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Democratic Services
The Corby Cube,
George Street,
Corby,
Northants,
NN17 1QG

Meeting: Council
Date: Thursday 23rd June, 2022
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, The Cube, George Street, Corby NN17, 1QG

Council Membership:

Councillor Paul Bell (Chair), Councillor Larry Henson (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jean Addison, Councillor Tim Allebone, Councillor Valerie Anslow, Councillor Ross Armour, Councillor Charlie Best, Councillor Matt Binley, Councillor Jennie Bone, Councillor David Brackenbury, Councillor Wendy Brackenbury, Councillor Cedwien Brown, Councillor Scott Brown, Councillor Leanne Buckingham, Councillor Lyn Buckingham, Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Councillor Jon-Paul Carr, Councillor Robin Carter, Councillor William Colquhoun, Councillor John Currall, Councillor Alison Dalziel, Councillor Mark Dearing, Councillor Dez Dell, Councillor Scott Edwards, Councillor Jonathan Ekins, Councillor Emily Fedorowycz, Councillor Martin Griffiths, Councillor Jim Hakewill, Councillor Clive Hallam, Councillor Ken Harrington, Councillor Helen Harrison, Councillor Kirk Harrison, Councillor Helen Howell, Councillor David Howes, Councillor Philip Irwin, Councillor Bert Jackson, Councillor Ian Jelley, Councillor Barbara Jenney, Councillor David Jenney, Councillor Matt Keane, Councillor King Lawal, Councillor Graham Lawman, Councillor Lora Lawman, Councillor Anne Lee, Councillor Richard Levell, Councillor Paul Marks, Councillor Dorothy Maxwell, Councillor Peter McEwan, Councillor John McGhee, Councillor Zoe McGhee, Councillor Andy Mercer, Councillor Gill Mercer, Councillor Macaulay Nichol, Councillor Steven North, Councillor Jan O'Hara, Councillor Dr Anup Pandey, Councillor Tom Partridge-Underwood, Councillor Mark Pengelly, Councillor Harriet Pentland, Councillor Roger Powell, Councillor Elliot Keith Prentice, Councillor Simon Rielly, Councillor Russell Roberts, Councillor Mark Rowley, Councillor Geoff Shacklock, Councillor David Sims, Councillor Jason Smithers, Councillor Chris Smith-Haynes, Councillor Joseph John Smyth, Councillor Mike Tebbutt, Councillor Kevin Thurland, Councillor Sarah Tubbs, Councillor Michael Tye, Councillor Malcolm Ward, Councillor Malcolm Waters, Councillor Kevin Watt, Councillor Andrew Weatherill and Councillor Lee Wilkes

Members of the Council are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed on the agenda.

This agenda has been published by Democratic Services.

Contact: democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk

Item	Subject	Page no.
01.	Apologies To receive any apologies for absence.	

02.	Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 26th May 2022 The minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 26 th May 2022 to be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	7 - 12
03.	Declarations of Interest Members to declare any interest as appropriate in respect of items to be considered at the meeting.	
04.	Chair's Announcements To receive any announcements from the Chair.	
05.	Leader's Announcements To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council.	
06.	Public Participation (i) Public Statements (ii) Public Questions	
07.	Councillor Questions To receive questions from members.	
08.	Executive Presentations To receive any presentations from the Executive.	
Items requiring decisions		
09.	Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Review of Electoral Arrangements - Proposed Council Size <i>To seek approval from Full Council for the draft submission on Council size regarding future electoral arrangements to the LGBCE, as recommended by the Democracy and Standards Committee.</i>	13 - 86
010.	Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) - Review of Members' Allowances 2022 <i>To consider the report and recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) into its review of Member Allowances conducted in 2022, following consideration by the Democracy and Standards Committee.</i>	87 - 106
011.	Motions on Notice To consider motions received in accordance with Meeting Procedure Rule 17 as follows:-	

Motion 1

To be proposed by Cllr Jim Hakewill and seconded by Cllr Sarah Tubbs:-

‘This Council directs the Portfolio Holder for Rural Communities & Localism, Cllr David Howes, to carry out whatever steps are necessary to have the “Funding Bid for the proposed development of a traveller’s stopping site”, proposed to be located at Rothwell Green Space, north of Junction 3 of the A14 and south of Harrington Road, Rothwell, withdrawn immediately.

