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Look to the Stars mural in Sutton town centre

CORPORATE PLAN 2023-2027

OUR PLAN TO BUILD A GREAT ASHFIELD



Introduction

Our ambition is to be 'Great' across all our services. Our focus is to look forwards. To make positive change and market our new offer. Building on our successes in securing over £100m external funding for the District, we remain ambitious for the future. We will continue to seek further investment for our towns, leisure, parks and open spaces, housing and homes, decarbonisation, safer communities, and skills and learning, to create high-wage, high-skill jobs of the future.

We are driving local growth through innovation and by adopting a 'can-do' attitude. So, we're diversifying our local economy and maximising the benefits of our location - right next to the M1 sitting between the core cities of Nottingham and Sheffield.

We want to be known as the 'future UK centre of excellence in automated technology and distribution.' Major investments will finance 20 key projects which will genuinely transform Ashfield over the next three years, including our flagship Automated Distribution and Manufacturing Centre (ADMC), due to open in 2024, and a new Planetarium and Science Discovery Centre at Sherwood Observatory (the biggest publicly accessible telescope outside Greenwich).

We are ambitious and are working with our partners to make a difference for the people of Ashfield. Working in partnership including the emerging East Midlands Combined Authority (EMCCA), we are committed to delivering excellent services supporting community safety, addressing health inequalities and net zero targets.

We know that in many areas we already excel, but we want all our services to be the best. We are doing it through sheer determination and the belief that Ashfield and our residents and businesses deserve more. We know there are tough challenges ahead, like in many other places some families are struggling and need more help to lead their best lives. We are determined to provide the right kind of support for everyone and that's why we're harnessing our skills, energy, and passion to deliver a brighter future for the District.

Our ambition is for everyone who lives, works, and visits Ashfield to be proud to do so. We are continuing our positive journey and writing our new story. It's the people that make Ashfield, and community is at our heart.

We're raising our sights, looking to the stars.



Theresa Hodgkinson
Chief Executive Officer



Cllr Jason Zadrozny
Leader of Ashfield
District Council

Leisure building in progress
at Kings Mill Reservoir

Our Priorities

Our priorities have been developed based on knowledge and understanding of the needs of Ashfield residents and businesses.

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**HEALTH AND
HAPPINESS**

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**HOMES AND
HOUSING**

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**ECONOMIC
GROWTH
AND PLACE**

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**CLEANER
AND GREENER**

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**SAFER AND
STRONGER**

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**INNOVATE
AND
IMPROVE**

Our Values

To ensure we deliver high-quality public services we have adopted a set of corporate values which underpin the successful delivery of our priorities. How we work is as important as what we do.



People Focussed

Putting people at the heart of what we do

Honest

Being honest with people in an open and transparent way

Proud

Being proud that Ashfield is a positive place to live, work and visit

Ambitious

We are ambitious about Ashfield's future





HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

Our vision is to enable everyone to live healthier and happier lives, to prosper in their communities and remain independent throughout life. Working with our partners, we are focussed on four key ambitions: -

Best Start – we will give every child the best chance of maximising their potential, because we know that a good start shapes lifelong health, wellbeing, and prosperity.

Living Well – we will create healthy and sustainable places, promoting good health and happiness so that everyone in our communities can live healthier for longer.

Ageing Well – we will ensure everyone can access the right support to improve their health and to maintain their independence.

Health Inequalities – we will keep our communities safe and healthy, addressing key health inequalities and prioritising areas and people in most need.



We will achieve this by: -

Best Start

- Developing a more connected, cohesive partnership network offering services and support for children, young people, and families
- Increasing access to leisure services and activities for children, and young people.

Living Well

- Ongoing enhancement and continuing transformation of our leisure provision and health offer across the District
- Provision of support to families resettling in the District to help integrate successfully into our communities
- Provision of financial advice and support to families to maximise income.

Ageing Well

- Working with partners to consider how we integrate local care, health and housing services.

Health Inequalities

- Co-ordinating and influencing organisations and service providers in our priority places: Leamington, Coxmoor, and Broomhill/Butler's Hill
- Increasing the awareness and take up of healthy and affordable eating for families in priority places.

