

Public Document Pack



North
Northamptonshire
Council

Meeting: Scrutiny Commission
Date: Tuesday 2nd August, 2022
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby, NN17 1QG

Committee Membership:

Councillor Wendy Brackenbury (Chair), Councillor Kevin Watt (Vice-Chair), Councillor Valerie Anslow, Councillor Robin Carter, Councillor John Currall, Councillor Mark Dearing, Councillor Jim Hakewill, Councillor Philip Irwin, Councillor Zoe McGhee, Councillor Andy Mercer, Councillor Gill Mercer, Councillor Geoff Shacklock and Councillor Lee Wilkes

Substitutes: Councillor Ken Harrington, Councillor Ian Jelley, Councillor Tom Partridge-Underwood, Councillor Lyn Buckingham, Councillor Anne Lee, Councillor Sarah Tubbs

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

The following additional reports have now been published which were not available at the time the agenda was published.

This supplementary agenda has been published by Democratic Services.

Contact: democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk

Item	Subject	Page no.
05.	Special Educational Needs	3 - 8
08.	Executive Forward Plan	9 - 18

Members' Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their duty to ensure they abide by the approved Member Code of Conduct whilst undertaking their role as a Councillor. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, you must declare the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** other Registerable Interests, you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but must not take part in any vote on the matter unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** your own financial interest (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or **relates to** a financial interest of a relative, friend or

close associate, you must disclose the interest and not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

Members are reminded that they should continue to adhere to the Council's approved rules and protocols during the conduct of meetings. These are contained in the Council's approved Constitution.

If Members have any queries as to whether a Declaration of Interest should be made please contact the Monitoring Officer at – monitoringofficer@northnorthants.gov.uk

Press & Media Enquiries

Any press or media enquiries should be directed through Council's Communications Team to communications@northnorthants.gov.uk

Public Enquiries

Public enquiries regarding the Authority's meetings can be made to democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk



Scrutiny Commission

2 August 2022

REPORT TITLE	Performance & Processing for the issuing of an Education Health Care Plan including the Early Help Offer.
REPORT AUTHOR	AnnMarie Dodds annmarie.dodds@northnorthants.gov.uk
EXECUTIVE MEMBER	Cllr Scott Edwards Scott.edwards@northnorthants.gov.uk

1. Purpose of this report:

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Commission at their last meeting have asked to receive a report on EHCP (education health care plans). They are keen to receive information on what the process is to get a plan, what the performance in obtaining a plan is, why some plans take so long to put in place and why some children are often put on to a plan rather than go through early help.
- 1.2 This report sets out:
- i. The process for obtaining a plan
 - ii. The SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) delivery plan that is shaping and developing SEND early identification and intervention for our special needs learners
 - iii. EHCP performance to date

2. The process of obtaining a plan

- 2.1 An EHC (educational health care) needs assessment, is a detailed assessment to assess what a child or young person's special educational needs are. It explains the support they may need to learn, progress and achieve. It is an opportunity for multiple agencies to define an individual's needs and, if required, draw up an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan). When it does not, the information gathered can be used to inform SEN support provided by the educational setting.
- 2.2 In North Northamptonshire, we would expect to carry out a statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment for children and young people who:



- have special educational needs (SEN) that are long term, severe and complex
 - have not responded to sustained intervention and support from their setting.
- 2.3 The EHC plan is a legal document for children and young people in education, training or an apprenticeship and are for children and young people who need more support than is available through SEN Support.
- 2.4 In North Northamptonshire requests for assessments are usually made by the educational setting and happens when the family and all professionals involved agree that extra provision is necessary. Professionals or parents can make a request, and this is usually done in partnership with an educational setting. For example, through discussion with the setting's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). The young person in their own right can also make a request once they are 16 years old. The IASS service is commissioned to support families in North Northants, which includes providing independent support and guidance through the assessment process.
- 2.5 The 20-week process starts when the Statutory SEN service receives a request. The decision to start an EHC needs assessment and issue a final plan is made by the SEND decision making group. This is a panel was introduced in March 2022, meeting weekly and is made up of a range of health and education professionals. The panel co-ordinator informs the young person and/or their parents/carers of the panel's decision, within 6 weeks of receiving the request. If the decision is not to go ahead with an EHC needs assessment, a letter explaining the decision is sent. This information is also sent to the child or young person's main educational setting.
- 2.6 The poster attached outlines in more detail the process for the application. Further information is also available on the local offer website by clicking the link: [Education, Health, and Care \(EHC\) Plans - NNC and WNC - Local Offer \(northamptonshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/education-health-and-care-ehc-plans-nnc-and-wnc-local-offer)
- 2.7 In addition to the new systems being introduced to reduce the time families have to wait, the local authority has been considering its consultation processes on completion of a plan and when securing specialist provision. These are often time consuming, resulting in schools being chased, without officer knowledge of availability and/or suitability. These, together with the poor governance arrangements, through a complete lack of panel process, has meant that the consultation process had also become a bottle neck. The involvement and leadership input of the wider support service, whose teams play a significant role in the allocation of resources, through the graduated approach for allocating specialist resources, is now beginning to improve our timeliness, as well as our family relationships. It brings consistency through known professionals who work closely with the family during the early support for help and then in supporting families through the placement and transition process. The wider support service can help support and manage expectations



