

# AGENDA

## People Panel

**Thursday, 23 February 2023 AT 10:00**  
**In the Flensburg Room, Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG**

**\*\*A pre meeting for Members to prepare for the Panel will  
take place 45 minutes before the meeting\*\***

The Press and Public are welcome to attend for the  
consideration of any items which are public.

### **Members of the People Panel**

Councillor Glover (Chair), Councillors Finlayson, Mrs McKerrell, Mrs Mitchell  
(Vice Chair), Pickstone, Shepherd, Miss Whalen, Wills

### **Substitutes:**

Alcroft, Allison, Atkinson, Bainbridge, Birks, Bomford, Brown, Collier, Ms Ellis-  
Williams, Mrs Glendinning, Lishman, Mitchelson, Morton, Ms Patrick, Robson,  
Miss Sherriff, Southward, Sunter, and Dr Tickner.

## **PART A**

**To be considered when the Public and Press are present**

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutions

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and any interests, relating to any items on the agenda at this stage.

### **PUBLIC AND PRESS**

To agree that the items of business within Part A of the agenda should be dealt with in public and that the items of business within Part B of the agenda should be dealt with in private.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**7 - 16**

The Chair will move the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2023 as a correct record. The only part of the minutes that may be discussed is their accuracy.

(Copy minutes herewith).

#### **A.1 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS**

To consider any matter which has been the subject of call-in.

#### **A.2 LEISURE CONTRACT UPDATE**

**17 -  
78**

Portfolio: Culture, Leisure and Heritage  
Directorate: Community Services  
Officer: Luke Leathers, Head of Health and Wellbeing  
Report: CS.06/23

#### **Background:**

The Deputy Chief Executive to submit a report updating the Panel on the Council's Leisure Contract with GLL, the Sands Centre Redevelopment and how leisure services might develop following the transition to Cumberland Council. Representatives of GLL have been invited to attend the meeting.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Annual Update Report

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

Provide feedback on the Sands Centre Redevelopment and to provide suggestions to Cumberland Council on how leisure services may best meet the needs of Cumberland residents and visitors.

**A.3 VICTORIAN BATHS UPDATE**

**79 -  
84**

Portfolio: Culture, Leisure and Heritage  
Directorate: Community Services  
Officer: Luke Leathers, Head of Health and Wellbeing  
Report: CS.07/23

**Background:**

The Deputy Chief Executive to submit an update on the Victorian Baths covering; the conservation requirements for the heritage asset; the investment appraisal; Building management procedures including Building condition survey; the handover to the Station Gateway project; and, the Friends Group's proposals .

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Item requested by the Panel at its meeting of 24 November 2022 (Minute Excerpt PEP. 60/22 refers).

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

To provide recommendations to Cumberland Council.

**A.4 SUSTAINABLE WARMTH PROGRAMME UPDATE**

**85 -  
88**

Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise and Housing  
Directorate: Governance and Regulatory Services  
Officer: Mark Walshe, Head of Property Services  
Report: GD.08/23 herewith

**Background:**

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services to submit an update on the Sustainable Warmth Grant project.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Item requested by the Panel at its meeting of 12 January 2023 (Minute Excerpt PEP.10/23 refers)

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

To scrutinise the review of the progress to date with delivery of the programme.

**A.5 CUMBRIA CHOICE – UPDATE ON THE HOUSING REGISTER**

**89 -  
226**

Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise and Housing  
Directorate: Governance and Regulatory Services  
Officer: Gareth Torrens, Homeless Services Manager  
Report: GD.09/23

**Background:**

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services to submit an update on Cumbria Choice.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Item agreed by the Place Panel when the item was within its remit.

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

To consider the content of the report.

**A.6 REVENUE BUDGET OVERVIEW AND MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 3**

**227 -  
248**

Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources  
Directorate: Finance and Resources  
Officer: Alison Taylor  
Report: RD.58/22 herewith

**Background:**

The Corporate Director of Finance and Resources to submit a report providing an overview of the Council's overall budgetary position for the period April to December 2022. The matter was considered by the Executive at its meeting of 20 February 2023.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Budget monitoring report

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**



To scrutinise the overall budgetary position for the period April to December 2022.

**A.7     CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW AND MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 3     249 - 266**

Portfolio:     Finance, Governance and Resources  
Directorate:   Finance and Resources  
Officer:        Alison Taylor, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources  
Report:        RD.59/22 herewith

**Background:**

The Corporate Director of Finance and Resources to submit a report providing an overview of the Council's capital programme for the period April to December 2022. The matter was considered by the Executive at its meeting of 20 February 2023.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Budget monitoring report

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

To scrutinise the overall budgetary position for the period April to December 2022

**A.8     SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT AND OVERVIEW REPORT     267 - 276**

Portfolio:     Cross Cutting  
Directorate:   Cross Cutting  
Officer:        Rowan Jones  
Report:        OS.06/23

**Background:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer to submit the draft People Panel section of the Scrutiny Annual report 2022/23.

**Why is this item on the agenda?**

Annual Scrutiny Report.

**What is the Panel being asked to do?**

- Note the items within Panel remit on the most recent Notice of Executive Key Decisions;
- Consider and comment on the appended Scrutiny Annual Report 2022 – 23.

## **PART B**

**To be considered when the Public and Press are excluded from the meeting**

-NIL-

Enquiries, requests for reports, background papers etc to:  
[democraticservices@carlisle.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@carlisle.gov.uk)

**People Panel**

**Date:** Thursday, 12 January 2023

**Time:** 10:08

**Venue:** Flensburg Room

**Present:** Councillor Mrs Christine Finlayson, Councillor Colin Glover, Councillor Mrs Ann McKerrell, Councillor Mrs Linda Mitchell, Councillor Tim Pickstone, Councillor David Shepherd, Councillor Christopher Wills  
Councillor Pamela Birks (for Councillor Miss Jeanette Whalen)

**Also Present:** Councillor Mrs Bowman - Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder  
Councillor Mrs Mallinson - Communities, Health and Wellbeing

**Officers:** Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services  
Head of Property Services  
Head of Human Resources  
Chief Executive's Office Manager  
Policy and Scrutiny Officer  
Mr Barry and Ms Todd, Youth Participation Officers, Cumbria County Council

**PEP.01/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Miss Jeanette Whalen.

**PEP.02/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted.

**PEP.03/23 PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED - That items in Part A be dealt with in public and items in private be dealt with in Part B.

**PEP.04/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED - . It was noted that Council, at its meeting of 3 January 2023, received and adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2022. The Chair signed the minutes.

**PEP.05/23 AGENDA**

RESOLVED - That item A.7 - Internal Audit Report - Sustainable Warmth Grant be considered following item A.4 - Corporate Risk Register & Local Government Review (LGR) Transition.

## **PEP.06/23      CALL-IN OF DECISIONS**

There were no items which had been subject of call in.

## **PEP.07/23      YOUTH PROJECTS AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Chair welcomed Mr Barry and Ms Todd to the meeting; they delivered a presentation covering: the national, regional and local partnerships Cumbria Youth Participation engaged with; and overview of the structure of the team following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR); Cumbria Participation Framework; the '7 Golden Rules' a set of principles for those working with and for children and young people; ongoing activity; work focused on health and wellbeing; and the Youth Inspection Programme.

In considering the presentation and report Members raised the following questions and comments:

- What age range did the Youth Participation Service work with?

Mr Barry responded that the service worked with 11 to 19 year olds, adding that it had the capacity to work with older juniors.

- Once LGR had been completed, was there a mechanism for young people to influence matters that remained on a Cumbria wide footprint

Mr Barry advised that each new unitary council would have a corresponding Youth Council which would hold joint meetings with its counter-part, providing a forum for the discussion of county wide matters.

Ms Todd added that currently the service was divided into teams covering particular geographical areas. As such joint working was already an aspect of the team's approach to service delivery, she anticipated such an approach would continue once the new unitary councils were in operation.

- What level of engagement did young people have with the service?

Mr Barry advised that levels varied depending on the type of work e.g. whether an event or a project, it was important that young people were engaged with in a manner that was appropriate to their individual stage of development.

Mr Barry gave an overview of methods used to identify priority issues for young people, including a referendum at the National Youth Council in which approximately 1,000 young people had participated where jobs and homes have been identified as an important issue along with health and wellbeing.

Moreover, the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic had increased remote working with young people that had enabled the service to engage more widely with young people. Face to face engagement had now returned with monthly meetings at Carlisle Youth Zone.

The Panel discussed with the Participation Officers opportunities for young people to participate in consultations the Council was conducting, for example in relation to the Re-imagining The Green Market / Castle Street and the St Cuthbert's Village Deign Code.

Ms Todd responded that the service undertook a lot of consultation work with young people and so were used to facilitating such activity.

Mr Barry noted that the service had been involved in supporting young people, to participate in the consultation on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP), he was confident that support would be able to be provided to engage in the consultations identified by the Panel.

A Member noted that Cumberland Council was to set up a number of Local Community Panels and suggested that they provide an opportunity for young people to engage in civic life.

The Health, Wellbeing and Communities Portfolio Holder noted that the County Council's Local Committees had an element of youth engagement, and it was hoped that such provision would be continued at Cumberland Council.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the support and outcomes for young people transitioning towards adulthood, the Participation Officers gave examples of how individuals had progressed from their experience of engaging with the Youth Participation Service and others such as the Cumbria Future Leader's programme.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their presentation which had underlined the importance of youth participation.

RESOLVED – 1) That report CS.37/22 be noted.

2) That the Policy and Scrutiny Officer forward information from the current and previous meeting where the Panel had discussed issues relating to young people to the relevant Portfolio Holder at Cumberland Council.

3) That the Panel request that the Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder through her work emphasise the importance of continuing youth participation work following Local Government Reorganisation.

4) That the topic be included in the Panel's section of the Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23.

## **PEP.08/23      CORPORATE PROJECT STATUS REPORT**

The Chief Executive's Office Manager submitted the Corporate Projects Status Report (CE 01/23). The report provided an up to date snapshot of the current status of the City Council's corporate level projects; recent activity; RAG rating; issues and emerging risk; key activities for the next period; and updated requests for change.

In considering the report Members raised the following questions and comments:

- The Chair asked whether Officers had received an update from DLUHC regarding the Carlisle Southern Link Road; and if that information was pending, how had the St Cuthbert's Garden Village – Carlisle South Masterplan project been given a green RAG rating?

The Chief Executive's Office Manager undertook to provide a written response to the Panel.

- In relation to project 4 – Asset Recovery Programme, a Member asked if the health

and safety actions regarding access and egress the civic centre had been actioned.

The Chief Executive's Office Manager undertook to provide a written response to the Panel.

- Regarding the Sands Centre Redevelopment, the Chair sought clarification that the amber RAG rating for the project was as a result of 'the condition of existing services in the arts and entertainment space. He further asked whether there were plans to renovate the arts and entertainment space and, where that to happen, would that resolve the identified risks?

The Chief Executive's Office Manager undertook to provide a written response to the Panel.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the transfer of GLL staff from The Pools site to the Sands Centre, the Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services understood that a report on the matter was to be submitted to a future meeting of both Executive and Council.

- Regarding accountability in the One Public Estate project would the two new unitary authorities work together on the matter?

The Chief Executive's Office Manager undertook to provide a written response to the Panel.

- The Chair noted the return of monies to BEIS from the Sustainable Warmth Grants project and asked whether it was likely further funds would need to be returned?

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services confirmed that in autumn 2022, a sum had been returned based on a calculation by BEIS. It would be for BEIS to advise whether it required the return of more funds in the future.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Corporate Projects Status Report (CE.01/13) be noted.

2) That the Chief Executive's Office Manager provide written responses to the Panel regarding whether:

- i) Officers had received an update from DLUHC regarding the Carlisle Southern Link Road; and if that information was pending, how had the St Cuthbert's Garden Village – Carlisle South Masterplan project been given a green RAG rating;
- ii) The health and safety actions regarding access and egress the civic centre had been actioned;
- iii) The amber RAG rating for the Sands Centre project was as a result of 'the condition of existing services in the arts and entertainment space;
- iv) There were plans to move into a new arts and entertainment space and, where that to happen, would that resolve the identified risks with the Sands Centre Redevelopment project;
- v) The two new unitary councils would work together regarding accountability for the One Public Estate project.

## **PEP.09/23      CORPORATE RISK REGISTER & LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW (LGR) TRANSITION**

The Chief Executive's Office Manager submitted report CS.02/23 which provided an update on the management of the City Council's Corporate Risk Register and covered the arrangements for the transition of such risks to Cumberland

Council. She gave an overview of the inclusion of the Sustainable Warmth project into the Register and the recording of mitigating actions taken to date. In relation to the transition to Cumberland Council, the Office Manager stated the need for a unified Risk Register, and appropriate training for Officers going forward.

In considering the report Members raised the following questions and comments:

- A Member expressed concern that a Corporate Risk Register for Cumberland Council had not yet been created. With reference to the red RAG rating on the City Council's IT service, he sought assurance that there would be no disruption to IT service following the transition.

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services explained that as part of the Local Government Reorganisation process workstreams had been set up in individual services areas, such as IT to manage the transition process and ensure continuous service delivery.

- The Chair sought clarification on the membership of the Risk Management Sub-Group and whether the risk for Cumberland Council would be identified by its first day.

The Chief Executive's Office Manager responded that she chaired the Sub-Group which comprised following Officers: the Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services; the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources; the Safety, Health and Environment Manager; a representative from the Council's insurance team. The Group would continue to meet in the run up to local government transition and a written record, in the form of minutes was produced.

- The Chair asked whether the sectional completion of the Sands Centre Redevelopment project had been achieved?

The Corporate Director confirmed that it had.

- The Chair asked whether there had been any progress on the re-procurement of contract by Homes England in respect of the Carlisle Southern Link Road project?

The Chief Executive's Office Manager undertook to provide a written response to the Panel.

- Why had the Sustainable Warmth Grants project not been included in the Corporate Risk Register earlier when it was clear that there were issues with the delivery of the project?

The Corporate Director acknowledged that the project ought to have been included in the Register at an earlier stage. It was added to the register as soon as it became apparent that there were issues.

- The Chair noted a couple of sites in important locations in the city centre: the Central Plaza and the Turkish Baths; he asked why they were not listed on the Council's Risk Register?

The Corporate Director explained that those sites had not been included on the Corporate Risk Register as they were not within the ownership of the City Council (the Turkish Baths were to be transferred to Cumbria County Council as part of the

Borderland's Station Gateway Project). However, he understood that they were listed in the Economic Development team's Risk Register, and that the team had a campaign to increase interest in the site. The Chief Executive's Office Manager undertook to investigate whether those sites were on the Economic Development team's Risk Register and provide a written response to the Panel.

In response to a further question from the Chair regarding the inclusion of the city wall on the Risk Register, the Corporate Director confirmed it was.

- A Member commented that she had understood, in relation to the demolition of The Pools site, the existing boiler and outbuilding were to be retained for the Turkish Baths.

The Head of Property Services responded that the intention was for the Turkish Baths to have its own boiler system as the site would be smaller.

The Panel discussed the ongoing maintenance of assets and the transfer of that liability to Cumberland Council.

RESOLVED - 1) That the Panel had scrutinised the Corporate Risk Register as set out in Appendix 1.

2) That the Panel had noted the arrangements for the transfer of risk to Cumberland Council.

3) That the Chief Executive's Office Manager provide a written responses regarding:  
i) the progress of Homes England Re-Procurement of the contract in respect of the Carlisle Southern Link Road;  
ii) the inclusion of the Central Plaza and Turkish Bath sites on the Economic Development team's Risk Register.

## **PEP.10/23      INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - SUSTAINABLE WARMTH GRANT**

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services submitted report GD.02/23. At its meeting of 8 December 2022, the City Council's Audit Committee had considered Internal Audit Report - Sustainable Warmth Grant and had resolved to refer the matter to the People Panel for consideration and review.

The Corporate Director set out in depth the background to project covering: the allocation of government funding; the issues that had been identified with the project delivery and the actions taken to address this; and the restructuring of the management of the team, along with recruitment of additional staff. Following the implementation of those measures, the backlog of applications had been significantly reduced and by in large the project was in the implementation phase.

The Council was working closely with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the Head of Property Services noted that the BEIS seemed confident in the Council's current approach to delivering the project. The deadline for the completion of the project was 30 April 2023, a request had been made to extend that deadline by six months and a decision on this is imminent. It was known that other local authorities had also encountered issues in delivering their Sustainable Warmth Grants projects and it understood that BEIS was considering those matters to inform its design and delivery of future grant funding projects.



The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio advised that, following the identification of issues with the project she had been keeping a close eye on the matter and was being kept informed of progress by Officers.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their update and indicated he wished the Panel to focus on the future delivery of the project.

In considering the report Members raised the following questions and comments:

- Had the initial timescale for project delivery, set by BEIS been realistic and was BEIS dealing with authorities who were having issues collectively or individually?

The Corporate Director responded that the Council was having regular meetings with BEIS individually. The more involved contact had arisen after issues with the spend profile of the project had been identified, he reiterated that BEIS seemed satisfied with the approach the Council was now taking.

The project had received £19.5M of funding and the Council would do its best to deliver the project as it would benefit households in the district.

The Head of Property Services noted that a large focus of the project was now the performance of contractors who were delivering the works to ensure a consistent standard of works and delivery. The Council was waiting to hear whether it would be allowed a six month extension to deliver the project.

The Member was reassured by the Officer's responses and considered that the issues had been well dealt with.

- A Member asked what level of spend had been achieved on the project thus far.

The Corporate Director stated that the maximum grant given to a household was £25,000. He did not have firm figures on the spend to date to hand, that information would be collated in advance of the Council's next meeting with BEIS, he undertook to circulate that detail to the Panel.

- Would the issues with the project affect the Council's capacity to secure future government funding?

The Corporate Director advised that due to Local Government Reorganisation, Carlisle City Council would not be seeking future government funding. He reminded the Panel that the Council had a good track record of applying for and delivering projects funded by government. It was understood that a further round of BEIS funding would be available to bid for in the coming financial year, were a bid to be put forward another district council would act in the role of lead authority.

The Panel discussed the procurement of contractors to generate leads and deliver works. The Corporate Director noted that there had been some cross over on the generation of leads as the delivery company had engaged in some of that work, the matter had been addressed by the Head of Property Services.

- Did the project have the capacity to receive new applications, and what would be the impact of not receiving an extension to the project deadline?

The Head of Property Services explained that a lot of marketing of the project had been carried out in 2022, at the current time it was still open to applications. A cut-off date for applications had been set for later in the month to ensure that the Council had time to deliver the grants which had been approved, in the event of an extension not being granted.

A further iteration of the scheme was expected to operate in the next financial year, were Members to know of any residents in their ward how may benefit from the scheme it may be worth bringing to their attention so that they may submit an application to the future scheme.

- What was the timescale from the receipt of application to the completion of works? The Head of Property Services replied that once an application had been deemed as eligible an initial property survey was carried out and recommendations for works passed to the contractor who would deliver the works. The contractor then undertook their own survey to determine the specification of works, once agreed the works were carried out. Given the varying conditions of properties and prescribed works, the time taken from application to implementation varied. The team were monitoring implementation to identify any blockages so that they may be addressed.

- Was the Council able through it contracts to apply financial penalties to any underperforming contractor?

The Head of Property Services advised that the Council was focused on performance at the current time, it had not yet begun to consider recovery.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their openness in responding to the Panel's questions and concerns. The discussion had been helpful, and he had confidence that the managers and the Portfolio Holder now having strong oversight of the project and would do their best to deliver the project.

RESOLVED 1) That the Internal Audit Report - Sustainable Warmth Grant report (GD.02/23) had been scrutinised.

2) That key steps and updates in relation to the Sustainable Warmth Grants project be communicated to Members.

3) That a position statement on the Sustainable Warmth Grants project be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel.

4) That the Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services circulate to the Panel details of the project spend to date, following the upcoming meeting with BEIS.

#### **PEP.11/23      LGR - SUPPORT FOR STAFF AND ASSURANCE ON PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS**

The Head of Human Resources submitted report RD.55/22 LGR - Support for Staff and Assurance On Proposed Arrangements, which provided an overview of the support available to staff during Local Government Reorganisation which would take effect on 1 April 2023.

In considering the report Members raised the following questions and comments:

- Were vacancy rates higher than average levels?

The Head of Human Resources advised that in some of the sovereign authorities (the existing district and county councils) there is an increase in the vacancy rate, principally in senior management level posts, however, that was not the case for Carlisle City Council. She added that there had been a rise in fixed term contract positions, but that managers were being encouraged to offer permanent contracts.

Responding to a further question from the Member as to whether staff would be able to know who their line manager was, the Head of Human Resources set out the process in relation to staff transfer (TUPE) and the appointment of Directors and Assistant Directors and the sequential order in which activity would take place. Once the appointment of Assistant Directors had taken place, work on detailed structure charts would take place which would set out lines of management at the two new unitary authorities. A specific HR / Organisational Development Workstream was in place to manage and deliver those processes.

A Member commented that there would be some uncertainty for staff.

In response the Head of Human Resources advised that for the majority of staff there would be no fundamental change on Day 1. A Management of Change policy was currently being developed and following Vesting Day a transformation process would take place.

- Was there any indication that staff were leaving due to LGR?

The Head of Human Resources replied that the City Council did not appear to be affected to the same extent by that issue as other sovereign councils were.

The Head of Human Resources, following a question from a Member regarding the number of staff appraisals that had taken place in the preceding year, undertook to provide a written response on the matter.

The Chair noted that within the Council there were currently a high proportion of Officers effectively doing two jobs as they were involved in the work of the Shadow Authority. It was evident that workloads were increasing, what were staff able to do to support their mental health during this period.

The Head of Human Resources replied that staff were able to discuss issues with their line manager, to request for workloads to be looked at.

The Chair noted that the Council had a good track record of supporting staff's mental health, he asked whether such an approach may be adopted by Cumberland Council?

The HR / OD workstream were looking into the matter, and the support afforded to Carlisle City Council staff was viewed positively. It was expected that the current provision would continue for 12 months to enable Cumberland to develop and implement its on approach.

The Chair thanked the Officer for her report.

RESOLVED – That the People Panel:

1) Recognise the support provided by the City Council to staff for health and

wellbeing activities and encouraged the carrying forward of such activities to Cumberland Council.

2) Recognise the pressure staff were working under, and request that Directors and line managers do all they can to support staff.

### **PEP.12/23      COST OF LIVING TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT**

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer submitted the final report of the Cost Of Living Task and Finish Group (OS.01/23). The report set out the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group to the People Panel.

Councillor Wills, Chair of the Task and Finish Group gave an overview of the work which had been undertaken.

A Member noted that in its early stages the Task and Finish Group's had been keen to produce a directory of resources for those who were affected by the Cost of Living crisis. Councillor Wills advised that Cumbria County Council was on with that work.

The Chair drew Members' attention to the report recommendations which were set out on pages 102 – 103 of the document pack.

RESOLVED – 1) That the People Panel supported the recommendation of the Cost of Living Task and Finish Group as set out in report OS.01/23.

2) That any responses to the recommendations of the Cost of Living Task and finish Group be co-ordinated by the Policy and Scrutiny Officer.

3) That report OS.01/23 be forwarded to: the relevant Scrutiny Panel Chair at Cumberland Council; the relevant Portfolio Holder at Cumberland Council; the Chair of Cumbria County Council's People Panel; and relevant MPs.

4) That thanks be given to the Members and Officers who had taken part in the Task and Finish Group's work, and in particular the Policy and Scrutiny Officer who had provided excellent support to the Group.

### **PEP.13/23      OVERVIEW REPORT**

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer submitted report OS.04/23 which gave an overview of matters related to the Panel's work.

In considering the Panel's Work Programme, the Chair requested that an additional item – Update on Sustainable Warmth Grants be added to the agenda for the meeting of 23 February 2023.

RESOLVED 1) That the Overview Report be noted.

2) That an update report on the Sustainable Warmth Grants be added to the agenda for the meeting of 23 February 2023.

The Meeting ended at: 13:37

### Report details

Meeting Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023  
Portfolio: Culture, Leisure and Heritage  
Key Decision: No  
Policy and Budget Framework: No  
Public / Private: Public

Title: Leisure Contract update  
Report of: Deputy Chief Executive  
Report Number: CS 06/23

### Purpose / Summary:

The report is designed to give the panel an update on the Leisure Contract with GLL, the Sands Centre redevelopment, future plans for the events centre and how leisure services might develop following the transition to Cumberland.

### Recommendations:

The panel are asked to provide feedback on the Sands Centre redevelopment and to provide suggestions to Cumberland Council on how leisure services may best meet the needs of Cumberland residents and visitors.

### Tracking

Executive:	
Scrutiny:	23 02 23
Council:	

## **1. Background**

- 1.1. The Council entered into a new Leisure Contract in 2017 with Greenwich Leisure Limited, who trade as Better. The contract is for 15 years.
- 1.2. Integral to the new Leisure contract was the upgrading of the Sands Centre to form a single site for dry and wet leisure alongside the existing events programme.
- 1.3. The new contract provided an immediate reduction in the leisure contract subsidy which then becomes a payment to the Council later on the 15-year term.

## **2. Sands Centre Redevelopment**

2.1 The Sands Centre Redevelopment (SCR) project is a £27m capital investment into facilities to provide health and wellbeing opportunities for our residents. A key part of the project is the colocation of NHS physiotherapy facilities. The project has provided:

- Main Pool Hall (25m x 17m, 8 lane) & Learner Pool with a moveable floor (20m x 8m) with Pool Store, Timing Room, and a Spectator Seating Gallery.
- Four Court Sports Hall with a Spectator Gallery.
- 120 station Fitness Suite with an office.
- Two Dance Studios.
- Spinning Studio.
- Wet and Dry Change facilities.
- Changing Places Facility.
- Dementia friendly design.
- NHS Physiotherapy Suite.
- First Aid.
- General Meeting Room/Office (10 persons).
- Reception Desk with offices.
- Vending facilities.
- Staff facilities (including Kitchen & Social).
- Environmental measurers to support more efficient use of energy and photovoltaic panels and combined heat and power energy generation.

2.2 The capital project contract with Wates Construction Ltd (WCL) was signed in November 2020 and work on the main project commenced on site in January 2021.

2.3 As part of the project the existing leisure and events services were able to function (Covid restrictions withstanding). This was enabled through the existing events

centre with temporary portacabins with reception, box office, bar and toilets, and temporary leisure facilities provided in the former Newman School.

2.4 The SCR opened for events on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 and for leisure on 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2022.

2.5 The construction contract was formally completed (“Practical Completion”) on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022. The contractor remains on site carrying out “snagging” and there is a 12 month defects period for them to return and deal with any issues that arise.

### **3. GLL contract update**

3.1 GLL to present an update on other sites and work within the contract including the work of the Community Team.

### **4. Sands Events Centre**

4.1 The SCR project also provided benefits to the existing Events space through:

- Provision of a new entrance, circulation space, bars, and toilets for customers
- Linking events centre to the new Combined Power and Heat plant
- Linking the events centre to the new Building Management System

4.2 The events centre is still due for further improvements:

- Re-instatement and reconfiguration of the Back of House area to make up for the loss of changing space when the emergency exits were altered to allow for the new build
- Upgrading of lighting to LEDs
- Replacement of retractable seating

4.3 Officers are scoping out a “Phase 2” for the Sands Centre to focus on the events centre.

### **5. The future of Leisure Services in Cumberland**

5.1 There are currently three separate leisure contracts in the Cumberland area; Allerdale, Carlisle and Copeland. The Allerdale and Copeland contracts are both due to finish in March 2024 and an assessment of the procurement/extension options are taking place through the LGR process. Carlisle’s leisure contract runs through to 2032. All three contracts are with GLL.

5.2 Leisure service have longstanding links to providing opportunities for improvements of residents' health and wellbeing, which is a core theme to the Cumberland Plan, and therefore leisure services will be a key delivering mechanism.

5.3 Sport England have recently published a document on the [Future of Public Sector Leisure](#) (appendix 3) and a meeting of Cumberland stakeholders has been arranged in conjunction with the Cumberland Portfolio Holder on how this work can influence leisure provision across Cumberland.

## **6. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan Priorities**

6.1 This project makes a significant contribution to the priority to *“Further develop sports, arts and cultural facilities to support the health and wellbeing of our residents”*.

### **Contact details:**

Contact Officer: Luke Leathers

Ext: 7481

### **Appendices attached to report:**

- GLL presentations/updates
- Sport England report; Future of Public Sector leisure

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

### **Corporate Implications:**

Legal -

Property Services -

Finance -

Equality -

Information Governance-



# CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL REPORT 2022

## HEADLINES

- Carlisle Pools and the Sands at Newman closed permanently on 14<sup>th</sup> November. (Carlisle Pools building handed back formally on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023).
- The Sands opened to leisure customers on 14<sup>th</sup> November and was formally opened on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
- The new centre has already attracted new clubs and activities including Feet4football, Boccia, Border Badminton, Wheelchair, Pickleball and Eden Badminton).
- Memberships have reached 2,331 throughout the city. An increase of 628 since December 2021.
- Swimming School reached 1,920 throughout the city. An increase of 196 since December 2021.
- The Sands Panto Aladdin hosted over 20,000 customers over the seasonal period.
- The 2022 HAF Programme has delivered funded sessions to 760 children.
- In 2022 the Community Team delivered to 24 primary schools across North Cumbria (Cumberland). Throughout the year we delivered to over 3,000 unique children.
- Partnering with local run / triathlon event specialists, Sport in Action, we delivered The Great Cumbrian Run on 2<sup>nd</sup> October with over 800 taking part in the event, the highest since Covid.



Sands External View

1<sup>st</sup> Event 30<sup>th</sup> Sept -Liverpool Legends

## THE SANDS CENTRE OPENING

### TIMELINE

- 30<sup>th</sup> Sept – “Take Over” Implemented to allow GLL to offer event only operations.
- 24<sup>th</sup> Oct – October Half Term. – Full service maintained at existing Centres
- 31<sup>st</sup> Oct – Reduced opening hours at both Pools and Newman for Core Hours, to enable essential training / building prep.

- 12<sup>th</sup> Nov – (Saturday) Newman closed at 12pm the Pools closed at 12:30 and remain closed on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>
- 14<sup>th</sup> Nov - New Centre Opens full service normal operating hours. 6:30am – 10pm
- 16<sup>th</sup> Nov – Formal opening by Chris Boardman (MBE) and local dignitaries.

	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
<b>Centre</b>																							
New Sands Centre																							
Sands @ Newman																							
Carlisle Pools																							

- Sectional and Practical Completion was achieved on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

## CHALLENGES

- Dealing with changes to the timeline with minimal notice.
- Juggling part openings of the centre from 30<sup>th</sup> Sept whilst still working in a multi agency site.
- Taking due consideration of demobilisation of Newman and Carlisle Pools and coping with competing demands from partners.
- Taking due consideration of other external works and how that affects staff and customer (car park access).
- Maintaining the service whilst trying to mobilise and train staff.
- Communicating to customers once the timeline was assured.
- Introducing a new catering and bars provision.
- Ensuring continuing snags and defects are still prioritised post opening.
- Coping with the removal (or change) of items previously included in the project, but not completed.
- Developing and improving areas now the centre is in use.
- Focus on creating a stable programme whilst also developing new activities (but that's good)!

## NEXT STEPS (COUNCIL AND GLL)

- Project Team to complete consequential improvement works in the “old” building.
- Returning the Backstage to previous provision / upgrade to modern standards in line with current and future event needs.
- Consideration of the life span of the main hall roof whilst considering developments.
- Replace events seating.
- Decoration of the main hall roof.
- Consideration of the flooring of the main hall.
- Establishing further works required to bring the events space up to modern standards.

## MORE THAN A JOB

- The Sands Events Department welcomed 5 new members of the team in 2022, including an entirely new technical team, all recruited locally from other providers.
- Sue Baty runner up for Cumbria women of the year.
- Additional training to bring the team up the speed with new activities at the Sands Centre included:
  - Gymnastics Rise Training
  - ALT Pool View Training
  - Technogym Equipment Training
  - Site specific building training
  - STA Award training
- The Sands team Recruited 2 new Fitness Instructors , 1 with GP ref and one with Level 3 providing customers with increased level of knowledge and supervision within the gym environment.
- We have developed links with Carlisle College to enable their Entry 3 Skills for Independence and work course. This has been linked to the additional work via Events where we offer opportunities for their students to get real world experience in the industry with employment and work experience opportunities.
- The Sands Centre hosted the Regional Manager's conference on 24<sup>th</sup> November. The majority of General Managers from the North region were in attendance along with members of the GLL Directorate Team.

## A BETTER WAY OF DOING BUSINESS — FINANCIAL REVIEW 2022

- We continue to work with the Council to re-profile the financial support in line with the delayed Sands opening.
- Memberships have reached 2,331 throughout the city. An increase of 628 since December 2021.
- Swimming School reached 1,920 throughout the city. An increase of 196 since December 2021.
- The Sands Panto Aladdin hosted over 20,000 customers over the seasonal period.
- As part of the Sands development we have invested substantially into new internal and external Digital signage, located on the perimeter of the West Elevation, Main Entrance within the Street and within the Pool Hall.
- The Events programme was substantially affected in 2022 due to works to link the two building between January to March 2022 and additional project works in Summer 2022. That being said we have hosted . We also successfully presented 137 events in 2022 and welcomed over 90,000 people to events at The Sands Centre with 68 of those events happening after Take Over on 30<sup>th</sup> September. Highlights of the year include: Billionaire Boy, Paul Weller, Jason Manford, Alan Carr, Diversity, The Shires, Tony Hadley, Oti Mabuse, Russel Kane, Collabro, Aladdin, Sarah Millican, Rob Beckett, The Proclaimers, Blood Brothers and 10CC.



## PARTNER OF CHOICE

- The closure of Newman and Carlisle Pools was scheduled to provide as little impact to customers as possible. This meant that Staff members worked across their old centre and received training at the new centre over a two week period. This enabled both Newman and Carlisle pools to stay open through peak times and maintain key delivery programmes such as group exercise classes, jnr dry courses, the learn to swim programme and school swimming right up until the closure date.
- We have appointed a new catering Concessionary Partner , Hickory, based in Edinburgh. Initial feedback has been very positive with the restaurant and outside catering element of the business still to be developed early in 2023.
- The new centre has already attracted new clubs including Feet4football, Boccia, Border Badminton, Wheelchair Pickleball and Eden Badminton).
- Recognising the staff resource focus required to open the new Sands Centre, we partnered with local run / triathlon event specialists, Sport in Action, to deliver The Great Cumbrian Run on 2nd October with over 800 taking part in the event, the highest since Covid.. We think they offered an excellent addition to the delivery team.
- Catering tender was completed in July 2022 with new catering operator Hickory being selected for food and hospitality.
- The Sheepmount Grounds Team have got the whole estate up to a good specification. Pitches have a good amount of grass on for this time of year despite the heavy usage and latter wet weather.  
Harraby:
- Winter 3g use programme has been similar to previous years at around 80 % occupancy. Youth league usage is up on last year due to younger teams entering the leagues and the increase in Girls football continues. December usage was massively affected due to weather conditions .
- Harraby Sports Hall is now the main base for Carlisle Netball League. Fixtures are played from October through to December. Other strong users are the Rollerderby. This team is expanding so hopefully we can accommodate more sessions in the New Year.
- Cycle track- still heavily underused. We still have the main booking of Carlisle Cycling association who have around 40-50 participants every Tuesday. December usage was low due to weather conditions. We are in discussion with local partners (CCC, Active Cumbria)how this can be increased with their involvement in 2023.





# CUSTOMERS & COMMUNITIES AT OUR HEART

## Community Team – (see also the Annual Community Team Review)

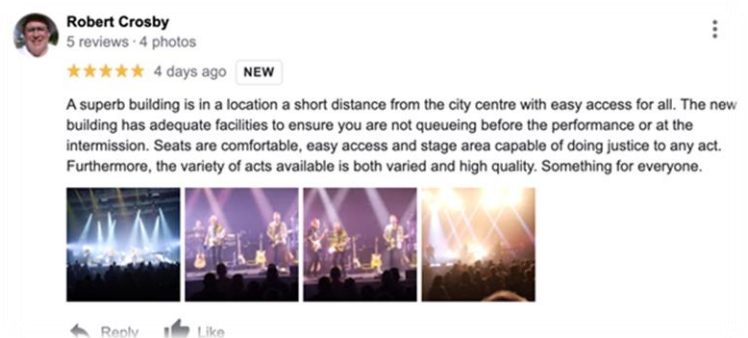
- The Community Team lost a key member of Staff with Guy Thompson moving over to the County Council, but Michael Barnes has picked up the solo lead of the team. The team is made up of 3 contracted and 3 flexible staff all working on average 25hrs each.
- In 2022 GLL applied for the government funding once again for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme. This funding enables each local authority in England to coordinate free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities to targeted children.
- The programme covered the Easter, Summer and Winter / Christmas Holidays. The team were successful in their bid and were able to deliver 4 days at Easter, 24 days in the summer and 4 days during the winter festive period. These were delivered at Trinity Leisure Centre and the final one of the year at the new Sands Centre facility.
- Out of the 800 spaces we had available as part of HAF funding, 760 spaces were booked by eligible children. In addition 150 spaces were booked and paid for places so the team ended catering to 910 children.
- In 2022 we delivered to 24 primary schools across Cumbria, these are located in the following areas: Carlisle – 18 Schools, Copeland – 3 Schools, Allerdale – 3 Schools. Throughout the year we delivered to over 3,000 unique children which is an increase of approximately 300 children on 2021 figures.
- The team continue to work in partnership with Rural Parish Councils to deliver a programme called “Rural Summer Fun Time” catering to children aged 5 – 12 years old. In 2022 the team delivered 25 sessions across 8 parishes. Out of a total of 850 spaces, 810 were filled.
- Our temporary facilities at Newman also helped create strong links with Carlisle College which resulted in us utilising their sports hall in the evenings and weekends. As part of the college partnership we introduced college gym / PE sessions under supervision with our FI's and the college tutors.
- On opening the new centre we managed to engage with the Cumbrian Wheelchair Basketball Club (Mohawks) to move the club to The Sands and agreed for national tournaments to be held at The Sands
- Fitness class programme grew from 30 classes a week to over 60 classes. A contributor of the growth of the health and fitness membership.
- Mini Athletics courses continued to perform well at Sheepmount, introduced originally to help meet demand and provide feeder participants to local clubs. We introduced athletic morning camps during the first Monday of Half Term with an additional 10 participants. We will reintroduce these sessions in February Half Term alongside with the Saturday morning club.

## Other Activities

- The football provision saw very little disruption from September until the big freeze in December. The provision of We have in place: 5 x Junior 9v9 pitch season tickets, 17 x junior 11v11 season tickets, 3 adult 11v11 season tickets and Sheepmount is the main home base for the City Sunday league which had 60 matches played from September to December (equivalent to 6 season

tickets). We also accommodate other teams as temporary pitches if possible such as Carlisle City reserves, Aspatria, Wigton, and Cotehill.

- The school football programme has been relatively quiet in comparison to pre covid and will be a focus of growth in the New Year.
- We held the Junior Cross Country Championship which has 12 different primary schools participate in and we also hosted the Secondary School's Cross Country trials event for those who succeed to qualify for the regionals.
- Athletics has ticked over. We have seen an increase in independent users rather than club base which is compensated for club member reduction.
- We have started to build a warm up area for athletes in the outdoor store at the Sheepmount. It is near completion and should be open for use by the end of the month. This is adding great value to our athletics community members.



## TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

- The Sands at Newman hosted the NHS Physio team before moving into the new centre which led to strengthening our relationship while supporting them with facility management. Shortly after opening the New Sands Centre we created a bespoke arrangements with the MSK department to allow access to the Gym and Studio so that escape pain classes could be run.
- We are in discussions with the NHS team to introduce new classes to further improve our joint approach to enable effective exits routes from those patients leaving the MSK Clinical programme.
- We have partnered with People First as point of referral for Patient on Referral Memberships.
- GLLs Better Health Strategy focuses on a life course approach linked to the aims and objectives of Local authority, Public Health and NHS aims and objectives across the life course starting well, living well, aging well. Our centre programmes will reflect the life course approach with a stronger focus on starting well
- In 2023 we will increase our involvement in the Local Integrated Care System (ICS) with actions agreed with the Local Authority accordingly to ensure we meet the local system demand
- Colocation and partnership work with the NHS will be a feature across the larger centres where this can be agreed (in place at the Sands and Kendal Leisure Centres, discussing future opportunities at Penrith, Workington and Whitehaven.

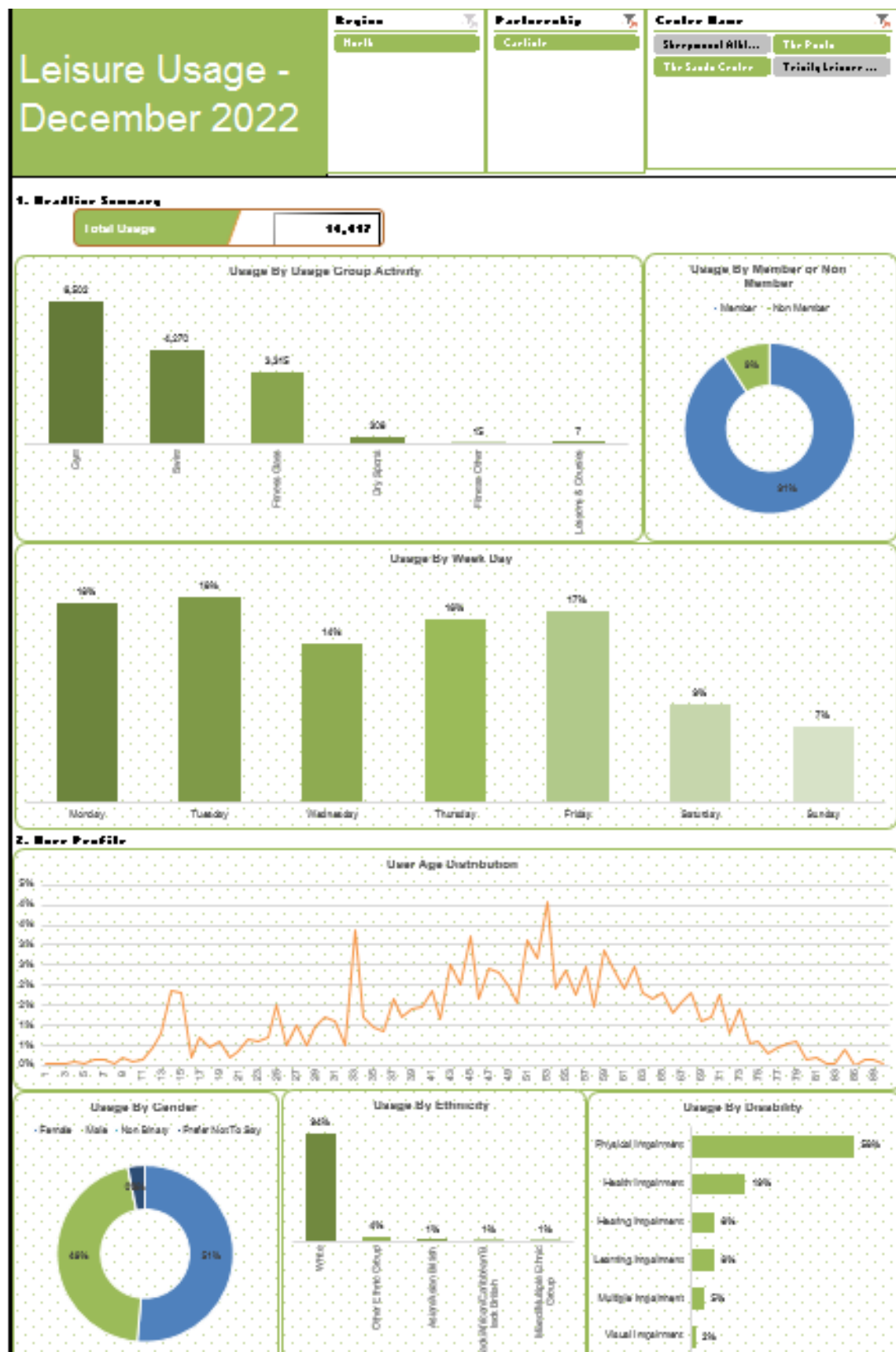
- Colocation of Health services and the creation of our centres as Health and Wellbeing hubs will bring Health services closer to where people live and work whilst improving access through increased opening hours etc.
- Upskilling of our Better Health Teams will allow for Public Health screening support services for example Point of care testing and early cancer screening. Training is being delivered to our teams now.
- Mapping of GLL existing services is happening now both locally and nationally including what we offer in terms of library services and children's services. These will also become part of the wider colocation agenda
- Better Health for Me programme which includes Healthwise GP referral and links with social prescribing services will now be a standard feature in the GLL offer across all centres.
- See the outline diagram of how we see Local Authority Leisure services becoming part of the wider system – Aligning Health with Economic Regrowth. Jointly working with the NHS, Local Authority and the Business sector to develop a Local Social Value Charter & Network to tackle inequalities.

## RESPECTING THE PLANET

- Over the last year GLL has invested in a number of spend to save initiatives to help reduce our carbon footprint.
- Staff have undergone energy specific training and are focused on reducing consumption by 5 % year on year.
- A full review of the Sands systems has led to a number of efficiency savings in normal operation (lighting levels, AHU controls).
- The current utility crisis is expected to increase Carlisle facilities utility costs by £300k, without further spend to save initiatives or operational savings. Without the Sands investment this would have been much higher.
- We have made huge strides towards cutting down on our reliance on paper stock with a huge push in 2022 to digital ticketing only for all our venues with over 70 % of all tickets now delivered digitally.
- We have also worked hand in hand with our Catering partners to ensure we are using compostable or recyclable containers only and cutting down on unnecessary usage of plastic.



## EXAMPLE USAGE REPORTS





# January Leisure Usage

**Region**  

North

**Partnership**  

Carlisle

**Usage Centre H...**  

The Greenwich Cen...

The Hive Leisure C...

The Plumstead Cen...

The Pools

The Queen's Diamo...