Success means: -

- Narrowing the gap in health inequalities
- Social value achieved through our leisure transformation programmes
- Increased attendance at events and our leisure centres
- Improved leisure offer in the Rurals

Leading delivery with others (partnerships and networks)

- We will continue to build a person-centred approach across our Council services and with partners, working together to better understand service needs
- We will work closely with local Place Based Partnerships, closely aligning our delivery plans and influencing improvement
- In partnership, we will continue to work towards improved health provision within Hucknall.



Films in the Park on Selston Country Park



Ashfield Food & Drink Festival at Hucknall



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HOMES AND HOUSING

Affordable, warm, safe housing contributes to making Ashfield a great place to live. Our vision is for everyone to have access to a suitable and appropriate home. We are therefore focussed on six key ambitions: –

Housing development – Since 2019 we have delivered 120 affordable housing units; our aim for the next five years is to significantly increase the overall supply of affordable and appropriate houses across the District so that everyone has somewhere to live.

Tackling disrepair and poor housing conditions – we will ensure residents have a safe and healthy place to live and that their accommodation is being correctly managed.

Suitable and appropriate housing – we will improve property conditions and the thermal comfort of properties, reducing levels of fuel poverty.

Reducing and preventing homelessness – we will tackle homelessness and rough sleeping providing good quality advice and support services.

Compliance with the Housing Regulator – we will ensure our homes meet all applicable legislative and regulatory standards.

Customer focus – we will ensure a customer-first approach.



We will achieve this by: -

Housing Development

- Developing a pipeline of land suitable for a 5-year Council house building programme
- Delivering provision of affordable housing developments
- Delivering an acquisitions programme aimed at maximising the number of open market and Section 106 purchases
- Ensuring homes are thermally efficient to minimise carbon footprint in line with government targets ensuring homes remain affordable for tenants.

Tackling Disrepair and Poor Housing Conditions – Maximising the use of enforcement powers to improve property conditions in the private sector.

Suitable and Appropriate Housing

- Maintaining as a minimum the Decent Homes Standard in all homes owned by the Council
- Maximising grants to improve thermal efficiency and reduce carbon emissions for social and private sector housing, with the aim of helping to reduce energy demand and fuel costs for households
- Gaining a better understanding of energy efficiency and decarbonisation requirements of private sector housing to assist with better targeting of future initiatives.

Reduce and Prevent Homelessness

- Improving levels of homelessness prevention through better early detection and focus on key trigger points
- Developing a clear strategy and action plan to ensure there is sufficient temporary accommodation for households applying as homeless
- Ensuring homeless households have access to long-term safe and suitable housing.

Compliance with Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 – Ensuring that the necessary compliance is in place to meet the new standards and regulations coming into force for the Council's social housing stock.

Customer Focus

- Further enhancing active tenant engagement and the ability for tenants to help shape and improve the housing services that we offer
- Ensuring customer data is up to date and we have a robust understanding of vulnerable tenants and hard to reach groups
- Delivering a modern, digital service to improve accessibility and service response
- Ensure compliance with the Consumer Standard (Neighbourhood and Community Standard).



Charlotte Gardens, Sutton

Success means: -

- Increased supply of affordable housing - new build and acquisitions
- Increased thermal efficiency and reduced fuel poverty
- Reduction in empty homes and quick void to re-let turnround times
- Meeting decent homes standards
- Increased tenant satisfaction
- Reduced levels of homelessness.

**Leading delivery with others
(partnerships and networks)**

- Delivery of the countywide Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI). Ensure partners are fully engaged and delivering on agreed interventions
- Private sector stock condition survey
- We will work closely with partners through our direct alignment to the new EMCCA Land and Housing priority workstream focussed on affordable housing, better mix of tenures, new housing sites and sustainable homes. Initial focus on retrofit/net zero and opportunity to build a pipeline of housing sites, working with Homes England.



Kids helping plant flowers in Jacksdale



A happy tenant of one of our new build Council homes

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ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PLACE

Ashfield is a location and destination of choice. It is well connected, offering a great environment to live, work, learn and visit.

The Local Plan will give certainty for future sustainable investment and demonstrate the vision for the place Ashfield wants to be, planning for growth and investment in housing, employment, and town centres, whilst protecting the environment and nature.

