

Report to Overview & Scrutiny of the Joint Venture Company Kier North Tyneside Limited February 2014



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kier North Tyneside Limited is a Joint Venture Company between Kier Group and North Tyneside Council (NTC). The new company commenced trading in September 2009 with circa 500 staff transferring from North Tyneside Council to the new organisation. The business now employs circa 400 people and our key objective is to provide an effective and efficient responsive repairs and planned maintenance service for all North Tyneside owned and managed properties including capital investment works. The Joint Venture Company (JVCo) is governed by a board of Directors and through Strategic and Operating Partnering Boards with Council members, officers and tenants.

Over the last four years the JVCo has made improvements in a number of service areas. Within the call centre, customers' first point of contact in many cases, call waiting times are reduced; the % of calls answered has increased as has satisfaction levels. Empty property turnaround has improved by nearly 50%, with the repairs element averaging 13.5 days. Month on month almost all, if not every property has a current gas certificate, a key landlord requirement. Tenants have seen improvements in response times, quality of work and speed of repairs demonstrated through higher satisfaction scores year on year. Balancing demand with resources remains challenging and this is particularly relevant where performance against Key Performance Indicators is below expectation. Backlogs in roofing, non emergency repairs, fencing works are key areas for the business to address.

Delivery of both housing and general capital schemes have been a significant part of the JVCo's activities over the last four years. The first new council homes were completed prior to Christmas 2013 and progress remains on track for further units currently on site. High profile schemes including the structural refurbishment of Whitley Bay Dome, Tynemouth changing village and North shields customer first centre have all been well received by local residents. Over 120 refurbishment projects have been completed to Schools during school holidays with all pupils being able to attend at the beginning of the new academic year. Where projects had particular challenges, lessons have been learnt and shared with all stakeholders.

The impact of the comprehensive spending review, current economic climate and external market opportunities has meant that growth of the JVCo has been challenging. Third party funded works through a number of frameworks, specific projects such as at North Tyneside general hospital, and part externally funded schemes including the construction of the new Fox Hunters sports pavilion and the major refurbishment of Wallsend parks have all contributed to the growth.

The recently issued NTC corporate complaints report indicated a reduction of 17% in the complaints received in relation to the repairs service from the previous year. The main themes relate to fencing, and work at height works including roofing and dampness.

In response to continually looking to improve the customer experience, a programme of specific engagement and customer training has taken place for all employees. The

next phase will involve tenant representatives taking part in this key training and development initiative.

Proportionally and relative to the number of repairs carried out, the percentage of complaints is averaging 0.30% based on the number of repairs carried out annually. However better engagement with our customers and implementing lessons learnt where we have not provided the level of service our customers should expect, is a key focus for the business and an action plan to address this has been developed. Engagement levels with customers and elected members remain a high priority and dedicated resources have made communication channels easier and provided a greater level of consistency. Over recent months, the senior management team in North Tyneside have been working closely with both Paul Hanson and Councillor John Harrison, regarding a series of improvement plans, which are being actively pursued with colleagues in North Tyneside Council.

The outputs from the previous Overview and Scrutiny Review in March 2012 have been taken on board, along with a number of areas of focus for the business as identified in a 3rd year anniversary review that took place at the end of 2012. The report which follows highlights a number of areas where progress has now been made.

People remain a key asset of the JVCo and their training and development is a top priority, as does ensuring that accidents within the work place are minimised and everyone goes home safely at the end of the working day.

Our Aspiring Manager programme, the company-wide talent pool, trade multiskilling training, foundation degrees, environmental based training, driver training, asbestos awareness and manual handling are just a few of the large number of training opportunities that Kier North Tyneside is providing its employees with, many being linked to recognised and approved qualifications, e.g. NVQ.

An example of this is since the last report to the Overview & Scrutiny board, 27 new apprentices have joined Kier North Tyneside.

The National Skills Academy continues to deliver on its targets, as does the BPEC accredited gas training centre. Both support the local supply chain and community as well as generating income for the JVCo.

Working Roots, a KNT initiative supported by NTC and Justice Prince, has recently been launched and has already made a significant impact on the lives of both the young people involved and recipients of the work they undertake.

Investments in new vehicle fleet, IT infrastructure, IT hardware and Personal Protective Equipment for staff have all been significant. Likewise the impact that the JVCo has on the environment has been reduced with a reduction in fuel usage, carbon emissions and waste sent to landfill.

As one of the largest employers in the area, KNT supports various community groups as well as community events and awards, raising funds for nominated local charities as well as national appeals such as Comic Relief, Children in Need and Macmillan Cancer Support. The Kier Group Foundation has also match-funded monies raised by a number of KNT staff.

KNT remains a key supporter of the Mouth of the Tyne Festival, the Tynemouth Victorian Christmas Market and other North Tyneside Council events.

In May 2013, the new Cabinet Member for housing challenged the JVCo to consider how it could further improve the service to customers, how much more the JVCo and its parent company Kier Group could do to support and add value to the residents of North Tyneside, and in particular how we could assist in helping the Council meet its strategic plans. The result of this was a business improvement plan which covers 6 main topic/themes namely:

1. Value for Money
2. Performance Management & Behaviour change
3. KPI's – are we measuring the right things, is there a balance of cost/performance management and can we make any efficiency savings
4. Customers – to see improvements in JVCo and tenants interactions, members enquiries and wider customer engagement in general
5. Overhead reduction – internal/external benchmarking activity
6. Wider Kier Group leverage – how the Group will support the Borough

This report provides the opportunity for Overview and Scrutiny to consider our overall progress, future direction of travel and key priorities.