Further, that all feedback and background work on this proposal be retained, fed into the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Policy and be considered during the proposed policy development.’

Motion 2

To be proposed by Cllr John McGhee and seconded by Cllr Zoe McGhee:-

‘This motion is asking members to consider changing when planning permission is required for small houses in multiple occupation (HMO).

As it currently stands, people can apply to change the use of a property to a small house in multiple occupation (with between three and six occupiers) under permitted development rights, while larger HMOs have to go through the full planning process.

By removing the permitted development rights, any applications for a HMO, of any size, would be governed by the same rules.

Under article 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework councils are able to increase the requirements for applications for planning permission to HMOs, this has to be based on robust evidence and apply to small areas only so. We recognise that there’s still a lot of work to do on this, but we are positive that by working together, we can improve the way HMOs are governed.

And as part of this motion we are asking officers to look into strengthening licensing requirements for the operation of HMOs, so they can be better monitored, and landlords held responsible for any negative impact on communities.

We ask the council to report back at the next full council with a plan on how to achieve this aim.’

Urgent Items

To consider any items of business of which notice has been given to the Proper Officer and the Chair considers to be urgent, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972.

012. Close of Meeting

Adele Wylie, Monitoring Officer
North Northamptonshire Council



Proper Officer
Wednesday 15 June 2022

Public Participation

The Council has approved procedures for you to present petitions or request to address meetings of the Council

ITEM	NARRATIVE	DEADLINE									
Members of the Public Questions	Questions may be submitted by members of the Public who live or work in the North Northamptonshire council area to meetings of the Council. The question must be in writing and submitted 2 clear working days prior to the meeting. There are no supplementary questions permitted, and no debate on questions or answers. A period of 30 minutes (Chair's Discretion) is allocated for Public Questions.	5:00 pm Monday, 20 June 2022									
Members of the Public Agenda Statements	Members of the Public who live or work in the North Northamptonshire council area may make statements at meetings of the Council in relation to reports on the agenda. A request to address the Council must be received 2 clear working days prior to the meeting. The member of the Public has a maximum of 3 minutes to address the committee.	5:00 pm Monday, 20 June 2022									
Other Members Questions	Written questions of up to 50 words maximum permitted. To be received at least 2 clear working days prior to the meeting. Chair's discretion on supplementary question. A period of 30 minutes (Chair's Discretion) is allocated for Other Members Questions.	5:00 pm Monday, 20 June 2022									
Other Members Agenda Statements	Other Shadow Members may make statements at meetings in relation to reports on the agenda. A request to address the committee must be received 2 clear working days prior to the meeting. The Shadow Member has a maximum of 3 minutes to address the committee. A period of 30 minutes (Chair's Discretion) is allocated for Shadow Member Statements.	5:00 pm Monday, 20 June 2022									
Members of the Public Petitions	<p>Anyone who lives, works or studies in North Northamptonshire may submit a petition to the Shadow Authority. Depending on the size of your petition it will be responded to as follows:-</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Signatory Threshold</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Petition which triggers a debate</td> <td>1,500 +</td> <td>Any petition with 1,500 or more signatures will trigger a debate at a Full Authority meeting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Petition which calls an officer to account</td> <td>750 – 1,499</td> <td>Any petition with 750 – 1,499 signatures will summon a senior officer of the Authority to give evidence at a public Authority meeting</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Signatory Threshold	Description	Petition which triggers a debate	1,500 +	Any petition with 1,500 or more signatures will trigger a debate at a Full Authority meeting	Petition which calls an officer to account	750 – 1,499	Any petition with 750 – 1,499 signatures will summon a senior officer of the Authority to give evidence at a public Authority meeting	
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	Standard Petition	5 – 749	Any petition with 5 – 749 signatures will be referred to a senior officer of the Authority to provide a response	
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These procedures are included within the Council’s Constitution. Please contact democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk for more information.