Across a wide variety of programmes, we are working with partners to deliver over £102 million of direct investment with a range of projects focused on: Skills and Employment; Business and Investment; Regeneration; Visitor Economy, Infrastructure and Connectivity and Town Centres and High Streets.

We will continue to drive local growth through innovation via our six key ambitions:

- Skills and employment
- Businesses and investment
- Regeneration
- Visitor economy, arts and culture
- Infrastructure and connectivity
- Towns centres and high streets



We will achieve this by: -

Skills and Employment

- Skills development realignment through delivery of the Education and Skills Plan
- Attracting and retaining talent to work in Ashfield
- Encouraging young people to raise their aspirations, showcasing opportunities through education and business collaborations.

Businesses and Investment

- Developing and delivering a business investment strategy
- Working with businesses across the District to improve business resilience and sustainability
- Support businesses to access new markets
- Providing support and information to businesses, for example available grants and tendering opportunities.

Regeneration

- Delivering the Regeneration programme
- Developing, securing funding, and delivering new programmes for Hucknall and the Rurals and other areas.

Visitor Economy, Arts and Culture

- Developing the area's visitor economy through existing and new assets and raising the profile and identity of the three towns and rural areas
- Supporting arts organisations and the development of cultural assets
- Delivering our Events Programme for 2023/24 and considering an expanded programme from 2024 onwards
- Developing and delivering a Visitor Economy Strategy.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

- Maximising the District's employment land and transport corridors to connect people to work and leisure offers
- Identifying sufficient future land availability/allocations across the District through an adopted Local Plan.

Town Centres and High Streets

- Developing and implementing masterplans and improvement plans
- Delivering initiatives and events
- Supporting diversification of town centres and high streets e.g., property purchase and repurpose, grants etc.



Plans for the Science Discovery Centre & Planetarium at Sherwood Observatory

Success means: -

- Maximising external funding for regeneration projects
- Improving:
 - Average workplace earnings by residence
 - Employment levels
 - Skills levels
 - Talent retention apprenticeships and graduates
 - Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- Vibrant town centres and high streets with increased footfall, dwell time, spend and occupancy levels.

Collaborating with others (partnerships and networks)

- We will work closely with partners through our alignment to the new EMCCA Skills and Education, and Business Growth and Innovation priority workstreams focussed on improving qualification levels, upskilling, employment opportunity, growth of key business sectors and local supply chains, and inward investment. Working with partners initially focussed on Skills Strategy, marketing of place, visitor economy, business support, growth and innovation, and digital connectivity.
- Discover Ashfield



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Idlewells Indoor Market, Sutton



Moor Market Cafe, Kirkby



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CLEANER AND GREENER

Ashfield is a unique environment with a mixture of towns and villages; and a beautiful landscape made up of award-winning parks and open spaces. A nice environment, clean streets and well-maintained parks and open spaces matters to our residents. We are therefore continuing to focus on having green spaces to be proud of. With improved quality and access, and have an ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards and continued improvement in green spaces.

We want residents and visitors to enjoy living in and visiting Ashfield, taking a proactive approach in how we keep it clean, sharing information with residents on what we do. We will also continue to take action against those who continue to litter and fly tip waste.

We recognise the scale and urgency of the global challenge from climate change and that local action on global warming can make a difference. We are keen to have a local leadership role, leading by example, maximising available grants and successfully delivering externally funded projects, decarbonising our social housing and assets as much as possible.



We will achieve via 3 key ambitions: -

Climate Change and Sustainability

- Ensuring the green agenda is at the centre of our decision making, leading by example, and working together across the organisation to reduce carbon impacts from our own assets
- Enhancing and restoring the natural environment, introducing biodiversity net gain, and improving the environment via planning applications, and where appropriate, development briefs and masterplans
- Maximising available grants and successfully delivering externally funded projects, decarbonising social and private sector housing, and our own assets as much as possible.

Parks and Green Spaces

- Ensuring our parks and green spaces are well-maintained
- Delivering our five-year green space improvement programme
- Developing and delivering our transformation programme for outdoor sports facilities and visitor centres/ cafés
- Aligned to a Cemetery Strategy, ensure required infrastructure and investment in our cemeteries.