The Sands Centre

The Wave Centre

**Usage Type**  

Fitness Group Exercise

Fitness Gym

Fitness Other

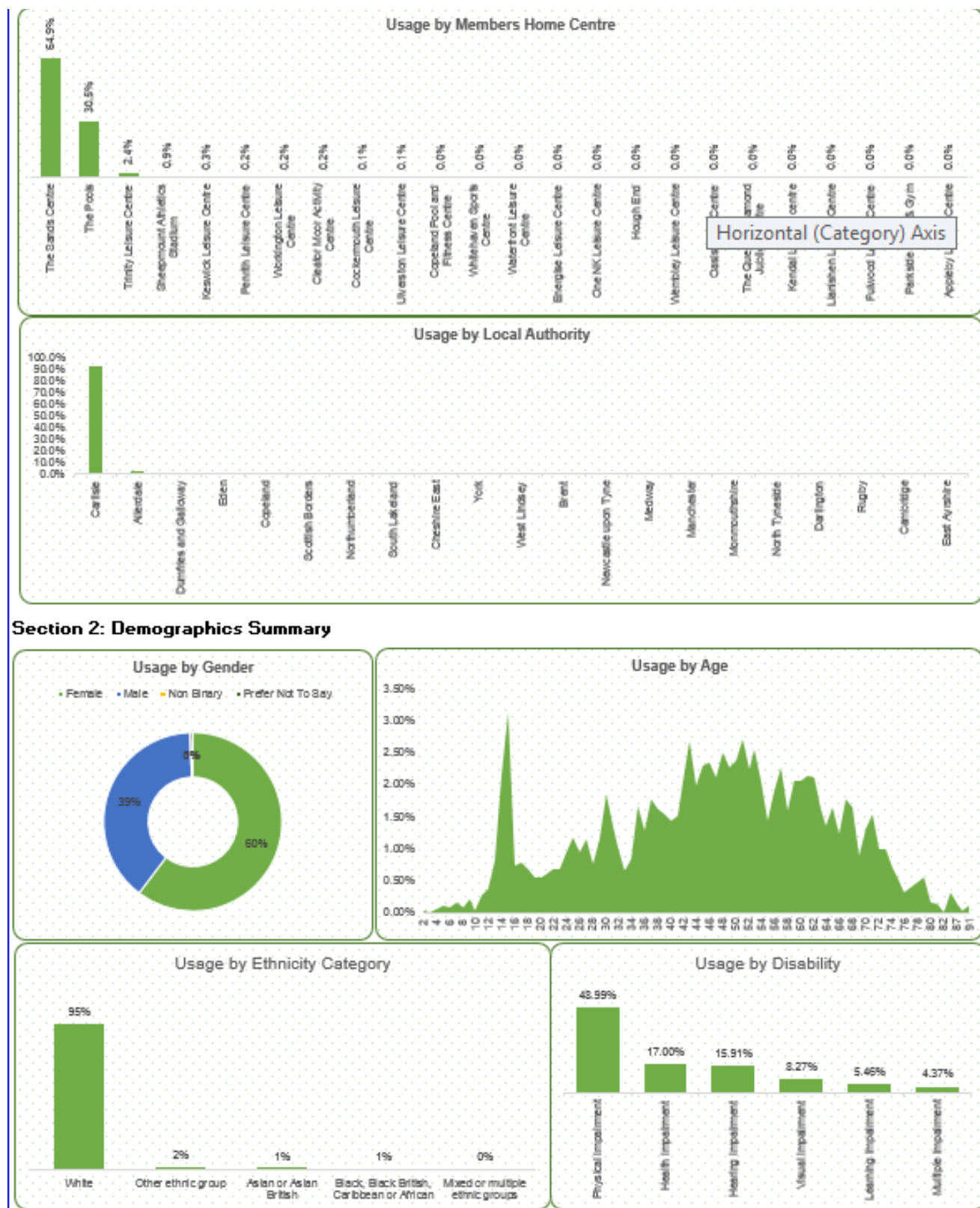
Lessons & Courses

Pools Swimming

Sports Dry Sports

## Section 1: Headline Summary

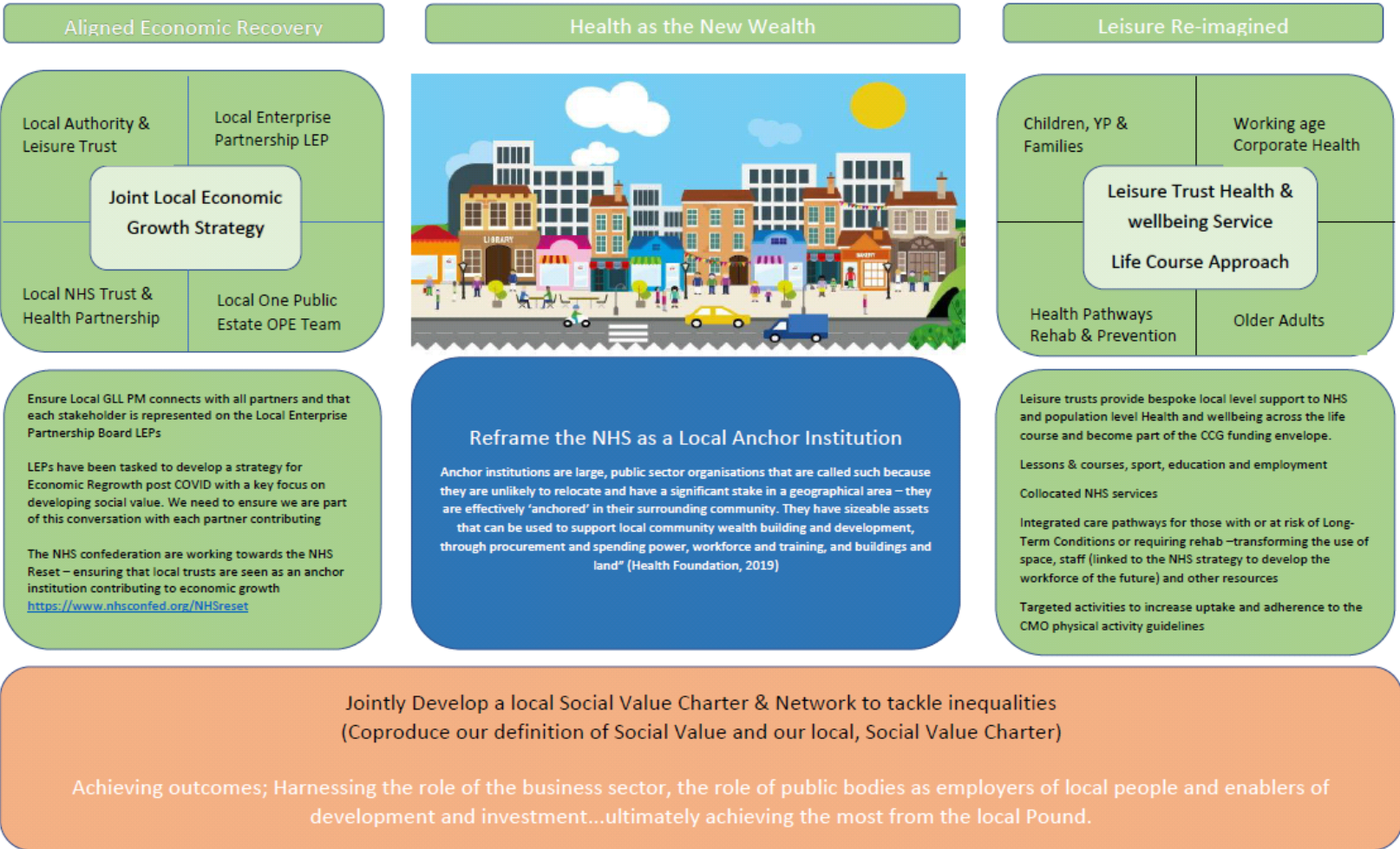




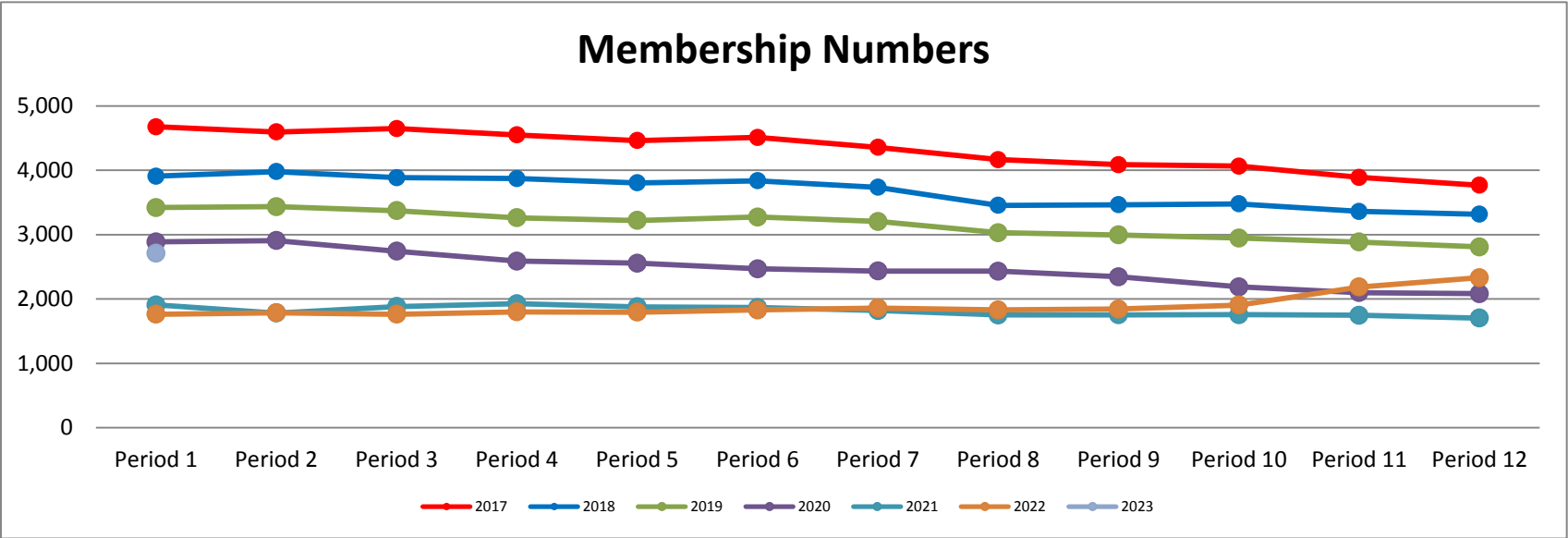
TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Reframing Local Authority Leisure 2023

Align Health with Economic Growth and place Local Authority Leisure Trusts within it



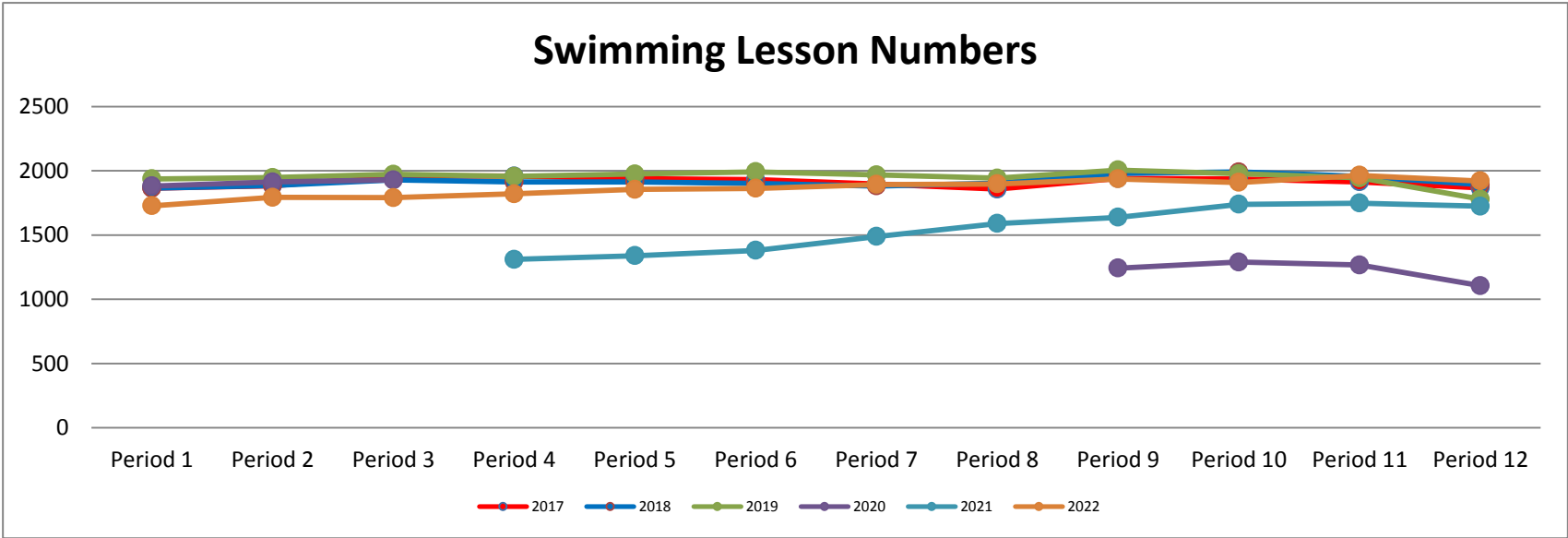
CITY WIDE MEMBERSHIP



Membership Numbers

Year	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	Period 9	Period 10	Period 11	Period 12
2017	4,676	4,596	4,648	4,550	4,461	4,510	4,355	4,164	4,087	4,065	3,890	3,768
2018	3,907	3,979	3,885	3,872	3,805	3,836	3,735	3,454	3,464	3,477	3,361	3,318
2019	3,421	3,435	3,372	3,261	3,221	3,273	3,205	3,030	2,996	2,948	2,884	2,808
2020	2,888	2,907	2,742	2,588	2,555	2,469	2,435	2,432	2,345	2,189	2,098	2,082
2021	1,909	1,781	1,882	1,927	1,879	1,867	1,820	1,751	1,753	1,756	1,748	1,703
2022	1,764	1,787	1,762	1,801	1,796	1,829	1,860	1,830	1,844	1,905	2,185	2,331
2023	2,709											

CITY WIDE SWIMMING LESSONS



Swimming Lesson Numbers

Year	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	Period 9	Period 10	Period 11	Period 12
2017	1865	1884	1959	1959	1939	1931	1896	1857	1940	1936	1914	1866
2018	1864	1886	1930	1914	1914	1902	1881	1905	1980	1991	1957	1892
2019	1937	1947	1972	1956	1974	1992	1968	1942	2006	1977	1945	1779
2020	1881	1913	1928						1242	1289	1266	1106
2021				1310	1339	1380	1488	1589	1638	1739	1748	1724
2022	1727	1793	1791	1821	1855	1863	1893	1898	1937	1909	1964	1920

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM ANNUAL REPORT 2022

## INTRODUCTION

GLL's contract to operate Carlisle City Council's leisure centres commenced in December 2017 for the duration of 15 years. As part of this contract, GLL recognises that delivering leisure activities in a rural region is not all about the delivery within leisure centres but also to consider how the outlining areas can benefit. The centres provide an excellent hub in which successful outreach programmes can be developed and grown throughout the region, thus enabling those participants without transport the opportunity to take part in instructor led sessions.

Within the Carlisle Partnership GLL have developed a dedicated Community Development Team which deliver activity sessions within Community Centres, provide a Primary School delivery programme based within the schools themselves and provide activities programmes within the leisure centres. This helps extend the outreach of quality leisure activities throughout the region.

## MORE THAN A JOB — TEAM OVERVIEW

During 2022 13 members of staff delivered/coached on a variety of programmes, events, schemes of work and activity days during curriculum term times, holiday periods, evening sessions and at weekends.

The team consists of a number of contracted and flexible workers all of which are very committed, well organised and love working in various settings in Carlisle and North Cumbria.

Towards the end of 2022 we lost a valuable member of the Management Team, Guy Thompson. He had worked within our coaching set up for many years in coaching and development roles. His knowledge and understanding will be missed but the team has continued to grow and has had a very successful year. Guy has started a new role within Cumbria County Council working as the Holiday and Activities Food Programme (HAF) Lead. We do still keep in touch as we work alongside the Council as we participant in the HAF scheme as an organisation. Michael Barnes, who has worked alongside Guy for a number of years, is now the Lead Staff member in co-ordinating the Community Team Programme across the North of the County.

Looking ahead we hope to recruit additional team members to increase the number of sessions we are able to offer across the new local authority area, particularly in Copeland.



# CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY AT OUR HEART

## OUTREACH HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES

### COMMUNITY CENTRES

The Community Team continue to work in partnership with local Community Centres to assist them with their delivery of their holiday schemes. Each programme is designed to help meet the specific requests of each Community Centre's needs. For example:

- **Morton Community Centre:** In 2022 the team have delivered programmes during Easter Hols, Queens Jubilee Day, Summer Hols, and Winter Hols. These were delivered as a HAF (Healthy Activity Programme/Funded) and through normal delivered sessions. The agreement is that GLL provide coaches and resources to deliver their programme which includes; games, sports and arts & crafts. The holiday camps will operate from 10am – 3pm and target those aged 5 to 11. The majority of sessions were at capacity attracting 24 children per day. In 2023 GLL will continue to support Morton Community Centre in a HAF and non HAF capacity.
- **Currock Community Centre:** - The team delivered the Summer Holiday Programme in Currock Community Centre. This took place over 4 days working with over 40 children.
- In 2023 GLL aim to work alongside more Community Centres targeting in areas we have not yet been able to develop.

### COMMUNITY CENTRES RURAL PARISHES – RURAL SUMMER FUN TIME

The team continue to work in partnership with Rural Parish Councils to deliver a programme called “Rural Summer Fun Time” catering to children aged 5 – 12 years old. In 2022 the team delivered 25 sessions across 8 parishes. This was an increase on last year of 3 sessions and 1 additional Parish (Dalston).

Out of a total of 850 spaces, 810 were filled.

- Beaumont – 6 days of delivery
- Houghton – 3 days of delivery
- Crosby on Eden – 3 days of delivery
- Rockcliffe- 2 Days of delivery
- Walton & Lees Hill – 4 days of delivery
- Scaleby – 3 days of delivery
- Castle Carrock – 1 day of delivery
- Dalston – 3 days of delivery.



The team have been delivering the programme for a few years now and it is a highlight of our summer programme. The Parish Councils cover the cost of delivery with GLL providing coaches, resources and organising all bookings. On conclusion of the programme each Parish is provided with a report reviewing the performance of their programme. This partnership that has grown over the last 7 years, the team is the preferred delivery partner because we can provide experienced and reliable coaches.

## SUMMER SPLASH

During the school holiday periods, the team coached the community based Summer Splash Scheme. Sporting activities were delivered at Brampton Community Fields, Botcherby's Melbourne Park, Belah Community Centre and at Morton Chances Park.

During the four days over 200 children participated in the sessions.

## HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD PROGRAMME (HAF)

In 2022 GLL applied for the government funding once again for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme. This funding enables each local authority in England to coordinate free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities to targeted children.

The programme covered the Easter, Summer and Winter / Christmas Holidays. The team were successful in their bid and were able to deliver 4 days at Easter, 24 days in the summer and 4 days during the winter festive period. These were delivered at Trinity Leisure Centre and the final one of the year at the new Sands Centre facility.



Out of the 800 spaces we had available as part of HAF funding, 760 spaces were booked by eligible children. In addition 150 spaces were booked and paid for places so the team ended catering to 910 children.

We intend to deliver further HAF programmes in 2023 if we are successful in applying for additional funds. The application for Easter 2023 has already been approved.

## SCHOOL DELIVERY PROGRAMME

Primary Schools have received up to £16,000 per year as part of the Schools Sport Premium, a number of schools use this funding to use the Community Team to deliver their PE Curriculum. The team offer a range of services that includes Curriculum PE and Extra Curricular PE. Participating schools have access to a range of packages they can choose from which are outlined in our Schools Brochure.

In 2022 we delivered to 24 primary schools across Cumbria, these are located in the following areas:

- Carlisle – 18 Schools
- Copeland – 3 Schools
- Allerdale – 3 Schools

Throughout the year we delivered to over 3,000 unique children which is an increase of approximately 300 children on 2021 figures.





The team deliver a wide range of activities design to interest and inspire the widest range of children. Activities include:

Football	Tri Golf	TAG Rugby	Tennis,
Lacrosse	Volleyball	Fencing	Basketball
Hockey	Badminton	Ultimate Frisbee	Multi Skills (Early Moves)
Athletics	Handball	Fun & Games	Multi Skills (Basic Moves)
Netball	Dodgeball	Gymnastics & Dance	General Fitness/Circuits.

## LEISURE CENTRE HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES

### TRINITY LEISURE CENTRE & THE SANDS LEISURE CENTRE

The team deliver centre based activity programmes during the school holidays. The multi-sport holiday camp caters to children aged 5-12. The programme operated between 9:00am – 3:00pm and consisted of a wide range of activities – in line with the curriculum programme delivered in a fun and relaxed environment.

Due to attaining the HAF funding the make up of the programme has evolved with many of the participants making use of the funded places. This funding has directly helped a number of children to be able to attend these sessions. The programmes operate during the educational holiday periods of, February, May/June, October Half Terms, and Easter, Summer and Winter School main holidays periods. Not including HAF participants (760) we had over 560 paid customers over the 12 months.



### SHEEPMOUNT ATHLETICS STADIUM

The team delivered 4 Monday morning Athletics Sessions from 9:00am-13:00pm during the first Monday in each Holiday period.

In total 64 children attended the 4 mornings. We intend to deliver similar programmes in 2023. One is already planned for the February Half Term.



## CENTRE BASED PROGRAMMES

### SCHOOL ACTIVITY DAYS

The team also programme and deliver the School Activity Day programme. Historically this was always based at The Sands Centre but again in 2022 due to the Sands redevelopment the decision was made to keep the programme to The Sheepmount. Activity Days are designed in such a way that schools book in advance to visit a centre and take part in a range of sports and games, delivered by centre-based staff. Schools select what sports they would like delivered; because 2022 was a Commonwealth year many schools requested Athletic based events. Several of the schools who attended used the activity day as their school sport day.



In 2022 we delivered 23 activity days to 14 different primary schools and over 1,500 children



these were split as follows:

- Carlisle – 7
- Allerdale – 5
- Eden – 1
- Barrow – 1

### MINI ATHLETICS

The team continue to deliver Mini Athletics sessions that are based at The Sheepmount Athletics Stadium for children aged 5 to 11.

The sessions run over two days, during Monday and Wednesday evening's from 5:30pm – 6:30pm. In 2022 we have introduced this additional Monday session as we felt two sessions gave children another option.

Numbers were good and had increased from the previous year. Children who attend are introduced to a variety of athletics disciplines with a view to children progressing to club sessions for one of the two Athletics clubs that hire the Sheepmount. Some even ended up coming to two sessions a week.



In 2022 we delivered 55 Mini Athletics sessions averaging 20/25 children per session.

Mini Athletics will relaunch in 2023 after February Half Term.

### **SATURDAY SPORTS CLUB**

Saturday Sports Club has continued from 2021. Initially numbers were lower than hoped so the team looked at ways of increasing participation with success.

We delivered 23 clubs when the facility was available. Over 200 children attended.







# Future of public sector leisure

December 2022

## Contents

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# 1. Foreword



**Public leisure facilities and services have a vital and unique role to play in our sport and**

**activity ecosystem because of their value to the people who use them most.**

For decades, they have fed the next generation's love of sport and being active, supported those with health conditions through good days and bad, and connected us all to our communities in a friendly and local space.

However, months after the pandemic restrictions were lifted, participation levels at public leisure facilities have only partially recovered. Facilities have also had to battle rising energy costs, chemical shortages and challenges in maintaining the right levels of recruitment and retention of the workforce. However, the sector has come together to meet these challenges and, where possible, turn them into opportunities.

For Sport England, the public leisure sector also has a central role to play in the delivery of our Uniting the Movement strategy, as it is a core element of each of the five Big Issues we have identified as having the greatest potential for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity.

The pandemic has accelerated the appetite for local authorities to look at leisure services and re-examine the purpose of their provision, assess whether they are delivering local community outcomes and consider their alignment with broader strategic outcomes, particularly health.

In the lead-up to this report, we supported and led workshops with a range of sector stakeholders to create a shared vision for the medium term. That group concluded that change is needed, and that collectively the focus should be on repositioning the traditional offer of public leisure into an active wellbeing service, doing more to create healthier and more active communities. The sector has already seen good examples of the shift in approach across the country but also recognises the need for national momentum.





The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the current landscape and summarise the conversations we have had with all our relevant partners in this space and our wider work engaging in this sector. This evidence has helped us map out the following shared medium-term goals for the public leisure sector:

- To transition from a traditional leisure service to one which is far more focused on active wellbeing.
- To move to a model that focuses on added value and supporting the delivery of key local priorities, and with that enable the delivery of wider government priorities around Levelling Up, net zero and health inequalities.

The report highlights the extensive support and resources deployed by a range of stakeholders that are already helping to evolve the service. It then discusses how these tools can deliver change on the ground and the importance of stakeholder collaboration in making progress.

The report also builds on 'Unlocking the Potential', another important report recently published by the National Sector Partners Group, which calls for reform and government action to support the growth and development of the sector.

We know the sector is in a fragile place and Sport England is committed to bringing together key stakeholders to promote increased partnership working that will provide cohesion and coordination of resources, with groups such as the Local Government Physical Activity Partnership already providing significant value in this space.

By providing this common agenda, we will help the sector move forward in a sustainable way with a service that meets the needs of modern users. Mutual accountability across partners will provide the culture required to safeguard the future of public leisure and provide it with a renewed sense of purpose.

Although Sport England is not a direct funder of public leisure services, it works closely with the sector in areas such as capital and revenue funding, by offering resources and guidance, and through investment in partners who rely on these spaces to deliver.

This report is the result of an excellent collaborative approach and forms the basis of a robust plan to unite these vital parts of our ecosystem. It sets out the first steps that must be taken to shift the sector's approach, and we look forward to continuing to support this important work.

**Tim Hollingsworth OBE**

Chief executive

## 2. Impact of Covid-19

**For many people sport and physical activity is not part of everyday life. Fewer than two-thirds of adults and less than 50% of children and young people meet the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines for physical activity.**

Even more so now than before the pandemic, opportunities to get involved in sport and activity – and reap the rewards of being active – depend too much on your background, your gender, your bank balance and postcode.

The public leisure sector plays a critical role in the delivery of sport and leisure across England. It provides vital community assets, such as swimming pools, sports halls and pitches, that are part of the fabric of our villages, towns and cities. They provide widely accessible opportunities for local communities to get involved in sport and physical activity, meeting the needs of the people in the places where they live.





## Size of the public leisure sector

Before the Covid-19 pandemic there were:



**2,727**

leisure centres in the UK

Which includes:



**33%**

of all swimming pools



**20%**

of all health and fitness facilities



**13%**

of all sports halls<sup>1</sup>.



**17%**

of these were owned and operated by **61 local authorities**.



**83%**

were run by **84 different external operators**, with different contracts in place with their respective **267 local authorities**.



**10**

largest providers deliver services to **168 local authorities**, which make up **55% of all local authorities with leisure responsibilities**. The majority are not-for-profit organisations who operate on small margins and low liquidity ratios.



**68%**

of sports halls and swimming pools were **built more than 20 years ago**. Although more than **£150m was invested in the opening of new public leisure and swimming facilities in 2018/19<sup>2</sup>**, with another **£200m worth of assets in construction or planning** there remains significant levels of ageing public leisure stock.



**72%**

of all school swimming lessons took place in a public leisure facility, which included both the statutory learn to swim programme and the water safety curriculum across primary schools. Swimming club usage was also predominately based from public leisure facilities.

Covid-19 had a significant impact on the public leisure sector. Lockdown closures and significant social distancing measures stretched the sector almost to breaking point, threatening many providers with service reduction, or indeed closure.

<sup>1</sup> Securing the Future of Public Sport and Leisure Services. A Report on Behalf of APSE, the LGA and CLOA; 2021. Accessed January 5, 2022. [https://www.apse.org.uk/apse/assets/File/Securing the future of public sport and leisure services Summary Report NEW\(1\).pdf](https://www.apse.org.uk/apse/assets/File/Securing%20the%20future%20of%20public%20sport%20and%20leisure%20services%20Summary%20Report%20NEW(1).pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Mintel Report on Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools (September 2019)

## Impact on participation

Between April 2019 and January 2020, Sport England's Moving Communities service recorded the following engagement levels from a sample (793 providers) of all leisure centres across England:



**8.9**

million participants



**165**

million unique visits

However, participation between April 2021 and January 2022 showed the following reduction post pandemic across the same 793 leisure centres in England:



**5.8**

million participants,  
a reduction of 35%



**112**

million unique visits,  
a reduction of 32%

Even at its peak in October 2021, throughput was still lower than the monthly average in 2019 (13.2 million in October 2021 vs an average of 17.8 million in 2019).

- Recovery of participation levels across different activities has been imbalanced and has understandably leant towards those activities which deliver a faster return to pre-pandemic revenue levels.

However, the demographic profile of those participants remained relatively stable, with more public leisure facility users being female and from less deprived communities.



**53%**

were female



**29%**

were under 16



**8%**

were over 65



**17%**

were from the most deprived parts of the country (IMD 1&2).

Importantly, the 35% reduction in participation between April 2021 and January 2022 has been significant in terms of the wider social value experienced by individuals and communities..

Research commissioned by the Government and conducted by the [Sheffield Hallam University Sport Industry Research Group](#) confirms that being physically active has a positive effect on physical and mental wellbeing, subjective wellbeing, social and community development and individual development.

A total of £549 million of social value was generated by participants undertaking consistent activity at leisure facilities reporting to Moving Communities between April 2021 and January 2022<sup>3</sup>; this is significantly less than the £910 million recorded by the same centres for the same period pre-pandemic.

3 Sport England (2021) Moving Communities – based on data from 642 leisure centres

The research shows that this social value is attributable across the outcome areas shown in the table below:

Category	Apr-Jan 19/20 (Pre Covid-19)	Apr-Jan 21/22 (Post Covid-19)
Improved health	£153,570,440	£85,819,133
Improved subject wellbeing	£514,919,164	£314,741,639
Individual development	£7,156,249	£4,796,128
Community and social development	£235,163,770	£143,779,102

These lower participation rates were due in part to capacity restrictions imposed by social distancing measures, but also to lower consumer confidence in using these facilities post pandemic. However, there is also a positive correlation between the years since the last refurbishment of a site and its recovery, which should be taken into consideration.

Those sites refurbished in the last 10 years are seeing a throughput recovery of 68% compared with a recovery of 62% for those last refurbished 20 or more years ago, suggesting that investment in newer facilities creates spaces that have greater appeal, increase user confidence levels and provide a more relevant offer to meet current customer demands.



## Impact on financial performance

The pandemic also highlighted the financial fragility of the sector.

Virtually all of its income (94%) comes from customer fees and charges relating to the use of facilities, so Covid-19 closures followed by a reduced use of reopened leisure centres inevitably had a significant financial impact on operators. Data collected in order to administer the National Leisure Recovery Fund suggests that Covid-19 created a £505 million gap between income and expenditure for leisure operators<sup>4</sup>, with the subsequent 'Plan B' restrictions in December 2021 and January 2022 increasing this gap by £30 million.

Three significant parties reacted to help close this funding gap.

1. Local authorities invested a further £160 million to support the sector. On average this extra support has covered 40% of the additional costs of operating the service, although the average figure hides considerable variation between different authorities, with 38% of the support covering less than 25% of the deficit faced by operators and 18% covering more than 75%.
2. The National Leisure Recovery Fund provided by DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) and DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, formerly Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) invested £100 million to support the reopening of leisure services in 266 local authorities after the pandemic. This support provided vital stimulus to the market, reducing the deficit and boosting confidence while also encouraging the reopening of services that deliver the greatest community benefit.
3. Leisure operators drew on £171 million of reserves to ensure that facilities and services could remain operational.

The major contributions outlined above, alongside further relief measures such as the Government's furlough scheme, helped to avert significant damage to the sector and enabled the additional costs of maintaining public assets and reopening services to be met.

However, these funding sources were finite and have now been virtually exhausted, and the sector is emerging from the pandemic in a particularly fragile state. At best, financial pressures risk limiting the ability of stakeholders to deliver against their commitments; at worst they may result in the permanent closure of some services or facilities.

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that this does not include the 19% of local authorities that deliver leisure services 'in-house'. Income for these services will have also fallen at a similar scale, although this will have been largely mitigated by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

# 3. Why does the public leisure facility sector matter?

**Public leisure facilities give local people access to vital community facilities and tackle inequalities in an affordable and accessible way. Put simply, the sector fulfils a vital public service that the free market is not incentivised to offer.**

Public leisure facilities, when designed well, provide an essential part of the ‘fabric of place’ and an important enabler for local communities to not just be physically active but to access a suite of co-located, broader public, social and health services – maximising the impact and value for money of service delivery and forming a core part of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept<sup>5</sup> that is gaining growing interest.

There will be a growing importance for local health collaboration, and the introduction of the integrated care systems (ICSs) to reduce health inequalities and maximise prevention is vital. As part of this, the role of social prescribing has increased, which highlights the role of other sectors in delivering services that promote wellbeing.

The profile and prominence that has been given to health and wellbeing will also be integral to positioning a service that is relevant to individuals. From the Government’s guidance around amounts of exercise that should be taken in lockdown to broader discussions on workplace wellbeing, this focus will have important implications for customer demand and how public leisure facilities can support the wider population’s health and wellbeing.

The decision-making process which drives consumer behaviour is complex and rarely driven by one single issue, but rather by the interplay between factors such as value, price, health and convenience. Issues such as sustainability and climate change are drivers of behaviour, but factors such as price and value are likely to remain the strongest drivers of consumers’ capabilities and motivations to take part in physical activity.

Marrying environmental considerations with these practical factors will be vital to the emergence and adoption of green initiatives. The public leisure sector has the potential to remedy a wide range of societal issues, making it uniquely placed to connect into and work alongside a range of other sectors to drive and influence positive action.

<sup>5</sup> See [The 20-minute neighbourhood – Town and Country Planning Association \(tcpa.org.uk\)](https://www.tcpa.org.uk)



## Why does the public leisure facility sector matter to wider agendas?

- Activity taking place in public leisure facilities makes a significant contribution to the participation theme of the DCMS's Single Departmental Plan<sup>6</sup>, as it plays a critical role in "[increasing] participation in, engagement with and access to sport and physical activity". It also plays – through its focus on ensuring equality of access and a broad geographical spread of provision – an important role in the delivery of 'priority outcome 4'<sup>7</sup>: "[enhancing] the cohesiveness of our communities and nations including through major events and ceremonial occasions, and reduc[ing] inequalities of participation in society, particularly among young people."
- The public leisure facility sector also positively contributes towards the Government's overarching agenda to 'build back better' in response to Covid-19, not only by protecting jobs and supporting local economic activity, productivity and social value, but through the activities it delivers as a key component of the Covid-19 response in terms of enabling and supporting policy interventions focused on healthy and active lifestyles<sup>8</sup>.
- Public leisure facilities provide a place-based infrastructure through which services and support can be delivered across the most deprived communities in England to support the Levelling Up agenda. In addition, health inequalities often underpin the deprivation that affects people (including future generations) and places. Sport and physical activity also have a vital role in addressing a broad range of physical and mental conditions, and in doing so positively contributing to individual health and wellbeing by helping to deliver local health and care priorities. There is also a growing body of evidence that the quality of physical infrastructure – of which sport and leisure facilities are a key part – is a significant factor in determining a local community's prosperity, sense of belonging and pride of place<sup>9</sup>. The public leisure sector can therefore make a positive contribution to four of the six capitals (physical, human, social and institutional) that the Levelling Up White Paper has identified as important factors to address in order to reduce inequalities and restore local pride<sup>10</sup>.

6 See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-digital-culture-media-and-sport-single-departmental-plan/dcms-single-departmental-plan-2019>

7 See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-digital-culture-media-sport-outcome-delivery-plan/dcms-outcome-delivery-plan-2021-to-2022>

8 See Professor Chris Whitty calls for physical activity to play key role in nation's recovery and future | ukactive

9 See '[Left behind' areas missing out on community facilities and places to meet – Local Trust](#)

10 See [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1052706/Levelling\\_Up\\_WP\\_HRES.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1052706/Levelling_Up_WP_HRES.pdf)

- Public sector leisure facilities and services help the NHS to focus on reducing health inequalities, and maximise prevention<sup>11</sup> by enabling people to stay healthy while also moderating demand on the NHS. More generally, the public leisure sector has begun to demonstrate the critical preventative role it can play across a range of health conditions including diabetes, cancer and mental wellbeing. Physical activity can also support secondary prevention for people with different acute and complex needs. And most importantly, it can play a role in rehabilitation and recovery, which further alleviates pressures across the NHS.
- For Sport England, the public leisure facility sector also has a central role to play in the delivery of its Uniting the Movement strategy, as it is a core element of each of the five Big Issues. These issues have been identified by Sport England as those where the greatest potential lies for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity: recover and reinvent; connecting communities; positive experiences for children and young people; connecting with physical health and wellbeing; and active environments.



<sup>11</sup> See <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/online-version/>

## 4. A shared vision for the public leisure facility sector

**This report is being published at a critical time. The pandemic has driven the public leisure facility sector to a crossroads.**

While the immediate pressure created by the Covid-19 pandemic has been alleviated through a concerted, sector-wide effort, the reduced revenues resulting from the plateau in participation levels along with increasing expenditure around utilities and staffing have put pressure on both sides of the sector's profit and loss statements. The resulting fragility of the sector increases the risk of service reductions and closures.

This has stimulated important questions about what the scale, nature and approach should be to make future service delivery better placed to meet the needs of communities. Multiple stakeholders have come together to debate this and agreed that change is required.

There is consensus that competition for contracts needs to focus on outcomes rather than costs to create a sustainable model that achieves the sector's full potential to deliver economic and social value to the local economy.





## Why does the public leisure facility sector matter locally?

This report shares our common agenda, one that will provide a direction of travel for the sector to move forwards.

**// We will evolve the sector, transitioning from traditional leisure services into an active wellbeing service.**

This vision is built on four inter-related foundations:



The commitments coalesce around seven broad themes:



There is already strong stakeholder support to enable change. This report compiles commitments from a range of stakeholders within the sector as to how they are, and will be, working to build these foundations in order to facilitate and foster the change. This report will support local communities and, in turn, help deliver against key government priorities.

Mobilising and realising this ambition in the context of rising energy prices, plateauing participation and recovery levels, the impact of rising payroll and supply chain costs and ongoing financial constraints across local authorities is a serious challenge.

A balance will need to be struck between a concerted effort to enact this change and enabling the required investment and resources to move beyond short-term financial pressures to a more sustainable footing. Innovation of the scale required will therefore need collaboration at both a national and local government level, as well as from the myriad of stakeholders working across the sector to assess how investment could be stimulated. Sport England will undertake work in this area.

However, this new approach will develop new products and services that, coupled with investment in a physical estate that delivers against the dual goals of energy efficiency and creating community hubs that enable wider service provision, have the potential to ensure that the sector is more resilient and effective than ever before. These new products and services will also make a significantly positive contribution to the Government's economic, societal and environmental priorities.

The sector has articulated its shared ambition. Now is the time to turn this ambition into action.



## Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care

Given the existing alignment of priorities and desired outcomes between leisure, physical health, mental health and social care, there is a clear opportunity to establish a new model that helps to formalise this relationship. This could be defined by elements such as:

- Co-location – with refurbished or new leisure centres providing community hubs that combine traditional leisure services with other health and social care services and facilities. This is vital in areas of deprivation where a lack of access to services can significantly reduce activity levels.
- Consolidation of the sector's role as deliverer of preventative activity – by ensuring that people are fit and healthy enough to participate fully in work. Those that are physically active have lower levels of absenteeism, greater efficiency, are less likely to suffer from stress or depression and are more productive<sup>12</sup>.



- Social prescribing and supporting local health and care priorities – with leisure services acting as a key delivery partner supporting general practice, pharmacies, multi-disciplinary teams, hospital discharge teams, allied health professionals, fire services, police, job centres, social care services, housing associations and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations<sup>13</sup> in the delivery of accessible and sustainable activities that support health and wellbeing. Of particular importance will be the role that prescribing leisure and physical activity can play in supporting the treatment of people with more complex needs.

To create an effective active wellbeing service, it will be vital that provision is not limited to physical assets and facilities, and that users are closely involved in the design and planning of both programmes and services.

To be truly effective, the service will need to play a key role in creating active environments within a place. This starts with dedicated sport and physical activity facilities, but it also includes utilising local assets (such as parks and green space, community centres and villages that, while not the focus of this report, are vital) as well as the wider built environment, with a particular focus on encouraging active travel.

An effective active wellbeing service will therefore provide front-line provision that will directly narrow health inequalities between places – particularly when combined with a truly place-based agenda.

<sup>12</sup> Nuffield white paper report commissioned by Sport England in 2018

<sup>13</sup> See <https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing/>



The introduction of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) in April 2021 has provided an ideal opportunity to progress this placed-based conversation at pace. ICSs have a remit to act as “partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups”<sup>14</sup>. A public leisure sector that is fit for the 21st century will not only be ‘at the table’ for these local conversations but will play a key role in delivery and providing activities and services that help to reduce health inequalities and positively contribute to the Levelling Up agenda and the NHS Core20PLUS5 approach to reducing health inequalities<sup>15</sup>.

The District Council Network’s [Fit for the Future report](#) evidences the health economic value of leisure and wellbeing services, and the further impact they could potentially have on reducing health inequalities. The results show that improving physical activity, especially among the most deprived, should lead to a reduction in diseases (thereby saving the healthcare system the cost that would have been incurred in treating the diseases), improved quality of life and the associated economic returns (improved health means people can be more productive for longer), and a reduction in health inequalities (by reducing the gap in healthy life expectancy between the lower and higher social economic groups). It also estimates the potential reduction in NHS expenditure as a result. The report summarises that if the leisure sector can leverage its existing infrastructure and services to develop the skills and communication tools needed to engage inactive members of their communities, they can be the catalysts for this reduction of inequalities.



<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.england.nhs.uk/integratedcare/what-is-integrated-care/>

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/core20plus5/>

Greater Manchester Health and Social Care system, working in partnership with GM Active, used a community leisure centre-based approach to deliver Prehab4Cancer, the first UK system-wide, multi-modal prehabilitation and recovery programme for cancer patients. It was designed to improve post-operative outcomes for patients across Greater Manchester (GM).

The evaluation shows that P4C is benefitting patients, providers, and systems:

- Patients are optimised prior to surgery and have long-lasting health benefits following post-operative rehabilitation. This reduces demands on healthcare services throughout the cancer pathway.
- Quality of life and physical activity improvements indicate long-term behaviour change and health improvement, with patients taking control of their care.
- Improvements are seen in both ward and critical care bed day usage, resulting in improved elective care capacity and effective use of resources. Additional positive impacts on 30- and 90-day re-admission and emergency department admissions have been observed.
- Efficiency improvements to pathways are visible which support delivery of elective care and cancer recovery plans, and achievement of cancer performance standards.
- Evidence that supports improved survival in patients who complete prehab. The colorectal patients who completed prehab were the largest cohort.

Headline results include:

- 1.5-day reduction in length of hospital stay per prehab patient
- 0.4-day reduction in critical care length of stay per prehab patient
- 550 ward bed days 'released'
- 146 critical care bed days 'released'
- Bed days 'released' from 1,000 colorectal prehab patients enable 179 additional patients to access timely surgical pathways.

The evaluation confirmed that the cost savings associated with the early release of beds per prehab patient cover the costs involved in setting up and delivering P4C for a year. Therefore, the programme has been recommissioned given it is sustainable on a recurrent basis.

## Strong sector leadership

The introduction of a new approach that brings forward new thinking, products and services will require proactive, skilled and diverse leadership at both local and national levels. The scale and nature of many of the challenges that sit at the heart of the Levelling Up agenda cannot and will not be fixed through traditional approaches and delivery models. Therefore, there is a clear need to develop leaders within the public leisure sector, broaden their diversity and hone the skills of those already playing a leadership role. This can be achieved through building on the work of the current local leadership programme with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the wider work of the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA), particularly through its Chartered Managers process. The CIMSPA process awards a badge of excellence to those who have demonstrated a real commitment and contribution to the sport and physical activity sector and have the leadership skills to drive and create positive change.

Leaders will need to invest time and energy in developing new skills and capabilities in the critical areas below to achieve the change and transformation we seek:

- data, insight and learning
- the practical application of innovation and digital to improve the experience of getting active
- translating good governance processes into delivery models and focusing attention on specific aspects of leadership such as diversity
- inclusion and putting distributed leadership concepts into practice.

Public leisure sector leadership will need to focus on two core areas initially:

1. Addressing the fragmented nature of the leisure sector. Fragmentation has limited the sector's ability to unite behind a common purpose, and hindered the sharing of best practice and innovation. Leaders need to address the transactional approach (particularly in the bidding for new contracts) which has stimulated a 'race to the bottom' and a focus on cost saving as opposed to added value and the delivery of outcomes. Creating and agreeing a common purpose for public sector leisure will help enable a move to a more relationship-led approach, which will in turn enable synergies, prevent agendas being overridden by other objectives, foster innovation and ensure that best practice is shared and implemented across the country – ultimately delivering greater value and improved quality of provision. This requires coordinated and committed cross-sector collaboration and shared leadership.
2. Building strong working relationships across multiple stakeholders. If the sector is to play a critical place-leadership role and create an active wellbeing service then leaders will need to effectively engage with multiple stakeholders, including public, private and third sector. This engagement will require leaders to: articulate a compelling vision at a local level; be clear about the costs and benefits, the provision in its entirety and the case for investment; persuade stakeholders to change existing behaviours and models; and show resilience, as change will take time. This will also require a commitment from stakeholders across the sector to help deliver change and a consistent measurement framework to understand that impact against local needs.

## Provision is place-based

The services of the leisure sector have predominately been provided via physical assets so it already has a widespread geographical footprint with a number of core community facilities. These facilities are spread over rural, urban and coastal areas, providing a variety of opportunities and challenges. The thinking behind this new model must therefore be based on this footprint and driven by two priorities.

The first is ensuring that health and wellbeing services are at the heart of local communities, and that the facilities and services provided contribute to fulfilling the needs of those communities. Any new investment in infrastructure must be considered and planned in this context to ensure the right interventions are delivered in each community. Recent work by the Town and Country Planning Association on “20-minute neighbourhoods”<sup>16</sup> and how to create “healthier, active, prosperous communities” is an important starting point. This work sees “community health and wellbeing facilities” as a core feature of the 20-minute neighbourhood where the objective is to create “places that include most of the things that most people need for their everyday lives within a short and pleasant walk or cycle ride”. It is an approach that is seen to deliver a range of economic, environmental, health and social benefits.

The opportunity therefore is to align both planned and new investment in leisure facilities to this broader agenda. To make leisure centres genuine neighbourhood hubs. To combine existing leisure facilities with broader health, cultural and community facilities. And to consider how they strategically complement wider assets, such as school and private facilities, to shape that place.

Warrington Borough Council and its provider of leisure, library and lifestyle services, LiveWire, worked closely with local stakeholders to transform the existing Great Sankey Leisure Centre into the Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub, encompassing leisure, library, health and culture facilities. The Hub specifically focuses on providing services that support the area’s changing demographic with an increasing number of young families alongside the fastest-aging population in Warrington (for example, the Hub has been designed to ensure it is dementia-friendly).

16 TCPA (2021) 20-minute neighbourhoods



The second is the need to ensure that provision is aligned to the needs of the people that live in the immediate and surrounding communities and is both designed and ultimately provided in ways that seek to reduce inequalities and improve overall quality of life. This means taking more user-led approaches to understanding needs, co-designing elements of the provision, and ensuring that flexibility and agility are built in, so it can adapt and change with local needs. This approach will see provision both located where it is needed most and tailored to the specific needs of the local community – particularly in the alignment of services and other community-based facilities. User needs and feedback must drive the

provision, and data, insight and learning must be shared and used to adapt the model and experiences provided on a regular basis. A model that can deliver in this way will better meet the needs of those people and communities that will benefit from physical activity most. This approach will also require an increase in skills and capabilities to apply innovation, digital, data and learning, all critical factors required to deliver local community objectives and align with the Government's Levelling Up agenda.

Together these aspects of the new approach will place leisure at the heart of local communities.





## Provision that is low carbon

Alongside a place-based approach there is also an ambition to deliver a step change in carbon emissions at the local authority level. Estimates suggest that leisure assets currently account for between 10% and 40% of a local authority's direct carbon emissions<sup>17</sup>. Investment in and improvements to England's leisure estate therefore have the potential to make a notable contribution to the achievement of local targets and make a positive contribution at national level.

The efforts already being made by local authorities, via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund, to invest in leisure facilities are starting to make this ambition a reality, but faster progress and increased investment are required to realise this in a timeframe that will make a notable contribution towards national and local net zero targets.



Giving people the confidence and ability to participate in active travel and connecting public leisure facilities up to cycle lanes and public transport will support wider strategic priorities in a place.

The challenges are the speed and scale with which this needs to occur and that it will increase energy costs in the short term, but in the long term this is an invest-to-save solution.

Exeter City Council has built the first super-energy-efficient centre (to Passivhaus standard), replacing a more-than-50-year-old swimming pool. This change is expected to save up to 70% on annual energy costs, use 50% less water, significantly reduce running costs and lower maintenance costs. Furthermore, it does not use chemicals which have been forcing facilities to close temporarily due to the lack of supply.

<sup>17</sup> APSE, LGA and CLOA (2021) Securing the future of public sport and leisure services

## 5. Cross-sector commitment to support change

**This report reflects the sector's ambition to realise a shared vision via a new direction of travel.**

Stakeholders have shared a number of commitments to show how they are, and will be, working collaboratively to build the foundations for change and facilitate and foster the transformation.

The commitments coalesce around seven broad themes and cover a range of activities that will:

- provide support to services on the ground;
- strengthen the sector's leadership;
- facilitate innovation; and
- help to share best practice.

The commitments listed below detail the first steps on our journey for change. Stakeholders have made commitments to the timescales and reviewed alignment to the vision presented above. However, this is not a comprehensive list and will need to be refined and added to as implementation develops. The commitments will be tracked through regular communication and feedback.





### ✓ **High-quality data and insight**

A commitment to build the evidence base and intelligence around what works, why and the difference it makes to communities.

### ✓ **Coordination and partnerships**

A commitment to coordinate stakeholders and share information across organisations and geographical boundaries.

### ✓ **Leadership and workforce development**

A commitment to develop and deliver programmes to support the workforce at all levels both within local authorities and providers.

### ✓ **Champion equality, diversity and inclusion**

A commitment to training and change to embed diversity and inclusion across the full range of activities, services and communications – for both communities and the workforce.

### ✓ **Digital transformation**

A commitment to support the digital transformation of the sector through the development of a white paper, partnering options and maturity assessment.

### ✓ **Strengthen the connection to health**

A commitment to building partnerships at all levels including ICS and providing materials to support engagement (e.g. social prescribing handbook).

### ✓ **Environmental sustainability**

A commitment to improving awareness, owning good practice and supporting the transition to zero carbon facilities.



## High-quality data and insight

A successful and impactful sector requires a shared understanding of the people and systems that are part of it. It is only with rich insight that success and impact can be identified and communicated, opportunities for change identified and confident decisions about the future taken.

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
Sport England will continue to support and develop our Moving Communities product to provide quality, consistent and comparable live data on participation, finance and customer experience. This will include dynamic calculations that articulate the wider impact of leisure centres on social outcomes and local priorities, including health and wellbeing, at a facility level and how they will positively impact the public purse and make a genuine difference in helping deliver against government's key priorities. This work includes a commitment to continuous improvement in both the quality and integrity of data gathered, as well as developing capabilities within the sector to better understand and use its own data.	In place currently with a commitment up to 2025	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care
The District Council Network has commissioned a report that evidences the health economic benefits of leisure services and their potential to engage inactive community members in physical activity.	In place currently with an associated campaign to run to 2025	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care
Sport England will collaborate with government on a national facility audit. This will: inform the extent of investment needs; shape thinking around the number, location and type of facilities that exist within places; and provide data on the scale of the net zero challenge. This information – alongside the Moving Communities data focusing on usage, service delivery, wider social impact and financial performance – will arm decision makers with the intelligence they need to make informed strategic decisions around future investment.	2022	Strong sector leadership



## High-quality data and insight

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
Community Leisure UK will carry out regular surveys with members to provide accurate and up-to-date information on the landscape for leisure trusts and emerging risks and challenges, and to support members by sharing best practice.	2022	Strong sector leadership
Sport England is encouraging partners to use best-practice open data standards where relevant, including publishing and using data according to these standards, as well as cooperating and collaborating in the development, adoption and maintenance of the data standards for the sport and physical activity sector. Relevant industry best-practice data standards include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. OpenActive data standards;</li><li>b. 360Giving data standards;</li><li>c. Active Places data standards;</li><li>d. OpenReferral data standards;</li><li>e. Any other industry standard data standards.</li></ul>	Included in system partner funding agreements to 2025	Strong sector leadership  Place-based
Activity Alliance will assist with content development and data capture in relation to disabled people and those with long-term health conditions to ensure that inclusion is embedded within continuous improvement and strategic decision-making.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
The Association of Public Service Excellence's (APSE's) Performance Networks Benchmarking Service will engage with Moving Communities to align datasets	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
UK Active will introduce the Active Standard to apply and quality assure the appropriate standards necessary to support the continued professionalism of the physical activity sector.	2022-23	Strong sector leadership
UK Active's Research Institute will continue to provide high quality research, evaluation, and business intelligence services that achieve sector, policy, and academic impact through two key functions; Data and Insight, and Research and Evaluation.	2022-23	Strong sector leadership

[Coordination and partnerships ▼](#)[Back to menu ▲](#)





## Coordination and partnerships

By working collaboratively across places and organisations there are greater opportunities to share best practice, influence and shape policy priorities and articulate the benefits of the sector

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
The Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) will continue to share information and coordinate and chair the Local Government Physical Activity Partnership and in doing so empower local government agencies to work collaboratively to improve and articulate the social and economic value of the sector.	Ongoing	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care  Place-based
Activity Alliance will continue to support a wide range of national, regional and local partners and networks, enabling organisations to be more effective in enabling provision to be more accessible and inclusive.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
UK Active will deliver a broad range of reports and services that will help to drive thought leadership within the sector and raise its profile in relation to key initiatives.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
UK Active will utilise its networks to bring together key sector leaders locally to enhance relationships and partnerships, which will support a whole systems approach to physical activity. They will work with other key partners to develop clear deliverables to avoid duplication and drive efficiency and effectiveness.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership  Place-based
APSE will fund and deliver research into the sector and provide and facilitate regular sector events and networks to share best practice.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
Active Partnerships is developing a deep understanding of communities, especially in relation to tackling inequalities, and will connect leisure providers to the local community organisations working in these areas.	2022-2025	Place-based



## Coordination and partnerships

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
Sport England will explore and analyse the opportunities for attracting alternative investment into the sector and consider how service delivery requirements need to evolve so they can be both sustainable and community outcome focused.	2022/3	Place-based  Strong sector leadership
Sport England will continue to support local authorities through resources, guidance and access to consultancy via the Active Environment Framework to develop provision that's planned strategically, linking effectively across health and community issues, and has effective contract management in place to drive wider outcomes and positive behaviours.	2022-2025	Place-based  Strong sector leadership
Sport England will continue to support investment into facilities through place-based work into priority areas in line with Uniting the Movement.	2022-2025	Place-based  Strong sector leadership

[Leadership and workforce development ▼](#)[Back to menu ▲](#)



## Leadership and workforce development

Investing in the sector's workforce and leaders will provide the capability and capacity to deliver change at the scale and pace that is required.