THE PAST

Background

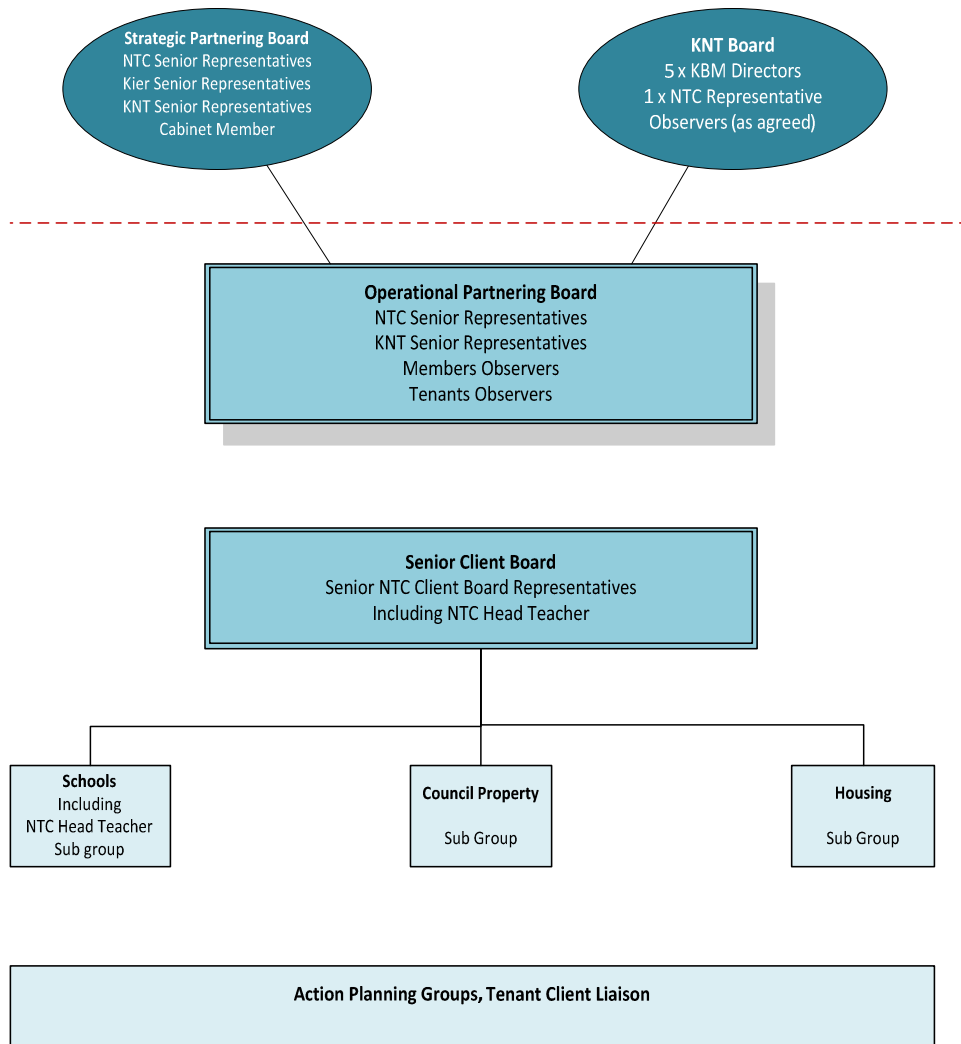
Kier North Tyneside Limited is a Joint Venture Company between Kier Group and North Tyneside Council (NTC). The new company commenced trading in September 2009 with circa 500 staff transferring from North Tyneside Council to the new organisation. There is a ten year contract (with a possible five year extension) in place between Kier North Tyneside Limited (KNT) and North Tyneside Council for the delivery of specific services.

Geographically, North Tyneside is part of the Kier Services Maintenance North Region which covers North Tyneside, Cumbria, Tees Valley, Northumberland and Scotland. As such the Kier North Tyneside Ltd business plan forms an integral part of the wider Kier Services Maintenance North Region Business Plan.

Originally there was a dedicated Council Commercial Services team who acted as the formal interface between Kier North Tyneside Limited and the various Service Departments within the Council, monitoring and measuring the performance of the Partnership.

New governance arrangements were put into place in 2011 to maximise the opportunities generated within North Tyneside, and ensure that there is a forum for service review and improvement, and an appropriate escalation process for problem resolution. These new arrangements include wider member and tenant involvement as agreed at the Operational Partnering Board in October 2012. This is detailed below:-

Governance Structure



Our key objective is to provide an effective and efficient responsive repairs and planned maintenance service for all North Tyneside owned and managed properties including capital investment works. We also play a key role in North Tyneside Council's emergency planning requirements acting as a Category 2 Responder supporting North Tyneside Council as detailed within the Council's Major Incident, Minor Incident and Business Continuity Plans.

The core work streams of our Business are as follows:-

- Work stream 1 – the Repairs and Maintenance Service responsible for the delivery of all housing related responsive works, gas servicing, void property and planned maintenance activities.
- Work stream 2 - housing capital investments works and major works.
- Work stream 2A – aids and adaptations based upon occupational therapists recommendations and funded by the Authority's capital budgets or grant funded by third party bodies in relation to non-Authority dwellings.
- Work stream 3 - other Authority Capital Funded projects whether allocated to Partnership through the 'New Project Approval process' or other agreement as the case may be. This service includes non-housing construction works for the various Council directorates and has a "design and build" capability.
- Work stream 4 - reactive repairs, preventative planned maintenance emergency works, or minor capital works to Authority owned and/or operated non-housing building portfolio.
- Work stream 4A - reactive repairs, preventative planned maintenance emergency works, or minor capital works to schools as instructed by the Authority or otherwise agreed between Kier North Tyneside Limited and individual schools through formal service level agreements.
- Work stream 5 - works or services to third parties undertaken by Kier North Tyneside Limited.
- Work streams 6, 7 and 8 - design and other partnering services provided by Kier North Tyneside Limited to North Tyneside Council.

The overarching objective of the service is the achievement of 'value for money', which is translated as meaning the provision of a high quality service at the lowest possible cost, underpinned by a strong customer focus and achievement of 'year on year' continuous improvement in performance.

We are committed to deliver, through the establishment of a long term partnering relationship, the following objectives: -

- The establishment of a long term capital construction and maintenance programme as described in Work streams 1-4
- The continuous improvement of construction and housing repairs and maintenance standards and the provision of facilities management and maintenance services to public buildings within the area
- Keeping everyone we come into contact with safe, and ensuring our people go home accident free
- Increasing the employment and training opportunities of those living in the area and particularly young people
- Achieving the 'Collective Partnership Targets'
- Make our individual long-term goals known to each other
- The most cost-effective procurement of work, goods and services
- The optimal business processes
- Upper quartile performance standards in terms of cost and quality
- Effective customer engagement and a high level of customer satisfaction

Our journey has generally been one of continuous improvement. Where there have been challenges, the business has always sort to rise to these challenges and overcome any problems. Since the creation of the JVCo, tenants have seen improvements in response times, quality of work and speed of repairs demonstrated through higher satisfaction scores year on year. These improvements can also be attributed to closer working relationships with elected members and Council officers which is ensuring tenants and residents get the best service possible from all involved.

In March 2012, the service provided by the JVCo was reviewed by a Joint Venture Working Group who made a number of recommendations to the Overview & Scrutiny board/cabinet. Many of these were completed and closed out quickly in 2012, with seven remaining outstanding by the end of 2012. Below is a summary against the seven actions (plus two that were ongoing):

R4 Cabinet asked the Head of North Tyneside Homes (NTH) and Kier North Tyneside to review and strengthen the arrangements for taking corrective action when things go wrong, including consideration of establishing a rapid response squad.

Action taken: NTH introduced ISO 9001 in September 2011 providing robust arrangements for taking corrective action. Introducing named individuals to deal with complaints was completed January 2012 and a direct link with Council members was created through the partnership Development Manager role (Chris Scott). A rapid response team was considered, however, with the ISO9001 checks and the existing P1 emergency response team it was deemed a duplication of resource and was therefore not implemented.

