

District Council Report May 2024

April has been a relatively quiet month at Newark and Sherwood District Council, meeting wise, due to the Mayoral and Police Crime Commissioner elections which took place on May 2nd.

April's planning committee considered the conversion of a 4 bed flat above the community room at King's Court, Southwell, to two one bed flats.

There will be no external changes to the building. The successful proposal will however, mean the re-siting of a lamp post to accommodate three extra parking spaces.

The addition of two further one bed flats will enhance the offer of social housing within Southwell and the Newark and Sherwood District area, where waiting lists remain at a premium.

April's Audit and Governance committee reviewed the arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints regarding Councillors.

The proposal reached was for all members of the committee to attend an informal workshop to consider updates and amendments to the Council's arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints. Proposals will then be presented formally to the committee. This way forward will ensure that arrangements are up to date and fit for purpose.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Planning committee members were asked to attend two, two hour mandatory training sessions on Biodiversity Net Gain;

For any new development, developers are required, where possible, to protect existing habitats and ecosystems. Habitat loss must be identified and mitigated in the early planning stages.

There will be an anti- trashing check and statement to ensure the intended plots of land haven't been disturbed before applications are submitted.

12th February 2024 is a key date as it is now a legal requirement for developers to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain in new developments. This can be done either off-site or on-site. The maximum on- site should be considered first, then off-site can be sought or a combination of the two.

The district will need to have off-site habitat banks of land.

Householder, permitted development and self-build are excluded.

Major applications of ten houses or more since February 12th 2024 are included in this new process.

BNG is a 'post permission' issue. Planning permission is granted then Biodiversity Gain plan needs to be submitted and approved pre-commencement of the granted planning permission.

The Biodiversity Gain plan should be approved within 8 weeks.

This will increase the workload for planning officers.

Cllr Penny Rainbow
District Cllr - Southwell Ward