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
CLOA will facilitate a range of learning seminars with local authority sector leaders on key issues facing the sector as it transitions. It will also share good practice and innovation to promote a strategic approach.	Ongoing	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care  Strong sector leadership  Place-based  Low carbon
Activity Alliance's training workshops and resources will empower activity providers with practical tools and creative ideas to get more disabled people active.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
The LGA will develop and deliver a programme of high-quality leadership development to support senior officers and portfolio holders as they seek to support and champion the service and help align it to wider strategic objectives for health.	2022	Strong sector leadership  Place-based
Community Leisure UK will develop and deliver a bespoke leadership training course for members, with a focus on social business, place and partnerships, to complement existing leadership training offered within the sector.	2022	Strong sector leadership
CIMSPA will support the recruitment in the sector through tailored support packages and training opportunities, as well as working with employers to support and retain the existing workforce.	2022-2023	Strong sector leadership
Active Partnerships will work with local organisations to support workforce needs through strategic planning, connecting with education providers and developing bespoke workforce development programmes.	2022-2025	Strong sector leadership
UK Active will ensure its public sector members are engaged fully in this work and commit to working collaboratively with other key partners to avoid duplication.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership





## Champion equality, diversity and inclusion

The future sector needs to be one that champions diversity and inclusion and provides opportunities and access for all.

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
Activity Alliance will share insight and expertise with leisure sector partners to increase understanding and focus resource on tackling inequalities. This will help to embed inclusive practices into organisations, change attitudes and close the fairness gap for disabled people in sport and activity.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
Community Leisure UK will deliver workshops on relevant EDI topics for members, identifying areas for more in-depth work in line with their EDI Action Plan. This will address issues of diversity both in the workforce and with regard to users and discuss solutions and best practice to remove existing barriers to participation.	2023	Strong sector leadership
Sport England will continue to deliver design guidance that promotes diversity and inclusion in line with its wider focus on championing inclusion and addressing inequalities.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership
UK Active will continue to develop campaigns and work programmes focusing on inclusion and tackling inequalities, such as their This Girl Can and Everyone Can programmes and taskforce.	Ongoing	Strong sector leadership

[Digital transformation ▼](#)[Back to menu ▲](#)



## Digital transformation

Digital technologies are transforming all sectors of the economy, bringing forward new ways of working, new services and new insight. The public leisure sector of the future must be fully digitally enabled.

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
UK Active's Digital Futures work will provide a range of reports and white papers to support the digital transformation of the sector including an assessment of digital maturity, consideration in relation to digital partnering and the development of a digital strategy and Digital Maturity Tool.	2022	Strong sector leadership
Sport England and CIMSPA have developed a Digital Marketing Hub, a free hub of information and resources aimed at improving digital marketing skills in the sport and physical activity sector.	2022-2023	Strong sector leadership Place-based

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## Strengthen the connection to health

Demonstrating the impact and alignment will be critical to building relationships between health and leisure sectors and will enable greater integration.

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
The District Council Network will continue to share best practice on targeting leisure services to tackle health inequalities. Alongside this we will be sharing members' expertise and success in retrofitting and modernising centres, and pressing for the resources needed for others to follow suit.	Ongoing	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care
The LGA will publish a Social Prescribing Handbook to share good-practice examples of local authorities working in partnership with the health sector to develop strong, locally led social-prescribing opportunities.	2022	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care
Community Leisure UK will publish a report outlining the contribution of members to the wider public health agenda and alignment with key national strategic aims around health including social prescribing, skills development and a person-centred approach to health and wellbeing.	2022	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care  Place-based
Active Partnerships is developing relationships with Integrated Care Systems both at a 'systems layer' (sub-regional) and at 'place level' (districts) so it can support leisure providers in navigating the different systems and help build meaningful relationships with people involved.	2022-2025	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care  Place-based





## Strengthen the connection to health

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
The District Council Network will commission future research on how local services, including leisure, are paramount in shaping public health. This will evidence the effect of wider services, such as housing, VCS and economic regeneration, on changing the health of communities.	2022–2025	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care
<p>UK Active will continue to develop its work relating to health and wellbeing. Specific examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• concluding a research project to investigate how to transform leisure facilities into musculoskeletal hubs;</li><li>• rolling out a Business Health Matters programme to support local businesses in improving the physical and mental health of their employees; and</li><li>• implementing the recommendations from the Leading the Change report relating to social prescribing within fitness and leisure centres.</li></ul>	Ongoing	Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care

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## Environmental sustainability

Supporting the sector to transition to one that has significantly reduced carbon emissions.

Commitment	Timescales	Alignment
Community Leisure UK has set up an environmental steering group to identify key areas for support in reducing carbon emissions and improving the environmental impact of facilities.	2022-2025	Low carbon  Strong sector leadership
Sport England will provide investment and resource for research-based planning guidance and advice that can help reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption.	2023	Low carbon
Swim England will publish reports highlighting the benefits of investing in facilities and sustainability issues, including leading research into the newest technologies that reduce the sport's carbon footprint and make swimming more sustainable both economically and environmentally.	Ongoing	Low carbon
Swim England will provide technical and strategic support to the public sector throughout the process of delivering aquatic venues, from strategic planning to technical design, commissioning and certification. This will include providing water wellbeing accreditation, so pools are optimally set up to support the health and wellbeing agenda.	Ongoing	Low carbon  Alignment of leisure, physical health, mental health and social care
APSE will continue its representation on the Sports, Environment and Climate Coalition. APSE Energy will continue to help local authorities transition their leisure services and facilities to a more carbon-friendly approach alongside APSE Training, which includes a three-year programme of carbon literacy training for senior employees.	Ongoing	Low carbon

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In isolation, no single commitment will deliver the scale of change required; however, as a collective, they provide a suite of activity that – alongside targeted and strategic investment – can build significant momentum on the road towards creating a new model for the public leisure facility sector.

This is a sector which is seeking to embrace change and create a more effective and resilient public sector provision. The extent of stakeholder support is significant and will be critical in meeting the challenges ahead.

Investment in infrastructure is needed to accelerate change, and this remains one of the biggest challenges for the sector. It is essential that stakeholders and government work together to assess opportunities and options to achieve investment and help realise the potential benefits of the sector. Creating an environment which stimulates and encourages investment will ensure social and health benefits can be realised across communities.





## 6. What happens next?

### **Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the public leisure facility sector is at a crossroads.**

This report has brought together key stakeholders to accelerate discussions that have stimulated this review into the sector's purpose and effectiveness.

It now provides a common agenda which creates the space to help the sector move forward together, working in partnership to provide cohesion and coordination of resources. Mutual accountability across partners will provide the culture required to safeguard the future of public leisure and provide it with a renewed sense of purpose.

Partners are committed to tracking the progress made to shift the sector in the short term through regular reviews and updates; this will ensure that the sector achieves its full potential and is better placed to meet the needs of communities.

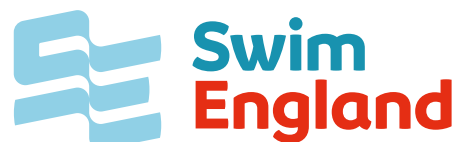
Work will continue across the sector and through the efforts of stakeholders. There will be collaboration across various elements of work, not least to meet the immediate challenges of rising costs for operators and the cost of living crisis.

Sport England will continue to support the sector and is committed to bringing sector stakeholders together to further develop the approach to evolving public sector provision, identify the actions needed to achieve progress and understand the impact of current challenges.



# Partners

This report is produced in collaboration with the following partner companies and organisations.





[sportengland.org](https://sportengland.org)

December 2022



Meeting Date: 23/03/2023  
Portfolio: Heritage, Culture and Leisure  
Key Decision: No  
Policy and Budget Framework: No  
Public / Private: Public

Title: Overview Report  
Report of: Deputy Chief Executive/Corporate Director of Economic Development  
Report Number: CS.07/23

## Purpose / Summary:

To provide the panel an update on:

- The conservation requirements for the heritage asset
- The investment appraisal
- Building management procedures including Building condition survey
- The handover to the Station Gateway project
- Friends Groups proposals

## Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- Provide recommendations to Cumberland Council

## Tracking

Executive:	<b>Not applicable</b>
Scrutiny:	<b>People 25/08/22</b>
Council:	<b>Not applicable</b>



## **1. Background**

- 1.1. The current Pools facility at James Street comprises of two distinct elements: a 1970's building containing the disused 25m pool, leisure facilities and entrance/lobby; and the historic James Street Baths building, which includes the mothballed 20m and 10m pools and the Edwardian Turkish Baths.
- 1.2. The opening of the new leisure facilities at the Sands Centre redevelopment in November 2022 meant that all leisure and swimming activities transferred from The Pools site to the redeveloped Sands Centre and the operation of the Turkish Baths ceased.
- 1.3. The Pools site forms part of the 'Carlisle Station Gateway' project, which is strategic regeneration project within the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal to revitalise Carlisle City Centre and wider Borderlands region. The Project will improve access and connectivity to Carlisle and the Borderlands region as well as contribute to decarbonisation by encouraging more journeys to be taken by rail.
- 1.4. As part of this project, it is planned that the 1970s Pools building will be demolished, with the Grade II Listed James St Baths building will become standalone facility. As part of the development of the project a feasibility study was commissioned by Cumbria County Council, on behalf of Carlisle City Council, to explore the future potential of the James St Baths building. Whilst the feasibility study does not provide a definitive solution to the future of the building, it investigates and evaluates the feasibility of potential uses of the site and proposes possible schemes of varying levels of intervention and cost.
- 1.5. The feasibility study should also be read in tandem with the Statement of Significance that was also commissioned to support the work and identifies the important characteristics / significance of the James St Baths building.

## **2. The Friends of Carlisle Victorian and Turkish Baths**

- 2.1. The Friends of Carlisle Victorian and Turkish Baths are a group of volunteers that have been campaigning to protect and develop the building as a health and wellbeing centre.
- 2.2. The Friends have set out a vision that proposes to create a new facility that would include an expanded Turkish Baths offer, a new health centre and community hub and laundry service. This would operate as a charity or Community Interest Organisation. Funding has yet to be identified but the Friends have previously indicated that Heritage Lottery Fund funding would be sought.

2.3. The Friends of the Turkish Baths have received funding to carry out a viability assessment for the site. The Friends have provided an interim position on their work in August 2022 and are continuing to work on a full viability study and proposal on a sustainable future use for the site. Once the viability study is complete the Friends plan to apply for funding to commence a development study (RIBA stage 4) of the preferred option during 2023. The Council continues to meet and support the Friends with this work.

### **3. Management of the heritage asset**

3.1. The Turkish Baths are of special historic interest and are Grade II listed as the original internal decorative tiling is of high quality and complete, rendering the building a rare example, with only around 20 remaining in England.

3.2. Investment appraisal. Historic England maintains a Heritage at Risk register which is updated annually and which can be viewed at:  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/results/?searchType=HAR&search=carlisle> The list has 22 entries for Carlisle, although Historic England entry qualification (outside London) is limited to Grade I and Grade II\* buildings, Scheduled Monuments and places of worship. The City Council holds its own informal database which was last updated in 2018 and any buildings that require adding, such as the Turkish Baths, have been recorded and will be added accordingly.

3.3. GLL have now vacated the property and ownership has transferred to Cumbria County Council to facilitate the Station Gateway project. Prior to the City Council accepting possession back from GLL the property was mothballed and a condition survey undertaken to ensure that the asset was returned to the Council in line with the contractual obligations. The Council then installed security measures and an inspection regime to ensure the building was secure prior to the transfer of ownership to the County Council.

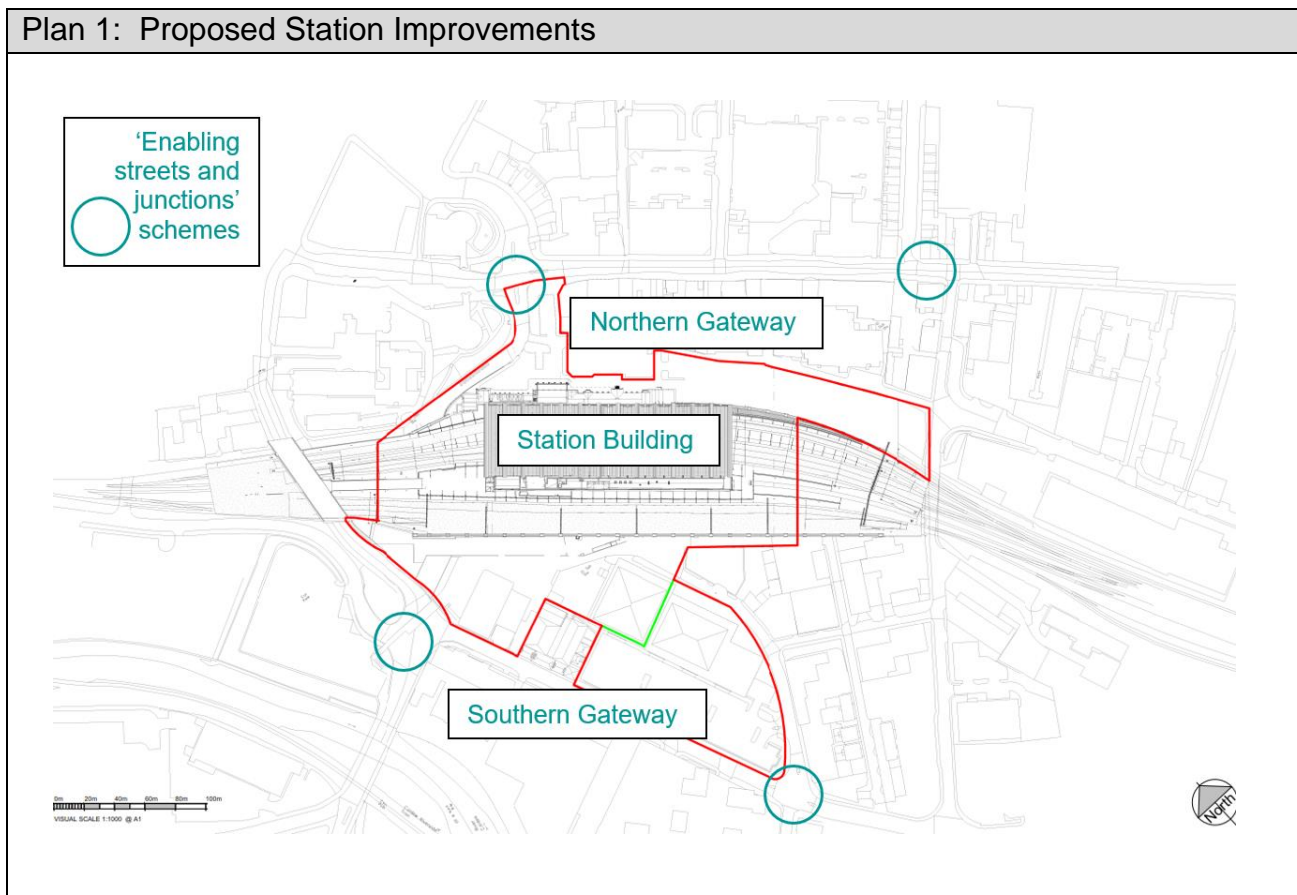
### **4. Station gateway project implications**

4.1. Cumbria County Council, in partnership with the City Council, Network Rail and Avanti West Coast have secured £20M of funding through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal for improvements to Carlisle Railway Station.

4.2. The primary objectives of the Carlisle Station Gateway project are to increase passenger use of the station and to create a more attractive gateway to the city centre. The strategic objectives are:

- Maximising this historic asset by respecting its heritage significance and architecture.
- Encouraging investment by improving the commercial opportunities of the station and the wider city area.
- Supporting passenger growth by improving the station and the facilities for all users.
- Growing the regional role of the station by making the station user-friendly and accessible, improving parking and drop-off facilities, and improving navigation around the facility.
- Creating a gateway by providing high-quality entrance and exits to the station, enhancing historic buildings, encouraging visitors, and better connecting to and showcasing the city.
- Future proofing by making the station accessible by greener forms of transport and making it safer to use.

4.3 The project has been split into four parts as illustrated in Plan 1 below:



- Northern Gateway: partial pedestrianisation of Court Square, enhancements to the space for passengers to enter and exit the station with easy access to ticket purchasing facilities. This will significantly reduce vehicular movements to the North of the station and Court Square and improve connection to the city centre. The Northern Station car park will close for public use and will be repurposed for staff parking and station servicing.

- Station Building and Interior: enhancements to the access to the platforms from the north and the undercroft using an easily accessible stairway. The undercroft will also be enhanced to provide a secure and welcoming entrance to the station from the South. Secure cycle parking, an improved historic entrance from the north, and improved/modernised passenger facilities are also included.
- Southern Gateway: creation of a new entrance and square, 'George Square', to the station together with the relocation of vehicular and parking uses on the Pools site and the Station Retail Park (Staples/Matalan) site, acquired by the County Council, that fall within the red line boundary shown on Plan 1. All public car parking will relocate to the south entrance to reduce the vehicular traffic at Court Square, including disabled, staff and electric bays. Together with the parking, coach services, rail replacement services and additional taxi ranks and pick-up and drop-off will also be relocated to the southern side of the station.
- Enabling Streets and Junctions: junction improvements at Victoria Viaduct / James Street, Water Street, Crown Street and Court Square Brow to improve access to the station, particularly for pedestrians.

4.4 Relevant to the Victorian and Turkish Baths building is the proposed development of the Southern Gateway. As part of this, it is planned that the 1970s building will be demolished to assist with the creation of George Square and new public car park. The James St Baths building will become standalone facility, with funding allocated within the Borderland project to support this.

4.5 Demolition of the Pools is likely to commence July / August 2023, subject to work by Electricity North West to relocate a high voltage running cable under the pools. Planning applications for both George Square and Court Square will be submitted for approval in the summer 2023 with a view to works proceeding in 2024 onwards.

## **5. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan Priorities**

5.1 Identifying a sustainable future use for the James Street Baths will support the successful implementation of the Borderlands-funded Station improvement project. This wider project will support the delivery of vision set out in the Carlisle Plan, which is to enable Carlisle to grow and prosper as the capital of the Borderlands region.

5.2 The James Street Baths has the potential to contribute to the growth of the tourist and visitor economy of the city. Therefore, identifying a sustainable future use for the building will contribute to the priority of delivering inclusive and sustainable economic growth, by increasing visitor spend and making Carlisle a more attractive place for investment.

**Contact Officers:**      **Luke Leathers, Mark Walshe,  
Steven Robinson**

**Appendices  
attached to report:**

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

- **None**

**CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

**LEGAL –**

**PROPERTY SERVICES**

Contained within the main body of the report

**FINANCE –** The property is now in the ownership of Cumbria County Council therefore the Council has no financial interest or liability associated with the property.

**EQUALITY**

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE –**



### Report details

Meeting Date:	23 February 2023
Portfolio:	Economy, Enterprise and Housing
Key Decision:	Not applicable
Policy and Budget Framework	Yes
Public / Private	Public
Title:	Sustainable Warmth Programme - update
Report of:	Corporate Director of Governance & Regulatory Services
Report Number:	GD08/23

### Purpose / Summary:

The purpose of this report is to update members on progress with delivery of the Sustainable Warmth funding programme.

### Recommendations:

That Place Panel scrutinise the review the progress to date with delivery of the programme.

### Tracking

Executive:	
Scrutiny:	23 February 2023
Council:	

**Background:**

Carlisle City Council was successful in obtaining £19.955m of grant funding on behalf of the Cumbrian Sustainable Warmth consortium of district councils with the aim of improving the energy efficiency of homes through the installation of retrofit energy efficiency measures. The City Council assumes the role of Accountable Body for the funding and its use across Cumbria.

**Current position:**

At January's scrutiny meeting members asked to be kept apprised of progress with delivery of the scheme. During the last month significant progress has been made with installations as identified in the attached table in appendix 1.

195 properties are now complete with a further 353 properties currently having measures installed. Total spend to date is £993,583.

Unfortunately, our request to extend the life span of the programme is still under consideration by central government with the recent cabinet reshuffle, whereby a separate department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DES) being created, further delaying the process. We have a strong dialogue with DES and are hopeful of a decision imminently which will be reported to Members at the Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February if received.

We continue to accept new applications to the scheme as well as progressing the existing application with the aim of installing as many measures as possible before the scheme closes.

**Contact details:**

Contact Officer:	Mark Walshe	Ext. 7427
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**Appendices attached to the report:**

Appendix 1: Sustainable Warmth Current position:

**Corporate Implications:**

- Legal -
- Property Services –
- Finance -
- Equality -
- Information Governance-

## Appendix 1: Sustainable Warmth Current position:

Cumbria | Update | 07/02/23

LAD3 + HUG  
LAD2

Pipeline			
	LAD	HUG	Total
In Progress	15	18	33
Sent to RFCO	729	364	1093
Ineligible	545	242	787
RFA Completed	618	295	913
Unable to proceed (RFCO)			148
Unique Properties - Installs in Progress	253	100	353
Measures Installed	148	47	195
Properties Finalised	72	6	78
Installed Measure Mix			
INSTALLED MEASURES TO DATE	LAD	HUG	Total
External Wall Insulation	0	0	0
Internal Wall Insulation	1	0	1
Cavity Wall Insulation	5	4	9
Underfloor Insulation	3	2	5
Loft Insulation	31	10	41
Draughtproofing	1	0	1
ASHP	1	3	4
GSHP	0	0	0
High Retention Storage Heaters	0	3	3
Solar PV	81	16	97
Double Glazing	0	0	0
EE External Doors	0	2	2
Ventilation	3	4	7
Heating Controls	21	2	23
HWT Thermostat	0	0	0
HWT Insulation	1	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Spend from installations</b>	<b>£725,984.75</b>	<b>£267,868.56</b>	<b>£993,853.31</b>

LAD 2							
	Allerdale	Barrow	Carlisle	Copeland	Eden	S.Lakes	Total
Eligibility Query (CC)	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
RFA booked	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
RFA Complete	20	10	11	15	25	30	111
Withdrawn/Ineligible	34	13	9	17	34	42	149
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>267</b>



Meeting Date: 23 February 2023  
Portfolio: Economy, Enterprise and Housing  
Key Decision: No  
Within Policy and Budget Framework: Yes  
Public / Private: Public

Title: CUMBRIA CHOICE – UPDATE ON THE HOUSING REGISTER  
Report of: Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services  
Report Number: GD.09/23

## **Purpose / Summary:**

Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Allocations Policy review (2020) is included as *Appendix 1*, supported by an updated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) as *Appendix 2*, with a summary of the key changes from the previous policy included as *Appendix 3*. The updated Policy relates to homelessness as well as allocations. The updated *Cumbria Choice* Allocations Policy is intended to ensure greater clarity for households in Carlisle who are currently registered for social housing or who may register in the future. The updated allocations policy was implemented on the 28 April 2022, the purpose of this report is to update the panel on the impact of the new allocation policy.

## **Tracking**

Executive:	<b>20 July 2020</b>
Scrutiny:	<b>16 July 2020</b>
Council:	<b>8 September 2020</b>



## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** *Cumbria Choice* is the adopted social housing allocation policy of all six district councils in Cumbria, as well as the seven largest housing associations operating in the county. *Cumbria Choice* has been in operation since 2011, and the policy is periodically reviewed by the partnership to ensure it remains fit for purpose and is fully compliant with the latest legislation and good practice. The Policy was most recently updated in 2020. The Policy was updated to reflect legislative changes, notably the *Homelessness Reduction Act 2017* and associated Code of Guidance, as well as further Allocations regulations arising from the UK's exit from the EU, issued in 2019.
- 1.2** The Project Board appointed a consultant, Andy Gale (who led on the previous *Cumbria Choice* review) to undertake the 2020 Policy review. Mr Gale has considerable experience in the field of allocations and homelessness, so his input has helped to ensure the new Policy is fully compliant with the latest legislation.
- 1.3** An important distinction between *Cumbria Choice* and earlier allocations schemes is that people on the register apply for vacant properties they are interested in, giving them more of a choice in where they live and a greater stake in their local communities. Under earlier policies people were allocated properties as vacancies arose, based on a waiting list scheme, meaning there was much less choice. People also had to complete a separate housing application form for each housing provider (all of whom operated different policies) meaning the previous system was less consistent and transparent.

## **2. Application of the Policy**

- 2.1** Applicants on *Cumbria Choice* are allocated bands, based on their level of housing need. Under the updated policy, which reduced the number of bands from five to three to make the policy more straightforward and easier to understand, the new bands are:-

Band A – Urgent Housing Need to Move

Band B – Statutory Housing Need to Move

Band C – All Other Applicants in Housing Need.

Band C is awarded where an applicant is not assessed as coming under the criteria adopted by the policy for being in a statutory housing need. Applicants placed in band C can still bid for properties but will not be considered above applicants from Bands A or B who have bid for the same property. Full details of the bandings are included in *Appendix 1*. It was intended that the proposed changes will simplify the operation of the policy to the benefit of both staff and customers.

**2.4** The full detail of the proposed amendments is included in the *Appendices* to this report:-

- The full updated policy is included as *Appendix 1*;
- The supporting Equality Impact Assessment, approved by the Project Board, is provided as *Appendix 2*;
- The two major changes to the policy are a reduction from five housing priority bands to three and a reduction in the minimum local connection qualification period from three years to one year. Many of the other amendments are of a more technical nature, and the full list of amendments to the previous version of the Cumbria Choice policy is included in *Appendix 3*.

**3. CUMBRIA CHOICE HEADLINE PERFORMANCE FIGURES**

**3.1 Total Number of Applicants**

The table below sets out the total number of applicants registered on Cumbria Choice, including their minimum bedroom requirement, registered up until 31/01/2023.

Local Authority	Minimum bedrooms required					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Allerdale Borough Council (ABC)	2291	817	436	17	3	3564
Barrow Borough Council (BBC)	1440	674	445	21	3	2583
Carlisle City Council (CCC)	3702	1353	857	58	8	5978
Copeland Borough Council (CBC)	1630	564	360	13	5	2572

Eden District Council (EDC)	686	239	144	6	1	1076
South Lakeland District Council (SLDC)	2114	751	364	21	2	3252
<b>Total</b>	<b>11863</b>	<b>4398</b>	<b>2606</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19025</b>

The table below sets out the total number of applicants registered on Cumbria Choice, including their minimum bedroom requirement, registered up until 30/04/2022.

Local Authority	Minimum bedrooms required					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Allerdale Borough Council (ABC)	2054	835	430	18	3	3340
Barrow Borough Council (BBC)	1296	609	417	20	3	2345
Carlisle City Council (CCC)	3703	1575	919	67	10	6274
Copeland Borough Council (CBC)	1372	535	321	20	6	2254
Eden District Council (EDC)	676	295	152	6	3	1132
South Lakeland District Council (SLDC)	1822	724	325	20	2	2893
<b>Total</b>	<b>10923</b>	<b>4573</b>	<b>2564</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>18238</b>

As the tables above demonstrate there has been very little change in the demand for social housing within the last nine months and as the waiting list has increased by only 787 applicants.

### 3.2 Applicants in Priority Need for Housing

The following table identifies the number of households in priority need bands, as at 31 January 2023:-

A – Urgent Housing Need to Move

B – Statutory Housing Need to Move

Local Authority	Band A	Band B
Allerdale Borough Council	122	1061
Barrow Borough Council	100	823
Carlisle City Council	147	1987
Copeland Borough Council	70	747
Eden District Council	19	275
South Lakeland District Council	100	848
<b>Total</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>5741</b>

Of the 19,025 households registered for Cumbria Choice, 6,299 are identified as being in a priority need group.

The following table identifies the number of households in priority need bands under the new policy, as at 30 April 2020 :-

A – Urgent Housing Need to Move

B – Statutory Housing Need to Move

Local Authority	Band A	Band B
Allerdale Borough Council	79	785
Barrow Borough Council	75	691
Carlisle City Council	104	1771
Copeland Borough Council	43	568
Eden District Council	12	215
South Lakeland District Council	52	653
<b>Total</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>4683</b>

Of the 18,238 households registered for Cumbria Choice, 5048 are identified as being in a priority need group.

The above tables indicate that, although the waiting list numbers have remained consistent, the number of applicants having been assessed as having a housing need has risen from approximately 27.5% to 33% of the waiting list.

### 3.3 Lettings by Band

The following table sets out the total lettings through Cumbria Choice from 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022 until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023.

Local Authority	Band			
	A	B	C (no priority)	Total
Allerdale	55	244	168	467
Barrow	58	67	12	137
Carlisle	125	180	70	375
Copeland	49	123	60	232
Eden	21	66	50	137
SLDC	55	57	22	134
<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>1482</b>

In this period 1,100 lettings (over 74%) went to people in priority need bands. This is an increase on previous years where the figure was closer to 60% of allocations going to those applicants with an identified statutory housing need.

## 4. CONSULTATION

### 4.1 Not applicable.

## 5. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 The policy has helped to ensure that there is a consistent and fair approach amongst housing associations letting homes in Carlisle to meet the greatest housing needs. The Policy ensures greater clarity and consistency for households registering for social housing in Carlisle, while simultaneously complying with legislative changes (including the Homelessness Reduction Act and resultant Statutory Guidance).



- 5.1 The tables and statistics provided in this report demonstrate that since the implementation of the new allocation policy those applicants with an identified housing need are better able to access social housing.

## 6. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 6.1 “Address current and future housing needs to protect and improve residents’ quality of life.”

**Contact Officer: Gareth Torrens**

**Ext: 7169**

**Appendices  
attached to report:**

***Appendix 1 – Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Allocations Policy (2020 Policy Review)***

***Appendix 2: Cumbria Choice: Revised Housing Allocations Scheme Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) June 2020***

***Appendix 3: Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Policy – Summary of Changes – 2020 Update***

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

**Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Carlisle 2021-26**

<https://www.carlisle.gov.uk/Residents/Housing-and-Homeless/Homelessness-strategy>

**Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>

### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

**LEGAL** – No legal implications

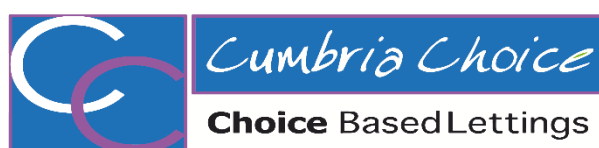
**PROPERTY SERVICES** – No property implications.

**FINANCE** – There are no financial implications.

**EQUALITY** – The policy has been prepared with due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. An Equality Impact Assessment is included.

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE** – Partnership agreement has been approved and entered into.

# Appendix 1



## Allocations Policy 2020 Policy

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## **Section 1 Introduction and Background**

### **Members of the Cumbria Choice Based Letting Partnership**

This document is the revised Housing Allocation Policy for the Cumbria Choice Partnership (CCP).

The Allocation Policy is called the 'Cumbria Choice' and is a choice based letting scheme where applicants are able to bid for advertised vacant properties. Cumbria Choice is a sub-regional partnership between the 6 Local Council Districts and 8 Registered Provider Housing Associations that own social housing stock across Cumbria.

The following are members of the Cumbria Choice Partnership:

Allerdale Borough Council  
 Barrow Borough Council  
 Carlisle City Council  
 Copeland Borough Council  
 Eden District Council  
 South Lakeland District Council

Plus the following Housing Associations:

Accent Housing Association  
 Castles and Coasts Housing Association  
 Eden Housing  
 Home Group  
 Impact Housing  
 Riverside Housing  
 South Lakes Housing

Each of these Registered Providers (commonly known as and referred to in this policy as Housing Associations) have voluntarily signed up to the policy to ensure that all applicants applying for social housing in Cumbria are provided with a single route of access to social housing and are assessed using a single policy. Where any individual housing association in Cumbria is not a partner to the policy and continues to let vacant properties owed to the Council under a nominations arrangement, this policy will apply to the nominations owed.

The participating Housing Associations listed above (contact details are set out in appendix 5) have agreed to advertise the majority of their available vacant properties through the scheme and in accordance with this policy.

The 'Cumbria Choice Partnership' is overseen by a 'Sub Regional Project Board', which is governed by a partnership agreement. The membership consists of one senior officer representative from each organisation. Each organisation has one vote within the partnership.

The Project Board will meet at least six times a year to oversee the running of the scheme and to monitor its compliance with local and national policy and guidance. The partnership will continue to monitor, fund, develop and make policy decisions about the scheme as appropriate.

The policy covers the nomination of any applicant under the scheme to be an assured or an assured short hold tenant of housing accommodation held by any participating Housing Association across Cumbria, whether by way of a legally enforceable arrangement or not. This includes a nomination of a 'starter tenancy'. Of the 6 Cumbrian Councils only Barrow still owns Council stock and the policy applies to allocations made for that stock.

This policy sets out who is, and who isn't, eligible for social housing in Cumbria and how the CCP will make this assessment. It details how applications to join the CCP Housing Register can be made, the priority they will be given, and how offers of social housing will be made.

This is a revised 'Housing Allocation Policy' and will take effect in respect of all allocations of housing on or after [insert date here](#). The assessment of need and qualifying criteria set out in this policy will be applied to all new and existing Applicants from this date.

## **Legal context**

This is the 6 Cumbrian Councils Housing Allocation Policy as required by Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. Applicants are able to apply for housing and all applications will be fully assessed.

When applying an applicant will be asked to choose a local authority or housing association partner to administer their application. Where a housing association partner assesses and administers an application they will, on behalf of the 6 Cumbrian local authorities, be formally discharging the legal responsibility for a local authority to receive applications and apply their adopted allocation policy to assess that application. All applications will be assessed and administered through applying this allocation policy: this being the legally adopted allocation policy for all 6 Cumbrian local authorities.

In developing this policy the Councils have followed and fully considered the following housing legislation, regulations, statutory guidance, and strategies:

- 1) The Housing Act 1996, Part 6 as amended by Localism Act 2011 (England)
- 2) The Housing Act 1996, Part 7 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

- 3) Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance for Local housing Authorities in England (2012, DCLG) “the Code”;
- 4) Providing social housing for local people: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England (DCLG, December 2013) “Supplementary Code”.
- 5) Plus the following statutory regulations:
  - a) Allocation of Housing (Procedure) Regulations 1997, SI 1997/483;
  - b) Allocation of Housing (England) Regulations 2002, SI 2002/3264;
  - c) Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006, SI 2006/1294 and all subsequent amendments
  - d) Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012, SI 2012/1869;
  - e) Housing Act 1996 (Additional Preference for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012, SI 2012/2989.
  - f) The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015
  - g) ‘The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/861)’
  - h) Right to Move guidance (DCLG, 2015)
  - i) Social Housing for Victims of Domestic Abuse in Refuges or other Types of Temporary Accommodation, guidance (MHCLG, 2018)
  - j) Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities (MHCLG, 2018)
  - k) Domestic Abuse Act 2021

In framing our allocations scheme this policy has had regard to the District Council’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Housing Strategy, and Tenancy Strategy as well as the Equality Act 2010.

In relation to f) above in accordance with the Right to Move statutory guidance on housing allocations for local housing authorities in England (Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2015) the Policy sets a limit of no more than 2% of lettings will be allocated to social housing tenants from outside of Cumbria who need to move for employment purposes.

All references to statutory materials are by way of summary and for convenience only, and are not to be used as substitutes for the details within the original.

Where the Policy refers to the Cumbrian Choice Partnership, or CCP, this is to



be taken to mean each of the 6 Cumbrian Councils. Each Council has adopted this Policy as its legal Allocation Policy to meet the statutory duty under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996.

This Allocation Policy applies when a Cumbrian Council:

- a) Selects a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of housing accommodation (i.e. in practice accommodation owned by Barrow Borough Council as the other 5 Council Partners no longer retain social housing stock).
- b) Nominates a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of housing accommodation (i.e. in practice accommodation held by another housing authority).
- c) Nominates a person to be an assured tenant or assured shorthold tenant of housing accommodation held by a Registered Provider (commonly referred to in the Policy as Housing Associations).

The above includes Affordable Rent properties and Flexible (i.e. fixed term) tenancies.

For details of lettings not covered by the policy see appendix 1.1

### **The key aims and objectives set for the Policy**

The key aims and objectives adopted for the Policy are:

- 1. A Policy that meets the legal requirements placed on each Cumbrian Council, namely to give appropriate priority to applicants who fall within the Housing Act “reasonable preference” categories
- 2. To ensure there is a social housing lettings service that embraces equality and diversity by being open and fully accessible to all individuals.
- 3. To improve the means by which local people in Cumbria gain access to social rented housing by providing a modern and easy to understand allocation system which offers realistic choices.
- 4. A Policy that is simple to understand and use, is transparent and is seen as fair by the general public and applicants
- 5. To support the objective of making the best use of the social housing stock in Cumbria, and to support mobility across Cumbria especially where residents need to access to employment.
- 6. A Policy that contributes to creating balanced and sustainable communities, and helps attract new customers to areas of low demand thereby reducing void times on any ‘harder to let’ properties.

## **Making changes to the Policy**

Any major change to the Policy can only be made after a copy of the proposed amendments have been consulted on by sending to every Registered Provider Housing Association in Cumbria, regardless of whether an association is a participating member of the CCP. (Section s166A (13) Housing Act 1996).

All major changes must first, be agreed by the CCP Partnership Board who will make recommendations that will then be considered:

- a) By each of the 6 Cumbrian Councils, and
- b) By each participating Partner Housing Association.

Details of how major changes will be considered by each of the 6 Cumbrian Councils are set out in appendix 9.

For minor changes to the policy or the operational procedures, decisions will be delegated to the CCP Board who will consult with the lead officer responsible for housing in each Council, (or their delegated officer), and with the Chief Executive for each CCP Partner Housing Association (or their delegated officer).

All major changes to the policy will be notified to those it may affect within a reasonable period of time.

## **General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

We will ensure for any person on the housing register their information is stored lawfully and we act in a fair and transparent way in processing their data. We will only collect data that is specific, explicit and legitimate for the purpose of the application and lettings processes set out in this policy. The data will be kept up to date and not held unnecessarily or without appropriate security measures in place. Information will only be shared with other organisations or individuals in order to legitimately assess and progress a person's housing, for the prevention of fraud or with the person's explicit consent.

Appendix 1.2 sets out the details for how the scheme will apply:

- 1) The General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- 2) The 'Privacy Notice' for the policy, and
- 3) An applicant's right to information

## **Equality, accessibility and monitoring**

The CCP is committed to ensuring that the Policy and the implementation of all associated guidance and procedures are non-discriminatory and that all applicants are able to access the service, especially taking account of any vulnerability or other specific needs, and also the needs of different groups protected by the Equality Act 2010; the Human Rights Act 1998; and for Children, Section 11 of the Children Act.

To identify the needs of our applicants the application contains specific questions relating to vulnerability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability and other relevant criteria. The information obtained will be used to monitor the impact of

the policy on minority and specific needs groups and to evidence the need for amendments, as may be required.

Under the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149, Councils are required to give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, when exercising a public function such as their legal Housing Allocation Policy.

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

The CCP will ensure that the policy complies with the current equality legislation and with all relevant statutory codes and guidance. The new policy has been subject to a full, detailed 'Equality Impact Audit' before it has been adopted (see appendix 10). This EIA will be regularly reviewed as more monitoring information regarding the impact of the policy is obtained.

The outcomes for applicants identified as having specific needs or who meet the definition of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act will be monitored in relation to the outcomes for applications to join the register and offers of social housing.

The CCP will monitor the policy and outcomes to ensure that it is meeting all legal requirements and that the aims and objectives set for the policy are being met. Monitoring will be used to ensure that:

- Those in the 'reasonable preference' categories are given priority for housing
- The Policy is complying with its Equality Act duties
- There is overall customer satisfaction with the scheme

## **Complaints**

Complaints are separate to the circumstances where an applicant wishes to seek a review of a decision made on their application. Such a request should be made under the review procedure set out in section 4 and not through the complaints procedure.

Where an applicant wishes to make a complaint about poor service, or the way they have been treated, this should be made using the complaints procedure for the Cumbrian District Council where they currently live. A copy of the current complaints procedure for each of the 6 Councils is available on their websites.

Complaints regarding the handling of an application by a partner Housing Association should be made through that Association's complaints procedure which will be detailed on the Association's website.

Where a complaint relates to how an applicant has been dealt with under this policy an applicant has the right to continue with their complaint to the Local

Government Ombudsman Service if they are unhappy with the response to their complaint.

The Local Government Ombudsman is an independent service run by Central Government to make sure that Councils provide the required standard of service to their customers.

The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how the Council has done something, but they cannot question what has been done simply because someone did not agree with it.

The Ombudsman will normally deal with a complaint if a customer feels they have been treated unfairly as a result of maladministration.

For example, if a Council has:

- Delayed taking action without good reason
- Taken into account facts which are not relevant or ignored facts which are relevant
- Not followed their own rules or complied with the law
- Not taken action that they had promised to
- Given a customer the wrong information
- Not reached a decision in the correct way

The Ombudsman will not normally investigate a complaint:

- ✓ Until a Council has had the opportunity to review its decision (normally by accessing the complaints process), or
- ✓ If it is a matter which has been, are, or could be dealt with by the courts or an internal review procedure
- ✓ If it was a matter which the applicant was aware of more than twelve months before making the complaint

All complaints to the Ombudsman must be in writing. Applicants can request assistance from their local Councilor or ask an advocate to write on their behalf. The contact details for the Local Government Ombudsman are:

Local Government Ombudsman

PO Box 4771

Coventry CV4 0EH

Tel: 0300 061 0614.

You can also text 'call back' to 0762 480 3014.

Fax: 024 7682 0001

Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

## **Policy Statement on Choice and Preferences**

One of the key objectives of the Policy is to, as far as possible, give choice to applicants who wish to obtain social housing. This is why the CCP has taken the decision to operate the Policy through a 'choice based lettings' system (CBL). The aim being to give applicants the best possible choice over where they wish to live.

For all applicants who are eligible to be registered, they should be able to express a preference over any area that they would like to live in and the type of property they would prefer. However, the ability to satisfy that preference might be limited by the housing pressures faced.

The housing pressures faced limit the degree of choice that can be offered, along with the responsibility the 6 Cumbria District Councils have to offer housing to applicants in urgent housing need, including the need to reduce the financial impact of temporary accommodation on a Council. As a result of housing pressures there is a limit on the degree of choice that can be offered. The district councils have to offer housing to applicants in urgent housing need, this reduces the financial impact of providing temporary accommodation on that Council.

Expressing a preference over where an applicant would prefer to live does not mean that preference can be met, nor prevent an applicant being offered suitable accommodation outside of their preferred area.

Any applicant will be asked to state any area where they believe they cannot live due to fear of violence, harassment or domestic abuse. The assessment will then consider the facts and decide whether the applicant can be allowed to restrict those areas.

### **The key policies on choice explained**

#### **A) When the CCP may make a direct offer outside of the choice based letting (CBL) system and, in exceptional circumstances, outside of the CBL band and date order system**

Not all properties that become available will be advertised and offered through the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system. There may be circumstances where for urgent operational or financial reasons there is a need to make a direct offer of housing outside the CBL and, in exceptional circumstances, outside of the band and date order criteria set out in this policy.

Specifically, this would be where there are urgent operational or financial reasons. Examples include but are not limited to:

- 1) Situations where urgent re-housing is required due to an applicant's existing property being uninhabitable, or where there are serious health and safety or personal protection issues that need to be addressed or in discharge of a statutory homelessness duty.
- 2) Urgent housing need situations where it would not be reasonable in the circumstances to wait for the Choice Based Lettings process to produce an offer.
- 3) Where there is an evidenced threat to life in the area in which an applicant currently lives.

- 4) Tenants of a CCP Partner in emergency cases whose homes are damaged by fire, flood or other disaster
- 5) To facilitate a three way (or greater) mutual exchange. Mutual exchanges are not an allocation, but when it would make best use of its housing stock and support the needs of the tenants involved, the CCP may make available a property for a three-way exchange
- 6) Direct offers to persons who the council has a duty to rehouse under section 39 of the Land Compensation Act 1973.
- 7) Direct offers in order to meet an annual lettings plan in the circumstances where a decision has been taken to adopt an annual lettings plan.
- 8) Where an applicant is homeless and in temporary accommodation and owed a section 189B(2) Relief duty or 193(2) main duty a Partner Council may wish to implement a short term scheme to make direct lettings for a period of time to move applicants out of temporary accommodation, in order to manage any budgetary or legal impact. The CCP Board should be informed so that they can monitor to ensure that any scheme does not undermine the key objective, which is to ensure that direct lets do not form more than 15% of all lettings.
- 9) If an applicant is not being realistic in the areas they are bidding for accommodation, and as a result they may be occupying a temporary accommodation unit that may be needed for another newly presenting homeless applicant.
- 10) Where a vacant adapted property or a property designed to disability standards becomes available and there may be a need to offer that property to an applicant whose disability need best matches that property, regardless of the date they were registered.
- 11) Where the assessment is that it is inappropriate for the applicant to participate in Choice Based Lettings. For example, vulnerable applicants nominated by Adult Social Care where work is on-going with social workers and care managers to decide on the best letting solution for that applicant.
- 12) Other examples include cases where an applicant is subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), or presents a risk to themselves or others

Furthermore, we may decide to restrict the time an applicant is able to bid for accommodation in an area where they would prefer to live. An offer of accommodation may be made in any area that has been assessed as being suitable and safe for the applicant to live in.

We will provide information about the number and types of homes, and current vacancy rates, to help applicants to make informed choices. The more flexible applicants are in their choice of areas and property types, the sooner they are likely to be successful in being offered a property that meets their need.



The number of direct offers will be monitored and should add up to no more than 15% of all lettings annually made under the scheme. This is to preserve Choice Based Lettings as the primary method of letting social housing properties in Cumbria.

### **B) Penalty for refusing a set number of offers**

Any applicant in Bands A or B who refuses 3 reasonable offers within a 12-month period will have their application placed into Band C for up to 12 months. This is to tackle the problem of applicants making unlimited bids that may result in higher refusal rates with resulting extended re-letting periods.

Criteria setting out what will be considered to be, and not be, a reasonable offer is set out in Appendix 4. A refusal of an offer of the correct size and type will normally be considered unreasonable.

### **C) Offers of accommodation made to any applicant owed any statutory homelessness duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996**

Specifically, for applicants owed the section 189B(2) Relief of homelessness duty, or the Main section 193(2) duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, or where an applicant has an urgent housing need that must be met immediately, although the Council supports that the ability of applicants to express a preference for where they wish to live, the Council is of the view that what is paramount is the need to offer suitable housing, which may not be possible in the location preferred by the applicant.

If an applicant owed any of the statutory homelessness duties set out below refuses a written offer of suitable social housing accommodation made through this policy, then the duty owed to them will be discharged and they will lose any priority status afforded to them because of that homeless duty owed.

Applicants owed a statutory homeless duty will be identified through the IT system at the shortlisting stage. On identification of a suitable property the RP and LA partners will agree a process for ensuring the a 'final offer warning letter' will be sent to the homeless applicant owed a statutory homelessness duty set out below. This will normally be to inform the relevant local authority Housing options Team that an offer is to be made so they can send out a 'final offer warning letter'

In these circumstances unless they have another reason to be awarded a statutory housing need Band A or B under this policy, they will be placed into Band C. The offer they have refused will count as the first offer out of the 3 offers allowed within the 12 months period. They will no longer be owed any banding award for being owed a statutory homelessness duty, as that duty would have been brought to an end when they refused a suitable offer of social housing.

A statutory homeless duty means:

- a) The prevention of homelessness duty under Section 195(2)
- b) The 'relief of homelessness duty under Section 189B(2)

- c) Where the relief duty has come to an end and an applicant is then owed a section 190 Intentionally homeless temporary accommodation duty to provide them with a reasonable opportunity to secure alternative accommodation for occupation (section 190(2) duty),
- d) The section 193(2) Main Homelessness duty or the section 193C(4) 'reduced' section 193 duty

For operational guidance notes:

Note 1: Where it has been decided to refer the case to another authority at either the 'Relief Stage' or at the 'Main Duty stage' of their homeless application, an applicant will not receive any banding for being owed any homelessness duty as the Council will owe no duty (other than, depending on the circumstances) an interim accommodation duty. Being owed an interim accommodation duty pending the outcome of a local connection referral does not qualify an applicant to be owed a banding A or B

Note 2: Where a Cumbria District Council has ended any statutory homeless duty and is exercising its power to provide accommodation pending a review decision (section 188(3) power) no statutory duty will be owed by the Council unless the outcome of any review is favourable for the applicant. Therefore where a review has been requested any banding priority for being owed any of the homelessness duties will be removed.

#### **D) Where applicants in Band A have not bid within 3 months of being awarded Band A**

Band A is an award of additional preference based on an applicant's very urgent need to be housed. The need to house someone urgently will be undermined if an applicant fails to bid because they may, for example, be waiting for the 'perfect property' to become available.

Therefore an award of Band A will be reviewed after 3 months for any applicant who has not bid, or where the view is that bids have been made but are not realistic.

The review after 3 months could result in a decision that:

- a) The Band A award should continue with further reviews scheduled for every 3 months, or
- b) The Band A award should be removed with the applicant losing additional preference and being placed into Band B, or
- c) That a direct offer should be made as soon as possible due to the urgent need for the applicant to move.

Note: There may be circumstances where no suitable properties have become available for an applicant to bid on within the 3-month period. In these circumstances an applicant will not have Band A removed and will continue to be able to bid. However, in recognition of their urgent need to move it may be agreed with the relevant local authority to make a direct offer for any property that is assessed as suitable to meet their urgent housing need.

## **Section 2: Who can apply to the Housing Register and the criteria for assessing who is eligible to be included**

The CCP Housing Register is a single list of applicants across Cumbria who qualifies to be included on the scheme. It includes new applicants and existing social housing tenants living in Cumbria who are seeking a transfer.

Anyone over the age of 16 is eligible to join the Housing Register if their current address is their only home, or sole residence, and they are not already registered through someone else's housing application.

If an applicant is under 18 years of age they will not normally be offered a tenancy. This does not apply to young people living in a foster home or in residential care provided by Social Services for whom re-housing under the Children Act has been agreed and who are within 6 months of their 18th birthday. There is an agreed protocol between the Housing and Social Services departments covering housing for applicants who are looked after, or were formerly looked after. Applicants under the age of 18 will be registered but made inactive until 2 months before their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday, at which point the young person or Professional Appointee must inform Cumbria Choice so their application can be activated.

Any offer to an applicant who is under the age of 18 will only be made after their ability to manage a tenancy has been fully assessed. This assessment is to make sure that they can cope with being a tenant at a young age and that they do not risk losing that tenancy offered through a lack of support.

If a person who is 16 or 17 is granted a tenancy, this will be held in trust until they reach 18. This means that another suitable person (such as a parent, legal guardian, social worker or relative) will be responsible for the tenancy.