R6 Cabinet asked the Head of North Tyneside Homes work in conjunction with Kier North Tyneside to ensure that when empty homes are re-let, all the essential works agreed with the tenant have been completed in accordance with the Council's empty homes letting standard.

Action taken: The empty homes letting standard has been comprehensively reviewed with tenants. The re-let standard is made known to the prospective tenant, who completes a tenant satisfaction survey. Each property is inspected against the empty homes letting standard prior to the property being re-let. We continue to work with NTC colleagues to manage this process in order to maximise rental income and ensure the property is ready to live in.

R7 Cabinet asked the Head of North Tyneside Homes to liaise with Kier North Tyneside to ensure that when the tenant has agreed that essential works can be carried out after occupancy, these details should be set out in writing together with timescales, signed by the tenant and the tenant should be provided with the contact details of the officer responsible for completion of the works.

Action taken: The empty homes letting standard has been comprehensively reviewed with tenants that will ensure that essential works are completed prior to the property being re-let. Details of minor or programmed works that are to be carried out after occupation are agreed by our team leaders in partnership with NTC voids officers, and then provided to the incoming tenant together with a named contact. This is followed by a managed period of 4 weeks after the new tenant has taken up occupancy in order that any additional work can be agreed and actioned via direct access with the team leader who originally signed off the property as meeting the empty homes standard. This ensures a smooth handover, accountability for the standard and an immediate response to any repairs problems.

R13 Cabinet asked the Strategic Director of Community Services to work in conjunction with Kier North Tyneside to ensure that all sub-contractors comply with Kier's policies and procedures regarding how they present and identify themselves to customers.

Action taken: This has been discussed at the Operational Partnership Board, cleared by the Strategic Director of Community Services and agreed by KNT and is signed off as completed.

R14 Cabinet encouraged Kier North Tyneside to continue to place emphasis within its procurement policies and procedures on contracting with local suppliers.

Action taken: Kier North Tyneside gives preference to local suppliers in its procurement arrangements. We have increased the amount of work placed within a 20 mile radius of the Borough and details are measured monthly. In 2013 Kier were able to increase its supply chain members by 112, from 232 to 344, with an order value placed with the local

supply chain of £15.2m. Currently 75% of our spend is with local supply chain partners. All subcontractors are vetted prior to engagement through accreditation with Constructionline and "SSIP", and their on-going performance is fed back through the BRAG system in order to inform future procurement decisions.

R15 Cabinet asked the Strategic Director of Community Services in consultation with the Head of North Tyneside Homes to amend the Governance Framework for the partnership between North Tyneside Council and Kier North Tyneside so that it provides for tenant representation at the senior level of the governance arrangements.

Action taken: There is an established Service Development Group of tenants who meet on a regular basis to discuss and review the performance of the repairs and maintenance service. Arrangements have been set in place to integrate the work of the Repairs Panel to enable a direct interface with management at the highest level within the Kier North Tyneside Governance Arrangements and to enable the Repairs Panel to escalate issues of concern and attend appropriate meetings. This was done through the appointment of two North Tyneside Homes tenants onto the JVCo Operational Partnering Board in order to ensure meaningful engagement and provide a real opportunity to influence and impact the services received by North Tyneside tenants.

As a result of a recent workshop with tenant representatives, a number of ideas and suggestions have been put forward to further improve the interface and engagement opportunities with one suggestion being to create a tenant resource centre within the Killingworth office environment.

R18 The Cabinet asked Kier North Tyneside to review its communication plan with the aim of improving communication with Council members. The review should include consideration of a) surveying councillors as to their preferred means of communication; b) providing contact details of local supervisors and project managers who could be contacted by councillors in the event of local problems; c) ensuring officers attend meetings when invited to do so by councillors; d) raising awareness and creating a better understanding of the role of elected members and their importance in protecting the reputation of the service; e) responding promptly and effectively to members' enquiries and f) designating a contact officer responsible for liaising with councillors on their members' enquiries.

Action taken: A Partnership Development Manager was recruited by Kier Services to improve the service to elected members. A survey had already been carried out by our regional communications team on preferred communication methods by members, and this will be repeated during 2014. In addition, key contacts cards have recently been issued to members with the direct contact details of the senior managers involved in responsive repairs, capital works, customer service as well as the Partnership Development Manager. Our dedicated Partnership Development Manager, Chris Scott, attends meetings on behalf of KNT when requested and has worked hard to develop a seamless service to members in dealing with their enquiries. Chris has helped members gain easy access to answers & solutions, with a personal service, home visits, daily &

hourly updates, photos, feedback, weekend and out of hours service. It is our understanding that this intervention has been well received and is valued by members.

R21 The Cabinet receive an annual report from Kier North Tyneside to provide a public account of performance and value for money.

Action taken: An annual report is produced in line with our business planning cycle and is publicly available.

R23 The Cabinet asked the Head of North Tyneside Homes, in conjunction with Kier North Tyneside, to undertake a review of the interfaces between the existing information communication technology systems used by both organisations to ensure they are meeting their needs and adequately support work management.

Action taken: The ICT systems and IT interfaces were reviewed to ensure systems are being used as planned to support the business, meeting needs and adequately supporting work management over the last 12 months, involving unifying the data held between the Council's and the business' operating systems. This has allowed agreement to be reached in a number of financial and performance related areas, allowing greater time to be focussed on the outputs of the data and the learning's from the results. As a consequence, a number of new activity codes have been developed and agreed.

Position statement on OPB action plan 2012-13

At the end of 2012, a 3rd year anniversary review was completed to gauge the continued direction of travel and how it was meeting the aspirations of the partners since its inception. This highlighted some significant achievement but also gave focus to areas for improvements. The output of that report resulted in the development of a Partnership Charter along with 39 recommendations, which are being reviewed monthly within the OPB governance arrangements.

Business Plan 2013-14

The plan for 2013/14 was signed off by the Strategic Partnering Board in April 2013, which identified the key targets and drivers for the business over this period and how Kier North Tyneside supports the wider Council corporate plan and five corporate priorities. As 2013/14 financial year draws to a close it is useful to reflect on how we have done against the aspirational targets we set ourselves.

THE PRESENT

Current targets

Key Performance Indicators

KPI's have changed over the 4 years of the contract, with 2012-13 seeing some KPI's removed and others added. This helps KNT to concentrate on those challenges and set priorities to drive continuous improvement.