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

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Annual Council

North Northamptonshire Council

Thursday 26th May 2022

At 2:00 pm in the Council Chamber, The Cube, George Street, Corby.

Present: -

Members:

Councillors Larry Henson (Vice Chair, in the chair), Jean Addison, Tim Allebone, Ross Armour, Paul Bell, Charlie Best, Matt Binley, Jennie Bone, Wendy Brackenbury, Scott Brown, Lyn Buckingham, Lloyd Bunday, Jon-Paul Carr, Robin Carter, William Colquhoun, John Currall, Alison Dalziel, Mark Dearing, Dez Dell, Scott Edwards, Jonathan Ekins, Emily Fedorowycz, Martin Griffiths, Clive Hallam, Ken Harrington, Helen Harrison, Helen Howell, David Howes, Philip Irwin, Bert Jackson, Ian Jelley, Barbara Jenney, David Jenney, Matt Keane, King Lawal, Lora Lawman, Anne Lee, Richard Levell, Paul Marks, Dorothy Maxwell, Peter McEwan, John McGhee, Zoe McGhee, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Macaulay Nichol, Steven North, Jan O'Hara, Anup Pandey, Tom Partridge-Underwood, Mark Pengelly, Harriet Pentland, Elliot Prentice, Russell Roberts, Mark Rowley, Geoff Shacklock, Jason Smithers, Chris Smith-Haynes, Mike Tebbutt, Kevin Thurland, Sarah Tubbs, Michael Tye, Malcolm Ward, Kevin Watt, Andrew Weatherill and Lee Wilkes.

Officers in Attendance:

Rob Bridge (Chief Executive), Adele Wylie (Director of Governance and Human Resources/Monitoring Officer), Paul Goult (Interim Democratic Services Manager) and Ben Smith (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager).

112. Election of Chair 2022/2023

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

The nomination of Councillor Larry Henson was MOVED by Councillor Scott Edwards and SECONDED by Councillor Russell Roberts. There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED that: -

Councillor Larry Henson be elected as Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

(Councillor Henson took the chair of the meeting at this point).

113. Appointment of Vice Chair 2022/2023

Nominations were sought for the position of Vice Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

The nomination of Councillor Barbara Jenney was MOVED by Councillor Larry Henson and SECONDED by Councillor Gill Mercer. There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED that: -

Councillor Barbara Jenney be appointed as Vice Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

114. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Valerie Anslow, David Brackenbury, Cedwien Brown, Leanne Buckingham, Jim Hakewill, Kirk Harrison, Graham Lawman, Roger Powell, Simon Rielly, David Sims, Joseph Smyth and Malcolm Waters.

115. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest on this occasion.

116. Minutes of the Meeting held on 31st March 2022

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 31st March 2022 had been circulated.

Councillor Henson (Chair) MOVED the minutes of the meeting held on 31st March 2022 be agreed. Councillor Jason Smithers SECONDED the motion.

117. Political Group Leadership

Annual Council received a report noting the political group leadership for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

- Leader of the Conservative Group – Councillor Jason Smithers
- Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group – Councillor Helen Howell
- Leader of the Labour Group – Councillor John McGhee
- Deputy Leader of the Labour Group – Councillor Jean Addison
- Leader of the Green Alliance Group – Councillor Emily Fedorowycz
- Deputy Leader of the Green Alliance Group – Councillor Dez Dell

The recommendation was MOVED by Councillor Lora Lawman and SECONDED by Councillor Helen Howell.

RESOLVED that: -

That the leadership arrangements of the Conservative Group, the Labour Group and the Green Alliance Group for 2022/2023 as detailed within the report be noted.

118. Leader's Address to Council

Councillor Jason Smithers (Leader of the Council) addressed the meeting. In doing so, the Leader stressed the achievements of the Council in its first year, thanked staff and councillors for their continuing work and effort, and recognised the challenges that still lay ahead in fulfilling the Corporate Plan and transforming local services to the public. Councillor John

McGhee (Leader of the Labour Group) and Councillor Emily Fedorowycz (Leader of the Green Alliance Group) also addressed Council.