### **The eligibility persons from abroad qualification rules**

Everyone can apply to join the register but there are some groups of people who by law cannot join the register, regardless of their housing need or circumstances. These are people who:

- Come under the Government's 'persons from abroad' eligibility rules and cannot lawfully be given housing help;
- Do not live habitually in the Common Travel Area (UK, Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland);
- Do not have the right to live in the UK;
- Plus other categories of people who the Government may in the future, decide are not eligible for housing assistance.

Under sections 160ZA (1), (2) and (4) of the Housing Act 1996 the CCP cannot allocate a tenancy, or nominate a person for housing, if they are a person who is ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation by virtue of being a person subject to immigration control or a person from abroad who is prescribed as ineligible.

The relevant regulations that apply to eligibility are:

- Regulations 3 and 4 Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006, SI 2006/1294
- All subsequent amendments including 'The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/861)

The rules are complicated and anyone who is impacted or believe they may be impacted can approach any CCP Partner for advice, or seek independent legal advice.

The rules will change from 2021 due to the UK's exit from the EU and new regulations regarding eligibility for housing based on the EU settlement scheme. This policy will be amended to take into account any new rules.

### **The qualification rules adopted under the Policy**

In addition to the Government's 'persons from abroad' rules setting out when a person is ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation the housing laws allow for the CCP to define in the Policy who will be regarded as 'qualifying persons' (section 160ZA).

What this means is that under section 160ZA(7) is that the Policy can set out classes of people who are, or are not, qualifying persons. A number of qualification rules have been adopted by the CCP. There are also a number of defined exceptions to all, or an individual qualification rule. The qualification rules and exceptions are set out below.

#### **Qualification Rule 1: Local Connection**

Only those applicants with a local connection to Cumbria and who also have an assessed statutory housing need, as defined by this policy, are eligible to be included for the statutory reasonable preference housing needs Bands A and B. The local connection rules do not prevent an applicant from being awarded Band C as long as they meet the other qualification rules set, for example – as long as they are not disqualified through the unacceptable behaviour rule.

There will be some properties advertised that may be subject to additional local connection requirements however, these will be clearly stated in the advert where this is the case. A local connection is defined as:

- a) Must live in Cumbria and have done so continuously for the past year, or for 3 years in the last 5, and that residence was of their choice.
- b) Have immediate family (mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter) who are currently living in Cumbria and have done so for at least the last 3 years
- c) Are employed in permanent employment in Cumbria. Employment is defined as paid employment for 16 hours or more per week for a period of one year, or self-employment where an applicant can demonstrate that the self-employed work they perform is in the Cumbria area and is on average 16

hours a week or more. The employment must be based on their actual place of work in the area and not based on a head office or regional office situated in the area but from which the applicant does not work. Where working hours fluctuate i.e. casual or zero hours contract, an average will be taken over the last three months, or

- d) Have close family (normally mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter) that have lived in Cumbria for a minimum of the past 3 years. We will consider whether there are exceptional circumstances where other family members may be considered as close. For example, the circumstances where an extended family member brought up a person in the absence of their own parents.
- e) Where there is an exceptional need to move to the area as determined for very special circumstances.

For the purposes of determining local connection for residence in Cumbria, this will include:

- 1) Residency in a non-traditional dwelling, such as a mobile home that is placed on a residential site, or an official pitch where it is demonstrated that this their permanent place of residence and can be evidenced through paying council tax.
- 2) People who are forced to sleep rough in Cumbria if they meet the qualification period for residency.

The exemptions to the residency qualification rule for Bands A or B are:

- 1) An applicant is homeless and a Cumbrian Council has accepted the section 189B 'relief of homelessness duty or the main section 193(2) housing duty under the Housing Act 1996, and they are not intending to refer the applicant to another Council under the homelessness local connection rules.
- 2) A Cumbria District Council has placed an applicant into temporary accommodation outside of Cumbria.
- 3) Where there are significant and special circumstances requiring a move into Cumbria. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis following a request from the applicant or from the information submitted on their housing register application. Examples include:
  - a) Reasons of safety; i.e. when an applicant is fleeing domestic abuse or hate crime from another area, or
  - b) Is on a witness protection programme and the CCP have agreed that there is an essential reason why they need to move to Cumbria
- 4) Applicants who are leaving an institution such as a prison or secure unit or a hospital, rehabilitation centre, refuge, hostel or supported accommodation scheme that is not in Cumbria and the applicant was resident in Cumbria for one year one year immediately preceding residency in an institution, or 3 out of the last 5 years immediately before they were accommodated in that institution.

- 5) The CCP will consider any application from a gypsy or traveller household where the applicant may not meet the continuous period of residence rule, as the period may have been broken by travelling. The CCP will consider the facts of each case when deciding whether the rule should be waived.
- 6) Care Leavers below the age of 25 years who are, or were, owed a duty under section 23C of the Children Act 1989 by Cumbria County Council and have been looked after in accommodation outside of Cumbria. This will include care leavers who are still receiving after care support from Children's Service until they are 25, and some care leavers who are in full-time education who wish to move back to Cumbria on completion of their education.
- 7) Applicants that satisfy the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012. These are:
  - a) Applicants who are serving members of the regular armed forces
  - b) Applicants who served in the regular armed forces within the 5 years immediately prior to the date of their application
  - c) Applicants who are serving or former serving members of the regular armed forces or reserve forces who suffer from a serious injury, illness or disability sustained as a result of their service
  - d) Applicants who are a bereaved spouse/civil partner of a former serving member of the regular armed forces and have recently ceased (or will soon cease) to be entitled to reside in services accommodation following the death of their spouse/civil partner.
- 8) Applicants who satisfy the right to move criteria will be exempt from the Bands A or B qualification rule. The Right to Move qualification regulations 20155 states that Local Connection criteria must not be applied to existing social tenants who seek to move from another Council district in England and who have a need to move for work related reasons to avoid hardship.

To qualify the applicant must:

- Be social housing tenant living in England
- Wish to join the Housing Register in Cumbria due to work related reasons to avoid hardship are able to do so provided that they can provide evidence to that effect that is accepted.
- Satisfy the criteria that the tenant needs, rather than wishes to move for work related reasons and if they were unable to do so would result in hardship.

**Qualification rule 2: The requirement to give permission to obtain and share an applicant's personal information**

Applicants will be required to sign a declaration, or to give informed consent, to confirm their understanding that:

- a. The information given is correct and that they will notify the CCP of any change in their circumstances.
- b. Enquiries will be made concerning their eligibility for housing and level of priority.



- c. Information will be provided to other partner organisations that are part of the scheme.

This is a condition of being accepted onto the housing register and applies to the applicant, or any member of the applicant's household.

Once an applicant provides information we will process that information under Article 6 GDPR. The processing is necessary under the Public Task purpose and is necessary for the Council to perform a task in the public interest or for its official functions, and that task or function has a clear basis in law.

### **Qualification rule 3: Homeownership, or legal interest in homeownership**

An applicant cannot qualify for Bands A or B of the housing register (see section on exemptions) if they own or have an interest in residential property including freehold, leasehold, joint ownership or shared ownership (applicants who have been the owner of a residential property within the last 5 years will be required to provide proof of the proceeds from the sale and of the disposal of the proceeds). This includes:

- Properties owned and rented out to other persons
- Properties in the UK or other Countries
- Properties owned by a spouse or civil partner

However, applicants will be able to qualify for Band C.

However, if as a result of a divorce settlement a Court has ordered that, for a period likely to exceed 5 years, an applicant may not reside in a former matrimonial or civil partnership home in which they still have an interest the Applicant will be treated as disqualified under this rule.

### **Qualification rule 4: Financial resources**

Applicants who are considered to have sufficient financial resources to buy suitable accommodation in Cumbria will not qualify for Bands A or B but can qualify for Band C. 'Sufficient financial resources' are defined as sufficient capital to buy or rent privately; or sufficient income to raise a mortgage to buy or rent privately; or a combination of both. The income and savings limits are:

- 1) Applicants (both single persons and couples) who have total savings, investments and/or assets of £25,000 or more.
- 2) Applicants whose total gross household income from all sources exceeds an annual income of £45,000 or more (for single persons) or joint income of £60,000 or more (for couples).

'Sufficient financial resources' includes any assets or investments even if they are not immediately available to the applicant, such as any residential or non-residential property that they own or part own anywhere in the UK or abroad.

Any lump sum received by a member of the armed forces as compensation for an injury or disability on active service will be disregarded.

Although this qualification rule will mean an applicant cannot be granted the statutory housing needs bands A or B, it does not prevent them being considered

for any low cost home ownership schemes, such as rent to buy, shared ownership/equity, discounted market sale and starter homes or lower demand properties. Information can be given on request regarding which Housing Associations or developers are currently operating any of the above schemes and how applications can be made.

Applicants who do not qualify for Bands A or B under the homeownership, legal interest or financial resources rules may be considered as an exception if:

- a) They own or part own accommodation or have an legal interest in accommodation; and
- b) They are over state pension age or have a substantial disability; and their current home is not suitable for their specific needs and cannot be adapted, and
- c) They have insufficient financial resources to buy accommodation that meets their particular housing needs in the private market despite owning a property, or having income or savings above the 'sufficient resources' thresholds set out in this policy.

The possible exemption is intended to cover situations where a person owns their own home but where it is agreed that they are no longer able to manage in it due to their advancing years, or due to developing a substantial disability that makes living in their home impracticable. This would be the circumstances where selling up would not provide sufficient funds to purchase a more suitable alternative in the area leaving that person in a difficult position.

#### **Qualification rule 5: Failure to Bid**

This is a disqualification rule that will be applied to applicants who are included on the Housing Register.

The CCP will monitor the bidding patterns to identify applicants who fail to bid and identify any applicants where their failure to bid could be the result of a vulnerability and not being able to understand the bidding system. In these circumstances the rule will not be applied.

Any applicant who has failed to bid for more than twelve months will be removed from the Housing Register to reduce the administrative burden of maintaining the register. This is based on the assumption that an applicant who has not bid for accommodation in 12 months is unlikely to continue to be in housing need. Any applicant removed from the register can reapply if they have a housing need.

If an applicant has only registered because they are interested in bidding for accommodation for a new section 106 rural developments that may be being built, this will be considered as an exception to the 'no bid in 12 months' rule.

#### **Qualification rule 6: Fraud or giving False Information**

Applicants who are found to have withheld or given false information may be removed from the register and will not be able to reapply for a period of 12 months. Decisions to remove the person from the register will be made based

on the seriousness of the false information given, or an assessment of why important information was withheld. The rule applies to an application for housing where the applicant has:

- a) Committed fraud, or
- b) Given false information, or
- c) Withheld information

For details on how we will assess the question of alleged fraud or false information see appendix 1.3

**Qualification rule 7: Circumstances where an applicant has current or former social housing rent arrears or another relevant recoverable housing related debt.**

This section sets out the rules for when an applicant

- a) Will not be allowed to qualify for the Housing Register because of rent arrears or a housing related debt, or
- b) Will be allowed to qualify but will not be allowed to bid for properties advertised until the rent arrears or housing related debt have been resolved to the satisfaction of the CCP using the criteria set out below.

When carrying out an assessment, we will take into consideration all housing related debts, associated with either a current or former tenancy where this relates to any social housing provider in the UK. Note the rules in this section apply only to social housing former or current rent arrears, occupation of temporary accommodation debts, and some other forms of housing related debt. This section does not cover any rent arrears for a private sector tenancy or licence. This is covered under the unacceptable behaviour rules set out in Qualification rule 8 below.

Note: the definition of a housing debt will not include debts that are statute barred. The debt will be considered statute barred where an applicant, or their representative or someone else they held the account with hasn't:

- Made a payment in the last 6 years
- Written to the creditor acknowledging the debt in the last 6 years
- Had a county court judgement (CCJ) relating to the debt in the last 6 years

For the purposes of this qualification rule housing related debts include:

- a) Current or former tenancy rent arrears of a social housing tenancy;
- b) Outstanding re-chargeable repairs;
- c) Current and former housing related service charge arrears;
- d) Bed and breakfast or other temporary accommodation charge arrears for a licence or a tenancy
- e) Housing benefit overpayments for a social housing tenancy;
- f) Failing to adhere to the terms of an agreed payment plan in relation to rent arrears or housing debt for a social housing tenancy or temporary accommodation

g) Any court costs associated with any of the above debts

Housing related debts apply to both the applicant and to any members of their household that are included in the application.

The purpose of this qualification rule is twofold.

- 1) To ensure any debt to a former landlord is recovered and
- 2) To focus on whether an applicant's history creates a risk of future non-payment, rather than simply on the existence of a current outstanding debt.

The following framework will be used to guide officers to apply this qualification rule. We will consider:

- Whether the applicant still owes that debt, and if they do, the extent of the arrears/debt and whether it is a recoverable debt or a statute barred debt.
- Whether there possible exceptional circumstances that need to be considered.
- Whether the claimant has taken debt advice acted on it, and entered into and begun to implement any arrangement to clear the arrears/debt.
- If an arrangement has been made, the amount of arrears/debt paid off, any amount outstanding, and the regularity of any payments made.

After applying the above procedure it may be decided that the applicant does not qualify for the housing register or that they will be allowed to qualify, but not allowed to bid for advertised properties until the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the CCP.

There is no time limit regarding when a person can make a new application following disqualification. Where a new application is made we will assess whether the applicant has taken appropriate action to address the debt. When disqualified the applicant will have been informed of the steps they need to take to resolve the debt in order to qualify.

### **How decisions for applicants with a social housing debt will be made**

#### **a) Applicants with debts of £1,000 or more who have not made any arrangement to address the debt**

Applicants with debts of £1000 or more who have not made any arrangement to address the debt should be ineligible to join the register unless the circumstances surrounding the debt are exceptional and the assessment concludes that there is no real risk of future non-payment.

#### **b) Applicants with debts of £1,000 or more who have made any arrangement to address the debt**

Applicants will be permitted to join the register and be able to bid for accommodation if they have maintained a payment arrangement for at least 13 weeks and have either:

- Repaid at least £750; or
- Repaid at least 25% of their original debt

Applicants who satisfy the above will be permitted to bid for properties. All partner landlords are encouraged to abide by these guidelines and to accept bids on this basis. It is however, accepted that the housing association to whom the debt is owed may wish to see that a longer period of repayment should be kept to. Where this is the case the period should not be more than a further 13-39 weeks in addition to the 13-week period that the applicant has already paid. Any requirement by the partner to whom the debt is owed for payments to be maintained for more than 13 weeks should not prevent an applicant from bidding for properties advertised by another housing association partner.

All partner landlords are discouraged from requiring a debt of £1000 plus to be paid in full. This disincentives applicants from making any attempt at payment and may result in an applicant having to demonstrate an extended repayment period of several years before they can be considered for accommodation. This would be unfair on applicant's who have demonstrated a commitment to pay off the debt and that the risk of any further debt for a new tenancy is low. It also makes it more likely that the housing association is unable to recover the debt.

#### **c) Applicants with debts of £1-£499**

Applicants with debts of £1-£499 should be eligible to join the register and eligible to bid, unless there is clear evidence of a future risk of non-payment. Clear evidence of a future risk could include factors such as:

- a) A long history of housing debt;
- b) A long history of poor rent payments; and
- c) A long history of breached payment arrangements.

Where such evidence exists the applicant should be unable to bid until there is evidence of rehabilitation. Evidence of rehabilitation could include factors such as:

- a) Maintaining a payment arrangement for 1-8 weeks;
- b) Demonstrating that the causes of the previous problems have been addressed.

#### **d) Applicants with debts of £500-£999**

Applicants with debts of £500-£599 should be eligible to join the register but ineligible to bid, unless the applicant can demonstrate there is no real risk of future non-payment.

Evidence there is a no real risk of future non-payment could include factors such as:

- a) A history of not having housing debts;
- b) A history of regular rent payments; and
- c) A history of maintained payment arrangements.

Where no such evidence exists the applicant should be unable to bid until there is evidence of rehabilitation. Evidence of rehabilitation could include factors such as:

- a) Maintaining a payment arrangement for 8-26 weeks;

- b) Reducing the debt to below £500 (in which case the above rules at c would apply)
- c) Demonstrating that the causes of the previous problems have been addressed.

Applicants who are disqualified for a housing related debt of £1,000+ should notify the Partnership immediately when they have either repaid at least £750 or repaid at least 25% of their original debt so they can qualify for the register. If it is agreed that the matter has been resolved and they can register, their effective date will be the date they have been assessed as qualifying for the register and will not be the date of their first application which resulted in the decision that they do not qualify.

The only exceptions to this qualification rule are applicants who can demonstrate that their circumstances are exceptional and that they would face serious hardship or risk through not being allowed to qualify. An exception may be considered where for example an applicant has a good payment history with a debt resulting from a one off incident or problem such as relating to Universal Credit, or benefits reforms, or where a tenant had to flee domestic abuse and a subsequent debt built up for their tenancy.

Additional procedural information on the consideration of exceptional circumstances and how applications where there is a 'Debt Relief Order', 'Bankruptcy Declaration' or 'Individual Voluntary Agreement (IVA)' are set out in appendix 1.4

### **Qualification rule 8: Serious unacceptable behaviour**

This rule will apply where an applicant, or any member of their current or prospective household, has a history of serious unacceptable behaviour that, in the view of the CCP, makes them unsuitable to be a tenant. It is important to note that whether an applicant's behaviour means that they are not allowed to register is entirely a matter for the CCP and that the qualification rule is not restricted to whether the unacceptable behaviour would entitle the Council to an outright Possession Order if the applicant were to be a tenant. This was the 'threshold test' set by the legislation for Housing Allocation Policies until the Localism Act 2011 was implemented in 2012. Since 2012 the legislation allows qualification for unacceptable behaviour to be defined through the rules adopted in any new Housing Allocation Policy.

In applying this qualification rule the CCP will decide on the facts of the case whether:

- a) The applicant should not qualify to be included on the Housing Register due to their (or household member's) serious unacceptable behaviour, or
- b) Will be allowed to qualify but will not be allowed to bid until the applicant (or household member) has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the assessing officer that their behaviour has changed.

In the circumstances described by b) the applicant will be placed in the band that reflects their housing need and will continue to accrue 'time' on the register for



the band awarded, despite not being able to bid. Once they have resolved their unacceptable behaviour their date within the Band will remain the date they were awarded that band for their housing need and will not be the date they resolved the unacceptable behaviour to the satisfaction of the CCP.

This rule will apply for example where the CCP is satisfied, having considered all available evidence of any of the following in relation to an applicant (or a member of their current or prospective household)

- 1) A serious failure to adhere to the terms of any current or previous social housing or private rented sector tenancy agreement. This includes failing to maintain any previous social rented or private sector rented property within the terms of their tenancy agreement, or committing acts causing or likely to cause nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or others in the locality of where they live or where they previously have lived. Non-qualification will apply until the applicant (or a member of their prospective household) has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the, that circumstances have changed such that the previous conduct is unlikely to reoccur. In many cases this could include demonstrating cooperation with support agencies leading to a substantial improvement in behaviour.
- 2) Conduct likely to cause nuisance or annoyance if they were to be offered a tenancy. This is conduct or behaviour that does not only relate to a previous social housing or private rented sector tenancy agreement but conduct or behaviour that the CCP has assessed is still current. This includes where an applicant or a member of their current or prospective household is the subject of actions being taken by a Council (or some other recognised body) on grounds of alleged Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
- 3) Rent arrears for their last private rented tenancy where the CCP has been able to obtain information that confirms on the balance of probabilities a debt is owed. If there is a debt owed it will be for the assessing officer to decide on the level and debt and any facts gathered regarding the level of debt and the reasons for it whether the applicant should be classified as a non-qualifying case or, should be allowed to qualify but prevented from bidding until the debt is resolved, or should be allowed to qualify with no penalty applied.
- 4) Circumstances where the applicant, or any member of their household, has assaulted a member of staff, whether or not an injunction is being sought or has already been obtained

Additional guidance for assessing officers and the framework to be used to apply the test of unacceptable behaviour are set out in appendix 1.5

#### **Qualification rule 9 – Existing CCP Tenants who are not assessed as Band A or B for having a statutory housing need.**

Existing tenants of any Council or Housing Association located in Cumbria or outside of Cumbria will only be allowed to qualify for the Housing Register if they have an assessed housing need that would qualify them for Bands A or B.

This does not prevent a tenant who is not in housing need from seeking a transfer through the 'Mutual Exchange Scheme'.

## **How exceptional circumstances will be considered for any of the qualification rules**

The CCP retains the ability, in exceptional circumstances, to exercise its discretion when applying any of the qualification rules. Note, it is for the applicant to request that discretion should be applied for exceptional circumstances and once requested this will be considered by a senior housing operational manager from the Council normally for the Council area where the applicant has applied from. A request for a review of a decision that an applicant does not meet the qualification rule will be taken as a request for any exceptional circumstances to be considered. The delegated responsible manager for each assessing organisation will consider:

- 1) Whether the application would result in the applicant being awarded a statutory housing need reasonable preference Band A or B under the Policy, and if so
- 2) Whether the applicant's circumstances (or those of a member of the applicant's household) are so exceptional that the qualification rule should be waived.

They will assess the case for exceptional circumstances and will record all decisions reached along with full reasons for that decision. The applicant will receive a written decision with the reasons set out.

Please note 1: that the CCP cannot waive the eligibility rules for any applicant who is not allowed to access social housing under the 'person from abroad' legal eligibility rules set by Central Government.

Please note 2: In deciding whether an applicant's circumstances are exceptional we will fully consider the Equality Act 2010 and Children Act 2004. For the Equality Act we will specifically consider:

- a) Whether the person, or a member of their household that they wish to be housed with them, meets the definition for one or more of the 9 protected characteristics in listed in the Equality Act 2010
- b) If we agree that the applicant or a member of their household comes under the definition for a protected characteristic the CCP will fully comply with section 149 of 2010 Equality Act and ensure that it has obtained all relevant information relating to the applicant's protected characteristic and will consider that if they were not able to qualify for the scheme, whether this would have an exceptionally detrimental impact on the person with the protected characteristic, and
- c) Ensure that any decision that the applicant's circumstances are not exceptional will be a decision that is a proportionate means of achieving the legitimate aims set out in this policy in section 1.

## Section 3: Applying to join the Housing Register

### How to apply

Applications should be made online by accessing the housing allocations section of the Cumbria Choice website and completing the on-line application form - <https://www.cumbriachoice.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/38.aspx>

An applicant will be asked to choose one housing organisation to administer their application. This can be the local authority for where they are resident or a housing association partner. If the applicant is a tenant of a 'Cumbria Choice' partner their application must be administered by that housing association. If they are a former tenant of a 'Cumbria Choice' partner, that partner must administer their application.

Applicants can call any of the CCP Council or Housing Association Partners if they need help to make their application on-line. There is also free access to the Internet at libraries, Council offices, Housing Association Offices and at some community facilities. A telephone or office appointment can be offered when an applicant has no access to the Internet or is unable to use the Internet. To mitigate any impact it is agreed that paper forms will still be available in exceptional circumstances where it is agreed an applicant is unable to complete an on-line form.

The Cumbria Choice website contains a list of all of the supporting documents that an applicant must provide in order to progress their application. In most circumstances an applicant will be able to upload their documents.

Where the applicant indicates that they have medical problems they will also be requested to complete an additional medical assessment form on-line.

Once the on-line application has been received there may be a need for additional information. If so applicants will receive a phone call, email or letter setting out the details for any additional information needed.

Prisoners can register in the 6-month period prior to their date of release. They are able to express an interest in a property in the 2-week period prior to release but must be able to accept the tenancy on the date required by the housing provider.

If accepted onto the register, applicants will be informed of:

- 1) The band they have been placed in (this determines priority)
- 2) The date of application (may be used to determine priority within the band allocated)
- 3) The size and type of properties for which they can bid
- 4) Their application reference number (applicants will need this to bid)
- 5) How to appeal against their banding if they think it is wrong.

They will also receive a user guide. This will inform them about how the scheme works and will include such information as:

- Where to look for advertised properties;
- How to bid for a property
- What checks are made before any offer is confirmed?
- Feedback on their bid

### **Where a band is allocated what date will this be from?**

The band start date is the date that the housing register application was received for assessment, unless an applicant's housing need and/or circumstances changes and they are as a result placed in a higher band. In these circumstances they will have their band start date reset as the higher band reflects how long they have had the higher level of housing need.

Note for eligible homeless applicants who meet the qualification rules to join the Housing Register the following will apply with regard to their Band start date:

- a) Owed a section 195(2) Prevention of homelessness duty – Band date is the date the duty was owed and not the date of the homelessness application
- b) Owed a section 189B (2) Relief of homelessness duty – Band date is the date the duty was owed and not the date of the homelessness application
- c) Owed the Main section 193(2) duty – Band date is the date the Relief of homelessness duty was owed and not the date the Main duty was owed. To start the date at the date the Main duty was owed would disadvantage an applicant by 56 days who has been found to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless
- d) Relief duty has ended and the applicant is assessed at this point as not being in priority need - Band date is the date the Relief of homelessness duty was owed and not the date the Relief duty is ended and the non-priority decision confirmed. To start the date at the date the Relief duty was brought to an end would disadvantage an applicant by 56 days who has been found to be homeless but not in priority need

### **Assessing Applications**

In order to assess an applicant's housing need and therefore their place on the Housing Register the scheme uses a needs based banding system detailed in section 4 below.

The Bands are awarded to reflect housing need, whereby the need reflected by the highest Band indicates the greater need for housing.

Applicants will be required to sign a declaration, or to give informed consent, to confirm their understanding that:

- a. The information given is correct and that they will notify the CCP of any change in their circumstances.
- b. Enquiries will be made concerning their eligibility for housing and level of priority.
- c. Information will be provided to other partner organisations that are part of the scheme.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide all the information requested to assess their circumstances, and to provide any supporting information or documents that are requested. Incomplete applications will not be made active until such time as the CCP is satisfied that it has in its possession all of the information it requires to complete its assessment.

All incomplete applications will be cancelled after a period of 28 days measured from the date information has been requested and not provided. If canceled this does not prevent the applicant making a subsequent application at a later date, although in such cases the effective date of registration would not be backdated to the earlier application date.

The CCP may request information or a reference from an applicant's current or previous social landlord and, depending on whether the application gives rise to any concern, request a reference from the most recent private sector landlord if the applicant is or has been a private sector tenancy.

Where a landlord does not reply a reminder will be sent, and if still not forthcoming any other information or records available will be checked to try to determine whether there have been any concerns over the way an applicant may have conducted their private rented tenancy. An applicant should not be disadvantaged if, despite every effort, it is not possible to obtain a reference from their current or previous landlord.

All applications are subject to certain verification checks and may be reassessed:

- At the point of initial application
- Following any change of circumstance notified to the CCP by the applicant
- Following any routine validation audits
- Following an annual review of the application
- At the point of an 2 working days
- At the point of letting

### **Checks into any court cases or unspent criminal convictions**

In the interests of community all applicants and members of their prospective household will be requested to disclose any pending court cases or unspent criminal convictions.

The CCP may use any information disclosed (or any other information obtained during the assessment or following registration) to ascertain whether the applicant should be disqualified from joining, or remaining on the register, due to applying the serious unacceptable behaviour rule including whether they may pose a serious risk to a community if they were to be housed.

Spent convictions are not required to be disclosed and will not be taken into account in assessing that person's eligibility to join the register. The assessment will instead reflect whether there is evidence of any current serious unacceptable

behaviour regardless of whether a person has been convicted in the past for that behaviour.

If the CCP decide that, on the information obtained during the assessment process, there is a real pressing need for a 'Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)' check, or a police check, a supplementary request for information and declaration will be sent to the applicant asking for more details and for permission from the applicant for the CCP to make the relevant check. Failure to give permission may result in the application not being made live whilst the CCP consider the information available to it or may result in the application being closed through the applicant failing qualification rule 2 which is to give permission for the CCP to undertake all reasonable enquiries.

Information gained will not automatically exclude an applicant from the register. Information received may also be used to make informed decisions about the suitability of any property that may be offered.

All assessments will be carried out in accordance with the data protection and information sharing policies and legal requirements.

### **Who can be included in the Application?**

The Application can include the following household members:

- a) Spouses or Civil Partners where the applicant lives with and/or intends to live with their Spouse or Civil Partner.
- b) Partners where the applicant is currently cohabiting with a member of the same or opposite sex.
- c) Children who reside with and are dependent upon the applicant. Children are defined as under 18 for these purposes. Where there is any dispute as to whether children reside with and are dependent upon the applicant, the CCP will apply the test in Section 189(1)(b) of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to decide (see below).
- d) A Carer where the assessing officer has agreed that on the evidence there is a need for a live in Carer. The Carer is a person who provides or intends to provide care for another adult. It is either a relative or friend who assists another person in their day-to-day life. This is different from someone who offers care professionally or through a voluntary organisation. Even if a carer is in receipt of Carer's Allowance this does not necessarily mean that it is necessary for them to reside with the person who is being cared for. An application to include a carer in a housing application will be considered by the assessing officer's Manager to determine if the carer has been assessed by Social Care and Health as needing to provide overnight support. In these circumstances the applicant must provide supporting evidence from other agencies e.g. Social Care or a Health professional.
- e) Any other household member at the discretion of a manager delegated by the assessing body to make such decisions.

- f) Note: Individuals can only be on 1 application. Where someone has an application in their own name (or with a partner) they cannot also be included as a household member on another application unless they are a victim of domestic abuse. If this is the case they should remove themselves from their previous application.

### **How joint applications will be considered and when will a joint tenancy normally be granted?**

Joint applications will be accepted and will be treated as one application. The housing need of the full household will be considered in assessing housing need.

Joint tenancies are normally granted where applicants have a long-term commitment e.g. married and unmarried couples, civil partners but this decision is down to the individual housing association who will decide whether to allow a joint tenancy depending on the rules adopted by that association.

### **Households with access to children/shared residency order or Child Arrangement Orders**

As part of the assessment process the CCP will record whether the applicant claims to have children that live with them part of the week whether or not this arrangement is set by the court or not. The CCP will apply the test in Section 189(1)(b) of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to decide whether any child both lives with and is dependent on the applicant. Unless this test is passed an applicant will only be able to be considered for the size of accommodation relevant to their circumstances.

There will be cases where after the section 189(1)(b) assessment it is agreed that children live with the applicant on a 'shared arrangement' even though they do not exclusively live with the applicant.

In these cases, and in cases where an applicant has contact with children who stay over but do not live with the applicant, the applicant will be advised as to what size of property the applicant they are likely to be able to access and the rules applied by each partner housing association for allocating accommodation to households where children do not exclusively live with an applicant. The decision in this respect of each partner Housing Association is likely to vary and will depend on a number of factors including:

- a) The ability of the applicant to afford the rent with or without help from benefits
- b) The availability and popularity of family housing in any area that an applicant expresses a preference to live in. For example a Housing Association may be willing to be more flexible where a vacancy relates to a flat than a house as long as the rent is assessed as being affordable.



## **The requirement to inform the CCP of any change of circumstances**

Applicants are required to inform the CCP of any changes in their circumstances, which affect their housing application.

Examples of a change in circumstances include but are not limited to:

- a. A change of address or contact details, for either themselves or members of their prospective household;
- b. A change in their medical condition or disability (either existing or newly acquired);
- c. Additional family members or other people they wish to add to their application (It will be for the CCP to decide whether they will allow additional people to join the application);
- d. Any family member or any other person on the application who has left the accommodation; and
- e. Any significant changes in income, savings or assets, which may require a reassessment under the income and savings qualification rule.

Where there is any change in an applicant's circumstances, an on-line change of circumstances form must be completed, and supporting documents must be provided. If there is any change to the banding, applicants will be informed in writing. The onus is on applicants to inform the CCP when there is a relevant change in their circumstances.

If the change in circumstances results in a higher banding award the effective date will be the date they moved into the higher band. If the applicant moves to a lower band there will be no change to their effective date.

Note, a failure to notify the CCP of changes in circumstances may lead to the offer of any housing being withdrawn and the application suspended whilst the changes are verified.

## **Applications from members of the Council, Board Members, and staff**

Elected Councillors, or Housing Association Board Members, cannot be involved in assessing housing applications or the allocation of housing. However, this does not prevent Councillors seeking or providing information on behalf of applicants.

In order to ensure that the Council is treating all applicants fairly, any application for housing from a Councillor, Board Member, or employee of any Cumbrian Council's Housing Department or Partner Housing Association will be assessed in the normal way, but an offer of housing must be approved by the Lead Officer for the social housing partner advertising the vacant home. Canvassing is not allowed in any circumstances by or on behalf of members of staff.

## **Reviewing the Register**

Every applicant on the Register will have their application reviewed annually, or more frequently as decided by the CCP in order to manage the administration of the register. A letter will be sent to all applicants requesting confirmation of their current circumstances, and asking if they wish to remain on the register. If a reply is not received within 28 days of the date the letter is sent the application will be cancelled.

## **Cancelling Applications**

An application will be cancelled in the following circumstances:

- At the request of an applicant
- Where an applicant does not respond to an application review, within the specified time limit set out in any correspondence sent to them
- Where a CCP Partner, or any other Council, or Housing Association has housed the applicant (unless it is assessed that the applicants' housing circumstances still qualify for an award of Band A or B based on their housing need, but this is unlikely to be the case). An applicant that has been rehoused and does not have an assessed housing need could of course apply again and would be included in Band C with a new Band date, which would be the date of their application.
- When a tenant on the housing register completes a mutual exchange
- Where the applicant moves and does not provide a contact address
- Where the applicant has died
- Where the applicant has not supplied information requested within 28 days at the application stage or the annual review stage.

Where the information known is that an applicant is vulnerable, the assessing officer may contact the applicant, or any agency supporting them, to check their current circumstances before cancelling the application.

If an applicant has moved into private rented accommodation rather than social housing the application will not be cancelled but if the result of a reassessment at this stage is that as a result of their changed housing circumstances they no longer qualify for an award of Band A or B, then they will be allocated Band C.

Any applicant whose application has been cancelled has the right to ask for a review of that decision.

## **Deliberate worsening of circumstances**

Where there is evidence that an applicant has knowingly and deliberately made their housing situation worse in order to gain a higher priority on the register, the assessment of their needs will be based on the circumstances before their situation changed through their actions to deliberately worsen their circumstances.

Examples are:

- Applicants who have allowed family members or others to move into their property, who previously had suitable accommodation or the financial means to secure their own accommodation, and this has resulted in the property being overcrowded.
- Applicants who have moved from previously suitable or more suitable accommodation which it were reasonable for them to continue to occupy, into a less suitable property.
- Homeowners who have transferred their property to another family member within the last 5 years from the date they make their application to the Register.
- Applicants who have given up affordable and suitable private rented accommodation which they are able to maintain, to move in with other relatives or friends, creating a situation of overcrowding and/or sharing of bathroom/kitchen and/or a split household;
- Requesting or colluding with a landlord or family member to issue them with a Notice to Quit

These are examples only. There may be other circumstances where the CCP decide that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances

### **The Review Procedure**

The CCP is committed to making the correct decisions on all applications. Notification letters by post or email notifying an applicant of ineligibility or non-qualification for joining the Housing Register, or about the band that they have been awarded, or about any other decision concerning the facts of an applicant's case, will state that the applicant has a legal right to request a review of the decision made.

Under the housing legislation that applies to Allocation Policies there is a legal right to request a review of a decision in the following circumstances:

- a) A decision that an applicant is ineligible, or not a qualifying person to join the Housing Register.
- b) A decision regarding which band an applicant has been awarded.
- c) The priority date granted for the band awarded.
- d) To remove an applicant from the Housing Register.
- e) Any decision about the facts of the case that has been used to assess their application.
- f) Where an applicant considers that a decision has been reached based on incorrect information.

The procedure for how a request for a review will be administered is set out in appendix 1.6

## **Section 4: How an applicant's housing needs and circumstances are assessed**

### **The Banding system**

The demand for social housing exceeds supply in many areas of Cumbria and therefore this Allocation Policy intends to prioritise the housing of those applicants who are assessed as being in the greatest need. Once registered this does not mean that an applicant has a right to be offered social housing. They can be considered for housing based on their housing need but many applicants will unfortunately not have sufficient housing need to be offered a property.

The banding system will normally be used to decide priority between applicants for an offer of accommodation. Additionally, the CCP may apply the 'direct offer' procedure in particular cases as set out in this policy.

Where the bidding process applies, priority is generally awarded in descending order between Band A, Band B, Band C. Within bands, priority is generally awarded according to the band date. The sub-categories within each band do not affect relative priority within that band.

The law, as it applies to local housing authorities, requires that the scheme be framed so as to secure that Reasonable Preference for housing is given to those in the categories set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). The statutory Reasonable Preference categories cover:

- a) People who are homeless within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.
- b) People who are owed certain homelessness duties by any local housing authority.
- c) People occupying unsanitary, overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory housing.
- d) People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability).
- e) People who need to move to a particular locality within the district to avoid hardship to themselves or others.

Reasonable preference is defined on the policy as a statutory housing need. There are two statutory housing need bands (A and B) and one non-statutory housing need band (Band C). The purpose of reducing the number of bands from 5 under the old policy to 3 is to ensure that the policy is more transparent and simple to use. Once a band has been allocated based on the applicant's housing need, that band would (with the exception of where a direct offer is made under the policy) operate as a 'waiting list' so that applicants can see progression and be given more accurate information on how long they are likely to wait for an offer of accommodation depending on the area and type of property they wish to consider. This system is fairer and aims to build confidence in applicants regarding the allocations process.

The following section provides details of the 3 bands an applicant may be awarded. The band in which an application is placed, will be determined by their housing need. How the policy defines and assesses housing need is described in the table below. Where there are further details (beyond that contained in the table) of how the housing need criteria will be assessed, these are set out in appendix 1, for example, how officers will assess medical housing need claims (appendix 1.8).

It is important to note that applicants will be placed in the appropriate band when it is assessed their housing need meets the set threshold. An applicant who qualifies under more than one housing need criteria will be awarded the highest priority that any one of their assessed needs is entitled to. For example, an applicant with a need that is awarded band A and another need that would be awarded band B will be awarded band A. An applicant who meets 2 Housing Need criteria for Band B will still only be awarded band B. This new housing allocation policy no longer reflects cumulative housing need to ensure that the policy is seen as being fair and less complicated to understand and administer. This will also ensure decisions reached are consistent.

The Bands are:

**Band A - Urgent housing need to move:** These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of what the 'Housing Allocation Legislation' calls '*reasonable preference*' but whom the CCP believes should also be awarded '*additional priority preference*' based on their urgent and exceptional housing need.

**Band B – Statutory housing need to move:** These are applicants that are owed a statutory award of *reasonable preference* under the policy and have been awarded Band B priority based on their statutory housing need. It also includes certain key workers granted B priority.

**Band C – All other applicants in housing need:** This is the housing need band awarded where an applicant is not assessed as coming under the criteria adopted by the policy for being in a statutory housing need. Applicants placed in band C can still bid for properties but will not be considered above applicants from Bands A or B who have bid for the same property.

The CCP wish, over time, to increase the Options available to applicants in all 3 Bands including Band C. We aim to use technology to send direct texts and emails to inform applicants of available housing options and this may include information on:

- 1) Social rented low demand properties available now in any area of Cumbria
- 2) Older person housing opportunities
- 3) Affordable homes with specific rural local connection criteria or section 106 agreement
- 4) Affordable rent
- 5) Rent to buy
- 6) Shared ownership/equity
- 7) Discounted market sale / starter homes
- 8) Market rented
- 9) Help to buy opportunities.

**The reasonable preference criteria and the Band allocated for that housing need criteria**

<p><b>Band A: Additional preference for certain homelessness duties</b>  <i>(This is assessed and verified by the Partner Council's Housing Options Team)</i></p>
<p>This banding applies where a Cumbrian Council have accepted:</p>
<p>1) People owed the Section 193(2) main homelessness duty or the Section 193C(4) 'reduced' Section 193 duty, or</p>
<p>2) People owed a section 189B (2) Relief duty and the applicant is, at the point of that 189B duty being accepted, considered likely to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless, whether a decision to that effect has been made or not, and the applicant is in temporary accommodation provided by the Council to meet a section 188 interim accommodation duty.</p>
<p>In these circumstances where an applicant is homeless and in temporary accommodation and owed a Section 189B(2) relief duty, or 193(2) main duty or a section 193C(4) reduced main duty the Council will need to move applicants out of temporary accommodation to manage the budgetary or legal impact on the Council. The applicant may still bid for properties advertised but due to the budgetary pressures faced by the Council and the need to maintain a supply of available temporary accommodation for new cases presenting as homeless, the Council is likely to make a direct offer of suitable accommodation into the private rented sector or social housing regardless of the preferences expressed by the applicant.</p>
<p><b>Band A: Additional preference for medical or disability (See appendix 1.8 for full details of the medical need assessment process)</b></p>
<p>Where an applicant (or a member of their household) is unable to continue to occupy their current accommodation due to high medical need or disability. Examples of when Band A may be awarded include:</p>
<p>Applicants ready to be discharged from hospital who: have somewhere to live but their accommodation is unsuitable due to their medical needs and cannot be made suitable through adaptations because of cost effectiveness or structural difficulties or the property cannot be adapted within a reasonable amount of time.</p>
<p>Applicants who have urgent need to move due to them having medical problems or disabilities that are being exacerbated by their current housing situation. This includes applicants:</p>
<p>a) Whose life is at risk due to their current housing conditions or who are housebound, effectively housebound or cannot access the essential facilities in their home and there are critical concerns about their safety, for example through falls due to difficulties with access.</p>

b) Whose condition is terminal and rehousing is required to provide a basis for the provision of suitable care
c) Whose condition is life threatening and their existing accommodation is a major contributory factor
d) Whose health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening for example, where an applicant has significant mental health problems which are exacerbated by their accommodation
e) With disabilities, who have restricted mobility and are limited by their accommodation such that they are unable to carry out day-to-day activities or have difficulties accessing facilities inside and outside of their accommodation and require rehousing into accommodation suitable for their use.
f) In overcrowded accommodation which puts the applicant at risk of infection, for example, where an applicant is suffering from late-stage or advanced HIV infection
<b>Band A: Additional preference where there is a need to move on welfare grounds due to exceptional impact on the applicant or a member of their households well being</b>
Not every circumstance that may present can be captured by the policy so below are examples of welfare ground cases that will be considered. The list is not exhaustive:
a) Suffering violence, harassment or discrimination whether a hate crime or otherwise, and it is not safe for them to remain in their home/locality.
b) Applicants who need to move due to domestic abuse.
c) Exceptional circumstances due to significant problems associated with the tenant's occupation of a dwelling in the social or private rented sector and there is high risk to the tenant or their family's safety if they remain in the dwelling/area.
d) For applications in circumstances where there is a serious threat to the wellbeing of a child and their accommodation is a major contributory factor to that risk. This will be in circumstances where the relevant manager in Children's Services or equivalent assesses the level of risk exposure in relation to the child or children remaining in the current property as being so critical that no other reasonable options in relation to accommodation are available to protect the child.
<b>Band A: Additional preference Armed Forces</b>
Applicants with urgent housing who:
a) Are serving (and will soon leave) the regular forces and is suffering from serious injury, illness, mental ill health, or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service



b) Have recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the MOD following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service or
c) Are serving or have served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the persons service
<b>Band A: Additional preference for unfit or unsatisfactory housing</b>
<b>There are 3 circumstances where Band A may be awarded:</b>
<b>1: Applicants without access at all to any of the following facilities:</b>
No access to:
a) A bath or shower
b) A toilet
c) Cooking facilities
d) Running hot water supplies
e) Electric/gas needed for essential activities
Applicants who have access to shared facilities re cooking; bathroom and toilet will not qualify under these criteria.
<b>2: Exceptional impact cases.</b>
Applicants who currently occupy a private sector property which has at least one Category 1 Hazard (excluding overcrowding) under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and where a Prohibition Order has been served or is intended to be served under the Housing Act 2004 and the effect of the Prohibition Order is likely to mean that the applicant(s) will lose the use of their home on a permanent basis. The relevant conditions at the property must be life-threatening or present an immediate threat of serious injury to the occupant(s)
This includes a property that has severe damp, major structural defects including subsidence, flooding, collapse of roof, or have living conditions which are a statutory nuisance, <u>and</u> there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a period considered to be reasonable by the Council and the household are not able to afford to resolve their own housing problem by moving to alternative private sector accommodation.
Note - this does not include Council or Housing Association homes as there is a legal requirement on social landlords to urgently remedy defects that pose a risk to their tenants
<b>3: Demolition or Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) cases.</b>
Where the applicant's property is subject to demolition or subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order for redevelopment
<b>Band A: Additional preference for severe overcrowding as defined as 2 bedrooms or more overcrowded</b> <i>Note: the measurement of overcrowding is based on the "bedroom standard" (with some exceptions adopted see below).</i>

<i>This is the non-statutory standard set out in the government's allocation of accommodation guidance.</i>
Where an applicant household is severely overcrowded defined as requiring 2 or more additional bedrooms to reach the bedroom standard. In calculating the overcrowding the following circumstances will be disregarded unless there are exceptional circumstances:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Children over the age of 16 will be excluded from the calculation</li> <li>➤ Cases where extended family had moved into accommodation causing the 2 bedroom plus level of overcrowding</li> <li>➤ Where the household contains non-dependent adults as there is more chance of non-dependents being able to resolve their housing</li> <li>➤ The CCP will take account of the space and layout of rooms and bedrooms in deciding whether the 2 bedroom plus priority will be awarded</li> </ul>
<b>Band A: Additional preference for applicants nominated by Cumbria Adult Social Services/Children's Services in the following circumstances:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where there is an essential need to move due to child protection issues</li> <li>• Fostering carers for Cumbria County Council where there is a need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child (this would not apply where the home required would be 4 bedrooms or more)</li> <li>• Adoption arrangements where there is a need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child (this would not apply where the home required would be 4 bedrooms or more)</li> <li>• Applicants owed a duty by Adult Social Services under the Care Act 2014 / Mental Health Act 1983/2007 who have been assessed by the housing team as being ready to move onto independent living and have an appropriate support package in place</li> </ul>
<b>Band A: Additional preference for Cumbria County Council Care Leavers (Former Relevant children) as defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and need to move on</b>
Applicants must be a former "Relevant Child" as defined by the Children Leaving Care Act 2002 and be a young person at risk of homelessness. The evidence to support this award will be provided by the council's leaving care service and will consist of confirmation that:
a) All referrals by Children's Services will be made following the provision of Cumbria's Joint Protocol for young people
b) The care leaver is ready to move to independent settled housing and is genuinely prepared for a move to independent living
c) The care leaver possesses the life skills to manage a tenancy including managing a rent account.
d) The care leaver has either long term or medium term tenancy support arranged, as required.
e) Ongoing support needs have been assessed and, where appropriate, a support plan is in place and

f) The CCP's assessing officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of their vulnerability, accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a detrimental effect on their well-being
<i>Note: Care leavers will be awarded Band A on proof of their status. If an application for housing is made before it has been determined by the CCP assessing officer that the individual is ready for independent living, taking into account information from the applicant's support worker and other agencies, the application will not have any bid considered until the support worker presents the evidence to the CCP that the individual is ready to move on and the CCP agree with that evidence.</i>
<b>Band A: Additional preference for applicants who are part of a multi-agency public protection agreement (MAPPA).</b>
Band A would apply only where:
a) On the recommendation of the MAPPA partnership the applicant requires and is suitable for independent housing and qualify for the Housing Register, and
b) The CCP assessing officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of the circumstances of the MAPPA case accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a detrimental effect on the multi-agency planning for that individual
<b>Band A: Additional preference for certain MARAC assessed cases</b>
Applicants fleeing domestic violence and abuse that have been assessed by MARAC (or any subsequent multi agency arrangement) as needing to move urgently for the safety and security of themselves and or any dependent children and are assessed as being in immediate danger, and
a) The MARAC partnership has referred the case and provided evidence as to why the applicant requires social housing, and
b) The CCP assessing officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of the circumstances of the MARAC case accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a substantial detrimental effect on individual or household
<b>Band B – Reasonable preference for certain homelessness duties owed</b> <i>(This is assessed and verified by the Partner Council's Housing Options Team)</i>
Any of the following statutory homeless duties owed by a Cumbrian Council:
a) People where it has been verified that they are rough sleeping in a Cumbrian Council area regardless of whether they have made a homeless application
b) People owed the prevention of homelessness duty under Section 195(2) by any Cumbria local authority
c) People owed the 'relief of homelessness duty under Section 189B(2) (Note: applicants owed a relief duty and are likely to be in priority need,

unintentionally homeless and are in temporary accommodation will be placed in Band A)
d) People where the relief duty has been brought to an end and an applicant has been assessed at that point as not being in priority need. Note this priority banding is dependent on the applicant remaining homeless. If their circumstances change and they are no longer homeless the band B priority award will be removed. If an offer of accommodation were to be made and upon verification the assessment was that the applicant was no longer homeless the offer would be withdrawn.
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for insecure accommodation arrangements</b>
“A pregnant woman or applicant with a child or children who are sharing a home with family and where:
a) They have no ownership or tenancy rights and the arrangement is short term and very insecure and only available whilst the applicant is actively seeking an offer of social housing or alternative accommodation with friends or in the private rented sector, and
b) They were owed a prevention of homelessness duty as they were assessed as likely to become homeless within 56 days, and that duty has ended because they have been allowed to remain at home whilst they bid for social housing with their Band B priority and it is likely that they can remain for at least 6 months to a year.
c) The family member with the interest in the home has agreed to allow the applicant to remain for at least 6 months to a year.
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for medical or disability housing need (See appendix 1.8 for full details of the medical need assessment process)</b>
Applicants who have need to move due to them having medical problems or disabilities where their housing conditions exacerbates a serious medical condition or disability but do not qualify for an award of Band A. This includes (the examples are to illustrate the level of housing need to be awarded Band B and is not an exhaustive list).
a) The applicant's current accommodation to a significant extent directly exacerbates an existing medical condition, is the direct cause of a medical condition or impacts on the ease of use of the facilities within their home for a disabled person.
b) Applicants who have mobility issues and it has been assessed need to move to ground floor or level access accommodation
c) Applicants who have mobility issues and need to move to accommodation that has level access showering facilities
d) Applicants who have a significant physical or mental health condition that is directly affected by their accommodation and where a move to alternative accommodation would help to ease or resolve their condition
e) Applicants who have a medical need for an additional bedroom (e.g. because they need an overnight carer or need to accommodate a substantial amount of medical equipment)

<b>Band B: Reasonable preference under the Government's 'Right to move' regulations</b>
Existing social tenants of accommodation in England who the CCP have assessed as qualifying for the housing register and additionally meet the Government's Right to Move regulations will be placed into Band B
Allocation to those Applicants who qualify is limited to a maximum of 2% of all lettings.
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for 'move on' from supported housing</b>
Where the CCP assessing officer after considering evidence from the applicant's support officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of their vulnerability, accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a detrimental effect on their wellbeing.
The requirements are that before the award is made, ongoing support needs will need to have been assessed and, where appropriate, a support plan put in place to increase the chances of the tenancy succeeding and the person must have been assessed as ready to move on from supported to independent housing.
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference where it is agreed there is a need to move on welfare or hardship ground:</b>
1) Applicants who need to move closer to a specialist organisation, agency or institution located in a specific area of Cumbria, where moving would prevent significant physical, psychological or financial hardship. (The assessment will include the availability and ability to use public transport)
2) Hardship on support grounds: Applicants that have demonstrable evidence that they provide or receive substantial and on-going support to or from relatives or friends and where moving would prevent significant physical, psychological or financial hardship. This award will only be considered where there are significant medical or welfare issues including grounds relating to disability. This award for applicants who give or require support from relatives or friends will only be considered where there is a severe disability or mental ill health, medical or welfare issue (relating to the applicant or their household or the relatives or friends) and there are reasons why this support cannot be made available through reliance on public transport or the persons own transport. (The assessment will include the availability and ability to use public transport).
3) Employment Hardship - Priority will only be given in exceptional circumstances and applicants will need to show that they need to move to take up or continue an employment opportunity not available elsewhere. They will only be considered where they do not live within a reasonable commuting distance and will be required to provide

confirmation of employment details from the employer. Employment purposes are defined as: applicants including people needing to move from outside Cumbria and between Cumbrian Districts, taking up or continuing permanent employment for a minimum of 16 hours per week. Under this clause applicants will only be considered where they do not live within a reasonable commuting distance and will be required to provide confirmation of employment details from the employer. (The assessment will include the availability and ability to use public transport)
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for being overcrowded by 1 bedroom</b> <i>Note: the measurement of overcrowding is based on the "bedroom standard" (with some exceptions adopted see below). This is the non-statutory standard set out in the government's allocation of accommodation guidance.</i>
Applicant's living in overcrowded conditions and whose housing circumstances have been assessed as being 1 bedroom short of what they need as measured by the bedroom standard.
Or alternative wording
Where an applicant household is overcrowded by one bedroom as measured by the bedroom standard. In calculating the overcrowding the following circumstances will be disregarded unless there are exceptional circumstances:
➤ Children over the age of 16 will be excluded from the calculation
➤ Cases where extended family had moved into accommodation causing the 1 bedroom level of overcrowding
➤ Where the household contain non-dependent adults as there is more chance of non-dependents being able to resolve their housing
The CCP will take account of the space and layout of rooms and bedrooms in deciding whether the 1 bedroom priority will be awarded
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for unsatisfactory housing conditions or issues of property fitness</b>
Private sector tenants that the relevant Council has determined that the property poses a category 1 hazard under the Health and Safety fitness rating and the CCP assessing officer is satisfied that the problem cannot be resolved by the landlord within 6 months and as a result continuing to occupy the accommodation will pose a considerable risk to the applicant's health. This includes a property that has severe damp, major structural defects including subsidence, flooding, collapse of roof, or have living conditions which are a statutory nuisance, <u>and</u> there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a 6 month time period, and the household are not able to resolve their own housing problem by moving to alternative private sector accommodation
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for under-occupation</b>
Applicants who have a social housing tenancy with a Cumbrian CCP Partner and are under-occupying social rented accommodation by two or more

bedrooms. The exception to the 2 or more bedroom under occupation rule will be:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Where a tenant occupies a house that they are under occupying by 1 bedroom and a move to a flat would free up that house</li> <li>b) Where it is agreed that under-occupancy by 1 bedroom will cause significant financial hardship for tenants. This is where there is clear evidence that tenants on lower incomes are forced to spend significant percentages of their incomes on servicing 1 bedroom under-occupancy deductions</li> </ul>
<b>Band B: Local preference for recent ex armed forces applicants</b>
Members of the Armed Forces persons who are serving in the regular forces who will be discharged within three months and have served for five years preceding their application for an allocation of housing accommodation as long as this has not been a dishonorable discharge.
<b>Band B: Local preference for identified 'Key Workers'</b>
The following key workers whose total gross household income from all sources does not exceed an annual income of £45,000 or more (for single persons) or joint income of £60,000 or more (for couples).
1) National Health Service Staff and Social Care staff
2) Police and Community Support Officers
3) Members of the Territorial Army
4) Fire Officers including Volunteer Fire Officers
5) Teachers
<b>Band C – All other applicants in housing need:</b> This is the housing need band awarded where an applicant is not assessed as coming under the criteria adopted by the policy for being in a statutory housing need. Applicants placed in band C can still bid for properties but will not be considered above applicants from Bands A or B who have bid for the same property.
Band C will include applicants who have been assessed as being intentionally homeless by any Council and since that award has not had settled accommodation (defined by the CCP assessing officer)

Note applicants who only want to register for a section 106 village or rural development and have no other statutory housing need will be allocated Band C.

