

Housing and Public Protection

Service Statement

April 2019



Executive Director: Paul Johnston
Head of Service: Philip Soderquest
Lead Member: Cllr John Riddle

Housing Service

Purpose:

To lead the Council's place shaping role in promoting housing growth across the region.

To manage, maintain and repair the dedicated housing stock for Council tenants and leaseholders.

To secure the provision of decent homes for all residents and to create sustainable communities across the County.

Primary functions - Strategic Housing

- Housing Options and Homelessness Service, including; Out of Hours Service & Management of temporary accommodation
- Private Sector Housing Initiatives
- Property & Tenant Accreditation
- Empty Homes
- Private Landlord Forum
- Refugee and Asylum Seeker Service, including resettlement of refugees under Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme
- Development of Housing Strategy and associated sub-strategies
- Management of Unauthorised Encampments
- Community-Led Housing.

Primary functions - Housing Operations

- Estate Management
- Income Management
- Anti-Social Behaviour management
- Gypsy Roma Traveller Service
- Homefinder Service
- Leaseholder Management
- Resident Involvement
- Right to Buy Management
- Tenancy Management
- Voids and Allocations Management
- Welfare and Advice Service.

Primary functions - Housing Maintenance

- Responsive Repairs and Maintenance Service
- Emergency Out of Hours Service
- Annual gas and solid fuel statutory testing
- Management of planned work programmes

Primary functions - Housing Capital

- Major Improvement Works Programmes
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Adaptations
- Contract Administration
- Thermal Efficiency Measures and External Funding
- Building Surveying
- Estimating and Procurement
- Large Scale Refurbishments
- Small Scale New Build
- Property Conversions
- Asset Management
- Asbestos Management
- Deed Plan Surveying
- Energy Performance Certification

Service Parameters

Key Service Facts and Figures – Strategic Housing

- Brought back to use 113 empty private properties in 2018/19
- The Homelessness service provided advice and support to 1140 people during 2018/19, preventing 218 applicants from homelessness and relieving homelessness for 170 applicants through provision of accommodation.
- Supported 11 Refugee families (52 people, 20 adults, 32 children) to resettle in Northumberland during 2018/19
- Managed 80 Unauthorised Encampments (327 trailers) during 2018/19
- Received 6 applications for Community Housing Funding in 2018/19 with 5 approved and 1 being assessed. 3 of these were Stage 3 applications (development funding).

Key Service Facts and Figures – Housing Operations

- Manages the Council owned social housing stock consisting of 8,559 rented homes and 259 leaseholders.
- Investigated and actioned 195 high level cases of tenancy breaches through Anti Social Behaviour.
- Collects and manages an annual rent debit of £32,000,000 and collected 99.16% of this debit during 2018/19.
- Provided financial and tenancy sustainability advice to over 1000 Council tenants in 2018/19.
- Manages 2 Gypsy Roma Traveller sites in Hartford Bridge and Lynemouth.
- Allocated 750 council properties in 2018/19;
- Registered and assessed 4126 applications for homefinder and assesses 2295 medical forms during 2018/19.
- Provided additional support to 2,710 people to be housed through the Homefinder service in 2018/19.
- Provides a variety of opportunities for Council tenants and Leaseholders to directly engage with the service via a dedicated Resident Involvement team.
- Processed 94 and sold 49 homes under the Right to Buy process in 2018/19.

Key Service Facts and Figures – Housing Maintenance

- Undertook 37,242 responsive repairs to council properties in 2018/19
- Carried out 8,126 gas services to council properties in 2018/19
- Carried out 325 solid fuel services to council properties in 2018/19
- Completed external painting of 684 council properties in 2018/19
- Provided out of hours callout service to council housing and public buildings

- Provided repairs and maintenance across two gypsy roma traveller sites in Hartford Bridge and Lyneburn Cottages
- Delivered 94 handyman service jobs for the elderly to council properties in 2018/19 (information only available between 16/10/18-31/3/19)
- Inspected 36 tenant improvement requests in council properties in 2018/19 (information only available between 16/10/18-31/3/19)

Key Service Facts and Figures - Housing Capital

- Developed and managed the £10,000,000 Housing Capital Programme
- Improved 1879 council owned properties by installing new kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, windows and doors and carrying out roof replacements and electrical rewires in 2018/19
- Managed the delivery of the £535,000 CSDP budget, carrying out minor and major adaptations in 2018/19
- Project managed the delivery of major refurbishment of 8 empty private properties and 5 purchased properties in 2018/19
- Carried out major structural repairs and external wall insulation to 83 Non-traditional properties in 2018/19
- Improved parking within estates by installing 58 hardstands to council owned properties
- Completed 57 deed plan surveys for RTB applications
- Project managed the delivery of 10 renewable heating systems as part of the Warm Homes Fund.