The tables below outline our Year to Date performance against the start of the contract using the following key:

Gold	Where performance is equal to, or greater than enhanced, performance is gold
Green	Where performance is less than enhanced, performance is green
Amber	Where performance is less than penalty, performance is amber
Red	Where performance is less than threshold, performance is red

Call centre	Mar 2010	20013/14 YTD	Direction of travel
Contact Centre: answered within agreed timescale (30 secs)	60.00% within 30 seconds as per original target	86.16% within 20 seconds as the target has changed	Improvement
Contact Centre: % of Calls answered	81%	98.78%	Improvement
Contact Centre: Average wait time (seconds)	60	14.33	Improvement
Contact Centre: Customer Satisfaction	Didn't measure in 2010	9.84	Cannot compare results
Contact Centre: Calls abandoned	Didn't measure in 2010	1.22%	Cannot compare results

Customer satisfaction – VMS Scores	Mar 2010	YTD	Direction of travel
Satisfaction with Responsive Repairs Service (VMS)	8.21	8.61	Improvement
Satisfaction with Void Repairs Service (VMS)	6.73	7.38	Improvement
Satisfaction with the Gas Repairs Service (VMS)	8.68	8.96	Improvement

Note: targets have been increased year on year so whilst we have higher performance in 2013, it is reflected as AMBER performance as a result of target increases.

Voids performance	Mar 2010	20013/14 YTD	Direction of travel
Average number of days to complete ALL Void repairs	31 days	19.1 days	Improvement
Defects found on Void post inspection (%)	Didn't measure in 2010	5.64%	Cannot compare results
Quality inspections carried out (Voids)	Didn't measure in 2010	16.61%	Cannot compare results
Average cost of a Void repair	Didn't measure in 2010	£1,556.74	Cannot compare results

Gas performance	Mar 2010	20013/14 YTD	Direction of travel
Properties holding a valid CP12 Certificate	96.35%	99.93%	Improvement
Quality inspections carried out (Gas Servicing)	1.28%	5.94%	Improvement

Responsive performance	Mar 2010	YTD	Direction of travel
P1 Emergency jobs completed within target	96.20%	99.68%	Improvement
P2 & P3 Urgent jobs completed within target	84.62% P2 87.29% P3	97.26%	Improvement
P4 & P5 Routine jobs completed within target	82.14%	91.44%	Improvement even though target in RED
Average days taken to complete a repair (All jobs)	Not measured – only non-urgent jobs which was 10.94 days	9.04 days	Cannot compare results
Emergency repairs as a % of all jobs done	23.64%	14.24%	
Jobs completed in one visit	91.77%	95.42%	Improvement
Quality inspections carried out (Responsive)	5.95%	7.80%	Improvement
Appointments made as a % of all jobs (Responsive)	94.03%	98.56%	Improvement

In summary, against the challenging suite of performance targets set, the current business performance actual stands at (YTD figures up to Dec 13):

50% = GOLD (Where performance is equal to, or greater than enhanced, performance is gold)

We are currently exceeding the following targets: P1 Emergency jobs completed within target, Appointments made as a % of all jobs (Responsive), Customer satisfaction score (VMS) – Responsive Customer satisfaction score (VMS) - Gas Servicing, Customer satisfaction score - Contact Centre,

Calls answered within 20 seconds - Contact Centre, Calls abandoned - Contact Centre, Urgent minor adaptations completed within target, Minor adaptations completed within target, Appointments made and kept, Appointments made as a % of all appointable jobs, Customer satisfaction score (VMS), Jobs attended within Target time (P1 : P2 : P3), Defects found on post inspections (%), Customer satisfaction score, Asbestos management (Prosecutions : Incidents).

25% = GREEN (Where performance is less than enhanced, performance is green)

Enhanced performance is a stretched target that would be more pleasing to meet, over and above the actual target. Actual target achievement is depicted in GREEN and are as follows: P2 & P3 Urgent jobs completed within target, Properties holding a valid CP12 Certificate, Cancelled jobs to all jobs raised (%), Defects found on Housing Responsive post inspection (%), Cost variance (Actual v Target), Minor adaptations completed within target, Defects found on post inspections (%), Accident Incident Rate HSE Benchmark score = 589.

12.5% = AMBER (Where performance is less than penalty, performance is amber)

We just fall short of target on the following: Jobs completed in one visit, Defects found on Void post inspection (%), Appointments made and kept, Customer satisfaction score (VMS) – Voids.

12.5% = RED (Where performance is less than threshold, performance is red)

For those where we have failed to meet target we have introduced a monthly action plan in order to improve these areas of our performance: P4 & P5 Routine jobs completed within target (due to resources being active in meeting more urgent repairs), Average days taken to complete letting process (we have received a significant increased number of voids this year which severely stretched the allocated resources during the middle of the year), Housing jobs out of priority, and Minor adaptations completed within target.

With 75% of KPI's meeting or exceeding target and a further 12.5% almost on target, we are working hard to ensure that customers are satisfied and the repair and maintenance of properties in North Tyneside are to the high standard expected by the JVCo.

Our people are working safer, as measured by the industry standard benchmark, Accident Incident Rate (AIR). The AIR for the JVCo as at the end of 2013 was 527 compared to the HSE benchmark figure of 589. This target has been reduced by the HSE for 2014 to 418 and the business will continue to focus on improving its accident/incident rate.

The business will continue to capture performance data that allows it to benchmark itself with peer groups. The recommendations from the Council's 'Overview and Scrutiny' working report in relation to performance and a gap in measuring the number of repairs which exceed their target timescale for completion have been incorporated into the overall KPI suite.

Capital Schemes

Housing:

- Since the start of the contract, the capital works budgets have been reduced in keeping with the Decent Homes Standard being achieved in 2010. However over the last two years 934 homes received new bathrooms, 972 homes received new kitchens and 1650 boilers and heating systems have been fitted, with a positive impact on local fuel poverty, whilst contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions in the Borough, and 977 homes receiving electrical upgrades. In addition over 1500 homes were fitted with solar PV panels in conjunction with Eon as part of the largest installation programmes in publically owned housing stock. Customer satisfaction levels with housing capital works have remained constantly high.
- 2013 also saw completion of the first new build council homes in 25 years at Station Road, Wallsend. This was a full design and build arrangement, demonstrating a whole-life service offering we are able to provide. Works are currently in progress at Byrness Court, Battlehill for the next phase of new homes.
- The JVCo also completed a number of significant major refurbishment projects such as the conversion of 24 flats to twelve x 3 bed homes at George Square, along with major re-roofing, internal insulation, external wall insulation and external works at Hedley Place.

Non Housing:

Kier North Tyneside have been proud to be involved in helping deliver many of the Council's key projects including:

- Benton Dene Schools
- Churchill Tennis Centre
- Tynemouth Pool Changing Village
- Spanish City Dome Refurbishments
- Demolition of Borough Theatre in Wallsend
- Schools Summer Programme

- Flood response and recovery in 2012
- Wallsend Park regeneration
- Foxhunter's Sports Pavilion
- North Shields Customer First Centre (formerly North Shields Library).