### Advertising Properties

All CCP Partners with social housing stock have agreed to advertise the majority of their properties through Cumbria Choice. Properties will be advertised on a weekly basis on the website.

Choice based lettings are about the applicants being given choice about where they want to live. Properties will be advertised and applicants will be able to



indicate the properties for which they want to be considered by 'bidding'. Once the bidding process closes a shortlist will be compiled and the property allocated will be based on the banding priority of the applications and the time they have waited as long as they meet the criteria set out in the advertisement.

If a bid is received from an applicant on Cumbria Choice who does not have a local connection with the Council area where the advertised property is located then the local connection criteria set out in 'Section 2 Qualification rule 1' will be used to produce the shortlist, unless the property is advertised with no preference for applicants with a local connection to the area where the property is located. For properties advertised under a local letting policy the criteria for that LLP will be used to produce a shortlist.

So far as is possible the CCP will use the CBL letting process, banding priority system, and waiting time within the band to allocate accommodation. However, there may be times when a direct letting will need to be made to a property using the criteria set out in 'Policy on Choice' detailed in Section 1. In these circumstances a property will not be advertised. The aim is that no more than 15% of properties available to let should be allocated through a direct letting in order to preserve the integrity of the choice based letting process. However, in the circumstances of a national emergency such as the Covid-19 pandemic choice based lettings may be suspended, or a much higher percentage of lettings may be made directly.

Further operational and procedural details are set out in appendix 1.7 covering:

- a) Advertising properties
- b) The bidding and selection process
- c) Offers of accommodation
- d) Feedback on lettings

## **Sheltered Housing**

Sheltered accommodation is included within the scheme. It is generally for people of 60 years and older and offers independent living with the added security and support of a warden service. In certain circumstances it may be advertised for people aged below 60 years. Property advertisements will clearly state the age requirements of applicants able to 'bid' for a property.

## **Section 106 developments**

Under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 some developments are subject to Section 106 planning obligations which usually requires properties to be let to applicants with a local connection to stated Parishes. Where this applies only those applicants meeting the requirements of the Section 106 agreement will be eligible for an offer of a property.

Advert details will state when the letting of a property is governed by a Section 106 agreement.

## **Local Lettings Policies**

Local lettings initiatives may be applied to meet the particular needs of a local ward or area or to address sustainability and community issues to ensure that the housing allocation scheme is able to contribute to building sustainable communities. Appendix 3 gives full details for how local lettings policies will be assessed and applied.

The following are examples of local lettings policies that may be deployed under this policy. The list is for illustrative purposes and is not exhaustive.

- 1) Age restrictions.
- 2) Specific local lettings policies for a village or rural parish (see below)
- 3) Prioritising applicants who are key workers, as defined by the CCP.
- 4) Restrictions on lettings to vulnerable households where there are already a concentration of supported tenants/residents in a street or block.
- 5) Lettings to childless households where there are high concentrations of children and young people living on a specific estate, street or block.
- 6) Disregarding household type or property matching rules to allow, for example, under-occupation to reduce child density or to account for future family growth.
- 7) Ensuring that there is a balance of working and non-working households allocated to a scheme.
- 8) Enhanced local connection restrictions relating to a specific parish.

New developments will normally have local lettings policies (usually only applies to first lettings) regardless of whether the new development is subject to a Section 106 agreement or affordable housing statement. Where a new development is subject to a Section 106 planning agreement the criteria set will be followed.

### **Specific Local Lettings Policies for Rural Villages and Parishes**

For some villages and rural parishes where there is a high demand for housing additional priority may be given to applicants who have a local connection to the particular village or rural parish. Advert details will state where an applicant having a local connection to the specific village or rural parish may be given priority. Those villages and rural parishes subject to a local lettings policy will be identified for each Cumbria Council. For some villages or rural parishes the definition of local connection may be based on locally agreed criteria through the Parish Council and will not necessarily be the definition set out below. In these circumstances the property advert will fully set out the local connection criteria.

## **Section 5      Appendices**

### **Appendix 1 – Operational and Procedural Instructions, Guidance and detail for how the Policy will be applied.**

#### **Appendix 1.1: Lettings not covered by the Policy**

- a) Introductory or probationary tenancies – Where an introductory/probationary tenancy becomes a secure or assured tenancy
- b) Family Intervention Tenancies – Introduced by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, Family Intervention Tenancies are a form of residential tenancy without security of tenure. They may be offered by either a local housing authority or a housing association to anyone who is a tenant of a secure (or assured) tenancy subject to a possession order on the grounds of anti-social behaviour or domestic abuse or anyone who (if they had a secure or assured tenancy) could have had such a possession order made against them.
- c) Succession under S89 of the Housing Act 1985 (secure tenancies), under S133 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 (introductory tenancies) or under S90 of the Housing Act 1985 (fixed term tenancies).
- d) Non-Secure tenancies or 'temporary accommodation' – Any accommodation that is provided to meet an interim duty under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.
- e) Temporary decants – Secure or introductory tenants of a local authority or assured or assured shorthold tenants of Registered Providers who need to be moved temporarily whilst major work is carried out on their home.
- f) Demoted tenancies - Following a successful application for a demotion order under sections 14 and 15 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- g) Mutual exchanges between existing tenants under S92 of the Housing Act 1985 or under S158 of the Localism Act 2011.
- h) Assignment to a person who would be qualified to succeed the tenant under S92 of the Housing Act 1985 (secure tenancies) or S134 Housing Act 1996 (introductory tenancies).
- i) Conversion of an introductory tenancy to a secure tenancy under S125 Housing Act 1996).
- j) Transfers of secure or introductory tenancies by a court order made under certain provisions contained within matrimonial, family, children and partnership legislation.
- k) Allocation to a person entitled to rehousing under section 39 of the Land

Compensation Act 1973.

- l) Allocation to a person whose home is repurchased under sections 554 or 555 of the Housing Act 1985 (defective dwellings).
- m) The Allocation Scheme does not apply to an allocation to anyone who is already a secure or introductory tenant or an assured tenant of a private registered provider of social housing or registered social landlord unless the person has applied to the CCP for a transfer and the CCP is satisfied that the person is to be granted reasonable preference under one of the reasonable preference categories in S166A (3) of the Housing Act 1996
- n) If a local authority [offers a tenancy](#) to someone who is or was previously a secure or fully assured tenant of a social landlord, and the new tenancy is granted because of domestic abuse towards the tenant or their household, the local authority must offer a lifetime secure tenancy (s.81ZA Housing Act 1985 as inserted by s.79 Domestic Abuse Act 2021) This is the case even if the local authority normally operates a flexible tenancy policy.
- o) Not all domestic abuse survivors have to be offered a secure tenancy. They could be offered housing association or private rented accommodation as an alternative to local authority accommodation. People who were previously in private rented or temporary accommodation have no additional rights to a lifetime secure tenancy.

## **Appendix 1.2: The details for how the scheme will apply:**

- 1) The General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- 2) The 'Privacy Notice' for the policy, and
- 3) An applicant's right to information

### **General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be undertaken for any proposed changes to the policy or procedures where those changes are likely to result in a high risk to individuals' interests in order to comply with the requirements of General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) and Data Protection Act 2018.

Personal information will only be used in ways that the applicant reasonably expects in order to process their application. This will include the sharing of information with the Housing Association Partners to this scheme or any other Housing Association that is not a member of the scheme.

Where it is necessary for personal information to be shared with third parties, it will be transferred in a secure way to ensure it is not compromised or accessed by anyone who is not entitled to it.

On a case by case basis, where the law requires or permits, and the disclosure is necessary and proportionate, information about an applicant may be shared in the absence of consent without breaching data protection, human rights or the common law obligation of confidence.

Usually this will involve striking a balance between the rights of the applicant and other legitimate interests, which may justify the information sharing. An obligation of confidentiality/privacy may be set aside where the interference is in accordance with the law, necessary and proportionate to the legitimate aim being pursued to meet one or more of the following interests:

- a) National security
- b) Public safety
- c) The detection or prevention of disorder or crime
- d) Protection of health or morals
- e) The protection of the rights or freedoms of others (e.g. safeguarding public funds, protecting those at work)

### **Privacy Notice**

All CCP Partners have a responsibility to protect public funds. For Local authorities this is a legal duty. The CCP partnership may obtain and share information about the applicant to:

- Prevent or detect crime or fraud
- Protect public funds
- To make sure information is correct

Third parties include government departments, other Councils, private sector companies, including companies that assist us in fraud detection and prevention, such as '*Credit Reference Agencies*'. Information may also be obtained from social media.

Any use of personal data will be in full accordance with 'The Data Protection Act 2018', which incorporates the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). A full copy of each CCP Privacy Notice is available on request via emailing Cumbria Choice *@add cumbria choice general query email address*

### **Right to information**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 makes it a requirement for every public authority to produce a 'Publication Scheme' which sets out all the information it makes available to the public, and whether copies of that information are available free of charge. The 'Publication Scheme' includes information that a Council is legally obliged to publish. The Scheme is also intended to assist in developing a culture in which openness and transparency is encouraged as per the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000.

### **Appendix 1.3 Details of how alleged fraud or providing false information will be assessed**

Section 171(1) of the Housing Act 1996 makes it an offence for anyone, in connection with the exercise by a local housing authority of their functions under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (and therefore in seeking an allocation of accommodation) to:

- a) Knowingly or recklessly make a materially false statement or
- b) Knowingly withhold information that the CCP has reasonably required him/her to give in connection with the exercise of those functions.
- c) A person guilty of this offence is liable on summary conviction to a fine at the date of this scheme document of up to £5,000.

The circumstances in which an offence is committed could include:

- d) Any false information given on an application form for housing/accommodation (including transfer applications);
- e) Any false information given in response to subsequent correspondence;

In addition making a fraudulent application for housing may constitute an offence under the Theft Act 1968 and/or the Fraud Act 2006.

If an applicant has given materially incorrect information at the time of the application or that subsequently comes to light, amounting to deliberate concealment of for example a debt, or an eviction, their application will ordinarily be cancelled and a letter will be sent to the applicant to notify him/her of the decision and reasons.

#### **Determination of deliberate intent**

In many cases, applicants will have provided incorrect or inadequate information on their application form, but the assessment concludes that there was no deliberate intention.

It will be for the assessing officer in the first instance to decide if any errors contained in an application were deliberately made or not. If the officer is satisfied that the errors were not deliberate, or that it had no impact on the application, then no action will be taken though the applicant may be warned about the need to provide accurate information and the consequences for not doing so.

However, if the assessing officer has concerns, these will be discussed with their Manager who will decide if they:

- 1) Are satisfied that there is insufficient evidence to disqualify the application on these grounds;



- 2) Requires more information to be gathered before a decision can be made;
- 3) Are satisfied that the applicant has provided fraudulent information, or withheld important information.

The Manager will notify the CCP Board and, in serious cases the Police, in all cases where serious or systematic fraud is suspected.

If the decision is that applicant has given false information or withheld information they will not qualify for the register, or where information emerges after they have been placed on the register, they will be disqualified. In these circumstances a letter will be sent to the applicant to notify them of the decision and they will have a right to seek a review of that decision.

#### **Appendix 1.4: Additional procedural information on the consideration of exceptional circumstances and how applications where there is a 'Debt Relief Order', 'Bankruptcy Declaration' or 'Individual Voluntary Agreement (IVA)'**

Note: it is the responsibility of the applicant to make the case as to why their circumstances are exceptional. Once a request has been made for exceptional circumstances to be applied the assessing officer will consider that request under the statutory review procedure. Each request to be considered an exemption will be assessed on the facts presented. The CCP will also consider cases where it has assessed that a tenant accrued rent arrears due to the bedroom tax resulting in the tenant being unable to pay the full rent, or through having a reduced income as a result of a National Emergency for example the Covid 19 emergency.

Note 1: This qualification rule also applies to applicants currently on the register. An applicant's eligibility to remain on the register will be kept under review. An applicant may be rendered ineligible (or allowed to remain on the register but not be allowed to bid) at any time should the CCP become satisfied that there is new evidence, or a change of circumstances, that mean the rule relating to former rent arrears or a housing related debt should be applied to their case.

Note 2: For applicants who have had their rent arrears included in a 'Debt Relief Order', bankruptcy declaration or individual voluntary agreement (IVA) a period of at least 12 months has to pass from the declaration of insolvency to the point a debt is cleared. Should an applicant maintain their finances for this period, this will be considered as strong evidence that their previous problem has been resolved. Should an applicant fail to maintain their finances during this period, any new social housing debt can be taken into account as normal. Therefore, we see no benefit of taking into account such debts at a later point.

## **Appendix 1.5: Additional guidance for assessing officers and the framework to be used to apply the test of unacceptable behaviour**

Specific examples of serious unacceptable behaviour are:

- a) Being subject to a court order (including an interim order) for breach of tenancy conditions
- b) Conviction for illegal or immoral use of their current or former home
- c) Causing nuisance and annoyance to neighbours or visitors
- d) Committing criminal offences in or near the home and still posing a threat to neighbours or the community
- e) Being violent towards a partner or members of the family
- f) Allowing the condition of the property to deteriorate
- g) Paying money illegally to obtain a tenancy for example a corrupt payment
- h) Unlawfully subletting their tenancy
- i) Applicants that have been convicted of housing or welfare benefit related fraud, where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974.
- j) Having unspent convictions where the assessment concludes that the applicant is unsuitable to be a tenant due to a significant risk to potential neighbours and/or communities.
- k) An applicant or any member of their household has been responsible for any racial harassment or other hate crime. Racial harassment and Hate Crimes is defined as racist, religiously aggravated, faith, gender, age, disability, and trans phobic or homophobic or gender re-assignment harassment or hate crime. A hate crime or racist incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be racist or hate crime related by the complainant or any other person.

Note: This rule applies to applicants currently on the register as well as new applicants. An applicant's qualification to remain on the Housing Register will be kept under review during their time on the register. An applicant may be disqualified (or allowed to remain on the register but not be allowed to bid until the behaviour is resolved) at any time during the process should the CCP become satisfied that the rule relating to unacceptable behaviour should be applied to their case.

As a guideline any new application will normally only be reconsidered at the request of the applicant, and as a guideline the CCP will consider whether there has been no reasonable cause for complaint or concern against the applicant (or members of their prospective household) for a period of 12 months.

Note: Where an applicant has resolved their behaviour to the satisfaction of the CCP it may still be the case that a CCP Housing Association Partner where the behaviour occurred might decide they do not want to consider rehousing their former tenant. However, this will not prevent an applicant from being considered for housing by another Housing Association.

The assessing officer will be guided by the following considerations:

- 1) The behaviour need not have led to possession, prosecution or other enforcement action by a statutory agency, provided that, on the balance of probability, the household is responsible
- 2) In normal circumstances the behaviour concerned should have occurred within the last two years. In cases of a more serious nature, for example, those involving criminal prosecution, a longer time-scale may be appropriate.
- 3) There must be reasonable grounds for believing that the behaviour could continue or be repeated. For example, the applicant may have issued threats, or there might be a history of repeat offending.

The assessing officer will specifically consider:

- a) The seriousness of the applicant's behaviour
- b) The duration of the behaviour and/or the number and frequency of incidents
- c) The length of time that has elapsed since the behaviour took place
- d) Any facts that indicate that there has been no further cause for concern in the last 6 to 12 months
- e) Any relevant vulnerability or support needs that may explain the behaviour
- f) Whether there is meaningful engagement with support agencies
- g) Critically, whether there has been a significant and sustained change in the applicant's behaviour, and
- h) Whether they believe on the evidence that the behaviour is likely to still reoccur now or at the point a tenancy was offered or commenced

Applicants to whom the rule is applied will be written to and informed that:

- a) That the unacceptable behaviour rule has been applied to their case and either they do not qualify, or that they qualify but cannot bid until the behaviour has been resolved
- b) What they must do to resolve the problem
- c) That for either decision i.e. disqualification or qualification but not allowed to bid, it is the applicant's responsibility to notify the CCP when they have, in their view, resolved the issue and that they will need to present evidence to back up their view.
- d) Where an applicant is disqualified for unacceptable behaviour they will have a right to ask for a review of the decision made to disqualify them.

Note where an applicant is disqualified, any new application will normally only be reconsidered at the request of the applicant and only where there has been no reasonable cause for complaint or concern against the applicant (or members of their prospective household) for a continuous period of 12 months.

## **Appendix 1.6: How a request for a review will be administered**

### **1. How a request for a review will be dealt with**

2. A review must be requested within twenty-eight days of the date of the letter advising the applicant of the decision on their application. The CCP has discretion to extend this time limit, or consider a request made out of time, if it considers this would be reasonable. Any request for a review out of time should therefore state why the applicant considers that the 28-day time limit should be extended.
3. The request for review should be made by email or letter to a Cumbria Choice Review Requests email account or PO Box address.
4. As a first stage the Housing Association or Partner who has assessed the applicant's case will consider the applicants concerns and provide a response to the applicant. If the applicant is still unhappy their concerns will then be treated under the formal review procedure set out below.
5. Once the informal consideration process has been completed and after receiving a response the applicant has indicated in writing or verbally that they wish the review to proceed the relevant Cumbrian Council's Housing Options Service covering the area where the applicant has applied will conduct the review or may delegate this task to the CCP Partnership Manager to undertake the review on behalf of the relevant Council. Please note these reviews do not form part of the separate homelessness review process contained within section 202 of the 1996 Housing Act and they will not be subject to an appeal process pursuant to section 204 of the Housing Act 1996.
6. The applicant, or their representative, must give reasons why they wish to have the decision reviewed so that the CCP can ensure that the request falls under the statutory review request criteria.
7. Upon receipt of a request for a review the CCP will send an acknowledgement letter explaining the review process and procedure to be followed.
8. The officer undertaking the review will not normally have been involved in an original decision.
9. An applicant may be asked to attend an interview and, if so, can be accompanied by an advisor or friend.
10. Where it appears that the applicant needs an interpreter this can be arranged.
11. The review will be carried out and the decision and the reasons for it will be given to the applicant in writing within 56 days of the request being received. There is no right to request a review of this review decision.

## **Appendix 1.7: Further operational and procedural details covering:**

- a) Advertising properties
- b) The bidding and selection process
- c) Offers of accommodation
- d) Feedback on lettings

### **Advertising properties**

It should be noted that in certain circumstances a participating Housing Association might apply their own rules regarding the allocation of accommodation, for example an association may wish to apply its own test of affordability. The aim of all CCP partners is to keep these individual association rules to a minimum. Where there are rules set by an individual Housing Association that differ from the common policy, the intention is to set these out in a link to the on-line policy.

Properties will be advertised in an easy to read format. They will usually include a picture of the property or scheme in which it is located. Property adverts will include details of the property and will indicate suitable household size as well as giving information about the local area. The properties will clearly indicate which housing organisation is the Landlord.

Properties may be advertised during the 4-week notice period given by an outgoing tenant. If the notice is subsequently withdrawn by the tenant the property will unfortunately be unavailable to let.

Direct offers will be made in accordance with the criteria set out in section 1 plus lettings to extra care housing and some sheltered schemes. Otherwise all categories of properties will be advertised. General needs properties; properties that have been adapted for those with disabilities; properties that are specifically for the elderly and which may have a warden and/or an emergency call system. Adverts will clearly indicate any restrictions on bidding (e.g. where properties have been adapted and/or are specifically for people with disabilities) and will detail any particular criteria that apply (e.g. where full occupancy is required, affordability criteria etc.)

Bids from applicants will only be accepted if they meet all of the eligibility criteria for the property. However if their situation is changing imminently, once evidence has been provided, they will also be accepted.

### **The bidding and selection process**

Properties are advertised on a weekly cycle. Applicants may express an interest through bidding on any advertised property that meets their needs. For applicants in bands A or B they are able to place up to 3 bids each week. For applicants in band C they are able to place unlimited bids in order to improve their prospects of obtaining an offer of a lower demand property in the circumstances where there may be several lower demand properties advertised in that cycle.

Bids can be made in a number of ways: on the website using the username and password; by telephoning or visiting the office of a partner organisation; by mail; by proxy bidding.

Applicants are able to check their position on the list at the time of the bid, together with the total number of bids already placed. This allows applicants to make decisions about their choice of property and the likelihood of being successful. Within the bidding period, applicants may withdraw bids and make further bids.

Only the applicant whose bid is successful will be contacted unless they refuse the offer made or are ineligible to be offered the property.

So far as is possible the CCP will use the banding system, and waiting time within the band to allocate accommodation. However, there may be times when a direct letting will need to be made to a property using the criteria set out in 'Policy on Choice' detailed in Section 1. In these circumstances a property will not be advertised. The aim is that no more than 15% of properties available to let should be allocated through a direct letting in order to preserve the integrity of the choice based letting process. However, in the circumstances of a national emergency such as the Covid-19 pandemic choice based lettings may be suspended, or a much higher percentage of lettings may be made directly.

The highest bidder is awarded priority in descending order between Band A, Band B, and Band C.

Within bands, priority is awarded according to an applicant's waiting time within that band and this is based on their registration date. However, there may be other reasons why it would be necessary or advisable to reject a bid that would otherwise have been successful: for example where there was restrictive labelling for the property advertised or where the property would not be suitable for that particular applicant. In the circumstances where the landlord who has advertised the property has decided that it would not be suitable, despite the applicant meeting the bidding criteria, there should be a discussion with the local authority's Housing Options Team before the bid is rejected.

Unless a property is advertised with restrictions, applicants who are members of the scheme can bid for any property in Cumbria regardless of where they live in Cumbria. However, when drawing up the shortlist applicants will be ranked first by local connection to Cumbria, then by Band (using the local connection criteria set out in Qualification rule 1 section 2 of the policy). For properties subject to Section 106 agreements and local lettings policies, priority will be awarded to applicants with a local connection as defined within the Section 106 agreement.

In the circumstances where there are two households with the same Band and registration date that bid for a property a decision to offer the property will be based on the household who is assessed as being most suitable for that property.



Where the property advert has indicated specific requirements such as age or accessibility, only those applicants meeting those requirements will be eligible for an offer.

### **Offers of accommodation**

This section sets out the procedure that will apply to making an offer of accommodation once an applicant has been selected from a shortlist of successful applicants bidding for that property.

All bids for a property are checked. Ineligible bids for a property will be excluded from consideration. Once selected and, prior to an offer being made, the Council or Housing Association landlord for that property will carry out a further verification of their eligibility and priority. In certain situations the offer will not be made, or if made may be withdrawn if:

- Since joining the scheme an applicant has become ineligible.
- On verification of the applicants' details, the priority band has been incorrectly awarded due to the information received by the applicant, or due to mistakes in the assessment of the application itself.
- The applicants' circumstances have changed since the priority band was awarded and the applicant is no longer entitled to the same level of priority.
- The landlord has evidenced housing management reason not to offer the property.

If an applicant does not reply to an invitation in writing, by letter or email or text, to view a property within 2 working days of receiving an offer then the offer will be deemed to have been refused and the property will be offered to the next applicant on the shortlist who qualifies for that offer.

A suitable and reasonable offer of accommodation is defined in appendix 4 of the policy.

There may, unfortunately, be exceptional circumstances where following a viewing or notification of offer an offer may still be withdrawn. This can be done up to the point when a tenancy agreement is signed. Examples of reasons when a property offer may be withdrawn are:

- The property is not suitable for the households needs
- The property fails to become available
- There is an issue and concern for community safety
- It comes to light that information has been withheld
- It comes to light that the household or member of the household has a property related debt
- The offer has been made in error
- The households circumstances changed
- The property is required for an emergency

- It transpires that the rent would not be affordable

There must be clear grounds recorded by the Council or a Partner Housing Association on the IT operating system if a decision is taken to refuse or bypass an applicant who is top of any shortlist. Where an applicant has been refused or bypassed because they have failed a verification check or that their circumstances have changed they should be informed of the reason and how it now affects their application.

For all other reasons for example, issues of public safety, risk, or sustainability of the tenancy, an applicant, upon request, will be informed of the reason behind the decision to refuse or bypass them.

### **Feedback on Lettings**

A main aim of the Cumbria Choice scheme is to operate an open and transparent lettings system.

The result of lettings made through the scheme will be published on the Cumbria Choice web site and at the end of the property advert newsheet.

## **Appendix 1.8: Assessing whether an applicant qualifies for a priority band A or B on the basis of medical priority**

The assessment: Awarding Medical Priority for significant Medical Conditions that are being made worse by an applicant's housing circumstances

### **The framework that will be applied to assess medical impact cases**

This appendix provides detailed operational guidance to help officers to make their decisions on whether medical or welfare impact priority should be awarded.

Applicants will be asked for information and any supporting documentary evidence, regarding how their health or welfare are affected by their current home, or why the applicant's health cannot be managed in their current accommodation. They will be asked to complete medical information questions set out in the on-line application form and may, depending on their answers, be asked to complete a follow up form to allow the assessing officer to obtain more information.

On receipt, the assessing officer will consider whether any supplementary information is needed from any other relevant professional, who may be able to explain the impact the applicant's current accommodation is having on their medical condition or disability.

While this information is being provided, and pending the assessment of medical priority, eligible and qualifying applicants who have another statutory housing need will be registered and placed in a band according to that need. Where no other housing need exists, the application will remain as pending until any medical priority is determined

The assessing officer supported, where necessary, by a senior officer, will normally make a decision whether or not to award a priority based upon the information provided. They will use the guidance notes and assessment framework in this appendix to help them make a decision.

If the assessing officer is of the view that it would be beneficial to obtain an opinion from an independent Medical Advisor, or Occupational Therapist they will make a referral. A Medical Advisor will not normally be asked to carry out a medical examination and their opinion will be based on the information provided by the applicant and any supporting information from a medical professional and any information submitted by any organization supporting the applicant.

Applicants are not required to provide any supporting medical evidence in support of their application before an assessment is made although where this is available they should provide it in support of their case.

Where the assessing officer believes that further medical information is required before they can make an assessment they may request it from a relevant medical professional dealing with the applicant.

It is important to note that the assessing officer is not making a medical opinion. The role of the officer is to consider evidence re the impact of an applicant's current housing circumstances on any medical condition or disability.

Medical priority will not normally be awarded in the following circumstances:

- a) Where the applicant has a health issue, however severe, that is not impacted by the accommodation occupied
- b) Health problems that are not affected by housing or cannot be improved by moving
- c) Where a move would only make a marginal improvement to the applicant's condition
- d) Medical impacts caused by housing defects that are likely to be rectified in a reasonable time frame.
- e) Where another reasonable course of action is available to the applicant to resolve their difficulties.
- f) Time-related medical problems (e.g. pregnancy-related problems or a broken leg)
- g) Disrepair problems not impacting significantly on the applicant's medical condition. (Note under the policy an applicant may receive priority separately for living in unfit or unsatisfactory housing depending on the assessment made of their circumstances and impact).
- h) Overcrowding not impacting significantly on the applicant's medical condition. (Note under the policy an applicant may receive priority separately for being overcrowded).
- i) If the situation can be resolved by equipment or minor adaptations which can be implemented in a reasonable period of time.

Applicants who require support to live independently with their medical condition will be placed in a priority band for their medical need but will be suspended from bidding until an appropriate package of support has been agreed. If no appropriate support package has been agreed the applicant will not be offered accommodation whilst a support plan/package is pursued.

Each individual on the application with a health or welfare problem will be assessed. If there is more than 1 member of the household whose health and/or welfare is being affected by their housing, their application will be awarded the need relating to the severest problem.

Where an applicant has been placed in bands A or B as a result of a medical need this may be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the award is still relevant.

The review will determine whether the level of priority is still appropriate. The review may involve a phone-call to the applicant and/ or support agency, an email, or a home visit.

Once the assessment has been completed the applicant will receive a letter or email advising them of the outcome, and if a priority band is awarded what that band is.

Where an applicant already registered notifies a change of medical circumstances that are impacted by their current housing the applicant's priority will be re-assessed using the same process.

This section below quotes examples of when Bands A or B could be awarded. These are just examples and an assessment will be made on the facts of the case.

### **Band A: Covers urgent and immediate medical impact problem**

This top category band A will be reserved for exceptional cases where an applicant's health is seriously at risk (including a risk to life) due to the associated medical and housing difficulties that are inherent in their existing accommodation.

### **Band B: Covers serious medical impact problem**

A band B award also reflects urgent medical impact cases that have a clear relationship with the applicant's existing housing circumstances.

### **The detail for the operational guidance that used to assess medical cases**

1. The applicant will be asked to indicate on their on-line application form whether they or anyone in their household has an illness or disability that is affected by their current accommodation.
2. If the information returned on the on-line form does not clearly address the impact of the applicant's current housing on their condition, the assessing officer will contact the applicant to ask them specifically to describe how the current housing is impacting on the condition described (a standard letter/form will be used).
3. The email/letter will explain that where supporting information from a health professional is available, the applicant should provide this information to support their application, but that we do not, as a matter of course, require an applicant to submit a medical report, or obtain letters from their GP before an assessment will be progressed. We do not wish to create further work or costs for doctors or applicants by insisting that medical reports are produced before an application can be considered.
4. It is expected that the majority of cases can be assessed by the assessing officer by using this guidance and where necessary taking advice from a senior officer. Only where relevant and appropriate will advice from an independent medical advisor or OTT be sought.
5. Depending on the seriousness of the circumstances claimed the case might be referred to an independent medical advisor or OTT to provide advice on the possible impact of any medical or disability condition to help address the impact of the applicant's current accommodation on that condition.
6. In the circumstances where the assessing officer believes there may be an urgent and immediate need, due to the severity of the impact of their current housing on an applicant's disability, the case can (with a senior officer's approval) be submitted to Cumbria County Council's Occupational Therapy Team (OTT) for a more detailed assessment. In order to do this the OTT may visit the home of the applicant and consider any supporting information

- and may recommend whether Band A or B priority should be awarded, based upon the severity of the case and the urgency of the need for re-housing.
7. The OT may also make recommendations re the type of housing that the applicant may need.
  8. Where priority is awarded applicants will only be considered for the type of accommodation assessed as being required. For example, if it is assessed that an applicant needs to move to a bungalow because due to their condition they need to use a wheelchair, they will only be considered for suitable properties that meet this need.
  9. There will be occasions when advice, or clarification, from a GP or hospital consultant may need to be sought. For example, where it is claimed that an applicant's housing circumstances is severely affecting their mental health.
  10. Where the information indicates that the applicants condition is not so urgent and immediate that they are unable to live in their current home, or that there is insufficient evidence that the medical condition would be significantly improved by alternative housing no award of priority band A or B will be made.
  11. The following list sets out some of the circumstances that may qualify for an award of priority banding:
    - a) An applicant's inability to manage stairs, control temperature, etc.
    - b) Where an applicant is confined to their existing accommodation due to the physical nature of that accommodation
    - c) Where an applicant's accommodation is having a significant or exceptional impact or is causing an applicant's mental or physical health.
    - d) An applicant's restricted ability to fend for him/herself in the accommodation which may put them at significant risk due to the physical nature of the accommodation
    - e) The need for adapted housing and/or extra facilities
    - f) The need for sheltered or supported housing due to the impact of their current housing on a medical condition.
    - g) The need for alternative housing as part of a care plan

When assessing whether to award band A or B or no band, the assessing officer will follow the 5-stage process set out below:

1. Is the medical/disability issue serious enough for a priority banding to be considered?
2. If the medical condition is serious enough for a priority banding to be considered the assessing officer should then decide if there is a direct link between the identified medical problem and the applicant's current housing accommodation/situation, i.e. on the facts obtained (from the applicant and any medical information or reports submitted including any advice from an independent medical advisor or OTT) is the officer accept that the applicant's current housing accommodation/circumstances is making their medical condition substantially worse, or will make it worse.
3. In practical terms the officer should consider the adverse effect this has on the applicant's ability to manage day-to-day tasks in their current home. The applicant's current housing accommodation/circumstances may be impacting on their medical condition or disability but not to the extent that an award of band A or band B priority should be granted under the criteria adopted for the policy.

The examples listed for an award of band A or band B should be used to guide the officer when making their decision.

4. Before making an award the assessing officer needs to be satisfied that there is a realistic expectation that the impact on the identified medical condition/disability would be removed or significantly improved through the provision of alternative accommodation.

5. If the officer is satisfied that the impact on the identified medical condition/disability would be removed or significantly improved they would then decide whether to award Band A or B depending on the severity of the impact and using the examples below to guide them.

### **More extensive examples to help the assessing officer to decide if band A should be awarded on medical or disability grounds**

These examples are intended to guide the assessing officer on the threshold set for a band A or band B priority award, or whether no award should be made. They will also serve to help an applicant understand the threshold for a priority award to be given.

The following are examples of cases that may qualify for Band A award. It may apply to the applicant or a member of their household:

1. Applicants who have a progressive, chronic or life threatening medical condition and cannot be discharged from hospital because they do not have any accommodation, or their accommodation is unsuitable for example, because they cannot access toilet and/or bathing facilities in the property. This will include cases that cannot be discharged from hospital due to their accommodation being unsuitable.
2. Applicants who have a progressive, chronic or life threatening medical condition and urgently need to move to accommodation with significant disabled adaptations, such as accommodation suitable for a wheelchair user.
3. An immediate life threatening condition which is seriously affected by the current housing and where re-housing would make that condition significantly easier to manage
4. A serious illness, where an applicant is receiving palliative care and urgently requires rehousing to facilitate the on-going provision of that care
5. A life limiting condition and their current accommodation is affecting their ability to retain independence or enable adequate care
6. The applicant's health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening, e.g. applicant has severe mental health problems that are significantly exacerbated by their accommodation;
7. A new and life-changing condition that severely impairs their mobility, meaning they are unable to carry out day-to-day activities, or have difficulty accessing facilities inside and outside of their accommodation and require housing into suitable accommodation
8. Where their current property leaves a person at risk of infection, e.g. where an applicant is suffering from late-stage or advanced AIDs
9. Due to limited mobility a person is unable to access essential parts of the property e.g. bathroom/toilet.



10. A member of the household is elderly or disabled or has a progressive illness and is likely to require admission to hospital or residential/nursing care in the immediate future and re-housing would enable the person to remain at home.
11. Armed forces personnel who need to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability that he or she has sustained as a result of service.
12. Veterans who have actively served in the armed forces and are suffering from severe post-traumatic stress disorder or serious illness directly related to service in the forces
13. People who have a severe mental health or learning disability which significantly affects their ability to lead a normal life and which puts them at risk of admission to hospital or residential care.
14. People living in a mobile home, caravan or converted vehicle which, due to medical conditions, the vehicle cannot meet their essential needs
15. Where remaining in the current accommodation poses a significant risk of serious and permanent injury and/or permanent severe disability
16. Where the applicant is prevented from having access to kidney dialysis, respiratory, or other similar essential equipment. This will normally apply where these circumstances are likely to prevent someone from remaining in their home for all or most of the time. Such a condition would be likely to be ongoing, rather than a temporary condition
17. Someone with a medical or disability who's housing has rendered them housebound
18. Where a move would avoid the need for another service (e.g. Social Services) from having to provide a significant level of support. This might include for example residential care; overnight care provision, or other support with similar resource implications
19. Where someone suffers with epilepsy or other conditions that cause frequent and unpredictable falls and all medical interventions to prevent them have been investigated. This will involve an assessment of the layout of their current accommodation, for example the number and nature of steps, stairs or other hazards that may increase the risk of serious injury
20. Where it is impossible for the person to use essential facilities within the home and no adaptation is possible
21. The applicant or household member requires significant disabled adaptations to meet their needs and this is not possible in their current accommodation or would not be cost effective.

**More extensive examples to help the assessing officer to decide if band B should be awarded on medical or disability grounds**

1. Applicants who have significant mobility issues and would benefit from a move to ground floor or level access accommodation
2. Applicants who have significant mobility issues and would benefit from a move to accommodation that has level access showering facilities
3. Applicants who have a significant physical or mental health condition that is directly affected by their accommodation and where a move to alternative accommodation would help to ease or resolve their condition
4. Applicants who have a medical need for an additional bedroom for example, because they have been assessed as requiring an 'overnight carer', or they

need more space to accommodate a substantial amount of medical equipment.

5. Applicants whose housing is unsuitable for severe medical reasons, or due to a disability, but who are not housebound, or whose health, or safety is not at such a risk level to require immediate urgent housing may be awarded band B
6. Children with severe conditions such as autism, or cerebral palsy where their long term needs cannot be met without long term settled accommodation.
7. A person whose disability means that re-housing would help them to overcome physical barriers created by their current accommodation that they struggle with e.g. stairs and steps.
8. A person with a severe disability requiring some adaptations to their property that cannot be provided for in their current accommodation.
9. Where an applicant can access their home, but struggles to access normal day-to-day facilities within it (e.g. bath/shower/toilet) without experiencing significant difficulty, pain or other discomfort. This would include cases where an adaptation is possible but cannot be undertaken in a reasonable period of time. (Note: any priority would be removed if an adaptation is completed, or work started)
10. An applicant is suffering from a long-term mental illness that is being exacerbated by their accommodation. There will normally not only be GP involvement, but other specific mental health support already provided.
11. Where an applicant is only not housebound due to significant support that is available to enable them to get out of their accommodation
12. An applicant or member of their household with a terminal illness, or long term medical debilitating condition, whose current accommodation is not necessarily having a significant impact on their condition but where it is agreed by the council that their quality of life would be significantly improved by moving to alternative more suitable accommodation, or accommodation that is nearer to support that is essential for their wellbeing.

## **Appendix 2 – Definition of Terms**

Accessibility – Used here the term refers to how ‘user friendly’ the service is to all people who may want to use it.

Adapted Property – Property that is suitable for those with a physical disability i.e. where a stair lift has been fitted.

Automatic Bidding – Within the ICT system a means of expressing an interest in a property for someone, without making the bid themselves.

Banding Scheme – The method by which customers are prioritised for social housing (previously ‘points schemes’).

Bidding – The term used to describe people who register an interest in a property (no money is involved in making the bid).

Choice Based Lettings (CBL) – The system of letting property that gives customers choice in where they live through advertising property.

Housing Register – One list for all of Cumbria of people applying for social housing (previously ‘housing waiting lists’).

Applicants – Those people applying to the scheme for housing.

Effective Date – The date used to decide between customers in the same Band to establish who has waited longest.

Fully Occupied – Bedrooms in the property that are being fully used in terms of the household occupying the property in accordance with the table in Appendix 6. When they are not fully used the property could be considered under occupied.

Hard to Let – Low demand property where it takes longer to find a tenant.

Housing Options – A term used to describe a service that advises customers of all their choices and includes mutual exchanges, low cost home ownership and renting in the private sector.

Letting Policy – The means by which it is decided how property will be offered to customers.

Local Lettings – Policy made in local areas (to tackle specific, identified housing management issues) on how property will be offered that differs in some part from the overall scheme policy.

Management Discretion – Property that is offered directly to an identified person without being advertised.

Partnership – The name for the District Councils and housing associations that have funded, developed and continues to operate the scheme.

Proxy Bidding – a Local Authority or Registered Provider places bids on the customer's behalf.

Social Housing Providers – The term for a variety of housing organisations that provides not for profit housing and included local authorities, housing associations.

### **Appendix 3: How any local lettings policy will be applied and reviewed**

Local lettings initiatives may be applied to meet the particular needs of a local ward or area or to address sustainability and community issues to ensure that the housing allocation scheme is able to contribute to building sustainable communities.

They will be tailored to fit local situations in well-defined communities (such as a particular block of flats, an individual street, or new housing development, or may be applied to a parish or a village in a rural area). Each local lettings policy will be based on a detailed analysis of relevant information gathered from a variety of sources and may include, for example, evidence from internal departments, partner Housing Associations, local Councillors, and the community itself. (Evidence may include information such as tenant profiling, the incidence of anti-social behaviour, and stock turnover in a particular block, street or area, a neighbourhood plan or the need to provide housing for local people in rural villages and parishes, or evidence from the Local Housing Authority internal departments i.e. environmental health).

The following are examples of local lettings policies that may be deployed under this policy. The list is for illustrative purposes and is not exhaustive.

- 1) Age restrictions.
- 2) Prioritising applicants who are key workers, as defined by the CCP.
- 3) Restrictions on lettings to vulnerable households where there are already a concentration of supported tenants/residents in a street or block.
- 4) Lettings to childless households where there are high concentrations of children and young people living on a specific estate, street or block.
- 5) Disregarding household type or property matching rules to allow, for example, under-occupation to reduce child density or to account for future family growth.
- 6) Ensuring that there is a balance of working and non-working households allocated to a scheme.
- 7) Enhanced local connection restrictions relating to a specific parish.

New developments will normally have local lettings policies (depending on the planning permission or agreement reached these may apply to first lettings only or be ongoing) regardless of whether the new development is subject to a Section 106 agreement or affordable housing statement. Where a new development is subject to a Section 106 planning agreement the criteria set will be followed.

In order to ensure a reasonable mix of household sizes and types, and families with children of different ages, a local lettings policy will normally be used for new developments larger than four properties. The local authority may set restrictions on the number of lettings, which can be made to families with young children, for example, or the number of families who are not working.

#### **How will a local lettings policy be assessed and agreed?**

The process for agreeing local letting policies may differ across the Cumbrian region. In some districts the decision is made by the Council and in other districts the decision is for the stock holding CCP partner in consultation with the Council.

There must be a clear evidence base for adopting a local lettings policy. The following framework will be used to decide whether a local lettings policy is appropriate:

- 1) That there is a clear definition of the objective to be achieved by that particular local lettings policy.
- 2) That there is a clear evidence base to back up the need for a local lettings policy.
- 3) That any potential equality impact has been considered.
- 4) How long the local lettings policy is intended to operate.
- 5) When the local lettings policy should be reviewed.

A written record of each policy adopted or rejected should be kept.

It is the intention that local lettings policies will be fluid with new policies being added as are required and existing policies being deleted once the objective for that policy has been met. Local lettings policies must be approved by the exceptions panel before they are applied.

All local letting policies will be reported to the CCP Board who will discuss any policies where there is any dispute over the wish to apply a local letting policy.

The intention is for all current local lettings policies to be listed as a link to the on-line version of this policy so the public can see which policies are in operation at any point in time. In addition any property advert will state whether there are any local lettings restrictions or criteria.

### **Limitation on applying Local Connection**

The conditions under s.198(2) of the Housing Act 1996 are altered so that a local connection referral can only be made if the applicant or any person who lives with them will not run the risk of “*domestic abuse*” in the other LHA’s district.

## **Appendix 4: Definition of a reasonable offer**

A refusal of an offer of the correct size and type will normally be considered unreasonable.

### **Guidance on reasonable and unreasonable refusals:**

#### **1) Property size**

The property must be the appropriate size for the household's needs at the time of making the offer. Where the family composition has changed, so that the property offered is too small or large for the applicant's needs, the refusal will be recorded as reasonable.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they register any change in their circumstances that will affect the number of bedrooms to which they are entitled.

Where the applicant refuses a property because it is too small on grounds of the need for an additional or larger bedroom(s) due to medical/mobility factors, but it meets the lettings standard, this will normally be considered to be an unreasonable refusal unless the applicant provides new medical information at the offer stage that is accepted by the CCP.

#### **2) Property type**

It will not be considered to be a reasonable refusal due to a dislike of the property type. Therefore an applicant cannot reasonably refuse an offer because for example, it is in a tower block, it does not have a garden or a particular heating system, it is on a wrong floor, or does not have a lift. If the applicant states medical grounds for refusing the property, these should already have been disclosed and considered as part of the assessment of their application, unless new information is submitted that is accepted by the CCP.

Where specialist accommodation is offered to a household inappropriately, this is considered to be a reasonable refusal. This may be for example:

- a) Offers of wheelchair standard housing to households which do not have wheelchair users
- b) Offers made to disabled applicants which are unsuitable for their needs, for example where they are unable to open a door entry system because the doors are too heavy
- c) Offers of sheltered housing where the applicant is not of the appropriate age.

#### **3) Property condition**

Where a property is refused on grounds of repair/decoration, this will be considered an unreasonable refusal unless the voids team decides to withdraw the property from letting for further works to be carried out.

#### **4) Area of choice**

Where the offer is not within one of the applicant's specified areas, the refusal will not be considered to be reasonable. It should also be noted that where an applicant is made a direct offer such as: where the applicant has been assessed as being statutory homeless and are owed a statutory homeless duty, area of choice will not apply.

#### **5) Racial harassment**

Where an applicant from a black or ethnic minority household refuses the property prior to viewing because the previous tenant was rehoused as a result of racial harassment, or there is a known problem of racial harassment in the vicinity of the property, the refusal is considered reasonable.

#### **6) Choice of landlord**

An applicant receiving a direct offer cannot choose whether they are rehoused by the Council or by a Housing Association or a specific Housing Association. Therefore, any refusal of Housing Association property because, for example, there is no Right to Buy, or Right to Acquire, or the rent is higher than another social landlord will not be considered to be reasonable (unless in the example of the rent level the assessment is that the offer is unaffordable for the applicant in question).

#### **7) Pets**

One of the conditions of the tenancy agreement is that a tenant must obtain the written consent of the landlord before keeping domestic pets.

Any intention to keep a pet must comply with the Council's or partner Housing Association's tenancy terms and conditions, which means that permission must be sought and agreed prior to signing the tenancy agreement for the property. Therefore any refusal on the basis that permission has not been granted to keep a pet is not reasonable.



## **Appendix 5: Contact Details for all Partner Organisations**

Accent Housing Association  
Ambassador House  
Dalton Road  
Barrow-in-Furness  
LA14 1HZ  
Tel: 0345 6780555

Allerdale Borough Council  
Allerdale House  
New Bridge Road  
Workington  
CA14 3YJ  
Tel: 03031 231702

Barrow Housing Department  
Town Hall  
Duke Street  
Barrow-in-Furness  
LA14 2LD  
Tel: 01229 876550

Carlisle City Council  
Civic Centre  
Rickergate  
Carlisle  
CA3 8QG  
Tel: 01228 817200

Copeland Borough Council  
The Market Hall  
Market Place  
Whitehaven  
CA28 7JG  
Tel: 01946 598300

Eden District Council  
Mansion House  
Friar Gate  
Penrith  
CA11 7YG  
Tel: 01768 817817

Eden Housing Association  
Blain House  
Bridge Lane  
Penrith  
CA11 8QU  
Tel: 01768 861400

Home Group  
PO Box 115  
Duke Street  
Whitehaven  
CA28 0BT  
Tel: 0345 1414663

Impact Housing Association  
Nook Street  
Workington  
CA14 4EH  
Tel: 0344 8736290

Riverside Housing Association  
English Gate Plaza  
Botchergate  
Carlisle  
CA1 1RP  
Tel: 0345 111 0000

















South Lakeland District Council  
South Lakeland House  
Lowther Street  
Kendal  
LA9 4DQ  
Tel: 01539 733333

South Lakes Housing  
Bridge Mills Business Centre  
Stramongate  
Kendal  
LA9 4BD  
Tel: 0300 303 8540

Castles and Coasts Housing Association  
3 Castle Street  
Carlisle  
CA3 8SY  
Tel: 0800 0851171

**Appendix 6 - Household Type and Property Size – *This will need to be amended according to the overcrowding rules that the CCP want to adopt as discussed in overcrowding section of the section 4 banding table***

This table provides guidance on the size of home that different types of household can bid for on Cumbria Choice. This is supplemented by the more detailed information which each housing provider places in individual advertisements and in guidance published on the Cumbria Choice website.