Summary of Service Resources at 1 April 2019:

Function	Number of FTE posts	Staffing Expenditure	Non Staffing Expenditure	Income	Capital Investment
Housing Services (GF)	39.75	£1,452,440	£1,493,240	£-2,084,900	£244,732
Housing Operations (HRA)	89.53	£2,082,170	£21,074,530	£-31,447,420	£0
Housing Maintenance (HRA)	120.23	£4,249,410	£3,629,970	£-181,090	£0
Housing Capital (HRA)	69.37	£2,505,530	£2,666,090	£-4,579,190	£11,216,430
Total for Service	286.85	£10,289,550	£28,863,830	£-38,292,600	£11,461,162

Contribution to the Corporate Plan

[How] We want to be efficient, open & work for everyone

The corporate plan requires us to be resourceful, making every pound count - we will review the structure of Housing Management Service to ensure income is maximised & complete a review of the Common Allocation Policy to maximise use of stock and increase income.

We will review our Tenant Involvement Framework with the intention of empowering residents within estates managed by NCC.

Within the Housing Capital team we will monitor the costs of all major improvement work to ensure we achieve value for money. External contracts will be procured by implementing a balanced approach in evaluating quality and price when appointing contractors to deliver our capital schemes. We will continue to utilise our internal Capital Delivery team to complete all of our internal improvement schemes which will result in high levels of efficiency whilst maintaining a local workforce committed to apprenticeship development.

We will continue to send satisfaction surveys to 100% of residents receiving improvement works and we will use the responses to continually improve the service we provide.

[Living] We want you to feel safe, healthy & cared for

The Council wants to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Through development of the Homelessness Service and the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act requirements the Council will support our vulnerable residents to ensure they have somewhere safe to live.

The Council invests in its housing stock through both capital investment and by providing an effective and responsive repairs and maintenance service, to enable tenants to live in an environment where they feel safe and comfortable.

Within the capital investment programme we will install security doors and external lighting to increase the safety of our residents. Within our heating programme, we will install energy efficient heating systems to mitigate the risk of our tenants falling into fuel poverty.

We will, with the support of Occupational Therapy, carry out specific housing adaptations to ensure that the housing we provide meets the needs of our vulnerable residents.

A programme of refurbishment work to communal areas within flats will be developed and delivered to reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour and improve the safety of our residents.

We will work collaboratively with other services to provide high quality sheltered and specialist housing in self-contained accommodation where tenants may live independently or with support and managed care when needed. Through this approach we wish to enable older people aged over 60 to live independently longer in the community and to reduce their reliance on health services and delay admission into long term care.

Through promotion of our Property and Tenant Accreditation schemes we will ensure that homes are safe and warm and suitable to live in whilst supporting tenants through accreditation to access properties in the private rented sector.

We support our vulnerable tenants to access all available benefits and budgeting advice through joint funding of a money advice worker with CAB. This worker works directly with our tenants to help maximise income. We also work with new and existing tenants who were once, or still are, part of our Armed Forces, with two Armed Forces Veteran Workers based in Housing Services helping veterans and serving personnel access the help and support they need.

The Housing teams actively support Safeguarding and contribute to both the Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards and sub-committees, ensuring that the workforce are appropriately trained to identify and support those at risk.

[Enjoying] We want you to love where you Live

We want people to be proud of where they live and have developed Estate Gradings for all of our Estates and we will roll out a new programme of Estate Inspections and Walkabouts with residents and partners to help develop and improve areas.

We have developed and are implementing a Volunteer Policy to work specifically with Refugee families living in Northumberland benefiting not only the families being supported, but also helping to engage with the local host communities where they live. The proposal will therefore have a strategic benefit in supporting the Council's wider objectives for community engagement.

We are also working in partnership with local communities to develop Community Led Housing (CLH). The aim is to establish a new bespoke development vehicle to facilitate and encourage local communities to accelerate the construction of community led housing.

We will provide our residents with the opportunity to make choices regarding their new kitchens, bathroom and external doors as part of the improvement works programme to around 1800 council-owned properties per year.

[Connecting] We want you to have access to the things you need

Our new Housing Management system will introduce a Tenant Portal where tenants will be able to access their personal accounts, self-serve and access more services on-line.

[Learning] We want you to achieve and realise your potential

We recognise that for our services to be sustainable and for succession planning it is important to have appropriate recruitment processes in place. We actively support the appointment of apprentices giving people in our county the opportunity to develop skills that will support future employability for the rest of their working lives.

We are leading on the Northumberland element of the Working Homes North of Tyne ESF Project to develop employment support for workless housing households, through a team of Employability Officers. We have a direct interest in supporting tenancies and our communities and have the mechanisms to engage directly with those of our tenants who are workless. We have an established relationship with our tenants and operate in areas with high levels of deprivation.

We have developed Learning Hives, in partnership with the Northern Learning Trust, and funded by Prosper. They provide an identified need in the community for help with finding work, improving skills and employability.

External Validation

Inspections

We are members of the Housing Quality Network who have introduced a number of accreditations for:

- Income Management
- Repairs and maintenance
- Estate Management Lettings

We will explore these over the next three years as they are a visible sign that the service meets or exceeds good practice standards and offers a best in class service to tenants.