and demand and to ensure a really smooth transition. This process will take some time to embed in the coming months.

3. North Northamptonshire commitment to a SEND early help offer without the need for a statutory assessment

3.1 For the majority of children and young people with SEND North, they are educated with others their age in their local community school which is properly equipped and fit for purpose. This is set out in the graduated approach:

3.2 Decisions for additional resources are made at three levels:

- Schools and settings (from schools' notional budget)
- Localities of Schools Early Help funding (from the HNB Block)
- Specialist Provision (from HNB Block)

(Special School, Specialist Unit Provision)

3.3 The Graduated Response and the Local Team:

3.4 Step 1:

3.5 It is expected that the majority of decisions are made at Schools and Setting level. Schools and settings are expected to use their notional SEN funding to make provision for the majority of pupils with SEN.

3.6 Step 2:

3.7 If the child's need persist the school should discuss the child with the link professional attached to the school from the educational psychology/SEND support services, who will provide advice and guidance. Some children may be referred to the early help panel for additional funding

3.8 Step 3:

3.9 For children with more complex needs, the local team provides the opportunity to discuss specialist support and resources, or to refer for a statutory assessment in order to access more specialist provision in a unit and in some cases a special school.

3.10 The introduction of the early help funding for schools in September, will mean that schools will be able to access additional funding for children who have a SEND support plan without the need for an EHCP.

3.11 The new process for the allocation of the funding is being coordinated across the four localities in North Northamptonshire, with support services working closely with school leaders for the distribution of the funding. We anticipate, over time, that this will reduce the requests for children to undergo a 20-week assessment process, as the confidence of schools and families increases in the



new arrangements, with the knock-on effect of manageable workloads for the EHCP team, which were becoming unsustainable.

- 3.12 To further enhance the SEND early help offer, the children's directorate have been reconfiguring its SEND provision, to ensure that it supports schools in developing local provision. It has been strengthening an early help SEND offer through its education teams working more closely with our special schools to support mainstream schools across the four localities. The SEND service has put in place a delivery plan, which sets out how it intends to develop the skills and confidence of settings, through individual allocation of time to the SEND support services and in doing so facilitate an early identification and intervention offer, to ensure the needs of children and young people with SEND are met as early as possible. It recognises the need to provide more timely localised access to support for the pupils, parents and schools and will be using a Team Around the Child approach to ensure that all children and young people with SEND can achieve the best possible outcomes.
- 3.13 In addition to the reconfiguration of the teams into localities, the SEND support service outreach support is currently being distributed to individual schools, to cut down on the unnecessary time of applying for support through a referral process. Work is also taking place with the special school sector in the piloting of an early help SEMH (social and emotional mental health) outreach team, which is commencing in September. To support in the development of the early help offer SENCO forums have now also been established and meeting since March on a half termly basis. Lead SENCOs for each of the localities are working together to coproduce the new developments to support local areas.
- 3.14 We are very clear that the impact over time we expect to achieve will include:
- **greater inclusion** of children educated in their local community school
 - **fewer** pupils in **segregated independent** provision
 - **reduction** in **complaints, mediations, appeals and tribunals**
 - **reduction** in **exclusions**
 - **less demand and pressure on high-cost** provision

4. EHCP Performance to date

- 4.1 The local authority has increased resources within its statutory assessment team and has seen improvement in the time it takes to obtain an EHCP.
- Timeliness of EHCPs has improved from 28% for the period March 2021 to April 2022 to 56.9% of EHC plans finalized within the 20-week timescale for the period January - June 2022.