Cleanliness of the District

- Having excellent street cleansing and grass cutting services with reduced fly tipping
- Making information about our programmes of work easily accessible to residents
- Delivering preventative, educational and enforcement initiatives to address environmental crime
- Continue to support Ashfield residents and businesses in managing their waste sustainably, reducing the impact it has on our environment
- Assessing the impact of the Environment Bill on waste collection and recycling services.

Success means: -

- District-wide reduction in carbon emissions with reduced carbon footprint from Council operations
- Increased public satisfaction with street cleanliness, our parks and green spaces and cemeteries
- Improved street cleanliness and reduced fly-tipping
- Improved recycling rates
- Increased tree coverage across the District
- Increase in green homes/ exemplar schemes and decarbonisation.

Leading delivery with others (partnerships and networks)

- We will work closely with partners through our alignment to the new EMCCA Net Zero priority workstream focussed on decarbonisation, reducing air pollution, green spaces, new green economy and technology. Working with the Midlands Net Zero Hub initially focussed on developing a Local Area Energy Plan for the region
- We will continue to work closely with our regional and national partners through the Joint Waste Management Board, collaborating on policies and practises to ensure that waste within Nottinghamshire is managed sustainably with a focus on the implications of the Environment Bill.



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SAFER AND STRONGER

We will work with our partners to ensure people feel safe and are safe by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB). Our vision is to provide a safer Ashfield where residents, businesses and visitors feel safer in the District.

The Council, alongside partners has been successful in securing over £1.5 million of external funding to support community safety projects in Ashfield. The funding is being used to address longstanding community concerns relating to feelings of safety, domestic abuse, neighbourhood crimes and anti-social behaviour in public places.

Continuing to work in collaboration with our partners, we will follow a neighbourhood management approach, coordinating multi-agency problem solving, and identifying and supporting high-risk individuals across the District.

We have a strong commitment to addressing domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, and as such will ensure survivors of domestic abuse and vulnerable residents are supported.

We will provide an evidence-based, performance-led approach to help drive activity where it is most needed and most effective.



Kirkby Christmas celebration

We will achieve this via our 4 key ambitions –

Our communities feeling safe.

- Understanding and improving feelings of safety

A Safer District

- Working with partners to tackle and reduce levels of crime and ASB
- Deliver community safety initiatives that focuses on preventative, educational and enforcement interventions across areas of most prominence
- Target areas most impacted by crime and anti-social behaviour by designing out trends and emerging issues

Supporting Vulnerable People

- Work in partnership to support vulnerable victims of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Protect our most vulnerable residents by identifying vulnerabilities and safeguarding those at risk of abuse and/or harm
- Provide support for high-risk survivors of domestic abuse and high harm offences through bespoke interventions and support plans.

Community Safety Strategy

- Work in partnership to develop and deliver a robust strategy.

Success means: –

- Increased perception of people feeling safe
- Increased perception that ASB has reduced
- Reduced levels and types of ASB reported/recorded
- Encourage reporting for high harm offences i.e. domestic abuse, hate crime and serious violence.

Leading delivery with others (partnerships and networks)

- Completing a strategic assessment of crime and disorder across the District and refresh the Community Safety Partnership priorities
- Working in partnership to maximise external funding opportunities to deliver initiatives such as Safer Streets
- Maximise multi agency responses to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce vulnerability such as Complex Case Panels, Neighbourhood Tasking and the Vulnerable Adult Support Scheme
- Police and Crime Commissioner initiatives.

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Safer Streets patrols on Coxmoor Estate, Kirkby



Engagement at Holiday Hills Park, Kirkby



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INNOVATE AND IMPROVE

We are proud of Ashfield and our achievements. We are positive, transformational, and are continuing to be innovative and customer focussed.

Through positive messaging, promotions and engagement with customers and the community, our aim is to continue to build pride in the area.

We want every customer to have a great experience when engaging with the Council. We will continue to improve service design and offer a more personalised experience.

We will also continue to build on success, significantly increasing the digital service opportunities for people to self-serve via online and digital methods, continuing to support those who are not digitally enabled, whilst making interaction and access to information easier.

The Council aims to be self-financing, setting a robust deliverable budget within the funding available.