We are actively engaged with The Tenant Participation Service (TPAS) through which we seek to develop and enhance current service delivery. We intend to explore accreditation for Tenant engagement, to evidence that we are actively working with, listening and responding to the needs of our tenants.

Customer Perception

Tenant Involvement Framework:

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the regulator for all housing providers.

It promotes a co-regulatory approach to service delivery which underpins the need for tenants to be involved and included in how the services they receive are monitored and scrutinised.

A dedicated Resident Involvement Team was set up in July 2015 to engage specifically with Council tenants and Leaseholders. Their remit is to develop and deliver an overarching framework of engagement opportunities for customers to get more involved with Housing Services.

Benchmarking

We continue to participate in informal benchmarking via the sharing of regular intelligence with other social housing providers throughout the North East and are looking to develop Regional benchmarking groups.

Resident Satisfaction

All housing tenants receiving improvement works, for example, a replacement kitchen, bathroom, heating system and windows and doors, are asked to provide feedback by way of a resident satisfaction survey. These are analysed, acted upon and reported to committees on a regular basis. Resident satisfaction is one of the KPI's monitored by the Housing Service.

Priorities for 2019 – 2021

Priority Area	Key Milestones
<p>The delivery of up to 1,000 new council houses, of appropriate design and house type, to meet identified housing need.</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for”</i></p> <p>[Enjoying] <i>“We want you to love where you live”</i></p> <p>[Thriving] <i>“We want to attract more and better jobs”</i></p>	<p>To develop an initial housing delivery plan [July 2019]</p> <p>To implement a staffing structure to take forward implementation and development of the plan. [August 2019]</p> <p>To establish a Housing Delivery Board with appropriate internal and external representation to oversee delivery, consider development opportunities and advise Cabinet on progress. [August 2019]</p>
<p>To enhance engagement with council housing tenants to help develop and inform service delivery, service improvements and self-service.</p> <p>[Success Measures] <i>“We want to make a difference”</i></p>	<p>To develop an effective tenant customer insight service [September 2019]</p> <p>To review and develop a tenant engagement framework [December 2019]</p> <p>To implement arrangements to gather, collate and analyse information from across the service to inform the understanding of customer satisfaction and identify opportunities for service improvement. [March 2020]</p>
<p>Review of HFN’s Tenancy Agreements</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for”</i></p>	<p>Revise Council’s Tenancy Agreement and its underpinning terms and conditions [September 2019]</p>
<p>Develop Estate gradings and Neighbourhood profiles to inform services to individual areas</p> <p>[Enjoying] <i>“We want you to love where you live”</i></p>	<p>Review Estate Walkabouts in partnership with wider services [November 2019]</p> <p>Develop an Estate Grading programme across all Council housing areas [March 2020]</p> <p>Roll out estate Grading programme with tenants [June 2020]</p> <p>Develop neighbourhood profiles for every Council housing area [March 2021]</p>
<p>Manage the implementation of</p>	<p>Review and revise structure/resources to</p>

<p>universal credit so as to reduce the impact on tenants</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for”</i></p> <p>[How] <i>“We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone”</i></p>	<p>support the full service introduction of Universal Credit [September 2019]</p> <p>Review policies and procedures i.e. rent and allocations [March 2020]</p>
<p>Deliver the NCC North of Tyne Working Homes Project from April 2019 to April 2021</p> <p>[Learning] <i>“We want you to achieve and realise your potential”</i></p>	<p>Provide a range of intensive and tailored employment support to help out of work social housing tenants in Northumberland.</p> <p>Assisting tenants in developing their skills and attributes needed to move from welfare benefits and into work</p> <p>2019 Q3 & Q4 30 Participants</p> <p>2020 Q1 - Q4 79 Participants</p> <p>2021 Q1 - Q4 80 Participants</p>
<p>To ensure that appropriate and robust strategies are in place to reflect local and national needs and legislative requirements including the Housing & Planning Act, Homeless Reduction Act etc</p> <p>[How] <i>“We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone”</i></p>	<p>Agree a refreshed Homelessness Strategy for Northumberland 2016 - 2021 and its associated Action Plan following the implementation of the Homeless reduction Act [April 2019]</p> <p>Produce and agree a new Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2019 - 2021 for adoption [July 2019]</p> <p>Review, implement and monitor the Private Sector Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2015 - 2020 Action Plan [March 2020]</p>
<p>Develop a transit, stopping provision for the Travelling community to support the requirements of the Local Plan</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for”</i></p>	<p>To identify, in partnership with Strategic Estates and Development suitable locations [November 2019]</p> <p>Recommend and develop site(s) for consideration as temporary transit provision for the Travelling Community [March 2020]</p>
<p>To complete the delivery of the Lease and Repair and Acquisition and Repair scheme in line with Homes England funding requirements</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe,</i></p>	<p>The identification of 20 suitable empty properties</p> <p>The commencement and completion of the Empty Dwelling Management process [August 2020]</p>