North Shields Customer First Centre was a particular success with feedback below:

"I thought I would drop you both an email to say how much I appreciated all the hard work that your team have done on the project to refurbish the old North Shields Library and to pass on my personal thanks. Not only have we had great support from Nigel, Colin and David but also the lads on site, Davy Campbell, Hugh Willis, Geoff and Stevie in particular. I am sure that I will have left out some names but without exception they have all been great to work with.

Nothing has been too much trouble for them and I know that timescales and changes to plans would have been a challenge to all concerned but they did everything they could to ensure that everything and more was sorted for our opening date. So far we have had great feedback about the building from both our customers and staff and having worked in the building before the refurbishment, I can honestly say it has been a wonderful transformation and one we can be proud of". Sharon Burdis, Service Manager, Cultural Services, North Shields Customer First Centre.

Schools Capital Programme

The team continue their track record of successfully delivering on projects and good progress is currently being made on a number of current projects. Feedback included:

"Nothing short of a miracle has been enacted here at Southlands largely down to the persistence and dedication of all the staff involved whether from the authority, Kier, or their sub-contractors. I am hugely grateful that so much has been achieved here considering the constraints imposed. It would not have been possible to squeeze any more workers on site and the fact that those who were here managed to avoid falling over one another and work with orchestrated co-ordination is down in particular to the professionalism of Peter Kane and John Hamilton. Their input has been essential. Confidences could not guarantee until the 11th hour that we would get a school back in fit condition for business next week, but long hours and 7 day weeks have made this a reality and we are enormously grateful for their efforts and the workmen under their guidance." **David Erskine, Head teacher at Southlands School, North Tyneside.**

Where we faced challenges we have engaged with the individual stakeholders in a lesson learned exercise but we are pleased to report that all schools opened for business in September on schedule.

Third Party Work

Non North Tyneside funded third party works have flowed through the JVCo during the year, for example we successfully completed a refurbishment of the main entrance way at North Tyneside General Hospital. The business has also been successful in being

appointed to a number of frameworks, including the Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Trust, South Tyneside Gas Servicing & Repair Framework, NEP Internal Works Framework and the SCAPE Minor Works Framework; all of which has provided additional work opportunities for Kier North Tyneside employees and the local supply chain.

Complaints & Compliments

The table below reflects the numbers of corporate complaints received and responded to by Kier North Tyneside. The number of complaints reduced by 17% from 245 complaints logged in 2011/12 to 209 logged 2012/13

Service Area	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013
Day to Day Repairs	188	159
Gas Servicing	46	26
Housing Investment	8	17
VOIDS/empty homes	1	7
Aids and Adaptations	2	0
TOTAL	245	209

The main three themes forming the majority of the complaints relate to:

1. Fencing Works – the borough has not invested in fencing specifically for a number of years and the poor weather over the past 24 months has exacerbated this. The 30 year asset investment plan seeks to address this with a programme of works each year. Where there are health and safety issues these are being dealt with by the responsive teams. In addition, the 'Working Roots' team are also adding real value by undertaking fencing work.
2. Roofing and Working at Heights activities - This is another area where demand has meant that a backlog has developed. Introduction of the mobile elevated working platform (MEWP) to help reduce the need for fixed scaffold and in doing so reduce the cost of the repair. Combined with the dedicated WAH team, and additional funding allocated by NTC we expect this backlog will be cleared and a reduction in complaints in the future.
3. Damp - Complaints about damp tend to be a seasonal topic which causes great distress to tenants. We have employed a qualified damp proof specialist who visits customers and carries out property surveys to identify if the issue is that of damp and if so generate the work needed to rectify the issue. In many cases, the issues once investigated are found to be condensation so we have produced a guide to dealing with condensation for tenants to help reassure them and provide practical solutions to managing condensation in their homes.

Whilst one complaint is clearly one complaint too many, the table below highlights the average number of complaints received as a percentage of the number of repairs completed.

Month	Repair complaints received	Completed Repairs	Compliments Received	Repairs completed per complaint	Percentage complaints to repairs	Repairs completed per compliment	Percentage Compliments to repairs
Jan-13	22	5146	1	234	0.43%	22	0.02%
Feb-13	13	5134	4	395	0.25%	13	0.08%
Mar-13	6	4878	1	813	0.12%	6	0.02%
Apr-13	7	5090	4	727	0.14%	7	0.08%
May-13	13	4587	2	353	0.28%	13	0.04%
Jun-13	10	4104	1	410	0.24%	10	0.02%
Jul-13	18	4280	1	238	0.42%	18	0.02%
Aug-13	15	4144	3	276	0.36%	15	0.07%
Sep-13	13	4306	3	331	0.30%	13	0.07%
Oct-13	17	4881	3	287	0.35%	17	0.06%
Nov-13	15	4653	6	310	0.32%	15	0.13%
Dec-13	10	3662	3	366	0.27%	10	0.08%

We are very conscious of our customers' perception of the service we provide. This is one of the critical measures we use to judge the business is performing and is a key area of focus within the business improvement plan presented to Councillor Harrison. It is for this reason that the JVCo invested in a specific programme of customer service training.

The customer service training has seen real improvements, with staff using more positive language with tenants, empowering staff to make immediate decisions and improving communication with tenants so they know what is happening with their repair.

This also allows managers to deal with areas of the business that have received multiple complaints relating to the service provided. Improved visibility of customer service feedback and learning within the operational teams has helped further embed customer service improvements.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Corporate Social Responsibility Plan continues to deliver real social value in terms of employment related opportunities as well as significant support to local communities and charitable organisations. The business chose to support 'Pathways 4 All' as it's named charity for 2012/13, and were pleased to be able to support a number of high profile projects. 2013/14 has seen 'Tynemouth Voluntary Life Brigade' chosen as its nominated charity and proactive fundraising from staff has meant a great start to this campaign. Engagement with our customers and members continues to improve through coffee mornings, tenant workshops, site visits and joint events with North Tyneside Homes, along with deployment of some dedicated resource through the appointment of our Partnership Development Manager, Chris Scott.

Apprentices

Since the last report to the Overview & Scrutiny board, 27 new apprentices (administration and trade) have joined the company, 8 former apprentices have been offered FTE contracts of employment and we have facilitated a number obtaining positions with local companies. In addition, a number of our employees have embarked upon personal development for themselves supported by the business in financing foundation degrees and similar qualifications.

Through an innovative jointly funded initiative working with NTC 8 joinery apprenticeships were created following an 8 week multi-trade Level 1 pre-apprenticeship programme run by NTC. Following interviews it became apparent one individual was a partially qualified plumber, and that was his preferred trade, so the business created a plumbing apprenticeship in addition to the 8 joinery posts to offer him the chance to gain his level 3 in plumbing and gas qualifications.

Cultural Change Programme

The business continues with its cultural change programme 'Formula for Success' which is designed to improve employee engagement & behaviour change and it is pleasing that the measured surveys show an improving trend.