Household	Bedsit	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5+bed
Single person			D	D		
2 Adults (couple including same sex couples)			D	D		
2 Adults (non couple)			 *	D		
Single 1 child				D		
Single 2 child						
Single 3 Child						
Single 4 or more children						
Couple 1 child				D		
Couple 2 child						
Couple 3 child						
Couple 4 or more children						

**NB** *Households with access to children will not be able to include them as part of the household when looking at eligibility for property size. See section 2.1 Households with access to children/joint custody.*

## Key



Number of bedrooms allowed for this household type



Number of bedrooms allowed for this household type, subject to the ages of the children.

Two children under the age of 10 are usually expected to share a bedroom.

Two children of the same sex are usually expected to share a bedroom until they are 16.

Once a child is 16 a separate bedroom is allowed.

D

Allowed by discretion only when stated in the advertisement.

This is most likely to apply in one of the following circumstances:

- There is low demand for the type of property in the location
- There is lack of supply of smaller homes in the location
- A local lettings or s106 policy applies

\*

Some providers may only allow households with children to bid on houses

## **Appendix 7 - Right to Move Qualifying Criteria**

To meet the Allocation of Housing (qualification criteria for the Right to Move - England) Regulations 2015, a local connection may not be applied to existing social tenants seeking to transfer from another local authority district in England who: -

- Have reasonable preference under Section 166(3)(e) because of a need to move to the Local Authority's district to avoid hardship, and
- Need to move because the tenant works in the district, or
- Need to move to take up an offer of work

### **QUALIFYING CRITERIA**

This applies to existing social housing tenants: -

- Who need to move within a Local Authority area or to another local authority area to avoid hardship, and
- Who need to move because the tenant works in the district, or
- Who need to move to take up an offer of work?

What the Local Authority should take into account: -

Need to Move:

Tenants must need to move, not simply want to move. Factors to consider in determining `need` are: -

- The distance and/or time taken to travel between home and work.
- Availability and affordability of transport as against earnings.
- Nature of the work and whether similar opportunities are available nearer home.
- Other personal factors, for instance medical conditions, child care
- Length of work contract.
- Would failure to move mean a lost opportunity to improve employment circumstances or prospects?

Work:

`Work` only qualifies as `work` if it is not: -

Short term:

- Consider whether the work is regular or intermittent (particularly relevant for the self-employed).
- Consider the period of employment – a contract of less than 12 months could be considered short-term.

Marginal:

- Less than 16 hours per week could be considered marginal

- Consider the level of earnings.

Voluntary:

- Unpaid, or expenses only.

Ancillary:

- That is, if the person works occasionally in another local authority area, but main place of work is a different area, the work is excluded.

### **Verification and Evidence**

The tenant must be able demonstrate that he/she has a genuine job offer and that he/she has a genuine intention to take it up.

Appropriate evidence could include: -

- A formal offer letter.
- A contract of employment.
- Wage/salary slips covering a certain period, or bank statements (zero hour contracts).
- Tax and benefits information, for example proof of receipt of working tax credit.

**Appendix 8: Person(s) Who Will Take Specific Decisions *this will be added to the final policy***

## **Appendix 9: How major changes will be considered by each of the 6 Cumbrian Councils**

*Will be added to the final policy*



## **Appendix 10: The revised Equality Impact Assessment June 2020**

This is attached to the policy as a separate document given its length. A copy can be emailed on request.

## **Appendix 2: CUMBRIA CHOICE: REVISED HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA) JUNE 2020**

Date approved	June 2020
Approved by:	
Next Review Date:	

### **Background**

Under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996, every local authority is required to adopt a 'Social Housing Allocation Policy', the purpose of which is to determine priorities in allocating housing and to set out the procedures to be followed. The Allocation Scheme determines individual priority for housing. In June 2020 the 'Cumbria Choice' Allocation Policy was reviewed and a number of changes made. Cumbrian Choice is the adopted social housing allocation policy for all 6 Cumbrian local authorities.

Cumbria Choice is a sub regional partnership between the 6 local authority districts and 8 'Registered Provider' housing associations that own social housing stock across Cumbria.

The revised policy was subject to a public consultation from 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 ending on 21<sup>st</sup> May. The consultation involved:

- Sending out a detailed consultation survey (attached at appendix 1 with a summary of the consultation responses). This was sent out with a copy of the draft policy.
- The survey and draft policy was sent to all relevant stakeholders including specialist organisations working with groups and individuals owed a protected characteristic including organisations working with disability, mental health, domestic abuse, older persons and race. In total over 350 stakeholders and individuals were sent the survey
- The survey was also sent to a group of service users who had previously indicated that they would like to be involved in the consultation exercise.
- The survey was also posted on the Cumbria Choice Website so that anyone registered could make comments.

This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and has been finalised in the light of the consultation responses.

Comments received were logged and considered against the policy proposals. Some minor changes have been made as a result of the consultation. The changes were strongly supported by stakeholders who responded to the survey.

Under the Equality Act 2010, when adopting a new Allocation Policy a local authority is required to have due regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by, or under the Act
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without
- c) Promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without

The 'protected characteristics' in law are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination. The equalities impact assessment set out below, has considered the impact of the changes to the Allocation Policy on the protected groups and, where there is an impact, set out the justification for continuing with the policy change along with the actions that will be taken to reduce any impact that has been identified.

**The key objectives for reviewing the social housing allocation policy are:**

- a) To continue to support local people most in need of housing in Cumbria
- b) To simplify the policy so that it is easier for customers to use, is transparent, and is accepted by customers as a fair way to allocate social housing when it is often in short supply.
- c) To ensure the policy contributes towards creating mixed and sustainable communities where people of different backgrounds and socio economic groups live side by side including the need to the problem in some areas where there is not as high a demand for social housing as there is in other parts of Cumbria.

**Details of the changes to the 'Cumbria Choice' policy**

There were a number of important changes proposed and these are explained below using the explanation set out in the consultation survey.

### **1) We want to reduce the number of Bands from 5 to 3**

The Cumbria Choice Partnership has received regular feedback from users and stakeholders that the allocation policy is too complicated and confusing. One of the main concerns expressed is that customers do not understand why there needs to be 5 Bands and inevitably this encourages 'higher band chasing' which, in turn, increases the officer time needed to administer the scheme.

The proposed solution is to move to a simple 3-band system with the time a person joined the register determining their place in the queue for the band they have been allocated.

Band A will be for the most urgent housing need cases that need to move quickly.

Band B will be everyone else that the legislation states has a statutory housing need.

Band C will be everyone else.

This aim of this simple change is to build trust in the system as it will become more of a 'waiting list' queuing system recognised by everyone using it as a fair way to allocate a limited resource where there is often over demand for certain property types or areas.

### **2) We intend to keep an 'Open Register'**

Many local authorities restrict their Housing Registers so that only customers who are assessed as having what is called by the allocations legislation 'a statutory housing need' can join the register

We intend to continue to operate an open register in Cumbria. Everyone will still be able to register regardless of whether they meet the definition for a statutory housing need (unless there is evidence of serious unacceptable behaviour or significant former rent arrears). Those customers who are not assessed as having a statutory housing need will be placed in the Band C. This still means they have a chance of being housed but when they bid for accommodation they will be 'shortlisted' below customers from the higher statutory housing need bands A and B. We think this is a fair system that gives everyone some chance of being considered for social housing.

### **3) We are adding to, and amending the qualification rules for when a customer is able to join the Housing Register**

The current policy has a number of qualification rules that decide whether an applicant will be allowed to join the Housing Register in Cumbria. We are amending some of the rules regarding when a customer can qualify to be included on the Housing Register, and in addition creating a rules for when a customer can qualify for Band C but not for the higher needs Bands A and B. We want to know what you think of each of these qualification rules. They are set out in the table below with an explanation for what we are trying to achieve.

Two of the key rule changes relate to customers where there is evidence of former social housing rent arrears or unacceptable behaviour. The objective is to be much clearer with customers what they have to do to resolve the issue in question but to discourage some previous practices whereby they may be 'arbitrary blocked' from being considered for social housing. The new rules mean fewer will be disqualified but they will not be offered social housing until they have demonstrated the changed behaviour required to be considered to be a good tenant.

<p>Qualification rule 1 – Local Connection</p>	<p>It is proposed that the Policy will restrict access to the high housing need Bands A and B to customers who can evidence a local connection with Cumbria. This would prioritise Cumbrian households for the higher 2 bands but there would be exceptions for people without a local connection if they were homeless or victims of domestic violence.</p> <p>Therefore to qualify for Bands A or B the customer must have a local connection with Cumbria. This could be set as:</p> <p><b>Option A:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Living in Cumbria for the last year, or 3 years in the last 5</li> <li>b) Having close family living in Cumbria</li> <li>c) Working in Cumbria as long as this isn't casual work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option B</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Living in Cumbria for the last year, or 3 years in the last 5</li> <li>b) Having close family living in Cumbria that provide essential support</li> <li>c) Working in Cumbria - defined as Employment is defined as paid employment for 16 hours or more per week for a period of one year, or self-employment where an applicant can demonstrate that the self-employed work they perform is in the Cumbria area and is on average 16 hours a week or more.</li> </ul>
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	If the customer doesn't meet one of the above they can still register but will be placed in band C
Qualification rule 2: The requirement to give permission to obtain and share an applicant's personal information	Unless the customer gives permission to enable enquires to be made to assess their application and circumstances, they will not be able to qualify for the housing register. This is to combat possible fraudulent applications.
Qualification rule 3: Homeownership or legal interest in home ownership	If the customer owns their home they will either a) not be able to qualify to be included on the register, or b) will not be able to qualify for Bands A or B but would still be allowed to be placed into Band C. We would like your views on this rule and if you support it which should it be a) or b)?
Qualification rule 4: Financial resources	<p>If the customer earns above a set net income or has savings above a set threshold they will either not be able to qualify for the register or will not be able to qualify for Bands A or B but would still be allowed to be placed in Band C despite their income or savings.</p> <p>We would like your views on which option should be included and if you support income or savings thresholds what these should be?</p>
Qualification rule 5: Failure to Bid	Many customers once they register don't bid for the properties advertised. We think that if someone hasn't made one bid in 12 months that they should be removed from the register. This will cut down on the time and costs in administering the housing register. This rule would not stop a customer from reapplying at a later date.
Qualification rule 6: Fraud or giving False Information	If someone has lied or withheld information in an attempt to get social housing we think they should not be able to register, or if they are already registered and we discover they have led or withheld information they will be removed from the register. This would be serious cases of lies or withholding information that were intended to obtain social housing by deceit.

<p>Qualification rule 7: Circumstances where an applicant has current or former social housing rent arrears or another relevant recoverable housing related debt</p>	<p>This rule in the current policy is being amended to help customers who have former social housing rent arrears or housing related debt to be able to obtain social housing.</p> <p>For customers with serious rent arrears it will continue to be the case that they cannot qualify for the housing register until they have reduced the debt to a level we agree is reasonable.</p> <p>However, for customers who owe less than £1000 they will be able to qualify and be banded for their assessed housing need but they will not be offered a property until they have resolved the debt to a level we think is reasonable in the circumstances. There will be clear criteria for what they have to do to resolve the issue and they will continue to 'move up the queue for their band' so they have not 'lost out' whilst resolving the debt.</p>
<p>Qualification rule 8: Serious unacceptable behaviour</p>	<p>This rule in the current policy is being amended to encourage customers to tackle any unacceptable behavior issues, or ASB issues before they will be able to be considered for an offer of social housing.</p> <p>For customers with a history of serious unacceptable behavior that has not been resolved when they apply to join the housing register it will continue to be the case that they cannot qualify for the register until they have resolved the problem to the satisfaction of Cumbria Choice. That is not a change from the current policy.</p> <p>However, it is proposed that customers presenting with more minor issues that are assessed as needing to be resolved will be allowed to qualify and will be banded for their assessed housing need. However, they will not be offered a property until they have resolved their behavior to a level that will give us confidence that they will be good tenants in the future.</p> <p>There will be clear criteria for what they have to do to resolve their behavior and they will continue to 'move up the queue for their band' so they have not 'lost out' whilst they resolve the problem.</p>

Qualification rule 9: CCP Tenants not assessed as Band A or Band B Housing Need	Existing Housing Association and Barrow Council tenants who have a housing need will be able to join the Housing Register. However, there is a problem in existing tenants who do not have a housing need wishing to transfer to another social housing property. Each transfer costs the social housing landlord thousands of pounds in costs to re-let the property. We think that tenants who do not have a housing need should still be able to seek a transfer through the Mutual Exchange Scheme but not through the housing register.
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#### **4) We are making the rules clearer regarding when a direct letting outside of the choice based letting system will be allowed.**

The current policy on making a 'direct letting' will be made clearer regarding when a direct let will be allowed. The Policy intention is that direct lets should account for no more than 10%-15% of all lettings to preserve the integrity of the choice based letting system.

The main examples of when a direct offer will be considered due to exceptional reasons are:

- a) Urgent housing need situations where it would not be reasonable in the circumstances to wait for the Choice Based Lettings process to produce an offer such as a threat to life in the area in which an applicant currently lives.
- b) Tenants of a Cumbria Choice Partner in emergency cases whose homes are damaged by fire, flood or other disaster
- c) Where an applicant is homeless and in temporary accommodation and owed a section 189B(2) Relief duty or 193(2) main duty and the Cumbria Choice Board agree with a request from a Partner Council to allow direct lettings to move applicants out of temporary accommodation in order to manage any budgetary or legal impact.
- d) Where a vacant adapted property or a property designed to disability standards becomes available and there may be a need to offer that property to an applicant whose disability need best matches that property, regardless of the date they were registered.
- e) Other examples include cases where an applicant is subject to 'Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements' (MAPPA), or may present a risk to themselves or others



**5) We are proposing a penalty for applicants who refuse 3 reasonable offers in a 12-month period.**

All applicants will continue to qualify for 3 reasonable offers in a 12-month period. If an applicant in the high need Bands A or B refuses 3 reasonable offers in that 12 months they will be 'downgraded' to Band C for 12 months. This is to stop applicants bidding for properties they are not committed to taking which has the consequence that properties take longer to let and cost the social housing landlord money in lost rent. The definition of a reasonable offer is clearly set out in the new policy.

**6) We are proposing to remove the 'Cumulative Need' rule from the Policy**

We propose to remove the 'cumulative housing need' rule from the scheme to make the scheme more transparent for customers and easier to understand and to administer. Under the current policy customers who have two or more of the housing needs as listed in Band C are 'promoted' into Band B. This is called the cumulative need rule.

Under the new policy we propose that an applicant who meets 2 of the housing need criteria for band B will still only be awarded band B and not promoted to Band A. The old policy of cumulative need has been extremely hard for officers to assess and results in people constantly requesting that their circumstances reassessed in the hope of qualifying for the higher band.

**7) We are setting out how we propose to give choice to registered customers who have a local connection with the local authority area where a vacant property is advertised whilst at the same time encouraging mobility across Cumbria**

We want to encourage mobility by allowing everyone registered to be able to bid for most of the properties advertised regardless of whether they have a local connection with the local authority area where the property is vacant. There will be exceptions, for example where there is a new development under a section 106 Planning Agreement that requires tenants to have a close local connection.

However, to ensure that properties are prioritised for customers who have a local connection to the area where the property is advertised we intend in the first instance to shortlist customers who have bid and have a local connection to the Council area where the property is advertised. We think this is a fair process and protects areas of higher demand for residents who have a connection to an area, but at the same time encourages customers to be more mobile in contemplating moving across Cumbria as if no one with a local connection bids then the customer who has a connection to Cumbria but not to the particular Council area will then be considered for that property based on their band and date in band.

**8) We intend to expanded criteria for when a customer will qualify for the statutory housing need bands A and B and have set out clearer criteria for when a band will be awarded to ensure assessments are always consistently applied.**

The criteria for when a customer will qualify for the Housing Need Bands A and B will be expanded and made far clearer. This will make it easier for applicants and their representatives to understand if they qualify, and far easier for officers assessing their case to made consistent and timely decisions regarding whether a customer qualifies for a high needs the Band A or B.

**The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)**

This EQIA considers the changes to the Allocations Policy and assesses their impact on those applicants/households within the protected characteristic groups. The assessment considers whether an impact that is identified is considered to be a positive, negative or neutral impact. Where negative the EQIA sets out what steps have or will be taken to reduce that impact.

**Data, guidance and evidence used to assess the EQIA**

This assessment has been drawn up using a broad range of data available to officers about applicants on the Housing Register. In addition to the legislation and case law governing allocations, regard has been had to the government guidance on the allocation of housing, the Equality Act 2010 and recent case law on the operation of Section 149 of that act.

It is recognised that the current 'Cumbria Choice' scheme does not have a comprehensive set of data for the households on the housing register and for those rehoused. This is, in part, due to the limitations of the current operating system to develop comprehensive monitoring and performance reports. Raw data can be captured but has not been configured into reports based on the protected groups. This is a critical task for the project plan implementing a new IT operating system. A further problem with the data is that a large number of applicants fail to complete the personal data section of the application form.

Moving forward Cumbria Choice needs to be able to monitor those on the register who are bidding for properties as well as those applicants who are housed under the policy. This will allow the local authorities and partners to analyse if those housed by each protected group is proportional to the proportion from each group registered.

A new IT operating system is being purchased. To ensure that Cumbria Choice has better information to review the EQIA in the future the following actions will be taken:

- 1) The on-line applicant form will be amended to encourage more applicants to fully complete the relevant sections,
- 2) Officers will, on contact with an applicant, request any applicant who has not completed the personal information section to do so.
- 3) Changes will be made to the home page for the applicant's on-line account to show a message explaining the importance of providing the information.
- 4) At the point all applicants are written to asking them if they wish to remain on the Housing Register they will be prompted to complete the personal data section

The data that does exist indicate that the following groups are over-represented in the high priority groups on the Housing Register:

- Families with children
- BME households
- Households with disabled or long-term health problems.
- Female headed households

Research shows that this is common for all local authority allocation schemes and is explained by socio economic factors and poverty.

The new EQIA assessment is set out in the table below and has been structured to consider:

- a) Part A - Firstly, each Individual protected group in the context of the changes, and then
- b) Part B - The changes in the context of their impact on all of the protected groups

### **The consultation responses summarised**

All 8 changes proposed were strongly supported including each of the 9 qualification rules set out in change 3. A number of changes have been made as a result of the consultation feedback. These amendments include:

- a) Allowing applicants where it is agreed need to move from one Cumbrian Council district to another due to domestic abuse, the same priority in any shortlist as an applicant who has an established local connection to the area where a property is advertised.
- b) Making the criteria clearer for an applicant with housing debt as to when they may qualify for the housing register with no penalty, and where a penalty is applied more clarity on the criteria to be applied for the actions needed to resolve the debt so that they may be considered for an offer of social housing
- c) Helping to define which keyworkers should be given band B priority under the scheme.

**Part A – Consideration of each Individual protected group in the context of the changes**

<b>Protected characteristic</b>	<b>Potential issue where there may be a positive or negative impact</b>	<b>Impact Judgement + / -</b>	<b>Observations and Recommendations</b>	<b>Relevant comments or Action/s to reduce any impact</b>
Age				
	<p>The scheme will require applications to be made on-line as opposed to submitting a paper form.</p> <p>The impact could be that older people are less able to use an on-line application form and the system of bidding for properties through choice based lettings</p>	Negative	<p>On-line applications have been the preferred method for the vast majority of residents in Cumbria to make their applications, but in some areas applications are still made by way of a paper form.</p> <p>To mitigate any impact it is agreed that each partner will assist older and vulnerable people to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fill out their on-line application and</li> <li>➤ To make bids under CBL</li> <li>➤ Plus paper forms will still be available in exceptional circumstances where it is agreed an applicant is unable to complete an on-line form</li> </ul> <p>On-line applications and CBL bidding on-line has been operating for several years. There is no evidence reported from applicants or stakeholders that customers are experiencing difficulty in applying for accommodation, or using the CBL system</p>	<p>The new website FAQs section will be amended to inform applicants that help is available if they are having difficulty in using any of the online application and bidding processes.</p> <p>The intention is to add a web chat option on the website to</p>

				further help applicants
	There is evidence nationally that younger people find it easier to access services online rather by filling out forms. Young people may be disadvantaged by a system where access is by paper form	Positive	It is reported by partners re the age profile of the Housing Register, that the majority of applicants are under 40. Delivering the application and bidding system on line is an advantage to younger people	No additional comments
	Seeking to deliver more of the application process on-line could disadvantage those applicants without internet access and these tend to be older applicants, or applicants most impacted by poverty	Negative	<p>Libraries have free public PC's. There are also free computer training sessions available across Cumbria.</p> <p>Information is available from any CCP partner on the availability of free local public internet access.</p> <p>There are numerous PCs in Council and Housing Association partner offices and the offices of other public authorities.</p> <p>Currently CCP partners report that the vast majority of bids are placed electronically. There are however alternative ways to bid.</p> <p>The office of National Statistics reported that In 2018, 90% of adults in the UK were recent internet users, up from 89% in 2017. 8.4% of adults had never used the internet in 2018, down from 9.2% in 2017. Virtually all adults aged 16 to 34 years were recent internet users (99%) in 2018, compared with 44% of adults aged 75 years and</p>	There is sufficient internet access points and support available in Cumbria to help people without access to the internet.

			over. The majority of the users of the CBL scheme are likely therefore to be confident in using on-line facilities and the scheme has ensured that there are sufficient protections in place for those applicants who are not confident of accessing the service online.	
	Young People - Care Leavers	Positive	Care leavers and young people ready to move on from supported accommodation benefit from the proposals as they are placed in Band A the highest priority Band. This should mean that they are provided with an offer of social housing in a relatively short time period Band A priority is also granted for children assessed as needing an urgent move for child protection concerns, and for residents who need larger accommodation to foster or adopt.	No additional comments
Disability				
	What is the impact of the changes on the housing prospects of applicants with a disability	Positive	The revised policy actively promotes the needs of disabled groups by ensuring that applicants with mobility problems are prioritised for accommodation that is suitable for them.  On the limited statistical information available it is estimated that for the Housing Register as a whole up to 25% of applicants have some level of disability.  Many applicants with a physical disability where their current housing circumstances impact on their disability will be prioritised for housing under the Policy. Disability is recognised in both of the 2 priority bands A and B.  Many applicants with a severe mental health condition and are homeless will be prioritised under the policy through being awarded reasonable preference for being owed a statutory homelessness duty	No additional comments

			The Council is also committed to capturing better information about social housing void properties to classify those that have or can be adapted.	
	How accessible are the application and bidding processes for applicants with a disability?	Positive	<p>The intention is to move to a new IT operating framework. The new website will be developed to ensure that it is fully compliant with all accessibility requirements. Actions that will be explored include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To ensure that the website is W3C 1.0 compliant</li> <li>b) That information is available on how to adjust type, font size, colour contrast and how to make the applicant's computer speak text aloud.</li> <li>c) To implement a drop down menu for people who need to read information in a language other than English.</li> <li>d) The ability to receive a letter in audio.</li> </ul>	The Council will seek in the future, where the IT allows, to monitor data on the frequency of applicants accessing their account to check whether some applicants are being disadvantaged
Transgender/ Gender reassignment				
	Is there an impact of the policy, or the changes, on transgender/gender	Neutral	Applicants who have undergone gender reassignment – can, as with any other applicant, apply to join the housing register and will qualify as long as they meet the eligibility and qualification criteria.	The scheme will more proactively collect monitoring

	reassignment applicants		The revised policy provides band A priority for applicants who have been subject to extreme harassment. Nationally statistically many people who have undergone gender reassignment report higher levels of harassment.	information for this group but has insufficient data at present
Pregnancy and maternity				
	No further impact identified	Positive	<p>The majority of the Register is made up of applicants that are female-headed households with up to 10% being pregnant (based on national estimates). Pregnant women are more likely to have become homeless due to being excluded from a family home, or homeless due to domestic abuse, or homeless due to being unable to continue to afford the rent on a private rented property once they have given birth given the cost of childcare.</p> <p>The homeless and survivors of domestic abuse are given a high priority for housing under the Policy and therefore pregnant women as a groups are likely to be advantaged and not disadvantaged by the Policy</p>	No additional comments
Race				
	The changes to the residency requirement for banding priority under the Housing Register may	Negative	<p>A residency requirement of 1 year or 3 years in the last 5 to qualify for the higher needs bands A or B will have some impact on, refugees, non-UK nationals and Irish Travellers. The revised scheme has attempted to:</p> <p>Strike the right balance between disadvantage to some groups of a residency requirement and the policy aims of the residence</p>	No additional comments



	impact on refugees, non British nationals and Irish Travellers		<p>requirement, which is to prioritise applicants who can demonstrate a positive commitment to Cumbria through being settled in the area. That is why:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A 1 year qualification has been chosen instead of 2 or 3 years which is the norm for the vast majority of local authorities (based on the national statistical local authority returns to MHCLG)</li> <li>b) The policy still allows applicants without the required residency period to qualify for the register (unlike most local authority schemes), awards them band C and means they may be still be successful in bidding for properties.</li> <li>c) To mitigate any impact the policy is careful to build in exemptions and consideration of exceptional circumstances for applicants who do not meet the residency rules.</li> </ul> <p>This impact and mitigation is considered more fully below in the section on the impact of the Policy changes across all of the protected groups</p>	
	On-line access for making an application and bidding will impact on applicants whose first language is not English		<p>The new Cumbria Choice website will have information for people who need to contact or talk to a partner in language other than English and there is a translation option for the on-line form and accompanying information.</p> <p>This is considered to be a low risk because if a person's command of English is particularly poor they are likely to have access to someone with interpretation skills.</p> <p>The new Policy has been designed to be more 'straightforward' and easier to understand reducing the potential impact on applicants who do not have English as their first language. As is currently the</p>	

			case, Officers can provide advice and assistance for people who may have difficulty understanding the policy	
Religion / belief				
	Is there an impact of the Policy or the Policy changes on applicants with a religion or belief?	Neutral	It can be difficult to distinguish what are factors to do with a person's religion as opposed to their ethnic or cultural origins. At present there is only generalised information for the Housing Register.	There will be more effort on collecting more accurate information in order to be able to assess any impact as the policy and the EQIA is reviewed
Sexual orientation				
	Is there an impact of the policy changes on applicants re their sexual orientation?	Neutral	The revised policy provides band A priority for applicants who have been subject to extreme harassment. Nationally, statistically many people report higher levels of harassment due to their sexual orientation.	More effort will be made on collecting the information in order to be able to assess any impact as the policy and the EQIA is reviewed

Sex				
	Is there any potential gender bias in the changes proposed?	Negative	<p>Females make up the majority of the housing register. This is because women are likely to be the main carers and are more likely as a result to come under one of the reasonable preference categories for a statutory housing need. This is likely to continue.</p> <p>A large proportion of the register is made up of 'female headed' households. The changes will not impact on the proportions of female headed households owed a statutory housing need</p> <p>Married, civil partners and co-habiting couples, same sex couples, brothers and sisters who wish to live together, can make applications.</p>	No additional comments
General comments on impact and safeguards			<p>Overall the changes proposed will have a positive impact for many of the protected groups identified under the Equality Act. Where there could be a negative impact the policy changes have been carefully constructed to keep any negative impact on any group to a minimum.</p> <p>Although it can always be argued that any change that positively impacts on the chances of social housing for one or more protected groups may have a negative impact on another protected group any impact is not considered to be substantial.</p> <p>There is a further protection in that all applicants have a statutory right to seek a review of their housing application if they are dissatisfied with the Council's decision regarding how they have been assessed and the band they have been awarded.</p>	

			The policy has been amended to provide all applicants with the opportunity to submit reasons why they believe their case should be considered for exceptional circumstances and where requested this will now be considered under the statutory review process ensuring senior officer scrutiny of their request and improved consistency in decision making.	
Part B Consideration of the changes in the context of their impact on all or several of the protected groups	All Groups/Several Groups			
	The impact of moving to a simple 3-band system with the time a person joined the register determining their place in the queue for the band they have been allocated	Neutral	<p>This aim of this simple change is to build trust in the system as it will become more of a 'waiting list' queuing system recognised by everyone using it as a fair way to allocate a limited resource where there is often over demand for certain property types or areas.</p> <p>This is assessed as having a neutral impact, as the 2 high need bands A and B are retained and applicants with a protected characteristic dominate these bands.</p>	
	The policy makes changes to the local connection rules impacting on whether an applicant may be awarded a priority band A or B.	Negative	<p>To qualify for the higher priority bands A or B an applicant must have a local connection with Cumbria. This is defined under the new policy as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Living in Cumbria for the last year, or for 3 years in the last 5</li> <li>b) Having close family living in Cumbria</li> <li>c) Be working in Cumbria as long as this isn't casual work.</li> </ul>	The scheme will analyse the equality profile of households who will potentially be affected by

			<p>Statutory guidance from the Government's MHCLG Department strongly encourages all local authorities to adopt a minimum 2 - year residency test as part of their qualification criteria.</p> <p>In accordance with Government Guidance there is the intention to embrace the idea of giving greater priority to applicants in housing need with a local connection to Cumbria based on residency, employment, or close family. However, the changes have sought to strike the right balance between the potential disadvantages for some groups of a residency requirement set against the policy aims of adopting a residency requirement, which is to prioritise applicants who can demonstrate a positive commitment to Cumbria through being settled in the area.</p> <p>The compromise chosen therefore is a 1 year residency rule to qualify for the higher priority bands A or B instead of 2 or 3 years residency rule to qualify for the register at all, which is the norm for the vast majority of local authorities (based on the data for local authority statistical returns to MHCLG 18/19).</p> <p>A key safeguard is that the policy will still allow applicants unable to meet a 1 year residency period to qualify for the register (unlike most local authority schemes) and they will be placed into Band C. This means they may still be successful in bidding for properties that are in less popular areas</p> <p>Local connection rules including length of residency were overwhelmingly supported in the consultation feedback.</p> <p>Adopting a residency rule is considered as particularly necessary given that the rental market in some parts of Cumbria is an affordable option for those seeking to rent privately in the region. It means that without a rule any applicant can apply for social housing, and their</p>	the proposed changes to local connection rules
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			<p>housing need may attract band A or B priority regardless of the fact that they may have only just moved into Cumbria. This is important for local authorities that have limited access to social housing in areas of high demand and seeks to prioritise limited social housing resources for applicants who have an established connection to the area.</p> <p>The partnership is mindful of any potential impact of introducing local connection rules on applicants who are classified as a protected group under the Equality Act.</p> <p>We are satisfied that the 1 year residency rule, employment and close family connection rules, are a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim which is to prioritise people with a local connection without preventing any access to housing for those in housing need without a local connection.</p> <p>The Council is satisfied that it has brought in changes that achieve an appropriate balance and namely that any indirect discrimination of the local connection rules on applicants from a protected group will be minimised through the actions set out below and that any impact is proportionate.</p> <p>The new policy has been careful to build in safeguards and exemptions to the local connection rules and the residency rule in particular. The safeguards include the ability for an applicant to retain their local connection where they have left the area due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Being in hospital, or</li> <li>2) Having to move out of the area for care, or</li> <li>3) Being accommodated in supported accommodation outside the district, or</li> </ol>	
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			<p>4) Having been placed into temporary accommodation outside of their 'home' district Cumbrian Council, or</p> <p>5) Applicants who are leaving an institution such as a prison or secure unit or a hospital, rehabilitation centre, refuge, hostel or supported accommodation scheme and were resident for 1 year or 3 out of the previous 5 years immediately before they moved into their current accommodation.</p> <p>Exemptions from the local connection rules for exceptional circumstances will also be considered for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Any application from a Gypsy or Traveller household that does not meet the continuous period of residence rule, as the period may have been broken by periods of travelling.</li> <li>2) Care leavers below the age of 21 years who are owed a duty under Section 23C of the Children Act 1989 by any local authority Children Services Department and have been accommodated within Cumbria for a continuous period of at least two years</li> <li>3) Reasons of safety; i.e. when an applicant is fleeing domestic abuse or hate crime from another area, or <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Is on a witness protection program, or</li> <li>b) Where by not moving to the area this would be detrimental to their wellbeing or cause significant hardship.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>Going forward there is a commitment to monitor and analyse the equality profile of households who will potentially be affected by the local connection rules and in particular the 1 year residency rule.</p> <p>A residency requirement of 1 year will impact to some extent on, refugees and non-UK nationals, Irish Travellers (though safeguards have been built in for travellers). The Council has sought to strike the right balance between disadvantage to some groups of a</p>	
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			<p>residency requirement and the policy aims of the residence requirement, which is to prioritise applicants who can demonstrate a positive commitment to Cumbria Choice and are settled in the area as defined by 1years residence, employment or close family associations.</p> <p>It is likely that for residents who have not resided in Cumbria for more than a year the rule will impact to some extent on BME residents, former asylum seekers and Irish travellers who will not be able to access the higher priority bands A or B until they meet the 1 year residency criteria, or other local connection rule such as employment. It should be noted however, that this will not stop them from bidding with their band C status and they may still be successful in obtaining an offer of social housing.</p> <p>It is also the case that levels of 'inward migration' into Cumbria is relatively low compared to other local authority areas of England.</p> <p>The Statutory Guidance issued by the Government expressly highlights the need for local authorities to take account of special circumstances. The changes on residence achieve this, for example, by protecting people who are moving into the district to escape violence</p> <p>Furthermore, it should be noted that all applicants to the housing register would be equally disadvantaged through the 1-year residency rule.</p> <p>To summarise the impact of the residency criteria is not considered to be substantial and the 6 local authorities have been careful to reduce the impact through the following actions:</p>	
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			<p>1 - The residency criteria is set at 1 year which is the number of years suggested in the Government's own guidance. We have been careful not to adopt a '2 or 3 years or more' residency rule which would have a greater negative impact.</p> <p>2 - The proposed allocations policy recommends that exceptions to the 1-year local connection requirement be made in appropriate cases, such as applicants who have been subjected to domestic violence.</p> <p>3 - By permitting exemptions to avoid hardship, the circumstances of all applicants can be fully considered and the possibility of an applicant suffering any disadvantage avoided.</p> <p>4 - There is an exemption for applicants where there are additional health, welfare or care/support needs that is reliant on the relative being within the area</p> <p>5 - All applicants have a statutory right to seek a review of their housing application if they are dissatisfied with the decision re the band they have been awarded. This provides an applicant with the opportunity to submit reasons why they believe their case should be considered under the exceptional circumstances part of the policy.</p> <p>6 - The Policy includes other ways an applicant can obtain the higher A or B banding for their housing need other than being resident for 1 year. The alternatives are where an applicant is employed in Cumbria for as little as 16 hours a week, or has close relatives living in Cumbria.</p> <p>7- Any disadvantage is only for a relatively short time period until the applicant can evidence residency for 1 year after which an applicant will be allocated the band that fully reflects their housing need.</p>	
	The specific change to include the ability to qualify for households who	Negative or neutral and positive in the longer term	<p>One of the policy aims is to reduce inequality and poverty over the long term by encouraging employment</p> <p>A key aim of this policy change is to encourage those who work in Cumbria to be able to work, live and settle in Cumbria. This is</p>	The scheme will analyse the equality profile of households

	are employed in the area		<p>especially relevant where they are unable to afford to rent or buy and have a housing need.</p> <p>The criteria has been deliberately set as paid employment for 16 hours or more per week for a period of one year, or self-employment where an applicant can demonstrate that the self-employed work they perform is in Cumbria. This recognizes that many women with childcare challenges may only be able to work part time.</p> <p>The policy aim is to make a contribution to rebalancing communities on social housing estates seeking a balance of households that are dependent on benefits and are economically active.</p> <p>There will be little impact on other households who don't work and live in Cumbria Choice and have a protected characteristic, as most of these applicants will qualify for a priority band under the 1-year residency rule.</p> <p>Unlike many other local authorities we have been careful not to build into the shortlisting rules work as a determining factor for prioritising applicants, as this could have a disproportionate impact on applicant's who are not able to work and come under the definition of one or more of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>Many of the mitigating actions and considerations set out in the section on the residency rule above apply equally here</p>	who will potentially be affected by the proposed changes to local connection rules for employment
	The specific change to include under the local connection rules family (normally mother, father,	Neutral or positive	This rule allows an applicant who is not resident or employed in Cumbria Choice to qualify under the local connection rules if they have close family living in Cumbria.	

	brother, sister, son or daughter) that have lived in the area for a minimum of the past five years.		This rule is likely to be positive for those applicants from a relevant protected group who live outside of Cumbria but have close family living in Cumbria and would be unable to qualify for another reason	
	What is the assessed impact of the revised income, savings/assets thresholds on applicants with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act?	Neutral or negative	<p>There were income and savings qualification thresholds under the previous Policy. These have been revised and are:</p> <p>Applicants who are considered to have sufficient financial resources to buy suitable accommodation in Cumbria will not qualify for Bands A or B but can qualify for Band C. 'Sufficient financial resources' are defined as sufficient capital to buy or rent privately; or sufficient income to raise a mortgage to buy or rent privately; or a combination of both. The income and savings limits are:</p> <p>Applicants (both single persons and couples) who have total savings, investments and/or assets of £25,000 or more.</p> <p>Applicants whose total gross household income from all sources exceeds an annual income of £45,000 or more (for single persons) or joint income of £60,000 or more (for couples).</p> <p>Those applicants with savings or income above the thresholds will be able to join the register and will be placed in band C and will also be advised on homeownership options and market and intermediate rent options.</p> <p>Although some applicants from a protected group will be impacted by this policy many other protected group applicants are on low incomes or have no savings and will benefit, because there will be fewer applicants on the register in bands A or B competing for housing.</p>	The Council will monitor the number of applications rejected for an award of the higher bands A or B due to high income levels or savings

			<p>The Council is satisfied that:</p> <p>The new policy contains a wide range of exemptions to the Income and savings thresholds compared to the previous policy and that these exemptions are targeted at applicants likely to be from a protected group based on age or disability.</p> <p>Furthermore, any negative impact on protected groups is reduced by the fact that they will have the income level or savings to obtain an alternative housing solution and by the fact that there is a process in the policy to consider exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>A key safeguard is that the policy will still allow applicants whose income or savings are above the thresholds to still qualify for the register (unlike most local authority schemes) and they will be placed into Band C. This means they may still be successful in bidding for properties that are in less popular areas</p>	
All groups				
	We will continue to operate an open register in Cumbria. Everyone will still be able to register regardless of whether they meet the definition for a statutory housing need (unless there is evidence of	Positive	<p>Although not a change to the policy the continuation of an open register will not impact on the objective that social housing should continue to be prioritized for those applicants assessed as being in the greatest housing need (bands A and B) and that these households are overrepresented by applicants who meet the protected groups criteria.</p>	

	serious unacceptable behaviour or significant former rent arrears). How might this impact on the protected groups?		However, many applicants without an assessed statutory housing need still meet the protected groups criteria. The continuation of an open register is therefore likely to benefit these applicants because they may be successful in bidding for lower demand properties.	
	The new Policy includes the ability to apply local lettings policies	Neutral at this stage. Each local lettings policy will need to consider any equalities impacts before being adopted.	<p>Although this isn't a change to the new policy as local letting policies were always allowable under the current policy, the new policy sets out a clear framework for how these policies will be agreed and requires an evidence base and a strict timetable for reviewing the impact. The equalities impact of local lettings policies had not been assessed fully under the current policy. There will now be a clear equalities consideration as part of the process for agreeing any LLP policy and a clear equalities monitoring on the impact of any policy.</p> <p>Local lettings policies have the potential to have an impact on the housing prospects of a number of disadvantaged groups. Such a policy restricts allocations within a small geographical area in order to achieve certain policy and good management outcomes. An example might be lower child densities in certain block or road, or to restrict the number of vulnerable people allocated accommodation in a block where there are already a number of people housed with complex needs and there is evidence that the number is causing</p>	We will fully consider the equalities impact of any local letting policy in deciding whether to approve any LLP and will then monitor the on-going impact

			<p>housing management issues for a landlord and impacting on other residents.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy is framed to allow for individual lettings plans to be developed and approved on a case-by-case basis. Each local letting plan will have to have an evidence base and be approved through a clear transparent process. Any equalities impact must be considered as part of the assessment process when deciding whether on not to approve a local lettings plan.</p>	
	<p>Applicants with former/current rent arrears or serious unacceptable behaviour who are assessed as being in housing need will be assessed as either non qualifying or allowed to qualify but not allowed to bid until the issue has been resolved.</p>	<p>The changes will have positive implications</p>	<p>Applicants with former/current rent arrears or serious unacceptable behaviour that are in housing need will be assessed as either non qualifying or allowed to qualify but not allowed to bid until the issue has been resolved.</p> <p>This isn't a change to the Policy but a clarification of how these rules will be applied. Under the previous policy section an applicant could be disqualified for former rent arrears or unacceptable serious behaviour. The previous policy lacked clarity resulting in some applicants being 'stuck' and unable to access social housing due to previous rent arrears or behaviour but a lack of clarity for how the policy would be applied and what an applicant needed to do to resolve a problem led to inconsistency in the application of the policy. Many applicants where the policy was applied would be in a protected group.</p> <p>Changes have been made that will benefit these applicants. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Much clearer criteria for when an applicant will or will not qualify</li> <li>b) Exemptions and exceptional circumstances consideration built into the Policy.</li> <li>c) Agreement with the Registered Provider housing associations on the approach to take regarding when an applicant should be</li> </ul>	<p>The number of households impacted by policy will be carefully monitored</p>

			<p>considered for an offer accommodation in respect of what 'resolving their arrears or unacceptable behaviour means. This will mean fewer applicants are 'stuck' with no solution.</p> <p>d) Where applicants qualify but are unable to bid until the matter has been resolved they will be allocated the correct band for their housing need and will continue to accrue 'time in band' priority which will be an advantage to them when they have resolved the issue.</p> <p>Although the housing related debt and unacceptable behaviour rules will impact negatively on some applicants from a protected group we are satisfied that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The rules are a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim which is to ensure that new tenants pay the rent and resolve previous housing debt owed to a social landlord, or resolve unacceptable behaviour, and</li> <li>➤ The changes that achieve an appropriate balance with safeguards and exemptions so that any indirect discrimination on applicants from a protected group has been minimised through the safeguards introduced in the new Policy and are proportionate.</li> </ul>	
	Making direct lets /sensitive lettings outside of the CBL system in certain circumstances	Positive for the protected groups of sex, disability	The revised Policy allows more flexibility in certain circumstances to make the best use of the housing stock. The vast majority of general needs properties will continue to be allocated via choice based lettings but there will be times when a housing association or Council needs to directly match a property to an applicant.	A target figure of no more than 15% has been set to ensure that the integrity

		and sexual orientation  Neutral for the other groups	<p>The policy lists the circumstances when a direct letting may be applied and includes MAPPA, MARAC or other sensitive lets or where there is a need to move due to extreme risk of domestic violence or harassment or witness protection.</p> <p>Where direct lets are made in sensitive circumstances this is often where an applicant may be a victim of domestic abuse or is being harassed or has complex needs. A direct sensitive let will allow the best match to be made depending on the circumstances and needs of a particular applicant. This is an advantage to a number of protected groups for disability, sex (women are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse)</p> <p>For the other protected groups making direct lets outside of the policy band and date order will have a minimal negative impact as these will only be made in limited circumstances</p>	of the CBL system is retained. The percentage of direct lets will be carefully monitored
	If an applicant in the high need Bands A or B refuses 3 reasonable offers in that 12 months they will be 'downgraded' to Band C for 12 months	Negative	<p>Applicants in Bands A or B who refuse 3 offers following a successful bid or direct allocation will be downgraded to Band C for a period of 12 months.</p> <p>We will implement clear operational procedures for the assessing officers to take into account people with mental health or support needs where their condition may impact on their behaviour and their ability to keep appointments in the normal way. Officers will look at the individual circumstances for all applicants before applying the rule.</p> <p>An additional safeguard is that the new Policy clearly defines what a reasonable offer is. This will ensure consistency in the application of the refusal policy.</p>	Regular analysis of the number and needs of applicants downgraded to Band C because they refused 3 reasonable offers will be needed to ensure that specific groups are not being



			<p>The view is that allowing an applicant to refuse 3 reasonable offers before being downgraded to Band C is a reasonable compromise between allowing choice and managing re-letting times for the partners. It is not expected that many applicants will have the rule applied, as having the rule in place will focus applicants on seriously considering any property they bid for.</p> <p>It is also likely to be positive in that some applicants in a high band who are in a protected group refuse offers of accommodation waiting for what they perceive to be the 'perfect' offer. This leaves them in unsuitable housing for a longer period of time. This policy will help tackle this problem</p> <p>Where an applicant is owed a homeless duty 1 suitable offer will end the homeless duty (this is required by the homelessness legislation) but they would still be able to receive 2 more offers if their housing need means they would still qualify for a Band A or B.</p> <p>Even if they have no other statutory housing need they would still qualify for the Housing Options Band C and be able to access lower demand properties and be entitled to 2 more offers in a 12 month period.</p>	adversely affected
	Removal of 'cumulative housing need' rule from the scheme to make the scheme more transparent for customers and easier to	Neutral or negative	<p>The change is to remove the 'cumulative housing need' rule from the scheme to make the scheme more transparent for customers and easier to understand and to administer. Under the current policy customers who have two or more of the housing needs as listed in Band C are 'promoted' into Band B and meeting 2 band B criteria would be promoted to band A. This is called the cumulative need rule. There may be some impact on applicants who meet the protected group criteria and have more than one assessed housing need.</p>	

	understand and to administer		<p>Under the new policy an applicant who meets 2 of the housing need criteria for band B will still only be awarded band B and not promoted to Band A. The old policy of cumulative need has been extremely hard for officers to assess resulting in inconsistency in applying the rule and applicants constantly requesting that their circumstances reassessed in the hope of qualifying for the higher band.</p> <p>There is mitigation built into the decision to remove the cumulative need rule in that band A criteria has been clarified to include applicants with an exceptional or urgent housing need therefore reducing the need for a cumulative need rule.</p> <p>There is also a positive impact in that applicants in the current band C are less likely to have a protected characteristic. By being able to meet 2 band C criteria they would be placed on an equal footing with applicants with a band B need and band B contains more applicants that have a protected characteristic.</p>	
	Applicants who have a local connection with the Cumbrian local authority where a vacant property is advertised will be given priority in any shortlist	Neutral	<p>This is not a direct change to the policy but an amendment to provide greater clarity.</p> <p>For any shortlist an applicant that has a local connection with the Cumbrian local authority where a vacant property is advertised will be given priority over applicants who bid without that local connection. This could impact on victims of domestic abuse but the policy has safeguards built in so that any DA cases where it is agreed that they need to move as they cannot stay in their local authority district due to risk, will be treated equally on any shortlist.</p>	
	The impact of the expanded criteria for when a customer will qualify for the statutory housing need bands A and	Positive	<p>The criteria for when a customer will qualify for the Housing Need Bands A and B will be expanded and made far clearer. This will make it easier for applicants and their representatives to understand if they qualify, and far easier for officers assessing their case to made consistent and timely decisions regarding whether a customer qualifies for a high needs the Band A or B.</p>	

	B and have set out clearer criteria for when a band will be awarded to ensure assessments are always consistently applied		This decision has a positive impact in that the criteria for being granted a band A or B award has been expanded for medical, disability, hardship, risk and move on meaning that more applicants from a protected group will qualify for a higher band award.	
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Date EQIA approved

Any subsequent amendments – date and detail

**Appendix 3: Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Policy – Summary of Proposed Changes – 2020 Update**

Changes to Policy	Details	Impact of Changes	Initial Board Consultation Responses	Change made to Policy in line with recommendation
Statutory Guidance	Policy updated in line with legislative changes since the last review of policy.	Low.	None identified	Yes updated in line with latest Homelessness legislation.
Equality Act 2010	An equality impact assessment has been undertaken as a result of which changes to syntax have been made throughout.	High. A significant number of customers are classed as vulnerable.	None	None
Reduction in number of Bands from 5 to 3	It is proposed that the number of bands reduce from 5 to 3 to make the Policy easier to understand and administer. The first two bands would cover the 'reasonable preference' categories as identified in relevant legislation with the remaining Band for any other applicants. Determination of priority would then be based on date of application.	Medium.	13 = yes agree 3 = no	Yes draft Policy updated.
Keep an 'open Register'.	This means that anyone can apply to join the Housing Register. This does not change the current position.	Low.	15 = yes agree 1 = no	None required.
Proposed changes to qualification rules	1 – Local Connection changes to allow those with local connection to Cumbria for the past year, or for 3 years in the last 5 years by way of immediate family in the area, permanent employment, or exceptional need (includes but not limited to: fleeing violence; armed forces, care leavers)	Medium.	15 = yes agree there should be a local connection rule	Some changes made to cover the local connection criteria.