<p><i>healthy, and cared for</i></p>	<p>Completion of all repair and refurbishment works [March 2021]</p>
<p>Allocation of the Government grant to support Community-Led Housing across the county</p> <p>[Thriving] <i>“We want to attract more and better jobs”</i></p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for”</i></p>	<p>To work with internal and external Partners and providers to identify and encourage landowners/developers and community organisations to support provision of CLH either as part of larger or individual developments [March 2021]</p>
<p>Continue to implement the Council’s offer to support the re-settlement of 48 families under the revised Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS) & the Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme (VCRS)</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for”</i></p>	<p>Final 21 families to be resettled in Northumberland by end of scheme date [March 2020]</p>
<p>To ensure that staff across the Housing Service are able to recognise and make a positive contribution to the safeguarding of vulnerable tenants who may be at risk, particularly with regard to Domestic abuse, Modern Day Slavery and Sexual Exploitation</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for”</i></p>	<p>Ensure all appropriate training is delivered to staff and that the Record of Learning is completed</p> <p>Develop and implement appropriate arrangements to support the Police Protocol when working with victims of Modern Day Slavery (MDS) or Sexual Exploitation. [October 2019]</p> <p>Develop effective pathways to ensure that all staff are aware of the correct routes for referrals [December 2019]</p> <p>Work in partnership with Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance to ensure that the housing offer for council tenants recognises and supports victims of Domestic Abuse [March 2020]</p>
<p>Complete a review of the internal stores service to ensure value for money is achieved</p>	<p>Conduct an audit of the existing process and benchmark against other providers produce recommendations for the stores service [March 2020]</p>
<p>To develop a Housing Asset Management Strategy to assist and inform the delivery of the annual</p>	<p>To review existing strategy and housing stock condition data and determine the need for new or additional information</p>

<p>capital programme and support the long term maintenance and improvement of existing housing stock</p>	<p>[December 2019]</p> <p>To develop Strategy [March 2020]</p> <p>To undertake an options appraisal of the current Capital/Asset Management IT systems [March 2020]</p>
<p>Review of delivery of R&M service to explore opportunities and apply best practice in line with industry standards</p>	<p>Benchmark existing service against peer organisations monitor industry new initiatives and best practices coming through as part of industry developments [March 2020]</p>
<p>Develop an Environmental Works Programme</p> <p><i>“[Living] We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i></p> <p><i>“[Enjoying] “We want you to love where you live”</i></p>	<p>Develop a matrix to provide an objective view on feasibility and to allow priority levels to be assigned [June 2019]</p> <p>Work collaboratively to identify what work could be carried out to improve the residential areas we manage across the county [March 2020]</p> <p>Develop an estimate of cost for the improvement work identified and work collaboratively to agree on the programme over the next few years [March 2020]</p>
<p>Improve the thermal efficiency of all properties with an EPC rating of ‘E’ or below</p> <p><i>“[Living] “We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i></p> <p><i>“[Enjoying] “We want you to love where you live”</i></p>	<p>Analyse existing EPC’s with a rating of ‘E’ or below, against any recommended measures already carried out [August 2019]</p> <p>Determine what measures can be carried out to increase the rating to a ‘D’ or above [September 2019]</p> <p>Explore options for external funding [September 2019]</p> <p>Liaise with Procurement to ensure compliance [September 2019]</p> <p>Roll out energy efficiency measures to properties as identified [March 2020]</p>
<p>Implement a digital improvement programme to; enhance service delivery, provide efficiencies and support “self service”</p> <p><i>“[How] “We want to be efficient, open and</i></p>	<p>Develop and implement as part of digital enhancement of service delivery customer portal within NPS to allow customers to self serve [March 2020]</p>

Performance Framework

Measure	Outturn 2016-17	Outturn 2017-18	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Target 2020-21
% of current tenant rent collected	98.28%	98.49%	98.12%	98%	98%
% rent lost through vacant council housing	1.36%	2.08%	1.87%	1.8%	1.8%
% of gas servicing certificates completed	100%	100%	98.08%	100%	100%
% of emergency repairs actioned within 24 hours	96.85%	99.43%	97.48%	99%	99%
% of routine repairs completed within target time	96.15%	99.31%	95.40%	98%	98%
% of Homelessness cases prevented within 56 days (new performance indicator)	N/A	N/A	48.50%	55%	60%
% of Homelessness cases relieved within 56 days (new performance indicator)	N/A	N/A	58.50%	65%	70%
% of Housing Capital Investment Programme Completed	N/A	95%	101.22%	95%	95%
% of positive feedback from resident satisfaction surveys following investment works	N/A	94.36%	96.25%	96%	96%

Public Protection

Purpose:

The purpose of the Public Protection Service is to protect and improve public health and the environment for all. Also to regulate and support a safe & fair trading environment for the benefit of the businesses and consumers of Northumberland and so contribute to a vibrant and growing economy.

The aim of the Public Health Protection Unit is to provide; environmental health, operational community safety, environmental enforcement, food safety and animal welfare services to protect and improve the environment, public health, safety and well-being of residents, and support business growth.

The aim of the Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit is to provide Building Control, Licensing, Pest Control and Trading Standards Services by responding to requests for advice, guidance and services from businesses and residents and taking proportionate action when breaches of legislation are uncovered.