Our people matter, we are focussed on employing, retaining, and developing talented, proactive, and highly engaged people 'living and breathing' our Council values.

The Council will have greater influence with external partners, working together to effectively deliver required improvements.



We will achieve this via our 7 key ambitions: -

Positive and proactive communications

- Improving the use of the Council's brand
- Increasing our positive promotion of things that matter to our Communities.

Customer Experience

- Improving the customer journey and experience across all service areas for all of the services we deliver, information provision and our engagement with the customer
- Improving customer interaction with the Council through the ongoing shaping of the Customer Services function
- Improving our understanding and perception of customers to improve the customer experience.

Customer Focus

- We will ensure a customer-first approach to all our residents

Digital and service transformation

- Continuing to develop and modernise digital solutions, transitioning to user-centric cloud technology
- Transforming processes to increase automation and reduce duplication of data and effort
- Ensuring that the Council website will continue to provide services in a digital format that drives channel shift and efficiency.

Financial sustainability

- Continuing to ensure the future financial robustness of the Council.
- Enhanced focus on identifying savings and income to support the Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Maximising efficiencies and social value in the way we procure goods and services
- Continuing to focus on reducing the cost and carbon footprint of our buildings, vehicles, and other assets
- Develop and deliver a refreshed Commercial Strategy.

People and Partnerships

- Planning our workforce for the future, continuing to review organisational design
- Building critical skills and competencies for the organisation
- Ensuring a focus on employee health and well-being
- Ensuring 'added value' partnership working.

Performance, data and change management

- Improving our performance, data and insight approaches to inform and shape our ambitions and celebrate success
- Working effectively with our partners, having an ability to influence and shape decisions, funding, and improvements for the area
- Introducing new change management approaches to facilitate robust improvement delivery
- Continuing to understand, assess and mitigate risk.



Tenant engagement at Aspley Court, Sutton

Success means: -

- Robust understanding of customer perception (complaints and comments and resident perception surveys)
- Improving the customer journey (reducing the number of telephone calls transferred and levels of customer demand that could have been avoided)
- Maximising income levels (void relet times, commercial property rent income, Investment property collection rates, housing rent, council tax and business rates collection rates)
- Reducing service and asset costs (Kwh/ EV's/ Cashable, Non-cashable, staff savings)
- Improving digital capability and customer self-serve (channel shift, website and portals usage, and more processes digital end to end)
- Embedded delivery of 'added value' through partnership working.