Proposed changes to qualification rules	2 = requirement to give permission to obtain and share an applicant's personal information.	Low.	15 = yes agree	Yes draft Policy updated.
Proposed changes to qualification rules	3 = Homeownership or legal interest in home ownership. Should people who own their own home not qualify for higher bands A and B.	Low as applicants who own their own home have a low need for social housing.	10 = yes agree 5 = no	Yes draft Policy updated. However, if as a result of divorce settlement a Court has ordered that an applicant may not reside in the home in which they have a legal interest for a period likely to exceed 5 years then this will not be taken into account.
Proposed changes to qualification rules	4 = financial resources. People with a certain level of income/savings will not qualify for higher bands A and B.	Low as applicants can satisfy their housing need on the open market.	12 = yes agree 3 = no	Yes draft Policy updated. Applicants (single persons and couples) with total savings, investments and/or assets of £25,000 or more can qualify for Band C. Applicants with gross income exceeding £45,000 or more (single) or joint income of £60,000 (couple) can qualify for Band C.
Proposed changes to qualification rules	5 = failure to bid for a period of 12 months.	Medium to ensure that applicants who are vulnerable are not discriminated against.	13 = yes agree 2 = no	Yes draft Policy updated.
Proposed changes to qualification rules	6 = Fraud or giving false information will result in removal from the Register for a period of 12 months.	Medium depending on reasons why important information was upheld and whether any vulnerability identified.	15 = yes agree 1 = no	Yes draft Policy updated.
Proposed changes to qualification rules	7 = circumstances where an applicant has current or former social housing rent	Medium depending on reasons why debt has	11 = yes agree 4 = no	Yes draft Policy updated:

	<p>arrears or another relevant recoverable housing related debt.</p> <p>Debts £1000+ who have made no arrangement to address the debt will be ineligible.</p> <p>Debts £1000+ who have made an arrangement to address can join but will need to maintain a payment arrangement for 13 weeks and have either: repaid at least £750 or at least 25% of the original debt.</p> <p>Debts £1-£499 – eligible to join and bid unless evidence of risk of future non-payment such as history of housing debt/poor rent payments or breached payment arrangements.</p> <p>Debts £500-£999 – eligible to join but not to bid unless no real risk of future non-payment such as history of not having housing debts, history of regular rent payments, maintained payment arrangements. Alternatively, evidence of rehabilitation such as maintaining a payment arrangement 8-26 weeks, reducing debt to below £500, demonstrating cause of previous problems addressed.</p>	accrued in the first place and vulnerability issues.		
Proposed changes to qualification rules	<p>8 - serious unacceptable behaviour updated.</p> <p>Applicants guilty of serious unacceptable behaviour may not be admitted to the register or where there is evidence of rent arrears from the last private rented</p>	Medium. This will need to be monitored to ensure that vulnerabilities are taken account of.	Yes agree= 13	Policy updated.

	tenancy. The non-qualification will apply unless the applicant can demonstrate that the previous conduct is unlikely to reoccur. This could include demonstrating cooperation with support agencies leading to a substantial improvement in behaviour.			
Proposed changes to qualification rules	9 - CCP Tenants not assessed as Band A or Band B Housing Need and wanting to transfer should seek to do so through the Mutual Exchange Scheme.	Low Applicants can seek a transfer through mutual exchange or if assessed as Band A or B will qualify.	Yes agree = 14 No = 1	Policy updated.
Proposed changes to make the rules clearer regarding when a direct letting outside of the choice based letting system will be allowed.	Clarity provided on when direct lettings are allowed for example, urgent re-housing due to property being uninhabitable or where there are serious health and safety issues, or discharge of a statutory homeless duty; urgent housing need where it would be unreasonable to wait for the bidding process, threat to life, natural disaster, facilitate a three way (or greater) mutual exchange to make best use of housing stock; persons where the Council has a duty to rehouse due to the Land Compensation Act 1973, lettings due to annual lettings plans, adapted property, cases where Adult Social Care work is ongoing, cases of high risk such as Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).	Medium. Cases will need monitoring by the Board where direct lets are permitted.	Yes agree = 15	Policy updated.
Proposal to introduce a penalty for applicants who refuse 3	Applicants in reasonable preference Bands A and B who refuse 3 reasonable offers in a	Medium. Cases of vulnerable applicants	Yes agree = 14 No = 1	Policy updated and 'reasonable' is defined in the draft Policy.

reasonable offers in a 12 month period.	12 month period will be 'downgraded' to Band C for 12 months.	will need to be monitored.		
Proposal to remove the 'Cumulative Need' rule from the Policy	The 'Cumulative Need' rule was difficult to understand and administer and often resulted in 'band chasing' where applicants seek to move bands if they could demonstrate more than one need.	Low. The bandings allow for prioritisation of applicants based on need.	Yes agree = 14 No = 1	Policy updated.
Proposal for expanded criteria for when a customer will qualify for the statutory housing need bands A and B and a clearer criteria for when a band will be awarded to ensure assessments are always consistently applied.	Ensure bandings are applied consistently.	Low. Clarity in awarding Bands. Less likely to be challenged.	Yes agree = 8	Policy updated (Bands table outlined below).
A number of changes are proposed to the banding system and these are out in the summary table below.	Changes are detailed in the Table below.	Low. Changes will make the application of the Policy clearer.	Yes agree = 8	Policy updated.



## Revised Bands

<b>Band A: Additional preference for certain homelessness duties</b> <i>(This is assessed and verified by the Partner Council's Housing Options Team)</i>
This banding applies where a Cumbrian Council have accepted:
3) The Section 193(2) main homelessness duty or the Section 193C(4) 'reduced' Section 193 duty, or
4) A section 189B (2) Relief duty and the applicant is, at the point of that 189B duty being accepted, considered likely to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless, whether a decision to that effect has been made or not, and the applicant is in temporary accommodation provided by the Council to meet a section 188 interim accommodation duty.
In these circumstances where an applicant is homeless and in temporary accommodation and owed a Section 189B(2) relief duty, or 193(2) main duty or a section 193C(4) reduced main duty the Council will need to move applicants out of temporary accommodation to manage the budgetary or legal impact on the Council. The applicant may still bid for properties advertised but due to the budgetary pressures faced by the Council and the need to maintain a supply of available temporary accommodation for new cases presenting as homeless, the Council is likely to make a direct offer of suitable accommodation into the private rented sector or social housing regardless of the preferences expressed by the applicant.
<b>Band A: Additional preference for medical or disability (See appendix 1.8 for full details of the medical need assessment process)</b>
Where an applicant (or a member of their household) is unable to continue to occupy their current accommodation due to high medical need or disability. Examples of when Band A may be awarded include:
Applicants ready to be discharged from hospital who: have somewhere to live but their accommodation is unsuitable due to their medical needs and cannot be made suitable through adaptations because of cost effectiveness or structural difficulties or the property cannot be adapted within a reasonable amount of time.
Applicants who have urgent need to move due to them having medical problems or disabilities that are being exacerbated by their current housing situation. This includes applicants:
g) Whose life is at risk due to their current housing conditions or who are housebound, effectively housebound or cannot access the essential facilities in their home and there are critical concerns about their safety, for example through falls due to difficulties with access.
h) Whose condition is terminal and rehousing is required to provide a basis for the provision of suitable care

i) Whose condition is life threatening and their existing accommodation is a major contributory factor
j) Whose health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening for example, where an applicant has significant mental health problems which are exacerbated by their accommodation
k) With disabilities, who have restricted mobility and are limited by their accommodation such that they are unable to carry out day-to-day activities or have difficulties accessing facilities inside and outside of their accommodation and require rehousing into accommodation suitable for their use.
l) In overcrowded accommodation which puts the applicant at risk of infection, for example, where an applicant is suffering from late-stage or advanced HIV infection
<b>Band A: Additional preference where there is a need to move on welfare grounds due to exceptional impact on the applicant or a member of their households well being</b>
Not every circumstance that may present can be captured by the policy so below are examples of welfare ground cases that will be considered. The list is not exhaustive:
e) Suffering extreme violence, harassment or discrimination, whether a hate crime or otherwise, and that it is not safe for them to remain in their present home/locality.
f) Applicants who need to move due to domestic abuse threats from an ex partner or family member they do not live with, extreme threats of violence, extreme harassment, or other extreme circumstances deemed to significantly affect a household's welfare and wellbeing.
g) Exceptional circumstances due to significant problems associated with the tenant's occupation of a dwelling in the social or private rented sector and there is high risk to the tenant or their family's safety if they remain in the dwelling/area.
h) For applications in circumstances where there is a serious threat to the well being of a child and their accommodation is a major contributory factor to that risk. This will be in circumstances where the relevant manager in Children's Services or equivalent assesses the level of risk exposure in relation to the child or children remaining in the current property as being so critical that no other reasonable options in relation to accommodation are available to protect the child.
<b>Band A: Additional preference Armed Forces</b>
Applicants with urgent housing who:

d) Is serving (and will soon leave) the regular forces and is suffering from serious injury, illness, mental ill health, or disability which is attributable to the person's service
e) Has recently ceased, or will ceased to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the MOD following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service or
f) Is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the persons service
<b>Band A: Additional preference for unfit or unsatisfactory housing</b>
<b>There are 3 circumstances where Band A may be awarded:</b>
<b>1: Applicants without access at all to any of the following facilities:</b>
No access to:
f) A bath or shower
g) A toilet
h) Cooking facilities
i) Running hot water supplies
j) Electric/gas needed for essential activities
Applicants who have access to shared facilities re cooking; bathroom and toilet will not qualify under these criteria.
<b>2: Exceptional impact cases.</b>
Applicants who currently occupy a private sector property which has at least one Category 1 Hazard (excluding overcrowding) under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and where a Prohibition Order has been served or is intended to be served under the Housing Act 2004 and the effect of the Prohibition Order is likely to mean that the applicant(s) will lose the use of their home on a permanent basis. The relevant conditions at the property must be life-threatening or present an immediate threat of serious injury to the occupant(s)
This includes a property that has severe damp, major structural defects including subsidence, flooding, collapse of roof, or have living conditions which are a statutory nuisance, <u>and</u> there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a period considered to be reasonable by the Council and the household are not able to afford to resolve their own housing problem by moving to alternative private sector accommodation.
Note - this does not include Council or Housing Association homes as there is a legal requirement on social landlords to urgently remedy defects that pose a risk to their tenants

<b>3: Demolition or Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) cases.</b>
Where the applicant's property is subject to demolition or subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order for redevelopment
<b>Band A: Additional preference for severe overcrowding as defined as 2 bedrooms or more overcrowded</b> <i>Note: the measurement of overcrowding is based on the "bedroom standard" (with some exceptions adopted see below). This is the non-statutory standard set out in the government's allocation of accommodation guidance.</i>
Where an applicant household is severely overcrowded defined as requiring 2 or more additional bedrooms to reach the bedroom standard. In calculating the overcrowding the following circumstances will be disregarded unless there are exceptional circumstances:
➤ Children over the age of 16 will be excluded from the calculation
➤ Cases where extended family had moved into accommodation causing the 2 bedroom plus level of overcrowding
➤ Where the household contains non-dependent adults as there is more chance of non dependents being able to resolve their housing
➤ The CCP will take account of the space and layout of rooms and bedrooms in deciding whether the 2 bedroom plus priority will be awarded
<b>Band A: Additional preference for applicants nominated by Cumbria Adult Social Services/Children's Services in the following circumstances:</b>
• Where there is an essential need to move due to child protection issues
• Fostering carers for Cumbria County Council where there is a need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child (this would not apply where the home required would be 4 bedrooms or more)
• Adoption arrangements where there is a need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child (this would not apply where the home required would be 4 bedrooms or more)
• Applicants owed a duty by Adult Social Services under the Care Act 2014 / Mental Health Act 1983/2007 who have been assessed by the housing team as being ready to move onto independent living and have an appropriate support package in place
<b>Band A: Additional preference for Cumbria County Council Care Leavers (Former Relevant children) as defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and need to move on</b>
Applicants must be a former "Relevant Child" as defined by the Children Leaving Care Act 2002 and be a young person at risk of homelessness. The evidence to support this award will be provided by the council's leaving care service and will consist of confirmation that:
g) All referrals by Children's Services will be made following the provision of Cumbria's Joint Protocol for young people

h) The care leaver is ready to move to independent settled housing and is genuinely prepared for a move to independent living
i) The care leaver possesses the life skills to manage a tenancy including managing a rent account.
j) The care leaver has either long term or medium term tenancy support arranged, as required.
k) Ongoing support needs have been assessed and, where appropriate, a support plan is in place and
l) The CCP's assessing officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of their vulnerability, accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a detrimental effect on their well-being
<i>Note: Care leavers will be awarded Band A on proof of their status. If an application for housing is made before it has been determined by the CCP assessing officer that the individual is ready for independent living, taking into account information from the applicant's support worker and other agencies, the application will not have any bid considered until the support worker presents the evidence to the CCP that the individual is ready to move on and the CCP agree with that evidence.</i>
<b>Band A: Additional preference for applicants who are part of a multi-agency public protection agreement (MAPPA).</b>
Band A would apply only where:
a) On the recommendation of the MAPPA partnership the applicant requires and is suitable for independent housing and qualify for the Housing Register, and
b) The CCP assessing officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of the circumstances of the MAPPA case accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a detrimental effect on the multi agency planning for that individual
<b>Band A: Additional preference for certain MARAC assessed cases</b>
Applicants fleeing domestic violence and abuse that have been assessed by
MARAC (or any subsequent multi agency arrangement) as needing to move urgently for the safety and security of themselves and or any dependent children and are assessed as being in immediate danger, and
a) The MARAC partnership has referred the case and provided evidence as to why the applicant requires social housing, and
b) The CCP assessing officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of the circumstances of the MARAC case accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a substantial detrimental effect on individual or household
<b>Band B – Reasonable preference for certain homelessness duties owed</b> <i>(This is assessed and verified by the Partner Council's Housing Options Team)</i>
Any of the following statutory homeless duties owed by a Cumbrian Council:

e) People where it has been verified that they are rough sleeping in a Cumbrian Council area regardless of whether they have made a homeless application
f) Applicants owed the prevention of homelessness duty under Section 195(2) by any Cumbria local authority
g) Applicants owed the 'relief of homelessness duty under Section 189B(2) (Note: applicants owed a relief duty and are likely to be in priority need, unintentionally homeless and are in temporary accommodation will be placed in Band A)
h) Where the relief duty has been brought to an end and an applicant has been assessed at that point as not being in priority need
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for insecure accommodation arrangements</b>
"A pregnant woman or applicant with a child or children who are sharing a home with family who are not part of their household and where:
a) They have no ownership or tenancy rights and the arrangement is short term and very insecure and only available whilst the applicant is actively seeking an offer of social housing or alternative accommodation with friends or in the private rented sector, and
b) They were owed a prevention of homelessness duty as they were assessed as likely to become homeless within 56 days, and that duty has ended because they have been allowed to remain at home whilst they bid for social housing with their Band B priority and it is likely that they can remain for at least 6 months to a year.
c) The family member with the interest in the home has agreed to allow the applicant to remain for at least 6 months to a year.
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for medical or disability housing need (See appendix 1.8 for full details of the medical need assessment process)</b>
Applicants who have need to move due to them having medical problems or disabilities where their housing conditions exacerbates a serious medical condition or disability but do not qualify for an award of Band A. This includes (the examples are to illustrate the level of housing need to be awarded Band B and is not an exhaustive list).
f) The applicant's current accommodation to a significant extent directly exacerbates an existing medical condition, is the direct cause of a medical condition or impacts on the ease of use of the facilities within their home for a disabled person.
g) Applicants who have mobility issues and it has been assess need to move to ground floor or level access accommodation
h) Applicants who have mobility issues and need to move to accommodation that has level access showering facilities
i) Applicants who have a significant physical or mental health condition that is directly affected by their accommodation and where a move to alternative accommodation would help to ease or resolve their condition
j) Applicants who have a medical need for an additional bedroom (e.g. because they need an overnight carer or need to accommodate a substantial amount of medical equipment)

<b>Band B: Reasonable preference under the Government's 'Right to move' regulations</b>
Existing social tenants of accommodation in England who the CCP have assessed as qualifying under the Government's Right to Move regulations will be placed into Band B
Allocation to those Applicants who qualify is limited to a maximum of 2% of all lettings.
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for 'move on' from supported housing</b>
Where the CCP assessing officer after considering evidence from the applicant's support officer agrees that due to the nature and extent of their vulnerability, accommodation in the private rented sector would, through its short-term nature, have a detrimental effect on their well being.
Before the award is made, ongoing support needs will need to have been assessed and, where appropriate, a support plan put in place to increase the chances of the tenancy succeeding and the person must have been assessed as ready to move on from supported to independent housing.
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference where it is agreed there is a need to move on welfare or hardship ground:</b>
4) Applicants who need to move closer to a specialist organisation, agency or institution located in a specific area of Cumbria, where moving would prevent significant physical, psychological or financial hardship. (The assessment will include the availability and ability to use public transport)
5) Hardship on support grounds: Applicants that have demonstrable evidence that they provide or receive substantial and on-going support to or from relatives or friends and where moving would prevent significant physical, psychological or financial hardship. This award will only be considered where there are significant medical or welfare issues including grounds relating to disability. This award for applicants who give or require support from relatives or friends will only be considered where there is a severe disability or mental ill health, medical or welfare issue (relating to the applicant or their household or the relatives or friends) and there are reasons why this support cannot be made available through reliance on public transport or the persons own transport. (The assessment will include the availability and ability to use public transport).
6) Employment Hardship - Priority will only be given in exceptional circumstances and applicants will need to show that they need to move to take up or continue an employment opportunity not available elsewhere. They will only be considered where they do not live within a reasonable commuting distance and will be required to provide confirmation of employment details from the employer. Employment purposes are defined as: applicants including people needing to move from outside Cumbria and between Cumbrian Districts, taking up or continuing permanent employment for a minimum of 16 hours per week. Under this clause applicants will only be considered where they do not live within a reasonable

commuting distance and will be required to provide confirmation of employment details from the employer. (The assessment will include the availability and ability to use public transport)
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for being overcrowded by 1 bedroom</b> <i>Note: the measurement of overcrowding is based on the "bedroom standard" (with some exceptions adopted see below). This is the non-statutory standard set out in the government's allocation of accommodation guidance.</i>
Applicant's living in overcrowded conditions and whose housing circumstances have been assessed as being 1 bedroom short of what they need as measured by the bedroom standard.
Or alternative wording
Where an applicant household is overcrowded by one bedroom as measured by the bedroom standard. In calculating the overcrowding the following circumstances will be disregarded unless there are exceptional circumstances:
➤ Children over the age of 16 will be excluded from the calculation
➤ Cases where extended family had moved into accommodation causing the 1 bedroom level of overcrowding
➤ Where the household contain non-dependent adults as there is more chance of non dependents being able to resolve their housing
The CCP will take account of the space and layout of rooms and bedrooms in deciding whether the 1 bedroom priority will be awarded
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for unsatisfactory housing conditions or issues of property fitness</b>
Private sector tenants that the relevant Council has determined that the property poses a category 1 hazard under the Health and Safety fitness rating and the CCP assessing officer is satisfied that the problem cannot be resolved by the landlord within 6 months and as a result continuing to occupy the accommodation will pose a considerable risk to the applicant's health. This includes a property that has severe damp, major structural defects including subsidence, flooding, collapse of roof, or have living conditions which are a statutory nuisance, <u>and</u> there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a 6 month time period, and the household are not able to resolve their own housing problem by moving to alternative private sector accommodation
<b>Band B: Reasonable preference for under-occupation</b>
Applicants who have a social housing tenancy with a Cumbrian CCP Partner and are under-occupying social rented accommodation by two or more bedrooms. The exception to the 2 or more bedroom under occupation rule will be:
c) Where a tenant occupies a house that they are under occupying by 1 bedroom and a move to a flat would free up that house



d) Where it is agreed that under-occupancy by 1 bedroom will cause significant financial hardship for tenants. This is where there is clear evidence that tenants on lower incomes are forced to spend significant percentages of their incomes on servicing 1 bedroom under-occupancy deductions
<b>Band B: Local preference for recent ex armed forces applicants</b>
Members of the Armed Forces persons who are serving in the regular forces who will be discharged within three months and have served for five years preceding their application for an allocation of housing accommodation as long as this has not been a dishonorable discharge.
<b>Band B: Local preference for identified 'Key Workers'</b>
The following key workers whose total gross household income from all sources does not exceed an annual income of £45,000 or more (for single persons) or joint income of £60,000 or more (for couples).
4) National Health Service Staff and Social Care staff
5) Community Support Officers
6) Members of the Territorial Army
7) Volunteer Fire Officers
<b>Band C – All other applicants in housing need:</b> This is the housing need band awarded where an applicant is not assessed as coming under the criteria adopted by the policy for being in a statutory housing need. Applicants placed in band C can still bid for properties but will not be considered above applicants from Bands A or B who have bid for the same property.
Band C will include applicants who have been assessed as being intentionally homeless by any Council and since that award has not had settled accommodation (defined by the CCP assessing officer)



# Carlisle City Council

## Report to People Panel

Item  
A.6

Meeting Date: 23 February 2023  
Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources  
Key Decision: No  
Policy and Budget Framework: Yes  
Public / Private: Public

Title: Revenue Budget Overview & Monitoring Report: April to December 2022  
Report of: Corporate Director of Finance and Resources  
Report Number: RD 58/22

### Purpose / Summary:

This report provides an overview of the Council's General Fund revenue budgetary position for the period April to December 2022 which was considered by the Executive on 20 February 2023.

### Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:

Members are asked to scrutinise the variances contained within this report.

### Recommendations:

Members of the People Panel are asked to scrutinise the overall budgetary position for the period April to December 2022.

### Tracking

Executive:	20 February 2023
Scrutiny:	23 February 2023 (People Panel)
Council:	28 February 2023

# Carlisle City Council

## Report to Executive

Meeting Date: 20 February 2023  
 Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources  
 Key Decision: No  
 Policy and Budget Framework: Yes  
 Public / Private: Public

Title: Revenue Budget Overview & Monitoring Report: April to December 2022  
 Report of: Corporate Director of Finance and Resources  
 Report Number: RD 58/22

### Purpose / Summary:

This report provides an overview of the Council's overall budgetary position for the period April to December 2022 for revenue schemes only. The report also includes details of balance sheet management issues and bad debts written off in the period.

### Recommendations:

The Executive is asked to:

- (i) Note the budgetary performance position of the Council to December 2022;
- (ii) Note the action by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources to write-off bad debts as detailed in paragraph 6;
- (iii) Note the release of reserves as set out in the table at paragraph 2.2, and note the virements approved as detailed in Appendix A;
- (iv) Approve the creation of an earmarked reserve for Talkin Tarn as set out in paragraph 2.7 for recommendation to Council.

### Tracking

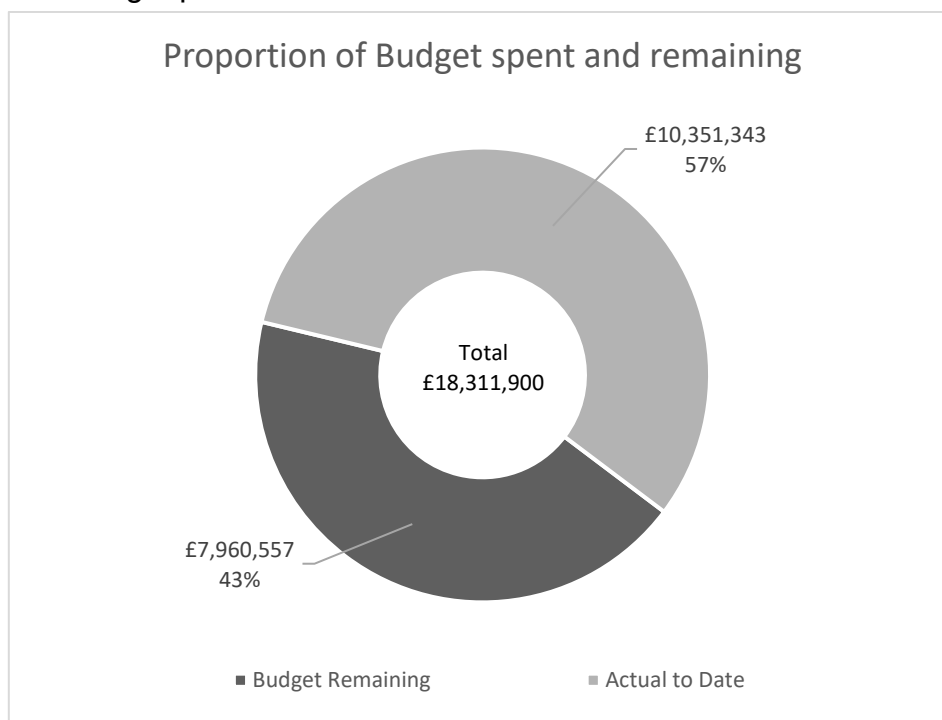
Executive:	20 February 2023
Scrutiny:	23 February 2023 (People Panel)
Council:	28 February 2023

## 1. Background

- 1.1. In accordance with the City Council's Financial Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources is required to report to the Executive on the overall budget position, the monitoring and control of expenditure against budget allocations and the exercise of virement on a regular basis. Further details of virements processed can be found in **Appendix A**. It is the responsibility of individual Chief Officers to control income and expenditure within their service areas and to monitor performance, taking account of financial information provided by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources.
- 1.2. All Managers currently receive a monthly budget monitoring report covering their areas of responsibility. Information is collated from the main accounting system and then adjusted to correct any known budget profiling trends, timing differences and commitments. The report has been developed in line with the need to provide sound financial management information to inform the decision-making process.
- 1.3. Please note that throughout this report:
- (i) the use of a bracket represents a favourable position i.e. either an underspend or additional income received,
  - (ii) the term 'underspend' is taken to include both reduced expenditure and/or increased income,
  - (iii) the term 'overspend' includes both spending above budget and/or shortfall in income.

## 2. 2022/23 Revenue Budget Monitoring

- 2.1 The budget position of the Council as at December 2022 is as follows:



2.2 The summarised revenue budgetary position as at December 2022 is shown in the following table:

		Original Budget £	Net Updated £	Net Budget to Date £	Net Spend to Date £	Variance £
Community Services	B1	11,263,900	12,254,200	9,404,674	9,443,702	39,028
Corporate Support	B2	143,600	237,500	375,946	359,471	(16,475)
Economic Development	B3	1,897,400	2,814,400	1,936,252	1,840,922	(95,330)
Finance & Resources	B4	2,859,600	2,586,200	1,520,608	598,751	(921,857)
Governance & Regulatory Services	B5	2,013,100	3,890,100	2,808,214	2,603,010	(205,204)
Corporate Management	B6	(3,474,000)	(4,380,100)	(4,918,693)	(4,813,814)	104,879
<b>Service Expenditure</b>		<b>14,703,600</b>	<b>17,402,300</b>	<b>11,127,001</b>	<b>10,032,042</b>	<b>(1,094,959)</b>
Exceptional Items	B7	215,400	909,600	697,776	319,301	(378,475)
<b>Service Expenditure</b>		<b>14,919,000</b>	<b>18,311,900</b>	<b>11,824,777</b>	<b>10,351,343</b>	<b>(1,473,434)</b>
Parish Precepts		731,500	731,500	731,500	731,304	(196)
<b>Total</b>		<b>15,650,500</b>	<b>19,043,400</b>	<b>12,556,277</b>	<b>11,082,647</b>	<b>(1,473,630)</b>
<b>Transfers to/(from) Reserves</b>						
Cremator Replacement Reserve		0	61,500			
Revenue Grants Reserve		0	(610,700)			
General Fund Reserve		166,100	(1,801,800)			
Planning Services Reserve		0	(25,500)			
Council Tax Income Reserve		0	(23,000)			
Carry Forward Reserve		0	(130,000)			
Operational Risk Reserve		(777,000)	(777,000)			
Building Control Reserve		0	(20,300)			
Tullie House Reserve		0	(800,000)			
Caldew Riverside Reserve		0	100,000			
<b>Total Transfer to/(from) Reserves</b>		<b>(610,900)</b>	<b>(4,026,800)</b>	<b>(1,293,827)</b>	<b>947,465</b>	<b>2,241,292</b>
Financed by:						
Precept from Collection Fund		(8,663,000)	(8,640,000)	(6,480,000)	(6,497,259)	(17,259)
Revenue Support Grant		0	0	0	(403)	(403)
Business Rate Retention		(6,376,600)	(6,376,600)	(4,782,450)	(5,532,450)	(750,000)
<b>Total Grants</b>		<b>(15,039,600)</b>	<b>(15,016,600)</b>	<b>(11,262,450)</b>	<b>(12,030,112)</b>	<b>(767,662)</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>(15,650,500)</b>	<b>(19,043,400)</b>	<b>(12,556,277)</b>	<b>(11,082,647)</b>	<b>1,473,630</b>

2.3 Further details for each directorate can be found in **Appendices B1 – B7**. Each appendix shows a breakdown of the variances for the Directorate, with comments and a note of any performance issues. Although the net position is shown in the table above, the main variances are summarised in the table below.

Budget Area		Underspend £	Overspend £
Car Parking Income (excl. contracts)	B1	0	183,657
Bereavement Services	B1	0	148,925
Recycling and Waste Management	B1	(204,772)	0
Development Control Income	B3	(64,428)	0
Loan Interest (incl. new borrowing)	B4	(481,418)	0
Minimum Revenue Provision	B4	(79,479)	0
Investment Interest	B4	(230,168)	0
Revenues and Benefits	B4	(127,984)	0
Electoral Services	B5	(94,991)	0
Market Hall	B5	0	105,440
Asset Review Income	B5	(119,417)	0
Homeless Accommodation	B5	0	72,957
Salary Turnover Savings	B6	0	173,272

2.4 Some of the significant service expenditure and income variances are set out below:

- A shortfall in car parking income from tickets, permits and PCNs.
- A net overspend on Bereavement Services due to increased gas and electricity and reduced income from Cremation fees.
- A net underspend in Recycling and Waste Services due to increased income from plastic and card recycling, sale of recyclates and Bring Sites.
- An increase in Development Control fee income received.
- A saving from interest on borrowing due to no new borrowing scheduled for 2022/23 being entered into yet.
- A saving on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) due to the year-end Capital Financing Requirement being lower than anticipated due to underspends and carry forwards in the 2021/22 capital programme.
- Additional investment interest generated due to higher cash balances and increases in interest rates.
- A net underspend in Revenues and Benefits mainly due to additional grant income received.
- An underspend on Election costs as a result of there being no City Council elections in 2022/23.
- Overspend at Market Hall in relation to payment of consultants for the proposed Towns Deal project.
- Additional income generated from completed rent reviews.
- An underspend of £25,539 on expenditure on Homeless Accommodation and a shortfall in income of £98,496. This is a direct result of Covid-19 as changes to occupancy and the available provision have had to be made to ensure the health and wellbeing of residents and staff.

- A shortfall in salary turnover achieved against the budget to date due to the 2022/23 pay award. The recurring pressure will be addressed as part of the Cumberland Council budget process.

- 2.5 A subjective analysis of the summarised budgetary position excluding exceptional items as at September is shown in **Appendix C**.
- 2.6 As usual the Council's virement procedures will be utilised in 2022/23 to accommodate new areas of spend outwith the current base budgets which can be funded from underspends, as highlighted within this monitoring report, thus avoiding the additional use of reserves, or pressures on future years budgets.
- 2.7 Following the Place Panel on 1 December 2022 which reviewed the potential management arrangements at Talkin Tarn County Park following the Panel's visit to the site, the panel recommended:
1. that the Executive be asked to consider creating an earmarked reserve for surplus/carry forward monies for Talkin Tarn.
  2. that the Executive be asked to look into ways to reduce or remove Talkin Tarn's National Non Domestic Rate levy. The proposal was seconded and the Panel indicated its assent.

The Executive on 19 December 2022 decided to:

1. develop ideas for the creation of an earmarked reserve for surplus/carry forward monies in relation to Talkin Tarn
2. look at ways to reduce the National Non Domestic Rates levied at Talkin Tarn.

**It is therefore proposed to set up an earmarked reserve for Talkin Tarn capital infrastructure projects for any net surplus income each financial year.**

**Approval to release funds from the reserve could only be approved by an Officer Decision Notice by the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director of Finance and Resources (or relevant officers within Cumberland Council). The projects would be subject to the normal governance and procurement procedures.**

The National Non Domestic Rates levied at Talkin Tarn have been reviewed and there is no relief or discount that can be applied to reduce the liability, as it is the Billing Authority that are liable (i.e. the Council). Under the discretionary rate relief rules, the Council are not eligible for relief.

- 2.8 The following table provides a summary position of the income and expenditure within Exceptional Items:



		Original Budget £	Net Updated £	Net Budget to Date £	Net Spend to Date £	Variance £
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	B7	56,300	56,300	42,232	55,603	13,371
Covid-19 Government Grants	B7	0	0	0	(21,389)	(21,389)
Covid-19 Specific Grants	B7	0	(8,900)	(34,021)	(33,955)	66
Local Government Reorganisation	B7	159,100	862,200	689,565	319,042	(370,523)
<b>Total Exceptional Items</b>		<b>215,400</b>	<b>909,600</b>	<b>697,776</b>	<b>319,301</b>	<b>(378,475)</b>

2.9 Further details for this “directorate” can be found in **Appendix B7**. The main variances are also summarised below.

- A net overspend position on Council related expenditure as a result of Covid-19.
- Any costs associated with Local Government Reorganisation should either be covered through the City Council’s own budget approved or reimbursed from the Implementation Reserve.

### 3. Forecast Outturn Position 2022/23

3.1 The Council’s financial position is affected by a number of external factors that have a financial impact during the course of the year and ultimately at the year end. These include:

- The general effect of local economic activity on the Council’s income streams e.g. car parking, tourism and leisure activities, and property rentals especially in relation to the retail sector and especially economic recovery following Covid-19.
- Fuel prices, energy costs and other inflationary issues.
- The effects of the housing market and property prices, especially with regard to income from land charges, rents and building and development control.
- The impact of the delay to the Fair Funding Review and Business Rates Retention Review.
- The impact of Covid-19 on Council’s budgetary position.

3.2 The Council’s financial position will continue to be closely monitored and the year end position will be reported fully at outturn. It will be important to maintain a prudent approach to ensure a sustainable position for future years to avoid any significant variance at year end.

3.3 The areas of significant variance noted in this report have been scrutinised fully and have been considered (where relevant) as part of the 2023/24 budget process for Cumberland Council where the position is deemed to be recurring in nature.

#### **4. Funding**

- 4.1 The main sources of funding for the Council are Council Tax Income and Business Rates income. Council Tax income does not vary in year from the amounts set at the budget, as any variation in Council Tax income received is usually adjusted in the Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit calculation for the following year's budget. However, the DLUHC announced a 3-year deficit recovery period for any arrears as at 31st March 2021.
- 4.2 Business Rates Income is largely prescribed by the amounts submitted to DLUHC on the NNDR1 form which estimates Business Rate Income for the year when calculated in January, however, there are two elements of this income that can vary throughout the year, namely, section 31 grants paid by government for business rates reliefs granted, and the levy and pooling calculations to the Cumbria Pool.
- 4.3 The current estimates of Business Rates income for the quarter to the end of December (still subject to review) are shown in **Appendix D**.

The figures show that based on current estimates the Council may receive an extra £750,000 (subject to review) in business rates income over and above what it has budgeted for. However, it is anticipated that this position could change significantly throughout the year depending upon the performance of other authorities in the Cumbria Pool and the amount of reliefs granted during the year that are subject to Section 31 Grant reimbursement and an updated position will be reported at outturn.

The previous 2-years saw government provide rating support to the retail leisure and hospitality sectors as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in larger deficits on the collection fund, however, for 2022/23 there is no such support so there should be no exceptional deficits on the collection fund and any surpluses or deficits reported at the end of the year will be as a result of actual collection rates.

#### **5. Balance Sheet Management**

- 5.1 In line with CIPFA guidance and good practice, information relating to significant items on the Council's balance sheet is shown below. The information concentrates on those items that may have a material impact on the Council if not reviewed on a regular basis.

Balance Sheet item	Balance at 31/03/2022	Balance at Dec 2022	Note
Investments	£25.87m	£28.80m	(i)
Loans	£12.83m	£12.59m	(ii)
Debtors System	£1.74m	£0.99m	(iii)
Creditors System	£0.007m	£0.167m	

- (i) The anticipated annual return on these investments is estimated at £198,200 for 2022/23 with current forecasts anticipated to be significantly above these projections. Further details on the overall Treasury Management performance can be found elsewhere on the agenda.
- (ii) The cost of managing this debt (including any new debt budgeted for from 2022/23 onwards), in terms of interest payable, is budgeted at £850,000 in 2022/23 with costs currently showing a saving against budget due to new borrowing not entered into yet.
- (iii) There may be a significant impact on the cash flow of the Council if outstanding debts are not received. Any debts deemed to be irrecoverable are written off against a bad debt provision set up specifically for this purpose. Other significant debts relate to Council Tax, NNDR, and Housing Benefit overpayments.
- (iv) The Council's VAT partial exemption calculation for the period ending December 2022 is currently 1.97%, well below the 5% limit.

## 6. Bad Debt Write-Offs

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Resources has delegated authority for the write-off of outstanding debts for NNDR, Council Tax and Debtors (including Penalty Charge Notices). In accordance with this, the Executive is asked to note that debts totalling £90,028.94 have been written off during Quarter 3 to the end of December 2022. A summary of bad debts is given in Table 1 in **Appendix E** of this report and these costs will fall against the following:

	£
General Fund	7,850.24
Council Tax (Collection Fund)	82,178.70
NNDR	0.00
Total Write-offs	90,028.94

- 6.2 The "write-ons" itemised in Table 2 in **Appendix E**, totalling £1,661.97 are in respect of balances originally written off that have since been paid. The write-ons will be credited as follows:

	£
General Fund	167.67
Council Tax (Collection Fund)	1,494.30
NNDR	0.00
Total Write-ons	1,661.97

- 6.3 In the case of the General Fund, the write-offs will be charged against provisions for bad debts. However, VAT, which has been identified separately, will be recouped in future VAT returns. Any write-off/write-on of Council Tax/NNDR will fall against the provisions within the Collection Fund. Any Council Tax court costs written off will be charged against the Bad Debt Provision within the General Fund.

## **7. Risks**

- 7.1 The ongoing impact of issues identified will be monitored carefully in budget monitoring reports and appropriate action taken.
- 7.2 The main risk to the Council is the impact of energy and other cost of living inflationary pressures and also any on-going impact of COVID-19 in terms of additional costs and shortfalls of income.

## **8. Consultation**

- 8.1 Consultation to date.  
SMT and JMT have considered the issues raised in this report.
- 8.2 Consultation Proposed  
People Panel will consider the report on 23 February 2023.

## **9. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

- 9.1 The Executive is asked to:
- (i) Note the budgetary performance position of the Council to December 2022;
  - (ii) Note the action by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources to write-off bad debts as detailed in paragraph 6;
  - (iii) Note the release of reserves as set out in the table at paragraph 2.2, and note the virements approved as detailed in Appendix A;
  - (iv) Approve the creation of an earmarked reserve for Talkin Tarn as set out in paragraph 2.7 for recommendation to Council.

## **10. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan Priorities**

- 10.1 The Council's revenue budget is set in accordance with the priorities of the Carlisle Plan and the position for the third quarter of 2022/23 shows the delivery of these priorities within budget.

**Contact details:**

Contact Officer: Emma Gillespie

Ext: 7289

**Appendices attached to report:**

- A, B1 to B7, C to E

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

**Corporate Implications:**

Legal - The Council has a fiduciary duty to manage its finances properly and the proper reporting of the budget monitoring is part of this process.

Property Services - Property asset implications are contained within the main body of the report.

Finance - Financial implications are contained within the main body of the report.

Equality - This report raises no explicit issues relating to the public sector Equality Duty.

Information Governance - There are no information governance implications.

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

## VIREMENTS PROCESSED FOR PERIOD OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2022

Date	Virement Details	Recurring/ Non-recurring	Value	Authorised By	
<b>Requested by Officers (under £35,000 or delegated authority)</b>					
13/10/2022	Release of Building Control Reserve to fund purchase of software licences	Non-recurring	9,500	OD.110/22 Corporate Director of Economic Development Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services Corporate Director of Economic Development Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Neighbourhood Services Manager Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Corporate Director of Finance and Resources	
25/10/2022	Provision of budget for Legacy project	Non-recurring	10,000		
25/10/2022 & 07/12/2022	Release of funding from Revenue Grant Reserve for Sustainable Food City Co-ordinator	Non-recurring	12,800		
25/10/2022 & 07/12/2022	Release of funding from Revenue Grant Reserve for One Public Estate	Non-recurring	24,300		
25/10/2022	Virement to provide recurring budget for additional Member Support Officer costs	Recurring	7,100		
25/10/2022	Virement to provide recurring budget for additional Regeneration costs	Recurring	63,900		
04/11/2022 & 12/12/2022 & 06/01/2023	Release of funding from Revenue Grant Reserve for St Cuthbert's Garden Village	Non-recurring	198,700		
08/11/2022 & 06/01/2023	Direct Revenue Financing from sale of Waste Receptacles towards Capital programme	Non-recurring	8,400		
12/12/2022	Release of funding from Revenue Grants Reserve for Homeless Accommodation	Non-recurring	41,800		
13/12/2022	Release of funding from Tullie House Reserve in respect of necessary repairs and re-purposing work to Castle Street property	Non-recurring	800,000		
<b>Approved by Executive (£35,000 to £70,000 or delegated authority)</b>					
<b>Approved by Council (over £70,000)</b>					
03/01/2023	Creation of an earmarked reserve for Caldew Riverside Remediation	Non-recurring	100,000	Council ED.01/23	

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

COMMUNITY SERVICES	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Recharges	Total
Position as at 30 December 2022	£	£	£	£
Annual Budget	21,920,700	(5,930,700)	(3,735,800)	<b>12,254,200</b>
Budget to date	16,989,305	(4,431,464)	(3,153,167)	<b>9,404,674</b>
Total Actual	17,157,674	(4,575,028)	(3,138,944)	<b>9,443,702</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>168,369</b>	<b>(143,564)</b>	<b>14,223</b>	<b>39,028</b>
<b>Carry Forwards/Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Adjusted Variance</b>	<b>168,369</b>	<b>(143,564)</b>	<b>14,223</b>	<b>39,028</b>

Analysis of Variances		Expenditure Variance	Income Variance	Recharges Variance	Adjusted Variance
Service	Note	£	£	£	£
Car Parking	1	16,744	161,728	15	<b>178,487</b>
Bereavement Services	2	46,310	102,583	32	<b>148,925</b>
Healthy Cities	3	(77,144)	(7,108)	0	<b>(84,252)</b>
Recycling and Waste Services	4	228,421	(426,101)	(7,273)	<b>(204,953)</b>
Miscellaneous	5	(45,962)	25,334	21,449	<b>821</b>
<b>Total Variance to date</b>		<b>168,369</b>	<b>(143,564)</b>	<b>14,223</b>	<b>39,028</b>

Note	Community Services - Comments
1.	Various minor overspends including budget savings to be found; Shortfall in ticket income, contract income and penalty charge notice income.
2.	Overspends on premises related costs; reduced income from cremation fees partly offset by increased income from Cemeteries fees.
3.	Underspends in relation to Leisure contract payments and Old Fire Station.
4.	Overspend on employee and transport costs. Surplus income from Plastic and Card recycling, Sale of recyclates and Bring Sites income.
5.	Minor underspends, shortfall in income and reduced trading income (recharges) across other services within the Directorate.

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

CORPORATE SUPPORT	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Recharges	Adjusted Total
Position as at 30 December 2022	£	£	£	£
Annual Budget	4,000,400	(307,500)	(3,455,400)	<b>237,500</b>
Budget to date	3,224,426	(256,582)	(2,591,898)	<b>375,946</b>
Total Actual	3,152,755	(201,472)	(2,591,812)	<b>359,471</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>(71,671)</b>	<b>55,110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>(16,475)</b>
<b>Carry Forwards/Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Adjusted Variance</b>	<b>(71,671)</b>	<b>55,110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>(16,475)</b>

Analysis of Variances		Expenditure Variance	Income Variance	Recharges Variance	Adjusted Variance
Service	Note	£	£	£	£
Customer Contact	1	(44,503)	59,563	92	<b>15,153</b>
Miscellaneous	2	(27,168)	(4,453)	(6)	<b>(31,628)</b>
<b>Total Variance to date</b>		<b>(71,671)</b>	<b>55,110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>(16,475)</b>

Note	Corporate Support - Comments
1.	Underspend on employee related costs, shortfall in reception service fee income.
2.	Minor underspend and additional income across other services within the Directorate.



## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Recharges	Adjusted Total
Position as at 30 December 2022	£	£	£	£
Annual Budget	4,990,400	(1,759,600)	(416,400)	<b>2,814,400</b>
Budget to date	3,217,404	(968,810)	(312,342)	<b>1,936,252</b>
Total Actual	3,158,147	(1,004,925)	(312,300)	<b>1,840,922</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>(59,257)</b>	<b>(36,115)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>(95,330)</b>
<b>Carry Forwards/Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Adjusted Variance</b>	<b>(59,257)</b>	<b>(36,115)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>(95,330)</b>

Analysis of Variances		Expenditure Variance	Income Variance	Recharges Variance	Adjusted Variance
Service	Note	£	£	£	£
Development Control	1	(24,444)	(64,428)	0	<b>(88,872)</b>
Miscellaneous	2	(34,813)	28,313	42	<b>(6,458)</b>
<b>Total Variance to date</b>		<b>(59,257)</b>	<b>(36,115)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>(95,330)</b>

Note	Economic Development - Comments
1.	Minor underspends and increased fee income received to date.
2.	Minor underspends and shortfall in income across services within the Directorate.

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

FINANCE AND RESOURCES	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Recharges	Adjusted Total
Position as at 30 December 2022	£	£	£	£
Annual Budget	32,872,200	(27,367,300)	(2,918,700)	<b>2,586,200</b>
Budget to date	26,129,346	(22,219,626)	(2,389,112)	<b>1,520,608</b>
Total Actual	25,516,270	(22,528,668)	(2,388,851)	<b>598,751</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>(613,076)</b>	<b>(309,042)</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>(921,857)</b>
<b>Carry Forwards/Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Adjusted Variance</b>	<b>(613,076)</b>	<b>(309,042)</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>(921,857)</b>

Analysis of Variances		Expenditure Variance	Income Variance	Recharges Variance	Adjusted Variance
Service	Note	£	£	£	£
Treasury and Debt Management	1	(560,083)	(230,168)	0	<b>(790,252)</b>
Revenues and Benefits	2	(49,126)	(78,903)	45	<b>(127,984)</b>
Miscellaneous	3	(3,866)	29	216	<b>(3,621)</b>
<b>Total Variance to date</b>		<b>(613,076)</b>	<b>(309,042)</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>(921,857)</b>

Note	Finance and Resources - Comments
1.	Saving on borrowing costs due to no new borrowing arrangements entered into yet & savings on Minimum Revenue Provision; improved levels of investment interest achieved.
2.	Various minor underspends; Increased level of Government Grants received.
3.	Minor underspends across other services within the Directorate.

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Recharges	Adjusted Total
Position as at 30 December 2022	£	£	£	£
Annual Budget	14,019,000	(6,304,100)	(3,824,800)	<b>3,890,100</b>
Budget to date	10,676,671	(4,999,493)	(2,868,964)	<b>2,808,214</b>
Total Actual	10,550,639	(5,115,607)	(2,832,022)	<b>2,603,010</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>(126,032)</b>	<b>(116,114)</b>	<b>36,942</b>	<b>(205,204)</b>
<b>Carry Forwards/Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Adjusted Variance</b>	<b>(126,032)</b>	<b>(116,114)</b>	<b>36,942</b>	<b>(205,204)</b>

Analysis of Variances		Expenditure Variance	Income Variance	Recharges Variance	Adjusted Variance
Service	Note	£	£	£	£
Industrial Estates	1	42,489	(54,690)	0	<b>(12,201)</b>
The Market Hall	2	105,430	10	0	<b>105,440</b>
Strategic Asset Investment	3	(109,797)	(3,625)	49	<b>(113,373)</b>
Homeless Accommodation	4	(25,539)	98,496	0	<b>72,957</b>
Electoral Services	5	(91,003)	(3,994)	6	<b>(94,991)</b>
Regulatory Services	6	(9,026)	(59,167)	13	<b>(68,180)</b>
Miscellaneous	7	(38,586)	(93,143)	36,874	<b>(94,855)</b>
<b>Total Variance to date</b>		<b>(126,032)</b>	<b>(116,114)</b>	<b>36,942</b>	<b>(205,204)</b>

Note	Governance & Regulatory Services - Comments
1.	Overspend on third party payments; increased rental income as a result of backdated rent reviews.
2.	Overspend in relation to payment of consultants for the Towns Deal project.
3.	Additional income generated from completed rent reviews; increased level of valuation fees received.
4.	Underspend on employee related expenditure and supplies and services; shortfall in income as a direct result of Covid-19 as changes to occupancy levels and the available provision have had to be made to ensure the health and wellbeing of residents and staff.
5.	Underspend on Election costs as a result of there being no City Council elections in 2022/23.
6.	Underspend on employee related expenditure; improved levels of licence income and agency fees received.
7.	Minor underspends and increased income across other services within the Directorate.