The key services required by legislation to be delivered by the Public Health Protection Unit and Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit are as listed below

Primary functions:

- Animal Welfare of companion animals
- Dog Control & fouling
- Environmental Enforcement (incld fly tipping, littering, abandoned vehicles)
- Housing Standards & HMO Licensing
- Noise / Smoke / Dust Control
- Regulation of private water supplies
- Anti-Social Behaviour Control/ Community Safety
- Air Quality Monitoring
- Contaminated Land
- Environmental assessments for planning consultations
- Regulation of permitted industrial premises
- Food Hygiene and Safety Inspections
- Port Health
- Infectious disease control
- Health and Safety
- The 'Produced in Northumberland' food verification scheme.
- Food Standards Inspections

- Animal Health for farm animals
- Fair Trading
- Product Safety
- Weights and Measures
- Under Age Sales
- Civil Law Consumer and Business Advice
- Primary food and feed producers regulation
- Compliance of new developments with Building Regulations
- Dangerous Buildings / Demolitions
- Land Charges Register & Searches
- Street Naming and Numbering
- Licensing Enforcement
- Licensing of Hackney Carriages, Private Hire vehicles, drivers and operators
- Licensing of premises Premises, Temporary Events and Personal Licence Holders
- Licensing of animal establishments
- Licensing of scrap metal dealers, street traders, tattooing premises
- Gambling premises licensing
- Providing Support to Licensing and Licensing & Regulatory Committees
- Pest Control services, including providing advice, to residents and businesses
- Providing Technical support to all Public Protection services
- Managing all Freedom of Information and Environmental Information enquiries
- Managing the complaints process
- Oversight of the Civica database

Service Parameters

Key service facts and figures

Public Health Protection Unit

The Public Health Protection Unit responded to 13,877 service requests in 2018/19 from residents and businesses. It also carried out planned and responsive visits to protect & improve food hygiene, food standards, air quality, and water quality in private water supplies.

The Unit investigates many different types of public health & safety issues including anti-social behaviour, noise, air & land pollution, fly tipping, littering, poor housing standards, dog fouling and we take hundreds of stray dogs a year to a place of safety.

The Unit's activities are strongly linked to all the corporate priorities but particularly:

- We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for (living),
- We want you to love where you live (enjoying).

The Unit comprises four teams that deliver a series of protective and/or preventative statutory functions for the Council across more than 100 pieces of legislation. The Unit seeks to protect and improve public health and safety through an approach that uses the three 'E's': education, engagement and, where necessary, enforcement.

The Unit works in partnership with a variety of other services including; Northumbria Police, Public Health England, Fire Safety, Adult & Children Safeguarding, Town/ Parish Councils, and plays an active role in the Safer Northumberland Partnership.

The Unit comprises officers with a wide range of competencies including; environmental health officers, community safety officers, environmental enforcement officers, animal welfare officers, and technical officers with a wide range of specialisms.

The Public Health Protection Unit's activities in 2018/19 included:

- The Public Health Protection Unit investigated 2014 noise and environmental protection complaints. 96% were responded to within 3 working days.
- The Environmental Protection Team was consulted and provided expert advice on 1,276 planning applications.
- The Community & Environmental Health Team investigated 878 complaints concerning anti-social behaviour 92% were responded to within 3 working days.
- The Environmental Enforcement and Animal Welfare Team investigated 1471 fly tips and 659 waste accumulations.
- The Environmental Enforcement and Animal Welfare Team investigated 562 reported abandoned vehicles.
- The Community & Environmental Health Team investigated 436 housing standards complaints from tenants. 97% were responded to within 3 days and this ensured hundreds serious housing health and safety hazards were removed.
- The Environmental Enforcement and Animal Welfare Team investigated 3882 dog related and animal welfare service requests. Officers issued 82 fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and other dog control offences.
- The Commercial Team carried out hundreds of proactive food safety and high risk food standards inspections of premises across Northumberland delivering 98% of the food service plan. They also responded to 1562 service requests.
- The Unit continued to deliver and promote the Produced in Northumberland verification scheme that received extensive positive coverage in the media. By the end of 2018 over 90 businesses had signed up to the scheme. The unit participated in an event promoting the scheme held at the Houses of Parliament on the 13th June 2018.
- The Animal Welfare stray dog collection service received the RSPCA's Platinum Footprint Award.

- The Team's Green Dog Walkers Initiative won Northumberland's Community Engagement Campaign of the Year for 2018. It was also a shortlisted finalist at the Keep Britain Tidy National Awards 2019.

`Produced in Northumberland` is an initiative from Northumberland County Council which recognises Northumberland food producers and also businesses that use and promote food and drink that is made in Northumberland. The core of the scheme is a source verification carried out by lead auditor trained officers of the Public Health Protection Unit. Additionally scheme members must reach a compliant food safety standard so this provides additional reassurance to the public that food produced or retailed with this branding is both safe and sourced locally.