Risk Management

Risk management has again been a strong feature of the partnership working within the JVCo and the risk register is reviewed, updated and formally signed off by the Operational Partnering Board on a quarterly basis. There is also in place a separate risk register for the statutory company board which is also reviewed quarterly.

Communications

With the imminent start of a new regional communication lead, who is a resident of the borough, we will continue to work jointly with the NTC communications lead to maximise the benefits of communication across the range of stakeholders we come into contact with. The focus will be on how this can be widened and improved by evaluating the effectiveness of the various communication channels used.

Efficiency Savings

The table below shows some of the efficiency savings over the life of the contract. The 2009-2013 figures is an average per month up to and including Mar 2013. The 2013/14 figure is an average per month in this current financial year.

	2009/13 (Avg per month)	2013/14 (Avg per month)
Waste % Recycled	93.26%	95.12%
Fuel Usage (vans)	22,458 Litres	19,670 Litres
Co2 emissions from vans	48.2 tonnes	42.3 tonnes
Co2 emissions from cars (impact of Video Conferencing)	4.19 tonnes	2.10 tonnes

In addition, some £3 million has been saved by the JVCo from overhead costs over the life of the partnership.

Fleet

We are constantly reviewing the way in which we put our vehicle fleet to work and introduced numerous initiatives last year to reduce costs, including removing all non-essential roof racks, increased appointments and dedicated resource controllers. Our van fleet remains in good condition with trackers fitted to all permanent vehicles. A business target has been set to achieve a 5% reduction in overall fleet numbers in 2014/15.

Waste & Recycling

Our current percentage for waste recycling has increased in the year 2012/13 to 95% recycled and 5% land fill. To achieve this we are recycling paper, cardboard, timber, glass, and plastic both from office and site areas, as well as the usual construction products. We have also invested heavily in new printer/copiers in offices to reduce unnecessary printing and copying and we expect to see a reduction in paper usage, toner and cartridges over the next 12 months.

Shared Savings

The business continues to benefit from re-procurement of both sub-contract and material requirements, linked to Kier Group bulk purchase arrangements, however, we are still committed to maintaining a local supply chain. The business had a 5% efficiency target for 2013 based on 'like-for-like' purchases, with these benefits flowing directly to North Tyneside Council.

Investment

Since the start of the contract, we have invested just under £65m in North Tyneside.

The table below demonstrates some of the projects, outcomes and value of investment across North Tyneside:

Operation Home front	KNT and our supply chain invested over £30,000 of materials and labour to refurbish the Pathways4all day-care centre from a disused hospital to a facilities used by children with special needs and their families
Pathways4All Stables -	P4A had been promised stables to house their two donkeys by BBC One show & Chris Evans. The BBC pulled out at the last minute leaving children and parents devastated, Kier NT stepped in and built brand new stable accommodation for the donkeys. This was a well needed investment from KNT of over £1500 providing much Christmas joy.
Trade Union Learning Centre	Kier invested £1000 and £1000 was match funded which allowed the stationery and computers to be purchased and set up. It is staffed by a dedicated Union Learning Rep who is part funded one day per week by UCATT and one day per week by Kier North Tyneside to run the centre. The remaining 3 days he is back working with the trade teams.
North Shields Victorian Market	We provide the electrical supply and market day support to this very successful annual event
Tenants Gold Ticket Event	We have sponsored the tenant event twice, with over 200+ attendees it allows tenants direct access to key KNT staff to answer any questions or queries.
Mouth of the Tyne Festival	Over £40,000 sponsorship to date plus the hosting of hospitality tent for clients and employees over the weekend.
18 Local Groups	Supported to date through our local community fund. This fund is £5k pa and supports projects from day trips for elderly tenants to support for the local football and ice hockey teams. Community groups, individuals and sports clubs can apply to KNT directly and support is decided quarterly by a team of staff who manage the budget.
TT2 race	dubbed the 'fastest wheelchair race on the planet' Kier North Tyneside sponsored the first race to the tune of £5000 in 2009
Churchill Community Sports Awards	sponsorship of £750
Children in Need activities	run by staff these events have raised over £500 over the past few years
Charity of the year 2013/14	Tynemouth Voluntary Life Brigade £600 in staff donations and support of the Kier Foundation which matches individuals efforts.

We have also made significant investment through our people development (£1.1m), our vehicle fleet (£2.62m), using our local supply chain (annual average £15m) with an additional £12,500 invested to support to them and their activities. Immediate

stakeholders, tenants, schools and NTC combined have received £240,000, with the wider community seeing £87,500.

People

Our people are our most valuable asset, and significant work has taken place over the last twelve months to train, develop and support our employees in a variety of training and development initiatives. Unfortunately, due to the budget pressures that the JVCo has faced in the four years since its inception, an overall reduction of 82 employees has taken place. This has, in the main, been achieved through voluntary reductions; however, there were a small number of compulsory reductions as a result of inappropriate trade mix and employee numbers required.

The current structure and overall employee numbers are predicated on delivering the volume of work planned in the budgets for the various service areas. Should these change the business will need to be flexible in its approach to manage the situation. In addition, the sometimes unpredictable flow and mix of works on both responsive and capital programmes has made workforce planning one of our biggest challenges. We have remained adaptable in moving resources around the business to address these challenges and the Council officers and business teams are focused on providing as much visibility of future workloads to assist with smoothing workload peaks and troughs as much as possible.

Our robust performance management framework introduced in 2012-13 has continued to allow us to identify areas for business improvement, as well as providing a mechanism to identify talent and support, with robust succession plans.

2012 saw the introduction of the North Tyneside Talent Pool, where talent was identified across the business and have benefitted from detailed individual development plans helping them achieve their career aspirations in line with the business vision.

Training

The training team sourced and managed 1112 hours of training in 2012/13 and a similar commitment is in place across 2013/14. Much of this relates to legislative, health and safety, and environmental training, however, we have supported significant personal development through the 'Aspiring Manager' programme. This saw 12 individuals gain their NVQ L2 & ILM L2 Certificate in Team Leading along with functional skills in 2012, with 5 of individuals successfully securing promotion from operative to team leader level within the business. In 2013 a further 16 put themselves forward to take up community challenges to aid projects in North Tyneside, the two most successful of these being the design of a waiting area for parents and carers of the children of Battle Hill Primary School, including planters and seating area, as well as fundraising for the Tynemouth Volunteer Life Brigade.

Further personal development saw full financial support given to staff achieving Masters (MSc) qualifications and full teaching equivalent (Dttls) for our gas trainer, as well as professional qualifications such as CIPR and CIPD. 2014 will see a natural progression of the 'Aspiring Managers' programme to link the leadership skills to help achieve 2 community challenges so that local residents and local schools benefit.