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Recharges	Adjusted Total
Position as at 30 December 2022	£	£	£	£
Annual Budget	(2,404,300)	(1,975,800)	0	(4,380,100)
Budget to date	(3,484,999)	(1,433,694)	0	(4,918,693)
Total Actual	(3,382,040)	(1,431,774)	0	(4,813,814)
<b>Variance</b>	<b>102,959</b>	<b>1,920</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>104,879</b>
<b>Carry Forwards/Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Adjusted Variance</b>	<b>102,959</b>	<b>1,920</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>104,879</b>

Analysis of Variances		Expenditure Variance	Income Variance	Recharges Variance	Adjusted Variance
Service	Note	£	£	£	£
Other Financial Costs	1	131,309	1,920	0	133,229
Miscellaneous	2	(28,350)	0	0	(28,350)
<b>Total Variance to date</b>		<b>102,959</b>	<b>1,920</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>104,879</b>

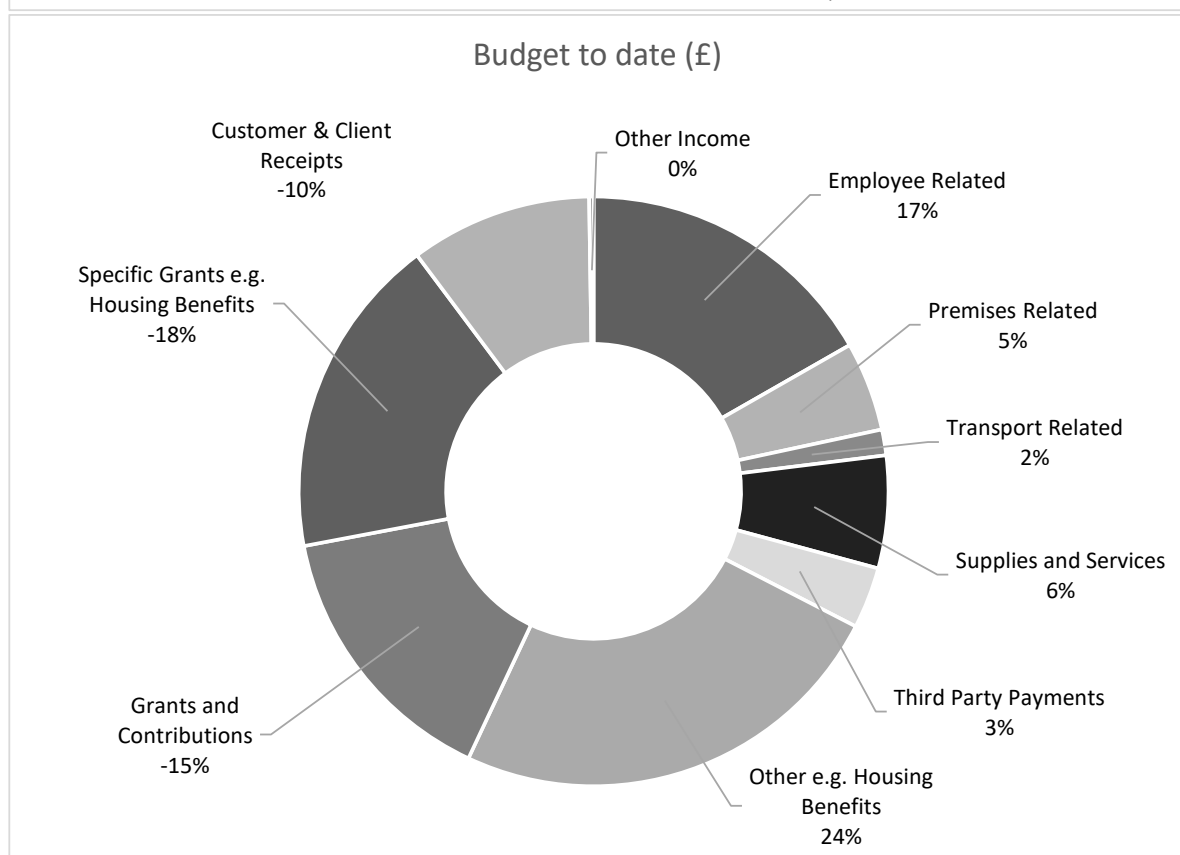
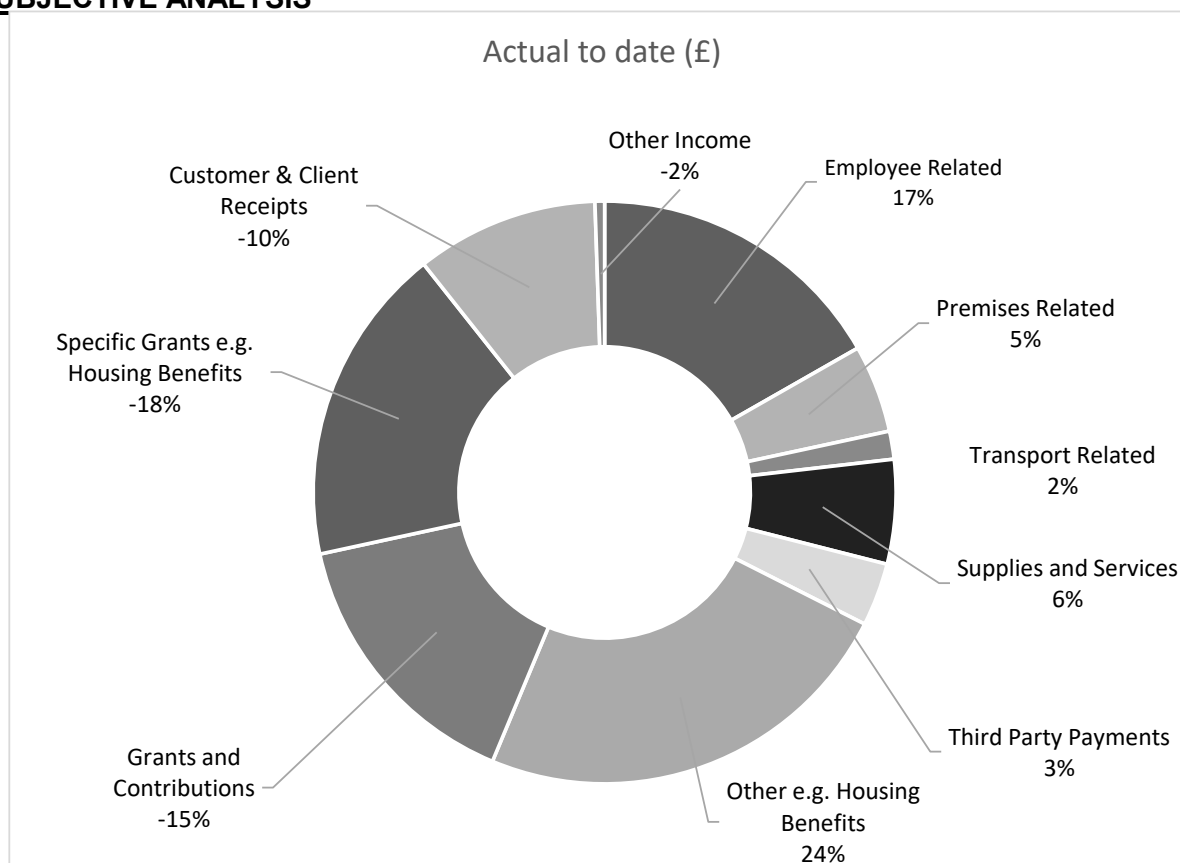
Note	Corporate Management - Comments
1.	Shortfall in savings for Salary Turnover (£173,272); partly offset by additional savings found (£38,800).
2.	Minor underspends across other services within the Directorate.

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Recharges	Adjusted Total
Position as at 30 December 2022	£	£	£	£
Annual Budget	1,245,900	(336,300)	0	<b>909,600</b>
Budget to date	988,984	(291,208)	0	<b>697,776</b>
Total Actual	634,820	(315,519)	0	<b>319,301</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>(354,164)</b>	<b>(24,311)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(378,475)</b>
<b>Carry Forwards/Reserves &amp; Provisions</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Adjusted Variance</b>	<b>(354,164)</b>	<b>(24,311)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(378,475)</b>

Analysis of Variances		Expenditure Variance	Income Variance	Recharges Variance	Adjusted Variance
Service	Note	£	£	£	£
Covid-19 Related Expenditure & Grants	1	16,433	(24,385)	0	<b>(7,952)</b>
Local Government Reorganisation	2	(370,597)	74	0	<b>(370,523)</b>
<b>Total Variance to date</b>		<b>(354,164)</b>	<b>(24,311)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(378,475)</b>

Note	Exceptional Items - Comments
1.	A net underspend position on Council related expenditure as a result of Covid-19.
2.	A net underspend position on Local Government Reorganisation expenditure. The balance will be required to support the ongoing process.

**SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS**

**BUSINESS RATES INCOME**

	2021/22 Outturn	2022/23 NNDR1	2022/23 Q3
Local Share of Income (Per NNDR1)	(17,415,961)	(16,489,930)	(16,489,930)
Renewables (Per NNDR1)	(378,052)	(412,335)	(412,335)
Renewables Bfwd (NNDR3 Previous Year)	4,122	0	0
Enterprise Zone (Per NNDR1)	(418,227)	(225,003)	(225,003)
Tariff (Per Final Settlement)	12,569,244	12,568,847	12,568,847
Section 31 Grants (reimbursement of funded reliefs)			
Section 31 Grants (Flooding)	(5,055,072)	(3,206,585)	(3,284,541)
Section 31 Grant Expanded Retail Discount, Nursery and Local Newspaper			
Estimated Collection Fund Deficit/(Surplus) per NNDR1	9,462,618	2,958,134	2,958,134
Spreading of Deficit	0	197,036	197,036
Levy Payable to Pool	1,349,235	1,660,000	1,443,000
Pool Redistribution	(700,000)	(940,000)	(726,608)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(582,093)</b>	<b>(3,889,836)</b>	<b>(3,971,400)</b>
<b>Budget</b>			
Section 31 Grant B/Fwd (Earmarked Reserve)	9,462,618	3,155,200	3,155,200
Baseline Funding	(3,335,200)	(3,335,700)	(3,335,700)
Business Rates Multiplier Grant	(173,800)	(340,900)	(340,900)
Additional Rates Income - Pooling/Growth	(2,700,000)	(2,700,000)	(2,700,000)
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>3,253,618</b>	<b>(3,221,400)</b>	<b>(3,221,400)</b>
<b>Additional Income retained</b>	<b>(3,835,711)</b>	<b>(668,436)</b>	<b>(750,000)</b>

**BAD DEBT PROVISION**

TABLE 1		Write-Offs December 2022		Comments
Type of Debt	No.	£		
NNDR (General)	0	0.00	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Council Tax	74	82,178.70	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Debtors:				
Private Tenants	0	0.00	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Housing Benefit Overpayments	5	2,886.99	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
General Fund	7	4,713.25	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Penalty Charge Notices:				
On Street	0	0.00	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Off Street	3	250.00	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
TOTAL	89	90,028.94		

TABLE 2		Write-Ons December 2022		Comments
Type of Debt		£		
NNDR (General)	0	0.00	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Council Tax	6	1,494.30	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Debtors:				
Private Tenants	0	0.00	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
Housing Benefit Overpayments	3	41.35	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
General Fund	10	126.32	01/10/22 to 31/12/22	
TOTAL	19	1,661.97		



# Carlisle City Council

## Report to People Panel

Item  
A.7

Meeting Date: 23 February 2023  
Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources  
Key Decision: No  
Policy and Budget Framework: Yes  
Public / Private: Public

Title: Capital Budget Overview & Monitoring Report: April to December 2022  
Report of: Corporate Director of Finance and Resources  
Report Number: RD 59/22

### **Purpose / Summary:**

This report provides an overview of the budgetary position of the Council's capital programme for the period April to December 2022 which was considered by the Executive on 20 February 2023.

### **Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:**

Members are asked to scrutinise the variances contained within this report.

### **Recommendations:**

Members of the People Panel are asked to scrutinise the overall budgetary position for the period April to December 2022.

### **Tracking**

Executive:	20 February 2023
Scrutiny:	23 February 2023
Council:	n/a

# Carlisle City Council

## Report to Executive

Meeting Date: 20 February 2023  
 Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources  
 Key Decision: No  
 Policy and Budget Framework: Yes  
 Public / Private: Public

Title: Capital Budget Overview & Monitoring Report: April to December 2022

Report of: Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

Report Number: RD59/22

### Purpose / Summary:

This report provides an overview of the Council's overall budgetary position for the period April to December 2022 for the Council's capital programme.

### Recommendations:

The Executive is asked to:

- (i) Note and comment on the budgetary position and performance aspects of the capital programme for the period April to December 2022;
- (ii) Note the adjustments to the 2022/23 capital programme as detailed in paragraph 2.1;

### Tracking

Executive:	20 February 2023
Scrutiny:	23 February 2023
Council:	n/a

## **1. Background**

- 1.1. In accordance with the City Council's Financial Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources is required to report to the Executive on the overall budget position, the monitoring and control of expenditure against budget allocations and the exercise of virement on a regular basis. It is the responsibility of individual Chief Officers to control income and expenditure within their service areas and to monitor performance, taking account of financial information provided by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources.
- 1.2. All Managers receive a monthly budget monitoring report covering their areas of responsibility. Information is collated from the main accounting system and then adjusted to correct any known budget profiling trends, timing differences and commitments. The report has been developed in line with the need to provide sound financial management information to inform the decision-making process.
- 1.3. Please note that throughout this report:
  - (i) the use of a bracket represents a favourable position i.e. either an underspend or additional income received,
  - (ii) the term 'underspend' is taken to include both reduced expenditure and/or increased income,
  - (iii) the term 'overspend' includes both spending above budget and/or shortfall in income.
- 1.4. It is important to understand the distinction between capital and revenue expenditure.

**The general rule is that all expenditure must be treated as revenue expenditure unless it meets strict criteria allowing it to be treated as capital expenditure.**

Capital expenditure is for fixed assets such as acquisition of land and buildings, construction, conversion or enhancement of existing buildings, or the purchase of new technology, vehicles, plant, machinery or equipment that yields benefits to the Council and the services it provides for more than one year.

Revenue expenditure is for the day to day running costs of providing Council services such as staff costs, premises, transport, and goods and services used in the delivery of services.

## **2. Capital Budget Overview**

- 2.1 The following statement shows the annual capital programme for 2022/23:

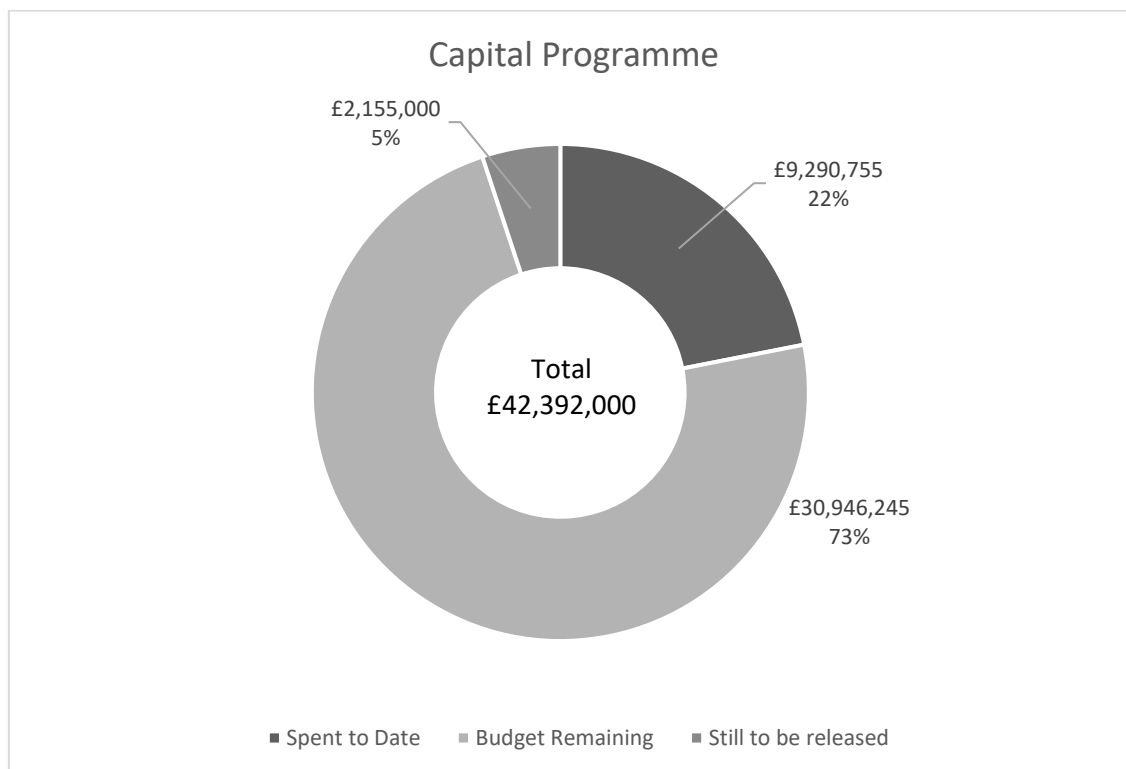
<b>2022/23 Capital Budget</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>2022/23 Capital Programme (RD24/22 Council 19/07/22)</b>	<b>45,447,400</b>
Increase from S106 contributions towards Play Area Improvements (OD56/22 & OD57/22)	242,500
Increase from S106 contributions towards CCTV equipment (OD54/22)	1,900
Revenue Contribution towards the purchase of Waste Receptacles	27,500
Carry Forward of Capital Reserves to be released by Executive in to 2023/24 (RD53/22 Council 03/01/2023)	(5,000,000)
External Grant repaid for Sustainable Warmth	(707,300)
External Grant for Town Deal Projects (ED24/22 Council 11/10/2022)	2,261,500
External Grant for UK Shared Prosperity Fund (ED29/22 Council 08/11/2022)	52,000
External Grant for Parks Levelling Up Projects	66,500
<b>Revised 2022/23 Capital Programme (at Dec 2022)</b>	<b>42,392,000</b>
Less Capital Reserves to be released by Executive (see para 3.9)	(2,155,000)
<b>Revised 2022/23 Capital Programme (released)</b>	<b>40,237,000</b>

2.2 A breakdown of the revised capital programme can be found in **Appendix A**.

### 3. 2022/23 Budget Monitoring

3.1 The position as at December 2022 can be summarised as follows:

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Revised Annual Budget £</b>	<b>Budget to Date £</b>	<b>Spend to date £</b>	<b>Variance to date £</b>	<b>Para. Ref.</b>
Community Services	9,539,900	6,471,281	6,421,293	(49,988)	3.3
Corporate Support	494,000	169,482	181,664	12,182	3.4
Economic Development	6,491,100	339,930	339,805	(125)	3.5
Finance and Resources	43,500	0	0	0	3.6
Governance & Regulatory Services	23,668,500	13,749,725	2,347,993	(11,401,732)	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,237,000</b>	<b>20,730,418</b>	<b>9,290,755</b>	<b>(11,439,663)</b>	
Reserves to be released	2,155,000	0	0	0	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>42,392,000</b>	<b>20,730,418</b>	<b>9,290,755</b>	<b>(11,439,663)</b>	



Schemes still to be released by the Executive are outwith the budget monitoring process until the budgets have been released.

A detailed analysis of the schemes within each directorate can be found in **Appendices B to F** with the main issues being summarised in the paragraphs below.

- 3.2 As at the end of December, expenditure of £9,290,755 has been incurred on the Council's core capital programme. When considered against the profiled budget of £20,730,418 this equates to an underspend of £11,439,663.
- 3.3 The variance in Community Services relates an underspend of £50,318 on the Civic Centre Development due to a credit balance on the project as a result of expenditure confirmed and agreed at a reduced level to the creditor list input at year end. There are however additional outstanding commitments which are likely to utilise this underspend position.
- 3.4 There are no significant variances to report in Corporate Support.
- 3.5 There are no significant variances to report in Economic Development.
- 3.6 There are no significant variances to report in Finance and Resources.
- 3.7 The variance in Governance & Regulatory Services is attributable to the following:

- an underspend of £493,760 on Disabled Facilities Grants. Spend to the end of the third quarter of 2022/23 was £1,754,957 which is higher than the expenditure for the same period in 2021/22 (£1,374,806). The level of commitment for grants awarded as at end of December is approximately £1.4million which together with the expenditure to date equates to £3.154million against an annual budget of £3,564,000. However, not all grant commitments will result in payments in 2022/23 due to the timing of works. Further grants and commitments will also be awarded during the remainder of the year.
- An underspend of £10,879,374 on Sustainable Warmth Projects (LAD3 and HUG1) against the revised delivery plan. This project is being closely monitored and regular detailed discussions are taking place with the funding provider, which will result in a further revised delivery plan. An extension request has been submitted to Government ministers and if approved, the expenditure plan will be reprofiled however it is likely that some funding will be returned under the terms and conditions of the grant. As at end of January, 848 properties have been surveyed and 235 measures installed.

3.8 The unspent balance remaining of the revised annual budget of £40,237,000 is £30,946,245. A review of the 2022/23 capital programme will be undertaken to identify accurate project profiles for the remainder of the financial year and any potential slippage into future years.

3.9 A number of schemes are included in the capital programme for 2022/23 that require a report to be presented to the Executive for the release of funding before the project can go ahead.

Scheme	Budget £	Note
Cemetery Infrastructure	30,000	
Crematorium Infrastructure	2,125,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,155,000</b>	

#### 4. Financing

4.1 The 2022/23 capital programme can be financed as follows:

	Annual Budget £	Current Programme £
<b>Total Programme to be financed (para 2.1)</b>	<b>42,392,000</b>	<b>40,237,000</b>
<u>Financed by:</u>		
Capital Receipts / Borrowing	285,500	285,500
Receipts Used to fund resources	(112,000)	(112,000)
Borrowing Requirement (in year)	11,256,100	10,426,100
Capital Grants		
• Disabled Facilities Grant	2,155,600	2,155,600
• Sustainable Warmth Grant	19,247,700	19,247,700
• Future High Street Fund	2,780,200	2,780,200
• Town Deal	2,261,500	2,261,500
• General	1,052,200	1,052,200
Direct Revenue Financing	2,392,500	1,067,500
Other Contributions	1,072,700	1,072,700
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>42,392,000</b>	<b>40,237,000</b>

## 5. Capital Resources

5.1 The following table shows the position as at December 2022 of capital resources due to be received during 2022/23:

	Annual Budget £	Actual £	Variance £	Note
Capital Receipts				
· Asset Review	(285,500)	(199,600)	85,900	1
· Used to fund resources	112,000	0	(112,000)	1
· Vehicle Sales	0	(61,678)	(61,678)	2
· Renovation Grants Repaid	0	(21,045)	(21,045)	2
Capital Grants				3
· Disabled Facilities Grant	(2,155,600)	(2,155,574)	26	
· Future High Street Fund	(1,739,900)	(1,739,866)	34	
· Sands Centre	(200,000)	0	200,000	
· Town Deal	(2,261,500)	(2,332,250)	(70,750)	
· Sustainable Warmth	707,300	707,303	3	
· General	(118,500)	(66,500)	52,000	
Capital Contributions				
· Section 106	(1,038,200)	(352,219)	685,981	4
· Disabled Facilities Grants	0	(10,824)	(10,824)	
· General	(34,500)	(34,930)	(430)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>(7,014,400)</b>	<b>(6,267,183)</b>	<b>747,217</b>	

Notes:

1. Receipts for 2022/23 are anticipated to be received from asset review sales (£285,500).

2. Included within vehicle sales are receipts of £6,498 for individual vehicle sales that are below the de minimis for capital receipts. These will be transferred to revenue at the year end and will be used to fund the capital programme in line with the capital strategy.
3. Capital grants are generally received once associated capital expenditure has been incurred and the amounts then reclaimed from the sponsoring body.
4. Contributions from Section 106 agreements to Play Area Improvements/CCTV Equipment (£437,400) and Affordable Housing (£600,800).

## **6. Balance Sheet Management**

- 6.1 In line with CIPFA guidance and best practice, information relating to significant capital items on the Council's balance sheet is provided in this section. The information concentrates on those items that may have a material impact on the Council if not reviewed on a regular basis and will ensure that the Council is using its resources effectively and that appropriate governance arrangements are in place around the use of Council assets and liabilities.
- 6.2 Fixed assets are revalued annually to ensure that an up to date value is held in the balance sheet. The revaluation programme is the responsibility of Property Services. It should be noted that some expenditure will be incurred during the course of the year which can be correctly classified as capital expenditure, but which will not increase the value of any of the Council's assets. This expenditure is written off to the revaluation reserve or through the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account as appropriate.
- 6.3 The value of fixed assets is a significant part of the balance sheet. In the 2021/22 accounts, fixed assets totalled £216million (2020/21 £191million). This represents 105% of the net current assets of the City Council.
- 6.4 Debtors  
This relates to the amount of income due to the Council that has not yet been received. For capital items, this mainly relates to grants and contributions that the Council is able to claim towards funding capital expenditure. Generally capital debtors arise due to timing differences where a cut off point occurs (e.g. the financial year-end) and/or expenditure has been incurred in advance of making the grant claim. As at December 2022 debtors of £187,743 (£342,313 at 31 March 2022) were outstanding for capital grants, contributions and receipts.



## 6.5 Creditors

This is the amount of money due to be paid by the Council for goods and services received from its external customers and contractors. For capital schemes this also includes retentions i.e. the amount due to the contractor after a specified period (normally one year) following the completion of a project; this time is used to assess and correct any defects outstanding on the scheme. Amounts earmarked for retention as at December 2022 totalled £136,253 (£1,924,994 at 31 March 2022).

## 7. Performance

7.1 The 2022/23 programme has been kept to a level that takes account of the Council's ability to deliver schemes with regard to capacity and available resources. Work is ongoing to continue to monitor the profiling of budgets, and these are adjusted to reflect progress in current capital schemes. It is likely that there will still be a requirement for some carry forwards at the year end due to further slippage and delays on projects. Members are reminded that budgets now totalling £2,155,000 are being held in reserves until approved by Executive for release.

7.2 The Senior Management Team will provide strategic overview and monitor the effectiveness of the overall programme of work in delivering the Council's priorities and objectives. Technical project support and quality assurance of business cases and associated project management activities will be managed by a Transformation Sub-Group chaired by the Chief Executive. Decisions to proceed or otherwise with proposed projects will be made in the usual way in accordance with the Council decision making framework.

7.3 A review of all capital expenditure incurred is ongoing to ensure that the expenditure has been correctly allocated between revenue and capital schemes. This will facilitate the year end classification of assets.

## 8. Risks

8.1 Individual capital schemes have different risks involved. A risk assessment of the overall capital programme is included at **Appendix G**. The most significant risk to the Council is the overall impact of inflation in terms of increased costs.

## 9. Consultation

9.1 Consultation to date.

SMT and JMT have considered the issues raised in this report.

9.2 Consultation Proposed

People Panel will consider the report on 23 February 2023.

## **10. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

10.1 The Executive is asked to:

- (i) Note and comment on the budgetary position and performance aspects of the capital programme for the period April to December 2022;
- (ii) Note the adjustments to the 2022/23 capital programme as detailed in paragraph 2.1.

## **11. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan Priorities**

11.1 The Council's capital programme supports the current priorities in the Carlisle Plan.

Contact Officer: Emma Gillespie

Ext: 7289

### **Appendices attached to report:**

- A to G

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

### **Corporate Implications:**

Legal - The Council has a fiduciary duty to manage its finances properly and the proper reporting of the budget monitoring is part of this process.

Property Services - Property asset implications are contained within the main body of the report.

Finance - Financial implications are contained within the main body of the report.

Equality - This report raises no explicit issues relating to the public sector Equality Duty.

Information Governance - There are no information governance implications.

Scheme	Original Capital Programme 2022/23 £	Carry Forwards from 2021/22 In Year £	Carry Forwards from 2021/22 Year End £	Other Adjustments £	Carry Forwards into 2023/24 £	Revised Capital Programme 2022/23 £
<b>Current non-recurring commitments</b>						
Sands Centre Redevelopment	3,450,200	0	3,240,900	0	0	6,691,100
Future High Street Fund - Market Square	1,011,800	377,300	80,000	(390,000)	0	1,079,100
Future High Street Fund - 6-24 Castle Street	510,700	42,600	110,700	(170,200)	0	493,800
Future High Street Fund - Central Plaza	1,787,300	632,400	37,500	(1,669,700)	0	787,500
Future High Street Fund - Devonshire Street	220,900	33,600	40,000	(54,500)	0	240,000
Future High Street Fund - Delivery Costs	122,500	33,400	24,000	(100)	0	179,800
Play Area Improvements	250,000	0	205,500	242,500	0	698,000
Sands Car Park Resurfacing	210,000	0	0	0	0	210,000
Swifts Car Park Resurfacing	200,000	0	0	0	0	200,000
Sustainable Warmth Competition	17,745,000	2,210,000	0	(707,300)	0	19,247,700
Bits Park Public Realm	0	32,000	10,000	0	0	42,000
Energy Monitoring System	0	0	12,000	0	0	12,000
Cemetery Infrastructure	0	0	5,700	0	0	5,700
Planning Software	0	0	150,000	0	0	150,000
Towns Deal - Caldew Riverside	0	0	646,600	0	0	646,600
Gateway 44	0	0	300,000	0	0	300,000
Rough Sleeping Initiative	0	0	4,800	0	0	4,800
Financials Upgrade	0	0	43,500	0	0	43,500
Affordable Homes	0	0	600,800	0	0	600,800
CCTV Equipment	0	0	0	1,900	0	1,900
Parks Levelling Up Fund	0	0	0	66,500	0	66,500
Town Deal - Start with the Park	0	0	0	500,000	0	500,000
Town Deal - Southern Gateway	0	0	0	259,700	0	259,700
Town Deal - Tullie House	0	0	0	265,200	0	265,200
Town Deal - Lighting Up Carlisle	0	0	0	180,000	0	180,000
Town Deal - Digital & Community Learning Hub	0	0	0	1,000,000	0	1,000,000
Town Deal - Carlisle Business Exchange Centre	0	0	0	56,600	0	56,600
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)	0	0	0	52,000	0	52,000
	<b>25,508,400</b>	<b>3,361,300</b>	<b>5,512,000</b>	<b>(367,400)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34,014,300</b>
<b>Recurring commitments</b>						
Planned Enhancements to Council Property	250,000	80,000	127,700	0	0	457,700
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	1,185,500	0	366,700	0	0	1,552,200
Recycling Containers	45,000	0	0	27,500	0	72,500
ICT Infrastructure	410,400	54,000	29,600	0	0	494,000
	<b>1,890,900</b>	<b>134,000</b>	<b>524,000</b>	<b>27,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,576,400</b>
<b>Disabled Facilities Grants</b>						
Private Sector Grants	1,899,800	800,000	608,400	255,800	0	3,564,000
Empty Property Grants	0	0	82,300	0	0	82,300
	<b>1,899,800</b>	<b>800,000</b>	<b>690,700</b>	<b>255,800</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,646,300</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,299,100</b>	<b>4,295,300</b>	<b>6,726,700</b>	<b>(84,100)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40,237,000</b>
<b>Capital Reserves to be released</b>						
Crematorium Infrastructure	1,775,000	0	350,000	0	0	2,125,000
Carlisle Southern Link Road	5,000,000	0	0	0	(5,000,000)	0
Cemetery Infrastructure	0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000
	<b>6,775,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>380,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(5,000,000)</b>	<b>2,155,000</b>
<b>REVISED TOTAL</b>	<b>36,074,100</b>	<b>4,295,300</b>	<b>7,106,700</b>	<b>(84,100)</b>	<b>(5,000,000)</b>	<b>42,392,000</b>

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Scheme	Revised Annual Budget £	Budget to date £	Expenditure to date £	Variance to date £	Details of major variance
Vehicles & Plant	1,552,200	306,700	308,079	1,379	Replacement of vehicles will be contained within overall annual budget.
Cemetery Infrastructure	5,700	4,277	0	(4,277)	For further improvements to Cemetery due to be carried out in 2022/23.
Civic Centre Development	0	0	(50,318)	(50,318)	There is a credit balance on the project as a result of expenditure confirmed and agreed at a reduced level to the creditor list input at year end. There are however additional outstanding commitments which are likely to utilise this underspend position.
Play Area Developments	698,000	549,544	552,018	2,474	Projects progressing as planned.
Sands Car Park Resurfacing	210,000	5,460	5,457	(3)	Resurfacing and enhancement work to the Sands car park.
Swifts Car Park Resurfacing	200,000	0	0	0	Resurfacing and enhancement work to the Swifts car park which will serve as an overflow car park for the Sands.
Bitts Park Public Realm	42,000	3,617	3,617	0	Externally funded project to undertake public realm improvement works at Bitts Park.
Sands Centre Redevelopment	6,691,100	5,549,998	5,550,270	272	Capital expenditure for the enhancement work to Leisure Facilities. Progress is being monitored and is currently on schedule.
Recycling Containers	72,500	49,785	50,250	465	Purchase of waste receptacles.
CCTV Equipment	1,900	1,900	1,920	20	Fully funded by S106 monies.
Parks Levelling Up Fund	66,500	0	0	0	Government grant received for the creation and improvement of parks and green spaces and the planting of trees.
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9,539,900</b>	<b>6,471,281</b>	<b>6,421,293</b>	<b>(49,988)</b>	

**DECEMBER 2022 - CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING****APPENDIX C****CORPORATE SUPPORT**

Scheme	Revised Annual Budget £	Budget to date £	Expenditure to date £	Variance to date £	Details of major variance
ICT Infrastructure	494,000	169,482	181,664	12,182	Part of ICT Strategy Business Case.
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>494,000</b>	<b>169,482</b>	<b>181,664</b>	<b>12,182</b>	

**DECEMBER 2022 - CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING**

**APPENDIX D**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Scheme	Revised Annual Budget £	Budget to date £	Expenditure to date £	Variance to date £	Details of major variance
Towns Deal - Caldew Riverside Remediation	646,600	46,491	46,481	(10)	Funding received from the Town Deal Capital Accelerated Fund and presented and approved by Executive 14/12/2020.
Planning Software	150,000	0	0	0	Project yet to start.
Future High Street Fund - 6-24 Castle Street	493,800	0	0	0	Increase to capital programme approved by Council (ED22/21 20/07/21)
Future High Street Fund - Central Plaza	787,500	11,892	11,869	(23)	
Future High Street Fund - Market Square	1,079,100	47,481	47,423	(58)	
Future High Street Fund - Devonshire Street	240,000	40,008	40,000	(8)	
Future High Street Fund - Delivery Costs	179,800	73,180	73,164	(16)	
Town Deal - Start with the Park	500,000	21,950	21,948	(2)	Increase to capital programme approved by Council (ED24/22 11/10/22).
Town Deal - Southern Gateway	259,700	0	0	0	
Town Deal - Tullie House	265,200	0	0	0	
Town Deal - Lighting Up Carlisle	180,000	98,928	98,920	(8)	
Town Deal - Digital & Community Learning Hub	1,000,000	0	0	0	
Town Deal - Carlisle Business Exchange Centre	56,600	0	0	0	Use of Affordable Homes Commuted Sums to bring empty properties back into use approved by Executive 02/08/2021 (ED25/21)
Affordable Homes	600,800	0	0	0	
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	52,000	0	0	0	Government grant received to support the delivery of the Year 1 UKSPF Investment Plan.
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,491,100</b>	<b>339,930</b>	<b>339,805</b>	<b>(125)</b>	

**DECEMBER 2022 - CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING****APPENDIX E****FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

Scheme	Revised Annual Budget £	Budget to date £	Expenditure to date £	Variance to date £	Details of major variance
Financials Upgrade	43,500	0	0	0	To cover necessary improvements to the Financials System, fully funded from existing budgets.
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>43,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

**GOVERNANCE & REGULATORY SERVICES**

Scheme	Revised Annual Budget £	Budget to date £	Expenditure to date £	Variance to date £	Details of major variance
Planned Enhancements to Council Property	457,700	98,947	97,806	(1,141)	Individual projects progressing as planned.
Rough Sleeping Initiative	4,800	4,800	4,800	0	Capital grant received from DLUHC for the development of the Rough Sleeping Initiative.
Gateway 44	300,000	91,950	91,945	(5)	Development and Improvement costs associated with the Junction 44 retail development.
Disabled Facilities Grants	3,564,000	2,248,717	1,754,957	(493,760)	Mandatory Grants. Grant work is picking up but it is still uncertain how this year's expenditure will be affected. The position is being closely monitored.
Empty Property Grants	82,300	61,735	24,000	(37,735)	Discretionary grants to assist getting empty properties back into use.
Sustainable Warmth Competition	19,247,700	11,231,576	352,202	(10,879,374)	Externally funded project by Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to address fuel poverty, improve energy efficiency and carbon savings and help boost local economy with energy efficiency measures across Cumbria. Detailed discussions are being held with the funding partner regarding a revised delivery plan.
Energy Monitoring System	12,000	12,000	9,996	(2,004)	To provide an Energy Management System to be installed to monitor energy usage across Council owned property.
Asset Management Plan	0	0	12,287	12,287	Expenditure in relation to the demolition of the former Raffles Community House.
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>23,668,500</b>	<b>13,749,725</b>	<b>2,347,993</b>	<b>(11,401,732)</b>	



Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Capital projects are approved without a full appraisal of the project and associated business case.	Remote	High	Strengthen the role of Transformation Sub-Group when considering capital project appraisals, to include consideration of business cases
Full capital and revenue costs of a project not identified.	Remote	High	Capital spending must meet statutory definitions. Financial Services to regularly review spending charged to capital. Appraisals to identify revenue costs, including whole life costs to improve financial planning.
VAT partial exemption rules are not considered.	Remote	High	Reduced impact following the decision to elect to tax land and property. To be considered as part of Project Appraisals and assessed by Financial Services.
Capital projects are not monitored nor reviewed (post contract) to ensure that the original business case assumptions have been achieved	Reasonably probable	Marginal	Better project management skills (including contract monitoring) have been introduced through PRINCE 2. Project managers to take more ownership and responsibility for the delivery of projects, including post contract reviews.
Capital projects are not delivered to time and/or are delayed due to the impact of COVID-19/Brexit on the supply of contractors and materials	Reasonably Probable	High	Significant slippage in the current capital programme. Better project management skills to be introduced through PRINCE 2. Project managers to take more ownership and responsibility for the delivery of projects. The review of the capital programme currently underway will address some of these issues.
Capital projects are not delivered to budget. Major variations in spending impact on the resources of the Council. Delays and increased costs due to COVID-19/significant inflationary increases	Reasonably Probable	High	Improved capital programme monitoring through PRINCE 2 and monthly financial monitoring. Corrective action to be put in place where necessary.
Assumptions on external funding for capital projects are unrealistic	Remote	High	Potential shortfalls arising from changes to external funding have to be met from other Council resources, so assumptions need to be backed by firm offers of funding before projects are submitted for appraisal. Risk increased due to uncertainty around funding, e.g. Government grants
Spending subject to specific grant approvals e.g. housing improvement grants, disabled persons adaptations varies from budget	Remote	Marginal	Specific grants are generally cash limited so variations in projects supported by funding of this nature will be monitored closely to ensure target spend is achieved to avoid loss of grant or restrictions on subsequent years grant funding.
Shortfall in level of capital resources generated from Capital Receipts	Probable	High	Economic downturn will impact - early warning so as not to over commit capital resources.



Meeting Date: 23/02/2023  
Portfolio: Cross-cutting  
Key Decision:  
Policy and Budget Framework No  
Public / Private Public  
  
Title: Overview Report and Scrutiny Annual Report  
Report of: Policy and Scrutiny Officer  
Report Number: OS.06/23

## Purpose / Summary:

This report provides an overview of matters related to the Scrutiny Panel's work. It also includes a draft of this year's Scrutiny Annual Report for comment.

## Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- Note the items within Panel remit on the most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions.
- Consider and comment on the appended Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23.

## Tracking

Executive:	<b>Not applicable</b>
Scrutiny:	<b>People 23/02/23</b>
Council:	<b>Not applicable</b>

## 1. Notice of Key Decisions

1.1. The most recent Notice of Key Executive Decisions was published on 20 January 2023. This was circulated to all Members and is available on the CMIS section of the Council's webpages. The following items fall within the remit of this Panel:

Items that are included in the Panel's work programme:

- None

Items that are not included in the Panel's work programme:

- GLL Management Fee Realignment

## 2. References from the Executive

2.1. None

## 3. Progress on resolutions from previous meetings

3.1. The following table sets out the meeting date and resolution that requires following up. The status is presented as either "completed", "pending" (date expected), or "outstanding". An item is considered outstanding if no update or progress has been made after three panel meetings. All the completed actions will be removed from the list following the meeting.

	Meeting date	Minute ref	Action	Status
1	25/08/22	PEP.33/22	2) That Scrutiny recommended the Council to consider a Meanwhile Tenancy.	Complete Exec 24/10/22
2	25/08/22	PEP.33/22	8) That a further site visit to the Turkish Baths be arranged for members of the People Panel and members of the Shadow Authority.	Pending
3	25/08/22	PEP.35/22	3) That Officers explore if it is possible to accelerate the process for paying new benefits claims given the cost of living crisis.	Pending
4	24/11/22	PEP.54/22	2) request the following written responses: - information on the condition survey / maintenance backlogs of Community Centres - information from the Cumberland Council S.151 Officer on the financial priorities of the Executive - information on the return of the monies paid by Morton Community Centre from works not yet carried out	Pending
5	24/11/22	PEP.54/22	3) request that the Executive seek the opportunity to progress leases which were less than 25 years before 31 March 2023. If this was not possible the Panel asked that the City Council supports the Community Centre in applying for funding where possible;	Pending
6	24/11/22	PEP.54/22	4) request that a letter be sent to all Community Centres encouraging them to provide details of their output, outcomes, successes and best practice to inform the review.	Pending
7	24/11/22	PEP.58/22	2) That the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources provide a written response regarding the reasons for the underspend in the Disabled Facilities Grant budget along with feedback on the impact of the changes made to the flexibility of	Complete

			the Policy and an overview of the budget profile including commitments, future spends and challenges.	
8	24/11/22	PEP.58/22	2) The Policy and Performance Officer provide the Panel with a written update regarding the increase of 10% to the end of private rented tenancies and what the Council could do to help the situation moving forward.	Complete
9	12/01/23	PEP.07/23	2) That the Policy and Scrutiny Officer forward information from the current and previous meeting where the Panel had discussed issues relating to young people to the relevant Portfolio Holder at Cumberland Council.	Pending
10	12/01/23	PEP.07/23	4) That the topic be included in the Panel's section of the Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23.	Complete
11	12/01/23	PEP.08/23	2) That the Chief Executive's Office Manager provide written responses to the Panel regarding whether: i) Officers had received an update from DLUHC regarding the Carlisle Southern Link Road; and if that information was pending, how had the St Cuthbert's Garden Village – Carlisle South Masterplan project been given a green RAG rating; ii) The health and safety actions regarding access and egress the civic centre had been actioned; iii) The amber RAG rating for the Sands Centre project was as a result of 'the condition of existing services in the arts and entertainment space; iv) There were plans to move into a new arts and entertainment space and, where that to happen, would that resolve the identified risks with the Sands Centre Redevelopment project; v) The two new unitary councils would work together regarding accountability for the One Public Estate project.	Pending
12	12/01/23	PEP.09/23	3) That the Chief Executive's Office Manager provide a written responses regarding: i) the progress of Homes England Re-Procurement of the contract in respect of the Carlisle Southern Link Road; ii) the inclusion of the Central Plaza and Turkish Bath sites on the Economic Development team's Risk Register.	Pending
13	12/01/23	PEP.10/23	2) That key steps and updates in relation to the Sustainable Warmth Grants project be communicated to Members.	Pending
14	12/01/23	PEP.10/23	3) That a position statement on the Sustainable Warmth Grants project be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel.	Pending
15	12/01/23	PEP.10/23	4) That the Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services circulate to the Panel details of the project spend to date, following the upcoming meeting with BEIS.	Pending
16	12/01/23	PEP.12/23	2) That any responses to the recommendations of the Cost of Living Task and Finish Group be co-ordinated by the Policy and Scrutiny Officer.	Pending
17	12/01/23	PEP.12/23	3) That report OS.01/23 be forwarded to: the relevant Scrutiny Panel at Cumberland Council; the relevant Portfolio Holder at Cumberland Council; the Chair of Cumbria County Council's People Panel; and relevant MPs.	Pending
18	12/01/23	PEP.13/23	2) That an update report on the Sustainable Warmth Grants be added to the agenda for the meeting of 23 February 2023.	Complete

#### **4. Scrutiny Annual Report 2022 – 23**

4.1 The Constitution: Article 6 – Overview and Scrutiny Committees, 6.03 Specific functions [c] states that:

*‘Annual report. Overview and scrutiny committees must report annually to full Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate’.*

4.2 The draft Scrutiny Annual Report, including the comments from the People Panel Chair, is provided as an appendix to this report. Members are asked to consider the information provided and comment on any amendments or further information that this report should provide.

#### **5. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan Priorities**

5.1. The scrutiny of Carlisle Plan items that fall within the remit of this Panel contribute to ongoing policy development.

**Contact Officer: Rowan Jones**

**Ext: 7257**

**Appendices  
attached to report:**

**1. Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23**

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

- None

**CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

**LEGAL –**

**PROPERTY SERVICES -**

**FINANCE –**

**EQUALITY – This report raises no explicit issues relating to the public sector Equality Duty**

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE –**

## Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23



## **Introduction**

Carlisle City Council has three scrutiny panels:

- Place Scrutiny Panel
- People Scrutiny Panel
- Resources Scrutiny Panel

Resources Scrutiny Panel has oversight of budget matters and financial planning. Due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Cumbria being due see Carlisle City Council merged into a larger Cumberland Unitary Authority in April 2023, there has not been a requirement for budget or development of financial plans during this scrutiny year.

Place and People Scrutiny Panels have met regularly over the year working with officers to ensure that their scrutiny activity is targeted at the most important issues and decisions that are facing the City Council as Carlisle responds to the rising cost of living, goes through the Local Government Re-organisation process in Cumbria and builds upon the many opportunities that are open to us.

## **What is Scrutiny and why is it important?**

Scrutiny is a process to ensure that decisions taken by the Council reflect the needs and priorities of communities in Carlisle. Scrutiny is carried out by Councillors who understand and promote the concerns of the people who elected them, connecting decision makers to local communities.

Council decisions can be made by Council Officers, by the Council's 'Executive' (the political leadership) and by full Council (all Councillors).

Scrutiny Panels are made up of Non-Executive Councillors who work together, across political parties, to understand why decisions are made and how the Council is performing to deliver the best possible outcomes for Carlisle and its people. Scrutiny Panels do not have decision-making powers; their role is to challenge and make recommendations that influence decision makers.

## **Local Government Re-organisation**

On 1 April 2023 Carlisle City Council will become part of a new Cumberland Council under Local Government Re-organisation (LGR) in Cumbria.



Over this year, 2022-23, a Shadow Cumberland Authority has existed that has included shadow scrutiny arrangements. The Shadow Scrutiny Committee has considered matters relating to the Shadow Cumberland Authority, while City Council Scrutiny Panels have considered matters within the remit of Carlisle City Council. As the LGR process has developed, the effective handover of services and strategic priorities has been a recurring theme in scrutiny discussions at the City Council.

The Chairs of Place and People Scrutiny Panel engaged with a Cumberland Shadow Scrutiny Task and Finish Group that was considering future scrutiny options for Cumberland Council. The Chairs shared their experiences of the Place and People scrutiny model at Carlisle, programme planning and lessons learned from the City Council's recent work in restructuring its scrutiny arrangements.

### **Comment from Leader of the Council, Councillor John Mallinson**

It's been another busy year for all the Scrutiny Panels and a lot of hard work has gone into making a very positive contribution to various policies and work programmes that this council is undertaking.

There are many projects that have kept us busy including the Garden Village with its associated new Carlisle Southern Link Road and the very important Borderlands project which will deliver the Station hub as well as the rejuvenation of the Citadels and surrounding area. We also have the Towns Deal and the Future High Streets Fund. We look forward to seeing the redevelopment of the Central Plaza site and also to seeing the Hooper's building redeveloped. Carlisle City Council has been heavily involved, in many cases leading, on these projects.

The Executive have appreciated the Scrutiny Panels work in carrying out in-depth and forensic examinations as well as exploring all options and helping formulate policy; as well as keeping an eye on our day-to-day activities.

As we come to the end of the line for the City Council I hope that the new Cumberland Authority is able to continue that work that our Scrutiny Panels have done to add value to the work of this council; both Councillors and officers working on behalf of residents and the wider community, working with our partners to achieve this.

Once again, I would like to thank Scrutiny and the Officers on behalf of myself and my Executive Members for all the hard work you do and a particular thanks to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman who come along and report to our Executive Meetings on behalf of Scrutiny.

## **Place Scrutiny Panel Chair's Report, Councillor James Bainbridge**

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## **People Scrutiny Panel Chair's Report, Councillor Colin Glover**

Scrutiny plays an important role in helping to develop Council policy and holding the Executive to account. This year, as we work through the transition to the unitary Cumberland Council, the work programme has taken on an additional role, to recognise the good practices and achievements within Carlisle City Council which could benefit residents and businesses within the new local authority and to raise awareness of emerging challenges that will need to be addressed.

The acute pressures that people are experiencing because of the cost-of-living crisis has been a key focus for the Panel this year. A task and finish group carried out detailed examination of the challenges and considered the valuable work which Councils and partners are doing to help and a final report has been produced which we hope will be of assistance to Cumberland Council as they take this work forward. Thanks go to our own staff, Cumbria County Council, Citizen's Advice Carlisle & Eden and Carlisle Foodbank for their help with this work and to other partners who provided valuable input to the report. The Panel has also received valuable updates by Carlisle Refugee Action Group (CRAG) and Cumbria County Council on important multi-agency work to support refugees and asylum seekers and counter common myths that exist.

Good health and wellbeing for our citizens has always been a priority for Carlisle City Council and we are rightly proud of our World Health Organisation Healthy City status.

The People Panel and its predecessor Health & Wellbeing Panel has been able to have oversight of the new Sands Centre development and we are delighted to see the Centre open and being enjoyed by local people and visitors. The facility will help to promote and deliver good health outcomes for many years to come. The Panel has also been involved in development of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans which will be an important workstream for Cumberland Council as active travel routes for the future are designed, developed and delivered.

We understand the disappointment of supporters of Carlisle's Victorian and Turkish Baths when the facility closed after the relocation of the Pools operation to the new

Sands Centre. The Panel is grateful to the Friends group who shared their exciting vision with us, to restore the Turkish Baths and create a hub that will provide complementary health facilities for local people and visitors. We look forward to seeing how the Friends group can further develop their plans in partnership in the future.

Another outstanding achievement has been the success of the Thriving Communities programme, which has had a particular emphasis on people impacted by loneliness and isolation. The programme has made a positive difference to the lives of people who have participated through a network of social prescribing partnerships and activities. The evidence provided to the Panel and the successful outcomes of the Thriving Communities programme provide a sound foundation to inform and extend the work under the Cumberland Council.

We have received valuable updates on youth engagement work carried out by Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council. Encouraging and enabling young people to participate in civic and public life is an important part of our work and there is evidence that they are keen to be part of shaping the places where we live and work, making them fit for the future.

The panel has been involved in many other workstreams over the year including financial monitoring, emergency planning, equality monitoring and sustainable warmth programmes.

In a time of change it is understandable that local government reorganisation creates additional pressures and uncertainty for our staff. Members of the Panel have been acutely aware of these concerns and have received regular updates on staffing matters and have been keen to ensure that staff are supported through the changes as much as possible.

I wish to place on record my thanks, and also those of my colleagues on the Panel, to all our staff, present and past, for your dedication to delivering the best possible services and outcomes for the people of Carlisle. Our city is the place that it is, and the Council is the organisation that it is, because of your commitment and hard work. As we move into the new era of Cumberland Council, I wish you every success and best wishes for the future.

I would also like to thank elected Members for their work, past and present, whether scrutinising or being scrutinised. This is an important part of local government, and your work is much appreciated.

Finally, my special thanks go to Rowan, our Policy and Scrutiny Officer, who has advised and guided us, carried out extensive research for us and without whom the

scrutiny panel programme would simply not have worked anywhere near as efficiently as it has.

### **Comment from Portfolio Holder for Communities, Health and Wellbeing**

I would like to put on record my thanks to the People Scrutiny Panel for all the positive work that you have done over the last twelve months. As a panel you have looked at issues that cut across over many portfolio areas but have an impact of Health and Wellbeing in the City

People Scrutiny Panel over the last year has looked at a large range of issues. The scrutiny work programme also includes Performance Reports to ensure that that the council is on track for continuous improvement within all service areas. It has helped me keep on track issues that have arisen in my portfolio area; so improving outcomes.

We have had some very good reports presented to People Scrutiny Panel from our Healthy City Team covering:

- World Health Organisation and work that this council has done and then been asked to present at an international conference on Health Issues that we have been able to take to the community.
- Healthy City Committee working with our NHS partners, Cumbria County Council Local Committee Team, Works and Pensions, the Third Sector and our Armed Forces.
- Children\ youths and their wellbeing.
- Various other issues too many to cover now but a big thank you for looking into them.

This list is in addition to all the various cross cutting items from other portfolio areas which have an input on our health and wellbeing.

To end, I would like to say thank you to the Panel for your hard work - it's a team effort and I really believe that your work has helped to form positive policy and working practices for our communities.

### **Resources Scrutiny Panel Chair's Report, Councillor Christine Finlayson**

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