In 2018/19 the scheme has started to reach national significance and was part of an event at the UK Parliament on 13th June 2018. Also officers regular promote the scheme at Northumberland food festivals and the County Show.

This verification scheme is offered to local businesses with the aim of raising the profile, value and public confidence in Northumberland food & drink. With regard to helping tourism within the County the scheme also helps to add value to the visitors overall experience of Northumberland as food & drink is such an important and memorable part of their visit.

During 2019/20 we will develop plans to expand the scheme to cover non-food, tourist related goods, such as locally made craft items

Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit

The Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit (BC&PSU) brings together a diverse group of Teams with a range of specialist skills.

The Building Control Team oversees a broad range of building development in the County from plan checking to completion including; domestic extensions, factories, leisure centres and schools. They also have responsibility when a dangerous structure is identified, working with colleagues in the NCC Highways Team, the Police, other services and property owners to make the area safe for residents, pedestrians and road users.

The Licensing Team administer licences and permits for taxi drivers and vehicles, for pubs, clubs and off-licences, scrap metal dealers, zoos, street traders, bookmakers, music festivals and tattooists amongst others. In many cases they have to ensure that licence holders are fit and proper people to hold licences and that they will be able to comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation. The Licensing Enforcement Team carries out checks to ensure that these requirements are being met. The Team work closely with the Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Public Health, Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services, amongst others, to monitor performance by licence holders and to ensure compliance.

Pest Control provides a service to business and residents, eradicating pests and providing advice on protection against infestation. Their work is seasonal with insects being the main focus during the warmer seasons and rodents during the colder months. Larger organisations can contract with them for annual support. Clients include leisure centres, hospitals, schools, shopping centres and social landlords, which helps to improve their offer to their tenants.

The Trading Standards & Animal Health Team focus on making sure that goods and services, including foods, and other products are safe and fairly described and traded. They make sure that all weighing and measuring equipment is giving the correct amount and that packages weigh what they say on their label. The Animal Health section focuses on preventing the spread of animal diseases such as foot and mouth. They also make sure that animal feed provided for animals is safe for them and the end consumer.

Our Technical Support Team support activity across all of Public Protection. Their services are integrated into front line activity so as to release more time for officers to work directly with clients. Without this support, front line activity would be severely reduced.

The BC & PS Unit covers a range of services. The following figures help to illustrate the diversity of activity undertaken. In the 2018-19 financial year:

- The Pest Control Team responded to 5414 requests for service with 2916 being initial requests and a further 2448 revisits to complete treatments dealing with rats, mice, fleas, wasps, ants and other pests. They also carried 526 inspection visits which include contract and complaints investigation .
- The Trading Standards & Animal Health Team received 2314 consumer complaints (a 15% increase on the previous year) and 929 requests for advice from businesses. They dealt with issues such as counterfeit vodka, illicit tobacco, misdescribed cars, allergens in foods, counterfeit car parts, rogue traders, scams, and livestock at markets and fallen stock on farms.
- The Licensing Team administered 5317 permits and licences for taxi drivers and vehicles, pubs, clubs and off-licences, zoos, street traders and scrap metal dealers, amongst others.
- Building Control supervised building schemes worth over £120m, carrying out 13,426 inspections to ensure that buildings in Northumberland are safe to live in, energy efficient and accessible for all our residents. Officers attended 35 reported dangerous structures.
- The Technical Support Team dealt with 255 Freedom of Information/Environmental Information requests compared with 178 the previous year, 1948 initial noise complaints (1478 in 2017/18) 1276 Planning Applications and minuted 12 meetings.

Summary of service resources at 1 April 2019:

Function	Number of FTE posts	Staffing expenditure	Non-staffing expenditure	Income	Capital Investment
Public Health Protection	47.17	1,949,565	237,145	-189,520	0
Business Compliance & Public Safety	57.52	2,145,965	486,375	-2,332,230	0
Total for Service	104.69	4,095,530	723,520	-2,521,750	0

Contribution to the Corporate Plan

Public Protection supports the Vision and Values of the County Council in numerous ways across the full range of services it provides. The Service is an integral part of the County Council and recognises the key themes of a new organisational cultural strategy which include:

- Ensuring our services are customer focused
- Supporting communities and staff to embrace change and innovation
- Involving communities and staff in decisions which affect them
- Supporting communities to feel safe
- Creating a healthy and positive working environment

The Priorities identified later in this document for the period 2018-2021 focus on these Visions and Values and how this will be achieved is detailed across the document and in all service plans produced by the individual teams within the service. Links to the Corporate Visions and Values are indicated against each Priority.

Public Protection also recognises and will strive to adhere to the five key traits of the Administration: the need for **financial prudence**; being **resourceful**; the need to **listen and consider** views; to be seen as **empowering**; and to seek to collaborate where it is in Northumberland's interests to do so.

[How] We want to be efficient, open & work for everyone

Public Protection has set its self challenging performance targets to ensure it provides a timely and efficient service to all our customers and stakeholders.

Responding to requests for advice, guidance and services from businesses and residents. Also a planned approach to programmed work enables us to provide efficient delivery across the County.