	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	YTD
20-week EHC Needs Assessments completion rate	26.7%	19.4%	8.0%	14.6%	20.0%	20.0%	9.1%	8.8%	40.9%	40%	59%	53%	28%

	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	YTD
20-week EHC Needs Assessments completion rate	40%	59%	53.3%	63.2%	65.4%	59.5%							56.9%

- 4.2 Weekly decision-making groups were introduced in March 2022, where the head of SEND, SEND EHCP team manager; EHCP locality team leads; panel coordinator; principal educational psychologist; service manager and team manager for the SEND support services as well as the designated clinical officer meet. The purpose of the group is to discuss requests for a statutory assessment, as well as the issuing of draft/final plans.
- 4.3 Weekly performance meetings have recently been introduced by the Head of SEND, with the SEND EHCP manager and the locality team leads to monitor the timeliness of the assessments process, including out of time assessments
- 4.4 These meetings are enabling SEND managers to better plan, allocate and monitor performance as well as escalate where cases are stuck and to continue to improve the number that are issued within the 20-week timescale, whilst addressing the backlog for the out of time assessments.
- 4.5 Whilst the service is seeing some improvements in addressing the backlog, it also recognizes the systemic and longer-term issues that the local authority face, in relation to sufficiency of specialist provision. To address this the local authority undertook a sufficiency report outlining some of the key issues in meeting the needs of children and young people who require more specialist provision. A summary of the report shared and endorsed by the school forum, outlines the six key areas of focus moving forward to address the issues the report raises. These include:
- 4.6 The service is also in the process of putting in place a parent help line to improve our communication with our parent carers who are awaiting an assessment outcome.



- 4.7 The performance scorecards form the basis of the underpinning EHCP improvement service delivery plan which includes: the recovery programme for out of time assessments; the completion of the operational guidelines which articulate procedures for assessing and reviewing children with and EHCP; embedding the weekly performance reporting highlighting and actioning areas causing concern; reconfiguration of EHCP and business support team into a permanent structure; embedding of all the new SEND decision - making groups for SEMH/ASD & cognition and learning/sensory & medical complex.

5. In Summary

- 5.1 We are supporting schools in developing local provision by strengthening an early help offer, including early help funding and building our local teams around the four localities of mainstream schools. Over time we expect to see a reduction in the number of referrals for an EHCP plan as confidence in the new system increases.
- 5.2 We have improved our performance in the timeliness of EHCP plans by 29% since 2021 and expect to clear the out of time assessments by the end of August.
- 5.3 In the wider context we have undertaken a sufficiency review to address specialist capacity and are working to a delivery programme that sets out 5 areas for development:
- repurposing existing spare capacity in mainstream schools to develop unit provision
 - expanding existing special school provision
 - establishing a new early help model for pupils with SEMH and developing an integrated graduated approach
 - reducing reliance on the independent/non-maintained sector for specialist provision and redeploying financial resources into local provision
 - developing opportunities for Alternative Curriculum Offer delivered by mainstream schools

Glossary

ASD – autistic spectrum disorder
EHCP – education health care plan
HNB – high needs block
IASS – independent advice and information services
SEMH – social emotional and mental health
SENCO – special educational needs coordinator
SEND – special educational needs and disabilities



North
Northamptonshire
Council

North Northamptonshire Council

1ST AUGUST 2022 TO 30TH NOVEMBER 2022

Published by: Democratic Services

Leader of North Northamptonshire Council: Councillor Jason Smithers

INTRODUCTION

This is the North Northamptonshire Council's Forward Plan. It is published pursuant to The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. Its purpose is to provide the required 28 days notice of the Council's intention to take 'key decisions' and to hold meetings or parts of meetings in private. It gives advance notice of all the "key decisions" and "exempt decisions" which the Executive or another body or officer so authorised are likely to take over a four month period. The Plan is updated on a rolling monthly basis.