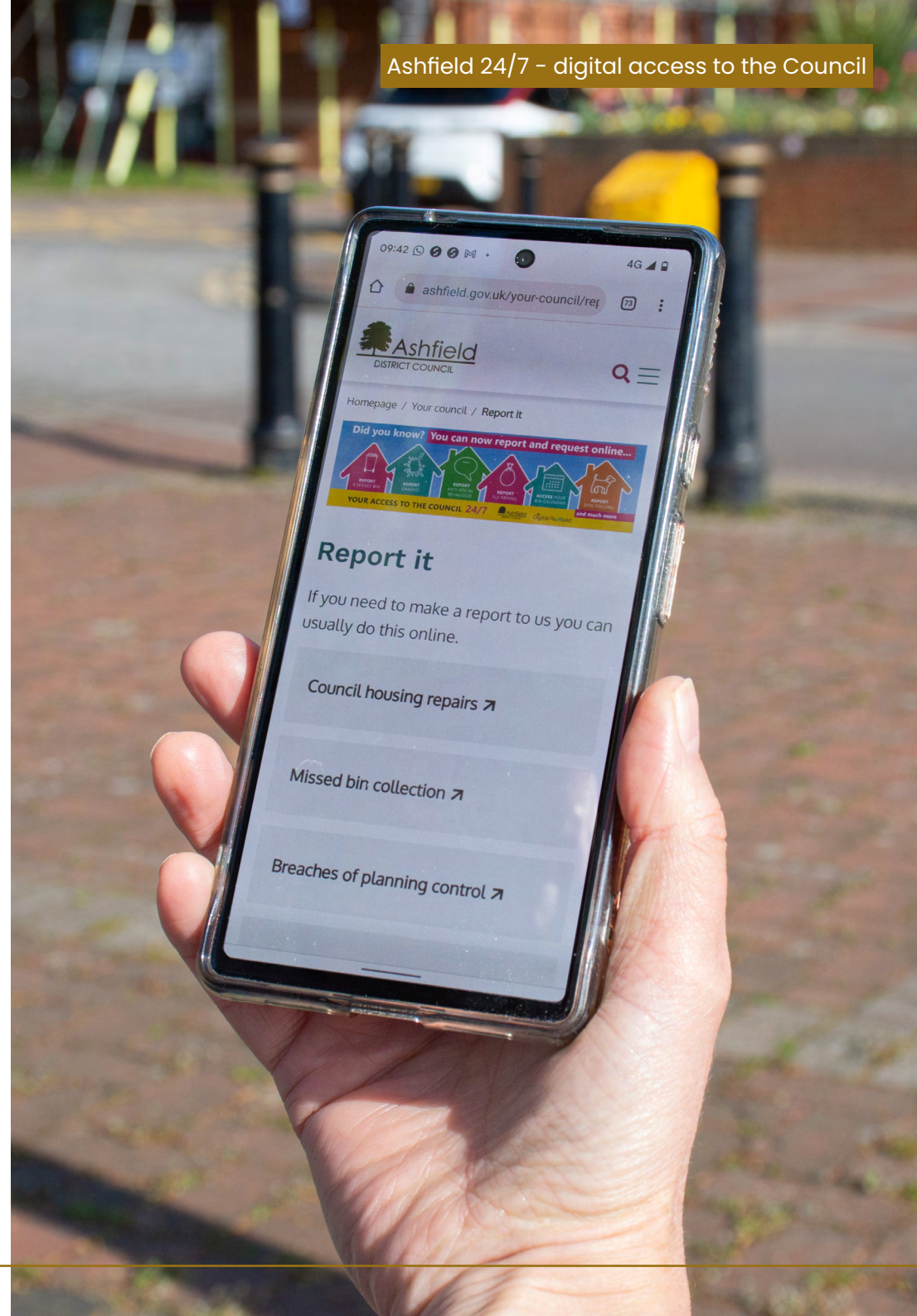
Leading delivery with others (partnerships and networks)

- We are focussed on building a thorough understanding of the delivery model of the new EMCCA, and our key lines of influence, engagement and contributing role in delivery of the priority workstreams
- Embedded use of our Partnership Framework.



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Ashfield 24/7 - digital access to the Council



How will we deliver our priorities?

The Strategic Direction and this Corporate Plan sets out our priorities for the future and the key projects and initiatives we intend to deliver.

The Corporate Plan sits above a wider strategic context which includes:

Corporate Project Management Framework

Corporate Performance Measures

A range of strategic documents relating to the organisation and its services

Implementation of the Corporate Plan will be achieved through:-

Programme Management

Delivery of initiatives under a priority theme

Project Management Framework

Delivery of projects

Service Reviews

Rolling programme of reviews to inform the Savings and Efficiency Strategy

Service Plans

Annual review of each service in respect of added value improvement activity/ projects and service performance

Performance Management Framework

Using a balanced scorecard approach

Organisational Development Strategy

Embedding desired organisational culture. Providing a motivated, flexible and skilled workforce

The Corporate Plan also aligns with relevant partnership strategies, providing a structured and consolidated approach to successful delivery.



Kings Mill Hospital - image by David Gratton

How do we know we are performing well?

Our performance framework incorporates balanced performance scorecards on three separate levels as indicated below.

Place

Ashfield's Place Scorecard aligns directly with each of our outward facing corporate priorities. With each balanced scorecard perspective represented by a corporate priority and focussed on relevant outcomes measures of Ashfield as a place.

Corporate

Our Corporate Scorecard measures organisational performance, and as such typical perspectives of a balanced scorecard have been adopted including Community and Customer, Funding the Future, Organisational Effectiveness and Our People.

Service

Each service area has a performance scorecard which measures performance for that particular service area.

Every four years we will undertake a Peer Challenge Review, engaging peers from across the sector through the Local Government Association sector led improvement offer, with an independent evaluation of the organisation focused on leadership, governance, corporate capacity and financial resilience.



Plans for destination pub at West Kirkby Gateway