[Living] We want you to feel safe, healthy & cared for

Through our work to prevent and protect, Public Protection contributes to the health and social well being of individuals and communities. We strive to provide an effective, proportionate, response to issues of anti-social behaviour and environmental issues such as noise through evidence based investigation and risk based action.

Also through the delivery of the Food Service Plan Public Protection protect residents and visitors from food borne illnesses by striving to ensure the highest food hygiene standards in Northumberland food businesses.

The Licensing Team will continue to demand high standards of those whom it licences and will take proportionate action against those who do not meet their responsibilities as taxi drivers or operators or who operate under a licence to sell alcohol as priorities.

We will work to make sure that new developments in the County are built to high standards in terms of workmanship and materials and meet appropriate standards for energy efficiency, fire safety and access for all users.

Trading Standards will take action against those committing scams or frauds whether at residents doorsteps, by phone or by email.

We will take action against those selling controlled products such as alcohol, tobacco, fireworks, solvents and knives to children.

Our Pest Control Team will help to keep homes and businesses free from pests, providing advice and treatments as necessary.

[Enjoying] We want you to love where you Live

Public Protection improve environmental quality and protect public health through the proportionate investigation of all dog related complaints, the efficient collection of stray dogs, and the promotion of responsible dog ownership through the Green Dog Walkers Initiative. Also we improve environmental quality and protect public health through targeted enforcement investigations of fly tipping and littering.

Also by proactively ensuring air quality within Northumberland meets national standards through the regulation of permitted industrial premises and the investigation of air pollution incidents.

Public Protection also protect and improve the natural and built environment for the future through the provision of expert technical advice on environmental issues such as noise or contaminated land to the Council's planning committees.

[Thriving] We want to attract more and better jobs"

Through the delivery of the Food Service Plan we strive to help food & drink businesses thrive by ensuring a fair trading environment with high food hygiene and food safety standards. We support businesses through advice and in particular through our Produced in Northumberland verification scheme.

We will provide a wide range of support to new businesses, helping them to understand which controls apply to them and what they have to do to meet their obligations. We will support Better Business for All and the Primary Authority scheme where they provide benefits to business.

External Validation

The stray dog collection service provided by the Service's animal welfare officers received the RSPCA's Platinum Footprint award in 2018/19.

Customer perception

The Service undertakes public satisfaction services. For most of the teams this is by means of an online questionnaire. Following a request by Members, the Commercial Team use a paper system for their food hygiene work, as do Trading Standards for their food standards visits.

As members of staff complete a piece of work, such as closing a complaint or service request, they will send the link to the survey to the client or customer. The responses are collated quarterly.

For 2018/19, the results from the 429 positive or negative responses to the comment "I received a high level of customer service" 394 indicated that they Agreed or Strongly Agreed, giving a score of 91.6%. (78% of which Strongly Agreed and 22% Agreed)

Benchmarking

The 18/19 performance of the teams delivering the Food Service Plan is in the process of being benchmarked with the other NE authorities. The benchmarking is occurring through the North East Food Liaison Group. The intention is that the benchmarking will cover both food hygiene and food standards inspections, comparing performance and resource allocation.

The Building Control Team have implemented the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) Quality Management System and anticipate being externally audited during 2010/20.

The Trading Standards & Animal Health Team are taking part in a pilot to implement the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) Inputs and Outcomes Performance Framework.

Priorities for 2019 - 2021

Priority Area	Key Milestones
<p>Regulate & support food businesses through the delivery of the Food Safety and Standards Service Plan 2019-20.</p> <p>[How] <i>“We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone”</i></p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i></p> <p>[Thriving] <i>“We want to attract more and better jobs”</i></p>	<p>Completion of inspection programme for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High risk ● Medium risk and ● Low risk food hygiene premises and investigation of complaints in accordance with agreed plan <p>[June, September & December 2019]</p> <p>Delivery of the plan [March 2020]</p>
<p>Delivery and enhancement of the Produced in Northumberland Verification Scheme.</p> <p>[How] <i>“We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone”</i></p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i></p> <p>[Thriving] <i>“We want to attract more and better jobs”</i></p>	<p>Completion of verification audits of scheme members.</p> <p>Proactive promotion of the PIN scheme through community and Participation in ‘Meet the Maker’ events.</p> <p>Provision of report setting out opportunities for the development of PIN [July 2019]</p> <p>Implementation of agreed action plan post consideration of report [March 2020]</p>
<p>Improve environmental quality and protect public health and reduce impact upon the natural and built environment from activities such as; dog fouling, littering and fly tipping.</p> <p>[How] <i>“We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone”</i></p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i></p> <p>[Enjoying] <i>“We want you to love where you live”</i></p>	<p>Platinum Footprint Award from the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals in 2019.</p> <p>Delivery of the Green Dog Walkers Scheme through organised events April to October 2019.</p> <p>Develop and publish a rescued dogs calendar [December 2019].</p> <p>Develop and participate in environmental campaigns</p>
<p>Protect residents and communities through interventions to improve the natural and built environment in respect of issues arising from such matters as noise or contaminated land.</p> <p>[How] <i>“We want you to be efficient, open</i></p>	<p>Assessment of relevant applications and provision of technical advice as part of the planning application process [Continuous]</p> <p>Attendance and provision of expert advice to the Council’s planning</p>