The Members of the Executive are:	
Councillor Jason Smithers	Leader of North Northamptonshire Council
Councillor Helen Howell	Deputy Leader of North Northamptonshire Council Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism
Councillor Helen Harrison	Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Scott Edwards	Children, Families, Education and Skills
Councillor Harriet Pentland	Climate and Green Environment
Councillor Lloyd Bunday	Finance and Transformation
Councillor David Brackenbury	Growth and Regeneration
Councillor Graham Lawman	Highways, Travel and Assets
Councillor Matt Binley	Housing, Communities and Levelling-Up
Councillor David Howes	Rural Communities and Localism

The concept of a "key decision" is intended to capture the most important or significant decisions. "Key decisions" will normally be made at meetings open to the press and public. The press and public will only be excluded from such meetings as and when the Council's Monitoring Officer considers that this is necessary in order to avoid the public disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

The authority has decided that a Key Decision is one which is likely:-

- (a) to result in the authority incurring expenditure of which is, or the making of savings which are, significant; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards in the area of the authority."

The Council has decided that significant expenditure or savings are those amounting to above £500,000.

In determining the meaning of "*significant*" for these purposes North Northamptonshire Council will also have regard to any guidance for the time being issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000.

At times it may be necessary for the North Northamptonshire Council to give consideration to items where the public may be excluded from the meeting. Members of the public are excluded from meetings whenever it is likely that, in the view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that confidential information would be disclosed. This includes exclusion from access to any pertinent documents. Details of the exemption categories can be found in the 'Access to Information Procedure Rules' section in the Council's [Constitution](#). This plan provides advance notice of any items which may be held in private.

Paragraph 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 provides for members of the public to make representations to the Council on why an exempt item should be considered in public, rather than in private. Persons wishing to make such representations and/or obtain further details in respect of any issues referred to in the Plan should contact the undermentioned officer.

The Monitoring Officer may also include in the Forward Plan references to such other decisions, which are to be taken by the Council or any of its Committees or Sub-Committee or officers as they consider appropriate. These will be those decisions that are considered to be significant or sufficiently important and/or sensitive so that it is reasonable for a member of the public to expect it to be recorded and published.

All general questions or queries about the contents of this Forward Plan or about the arrangements for taking key decisions should be raised with David Pope, Democratic Services.

Please email: democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk

August 2022

Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? /Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Anticipated Date of Decision:	Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Capital Programme Update	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Budget Forecast Update	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Capital Monitoring Report	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Pollinator Strategy	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	
Tree Strategy and Policy	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	

Oakley Vale, Phase 8 and 9 Land Sale	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	
Outcome of Initial Consultation for the Proposed Amalgamation of Alfred Street Junior School and Tennyson Road Infant School	Executive	Yes	No	Initial consultation has been undertaken with school staff, Parents / Carers, local residents, community groups linked to the school etc	25 Aug 2022	Director for Children's Services	
Recommissioning of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Director for Children's Services	
Provision of fleet arrangements for Grounds Maintenance, Cleansing, Refuse & Recycling Collections for Wellingborough – Post April 2023	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	
High Street Heritage Action Zone Phase 3	Executive	Yes	No	Historic England continue to be a key partner and part of the Project Board	25 Aug 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	

Integrated Care Across Northamptonshire (iCAN) Case for Change	Executive	Yes	No		25 Aug 2022	Executive Director - Adults, Communities and Wellbeing	
--	-----------	-----	----	--	-------------	--	--

September 2022

Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? /Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Anticipated Date of Decision:	Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Capital Programme Update	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Budget Forecast Update	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Priors Hall Golf Course	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director - Adults, Communities and Wellbeing	
Parking Enforcement	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	
Knuston Hall	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	

Garden Waste: Future Service Provision	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	
Hackney Carriage Fares Tariff	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	
Waste 5 Year Plan	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	
Full Asylum Dispersal Model	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022	Executive Director - Adults, Communities and Wellbeing	
Raunds Library (Community Managed Library programme)	Executive	Yes	No		15 Sep 2022		

October 2022

Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? /Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Anticipated Date of Decision:	Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Capital Programme Update	Executive	Yes	No		13 Oct 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Budget Forecast Update	Executive	Yes	No		13 Oct 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Towns Fund Multi-use Building	Executive	Yes	No		13 Oct 2022	Executive Director – Place & Economy	

November 2022

Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? /Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Anticipated Date of Decision:	Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Capital Programme Update	Executive	Yes	No		10 Nov 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Budget Forecast Update	Executive	Yes	No		10 Nov 2022	Executive Director of Finance	
Half Yearly Treasury Management	Executive	Yes	No		10 Nov 2022	Executive Director of Finance	