2012-13 saw Gas Training at Kier train more MOD service leavers than in previous years, thanks to the Covenant signed in 2013, plus opportunity to guarantee work placements within the KNT contract and across the country within other Kier businesses. Training MOD service leavers for civilian life has helped secure direct employment for 3 service leavers within Kier and 2 others within the supply chain, demonstrating the true commitment to our armed forces returning to North Tyneside. The gas training centre has maintained its formal BPEC accreditation, and building on the success of 2012 when we achieved ELCAS and CTP preferred supplier status with the Ministry of Defence. It has grown year on year having helped retrain over 25 service leavers. This, alongside our own staff and supply chain, has helped generate external revenue for the JVCo of almost £100k in 2012/13, with an expected £200k in 2013/14.

Third party income is also generated through providing training courses required by our supply chain, for example UKATA accredited asbestos awareness or manual handling at cost price. Some training is provided free of charge where there is additional funding to cover costs and this has been done for SMSTS site management qualification.

The training centre retained its National Construction Skills academy status at the end of 2013 and delivery of the outputs required to maintain this status will be an on-going focus for 2014. The benefits are intrinsically linked to the '10 year Education Employment and Training Plan' supporting the needs of the wider North Tyneside population. This achievement helps us secure enough funding to employ a co-ordinator to manage work placements for school leavers, service personnel, pre-apprenticeships, advanced H&S training and leadership training for us and our supply chain.

The union learning centre continues to help staff, tenants and supply chain to achieve training personal to them, with achievements in NVQ L3 in Health & Safety, NVQA L2 in ITQ as well as functional maths and English skills. Several community groups, including Phoenix detached youth project and White Swan groups have been accessing the ULC for pre-employment courses.

We will continue to maintain focused and engage in constructive dialogue with the local Trade Unions in 2013/14 through the structured mechanisms that currently exist as well as at regional and national level.

In addition, the co-location of the Council's CYPL work based learning team into the training centre at Killingworth is a good example of the Partnership working together; with 2012/13 seeing the first in the pre-apprenticeship programme in joinery and multi-skills, resulting in 8 full time apprenticeship positions from May 2013/14 within the business.

Working Roots

2013-14 saw the fruition of plans to create our own 'city stewardship' in North Tyneside, called Working Roots which has provided 15 young people who traditionally fall in the hard to reach/disadvantaged category, a real opportunity to gain experience, learn a practical trade, gain a qualification and be paid. The 30-week programme trains and mentors young people on a range of work schemes within their own communities- including maintaining gardens, carrying out environmental works (eg fencing), painting and decorating vacant dwellings or dwellings for vulnerable individuals. Such work provides young people with the skills and experience they need to increase their chances of employment. The project operates via a Service Level Agreement between North Tyneside Council, Kier North Tyneside and Justice Prince, a social enterprise organisation with work being identified by North Tyneside Homes.

Kier continues to invest in its commitment to play a major part in the overall wealth and sustainability of North Tyneside and its people. We measure our achievements through the BITC index which is currently at Platinum level. The index covers all aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) including environment and climate change, workplace health and safety, workplace employees and training, market place customers and suppliers, community engagement and through the considerate constructor's scheme measures our engagement with the community at a local level.

Awards & Recognitions

1. British Safety Council Awards – for workplace safety practices, recognising the standards and Health & Safety qualifications gained across the business.
2. ROSPA – silver award helping us prove our on-going commitment to raising health and safety standards.
3. National Apprenticeship Awards, NE Regional Large Employer of the Year 2013 winner, National Large Employer of the Year Highly Commended, and Top 100 apprenticeship employer 2013 for our apprentice programmes.
4. CITB National Skills Academy for Construction award to community projects.
5. Green Apple – silver award for service industries waste management, centred around a recycling project within North Tyneside.
6. ISO 14001 - at the point of transfer in September 2009 the 'Construction Group' was ISO14001 accredited in relation to environmental policies and procedures. The business underwent a detailed 3 year audit in August 2012, which has been widened to cover all of the Kier North Tyneside and Kier Services.
7. BPEC awarding body accreditation – maintained the awarding body status to continue to deliver gas training.

Engagement

We will continue engagement with our customers as a continuing priority and do this through many avenues including:

Tenant Engagement:

- Tenant forums
- Customer satisfaction surveys via call centre – ring backs within one day of repair
- Service delivery groups to review repairs and investment x2 a month. Client chair and agenda – Kier only invited – can be a rough ride
- Coffee events / drop in sessions when on planned / project works involving other affected groups
- Repair feedback within 5 days of work being completed
- Attendance at the Kier sponsored Golden Ticket event where over 200 tenants have access to ask us anything they want to know.
- Estate walkabouts every month – Councillors/Housing Officers/Customers
- Attendance at Four Area housing boards quarterly
- Quarterly repairs training, tenants invited in
- Newsletter sent out – project driven

A recent workshop with 25 tenants has helped us shape our plans for 2014 in this area, and new engagement opportunities are listed below:

- Quarterly workshops on specific topics (performance service improvements priorities)
- Ride outs/office/call centre visits – bookable timeslots
- Kier open days
- Tenant resource centre in Killingworth, providing a free meeting space, with computer and copier facilities with tea and coffee amenities for tenants.
- Estate walkabouts
- Bi annual tenant/leaseholder conference
- Trade Union Learning Centre
- Handyperson service – how do we introduce for younger tenants and residents

Communications and engagement will be improved by Kier North Tyneside through continuing with the above, as well as attendance at Resident Groups on request, a joint NTC/KNT Communication Group, Member briefings, regular contribution to the members newsletter sent by member's services and attendance at Area Housing Forums.

Member's Engagement:

Member's engagement has seen significant improvements following the creation of the Partnership Development Manager position, which is a dedicated resource, providing a direct contact and often out of hours access to answers, with daily and hourly updates to members on the issues they have raised. Other improvements include:

- Estate walkabouts every month – Councillors/Housing Officers/Customers

- Attendance at the Four Area housing forums four times a year. It is expected that we will invest in further resource to help us meet our responsibilities should it change to ward surgeries which would involve us attending 60 meetings a year.
- Informal contact with members
- Attending ad-hoc meetings
- Providing support for members in public meetings, e.g. flooding in Longbenton
- Joint visits to tenants with members at their request

Schools & Head Teacher's Engagement:

We are very active with local schools & in working with Head teachers. Our dedicated customer liaison team with 'Kieran', our fully grown bob the builder type mascot, regularly visit school to raise awareness of dangers on construction sites and to promote construction as a career choice. Visits in the last year include assemblies to whole schools at Ivy Road Primary School, Hadrian Park Primary School, South Wellfield, Westmoor, Grace Darling, St Bartholomew's, St Stephens, St Columbia's, Woodlawn School, St Bernadette's School, White House Primary and St James Knott Nursery. Work experience placements and appropriate career choice visits include Longbenton College, George Stephenson High School and Whitley Bay High School.