<p><i>and work for everyone”</i> [Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i> [Enjoying] <i>“We want you to love where you live”</i></p>	<p>committees. [Continuous]</p> <p>Completion of All Noise from Intruder Alarm complaints (ENA) [Continuous]</p>
<p>Protect and improve public health by proactively ensuring air quality within Northumberland meets national standards through the regulation of permitted industrial premises and the investigation of air pollution incidents.</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i> [Enjoying] <i>“We want you to love where you live”</i></p>	<p>Proactively inspect identified industrial polluting sites which require a Local Authority permit in accordance with risk based inspection programme.</p> <p>Submit Annual Air Quality Status Report to DEFRA [March 2020]</p>
<p>To develop effective partnership working to reduce fear of crime and to safeguard and protect our communities and residents of Northumberland.</p>	<p>The organisation and management of multi agency problem solving groups, including the VOL's (Victim, Offender, Location)</p> <p>Review of arrangements to ensure the council is meeting its duties in respect of Contest, Prevent, Channel and Modern Day Slavery [October 2019]</p> <p>Review of the Safer Northumberland Partnership [October 2019]</p>
<p>To support and encourage a fair trading environment which promotes economic growth and protects and safeguards consumers.</p>	<p>Effective recording and management of complaints and service requests, including, targeted interventions in response to complaints of “rogue trading”</p> <p>Consideration and determination of non-contentious licence applications</p> <p>Delivery of a programme of under-age visits to premises selling restricted goods.</p> <p>The activities detailed in the plans will be monitored at the end of each month. [Continuous]</p>
<p>To provide an effective and proportionate response to identified</p>	<p>Develop and implement a programme of visits to high risk premises for both</p>

<p>breaches of legislation to protect and safeguard residents, consumers and visitors to Northumberland.</p>	<p>Trading Standards and Animal Health [July 2019]</p> <p>Develop and implement a programme of visits to high risk Licensing Act and Gambling Act premises [July 2019]</p> <p>The activities detailed in the plans will be monitored at the end of each month or quarter as specified.</p>
<p>To regulate licensed premises, persons and activities so as to protect the personal and physical safety of residents and visitors to Northumberland.</p> <p>[Living] <i>“We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for”</i></p>	<p>To provide expert technical advice and support to Licensing and Licensing & Regulatory Committee and sub-Committees</p> <p>To ensure that appropriate and robust policies are in place to support structured decision making</p> <p>To participate in local, regional and national forums and initiatives to develop best practice and inform service delivery. [Continuous]</p>
<p>Support the safe design, construction, occupation and use of high risk residential buildings, other “complex” buildings and those which present a risk to the public.</p> <p>[How] <i>“We want you to be efficient, open and work for everyone”</i></p> <p>[Learning] <i>“We want you to achieve and realise your potential”</i></p>	<p>Development and adoption of the LABC Quality Management System [August 2019]</p> <p>Inspection and response arising from dangerous structures within 1 working day of notification</p> <p>Review of Building Control service provision and delivery to reflect government response to Hackitt review - Building a Safer Future [December 2019]</p>
<p>Implement a digital improvement programme to; enhance service delivery, provide efficiencies and support “self service”</p> <p>[How] <i>“We want you to be efficient, open and work for everyone”</i></p>	<p>Undertake a review of services and associated processes to identify digital improvement opportunities [July 2019]</p> <p>Consult with appropriate internal services to identify any dependencies, benefits and implications [September 2019]</p> <p>Develop a prioritised improvement plan [October 2019]</p>

Performance Framework

Measure	Outturn 2016-17	Outturn 2017-18	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Target 2020-21
Overall customer satisfaction with Public Protection services (New indicator)	N/A	N/A	93.24%	90%	90%
Percentage of food plan visits achieved against % expected in plan (cumulative)	97.31%	93.8%	98.8%	95%	95%
% of high priority food premises inspections completed in line with annual programme (cumulative)	82.46%	100%	100%	98%	98%
% of planning consultations responded to within target time	79.20%	82.49%	69.85%	75%	75%
% of waste accumulations removed from private land, following environmental enforcement team action within 28 days	86.48%	84.97%	89.47%	85%	85%
% of land charges responses replied to within 10 working days	53.10%	79.67%	93.77%	85%	90%
% Reported dangerous structures responded to within 1 working day of notification	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% of Building Regulations applications duly made decided within timescale	N/A	N/A	75%	80%	80%
% high risk animal health visits conducted in line with quarterly schedule	99.30%	100%	98%	95%	95%
% of non-contentious licence applications processed within 10 working days	N/A	93.03%	97.53%	95%	95%
% Trading Standards interventions carried out following consumer complaints in relation to rogue traders	N/A	N/A	100%	95%	100%
% Underage sales operations completed	N/A	N/A	100%	100%	100%