Kier invited and supported the Institution of Civil Engineers to engage with schools across North Tyneside in delivering their 'Bridge Project' to secondary and primary feeder schools throughout the borough. This impacted on 12 schools and approximately 1000 students, and was well received.

All North Tyneside schools invited to take part in a construction project 'Enterprise in Construction' with Seaton Burn getting involved. They have benefitted from and will continue to benefit from mentoring by Kier staff at their request.

Unfortunately not all schools have chosen to engage with us in the same way. 2013 saw us invite all North Tyneside primary schools to attend a training/PDP day for teachers or classroom assistants to understand how to use construction as a context for learning. The day involved investigating activities Kier could deliver in school and access free resources however we had to cancel the event due to lack of numbers on that occasion, however we are committed to try and engage with this stakeholder group.

Kier were partners in a Construction Conference at Newcastle University where over 60 teachers and careers staff from across the region attended a conference to look at professional careers in the industry.

And it doesn't stop there, with Battle Hill Primary benefitting from our award winning 'Aspiring' Managers' programme, where the future leaders took on a community challenge to renovate part of the grounds of Battle Hill Primary School to make it into an area students could explore horticulture.

Other stakeholder groups engagement:

Project Specific Engagement:

General community engagement on the back of capital projects include Wallsend Parks residents coffee morning, discussions with the Wallsend Park Bowls Club, we carried out the Wildlife Habitat Improvement programme with the younger residents in the area making bird & bat boxes for the park. Specialist owl boxes were also made and installed in Northumberland Parks after consultation with local conservation groups.

Supply Chain Engagement:

- Attendance at the North Tyneside Meet the Buyer events
- Attendance at the Construction line Meet the Buyer events
- Support to help the supply chain to meet any outstanding requirements eg UKATA asbestos accredited training
- National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfc) Supply Chain events, x 4 per year to meet and discuss the training, growth and support opportunities for the supply chain that can be met through the NSAfc.
- Many excellent one to one relationships between JVCo staff and the supply chain which has helped build up efficiencies and quality of work.

Ministry of Defence Covenant:

Having committed nationally to the MOD Covenant, Kier and the JVCo locally are active in our support for service leavers, having trained many that have gone on to resettle in North Tyneside. We have been invited to speak at numerous events around the North of England including Leeds Armoury, Nostell Priory, Wathgill Camp, Sedgefield racecourse and at Catterick super garrison. We are developing a unique MoD work experience partnership which will be piloted with NEET residents from North Tyneside including care leavers providing them with an insight into the forces work ethic, combined with the fun and unique practical skills gained when you are trained by the British Army.

THE FUTURE

The Challenge

In May 2013, the new Cabinet Member for housing challenged the JVCo in support of the current action plan to consider how much further the JVCo and its parent group could more specifically support and add value to the residents of North Tyneside, and in particular how we could assist in helping NTC meet its strategic plans. The result of this was a business improvement plan which covers the 6 main topic/themes below:

1. Value for Money – establishing what this looks like, not just about reducing costs but how we are able to add social value to every pound spent
2. Performance Management and Behaviour change – this was to be supported by a review by external consultants Deloitte's
3. KPI's – are we measuring the right things, is there a balance of cost/performance management and can we make any efficiency savings
4. Customers – to see improvements in JVCo and tenants interactions, members enquiries and wider customer engagement in general
5. Overhead reduction – internal/external benchmarking activity
6. Wider Kier Group Leverage – how the Group will support the Borough

Progress has already been made on a number of fronts, these include:

- External consultants were commissioned to carry out an independent review of the business model and processes. This was linked to similar reviews carried out elsewhere across other businesses in the Group, and allied to benchmarking against best practice in the wider maintenance market and other industries. We have already started to implement a number of the recommendations of this report. It is also pleasing to report that a number of the ratios and practices currently adopted within the JVCo were considered to be best practice.
- Greater dialogue and interaction with tenants has already taken place via a workshop attended by 25 tenants. This was received very positively, will be continued, and the actions and outputs in a number of areas are already complete.
- The teams are currently engaged in reviewing the key performance indicators the output from which will flow into the 2014/15 business plan.
- Kier Partnership Homes are engaging with North Tyneside Homes to support in HCA grant funding where relevant.

Sharing NTC Ambitions

We commit to supporting the delivery of the Council's five corporate priorities and themes:-

1. Sustaining our front line Council services within the council, but only spending what we can afford.
2. Maintaining excellent education, training and employment opportunities, including apprenticeships and working in collaboration with partners.
3. Providing Council Housing and affordable rented housing in partnership with the private sector and registered social landlords.
4. Introducing new income streams to maximise the benefits of our assets, not just seeking to dispose of them forever
5. Work in Partnership to realise the full potential of the North Bank of the Tyne Regeneration.

The business plan for 2014/15 is currently being formulated through which the JVCo will commit to:

- Striving for further efficiencies/VFM
- Improving service across a range of indicators
- Reducing the level of complaints
- Reducing the repairs backlog
- Improving customer satisfaction levels further
- Reducing defects/improving right first time

The National Skills Academy targets and delivery of the ten year Education, training and Employment plan will continue to be two key frameworks that focus and harness our energies in 2014 focussing on employment and training within:

- Education
- Community
- Sub-contractor/supplier
- Kier staff

We will continue with the Kier Apprentice Ambassadors programme which will provide a route to the business engaging with young people via their peer group as well as providing valuable personal development for the apprentices themselves. Each apprentice to the business will undergo a personal development training plan aimed at developing their employability skills.

The strategic landscape is changing with Kier working closely with the Local Authority, NTLT and other key employers in developing an alternative work experience strategy which will eventually offer work related experiences to school children of all ages across the borough of North Tyneside.

Growth

With strains on the public purse ever constant, we are looking forward to building further relationships to maximise exciting frameworks with our teams actively sourcing new business opportunities as well as through NEP, SCAPE and other frameworks.

The appointment of Kier Property as development partner at the old Swan Hunter's shipyard, Kier Construction on the new school development in Longbenton and the potential for Kier Partnership Homes to be an active partner in delivering the Council's ambition to build 3000 new homes should all provide growth opportunities for the local supply chain as well as the JVCo. The recycling of investment in the Borough in this way is a key benefit and output that the Joint Venture Company provides.

Growth will come through greater utilisation of our existing resources from increasing our efficiencies, reducing any duplication of activity and ensuring KNT & NTC staff adhere to the partnership charter vision and behaviours. The closer working relationship with the management team and staff at NTC and with councillors and elected members means we can jointly develop business growth opportunities to the benefit of both partners. Keeping effective customer engagement at all levels for both NTC and Kier North Tyneside remains crucial to ensuring satisfied customers and clients. Being able to demonstrate upper quartile performance will also support the business growth aspirations.

The strengthening partnership working can help us all to respectfully challenge each other to deliver improvements, working together to reach solution and using this learning to develop our own practices and develop our people.