119. Confirmation of Executive Appointments

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Jason Smithers) had circulated details of the appointments to the Executive for 2022/2023. These included: -

Councillor	Portfolio
Helen Howell (Vice-Chair of the Executive)	Deputy Leader of the Council Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism
David Brackenbury (Executive Member)	Growth and Regeneration
Lloyd Bunday (Executive Member)	Finance and Transformation
Scott Edwards (Executive Member)	Children, Families, Education and Skills
Helen Harrison (Executive Member)	Adults, Health and Wellbeing
David Howes (Executive Member)	Rural Communities and Localism
Graham Lawman (Executive Member)	Highways, Travel and Assets
Harriet Pentland (Executive Member)	Climate and Green Environment
Vacancy (Executive Member)	Housing and Community

The Leader indicated to Annual Council that he would be appointing to the vacant role of Executive Member for Housing and Community during the next few weeks.

120. Committee Membership and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs of Committee 2022/2023

Annual Council were being requested to note the nominations from recognised political groups for seats on formal committees of Council for the Municipal Year 2022/2023. Annual Council was also requested to elect/appoint the Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees in accordance with the procedure detailed in the Constitution.

The recommendations were MOVED by Councillor Matt Binley and SECONDED by Councillor Philip Irwin.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The proportionality rules detailed in Appendix A be applied;
- (ii) The appointments made by the respective recognised political groups to the governance structure as detailed in Appendix B be noted;
- (iii) It be noted that the Officer Scheme of Delegation grants authority to the Monitoring Officer to make in-year changes to the membership of committees on behalf of the Council, in consultation with the Leaders of the political groups; and
- (iv) That the current North Northamptonshire Council representation on the –

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel
Patrol Adjudication Joint Committee
Pensions Committee
Local Pensions Board
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Continue until subject to review.

Annual Council then considered the nominations received in relation to the election of committee Chairs and appointment of Vice Chairs.

Those Chair and Vice Chair positions where only one nomination had been received were MOVED by Councillor Matt Binley and SECONDED by Councillor Philip Irwin.

RESOLVED that: -

The following be duly elected/appointed for the Municipal Year 2022/2023 –

Position of Responsibility	Councillor
Chair of the Scrutiny Commission	Councillor Wendy Brackenbury
Chair of Finance & Resources Committee	Councillor Mark Pengelly
Vice Chair of Finance & Resources Cttee	Councillor Richard Levell
Chair of Licensing & Appeals Cttee	Councillor Jonathan Ekins
Vice Chair of Licensing & Appeals Cttee	Councillor Jennie Bone
Chair of Democracy & Standards Cttee	Councillor Lora Lawman
Vice Chair of Democracy & Standards	Councillor Macaulay Nicol
Chair of Audit & Governance Committee	Councillor Andrew Weatherill
Vice Chair of Audit & Governance Cttee	Councillor Kirk Harrison
Chair of Kettering Area Planning	Councillor Mark Rowley
Vice Chair of Kettering Area Planning	Councillor Cedwien Brown
Chair of Thrapston Area Planning	Councillor Jennie Bone
Vice Chair of Thrapston Area Planning	Councillor Gill Mercer
Chair of Wellingborough Area Planning	Councillor Paul Bell
Vice Chair of Wellingborough Area	Councillor Malcolm Waters
Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board	Councillor Jon-Paul Carr

Nominations for certain Chair and Vice Chair positions had been received from both the Conservative Group and the Labour Group.

Councillor Macaulay Nichol MOVED the Conservative Group nominations; these were SECONDED by Councillor Wendy Brackenbury. Councillor Matt Keane MOVED the Labour Group nominations; these were SECONDED by Councillor Lyn Buckingham.

RESOLVED that:

The following be duly elected/appointed for the Municipal Year 2022/2023 –

Position of Responsibility	Councillor
Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Commission	Councillor Kevin Watt
Chair of Strategic Planning Committee	Councillor Steven North
Vice Chair of Strategic Planning Cttee	Councillor Paul Bell
Chair of the Employment Committee	Councillor Barbara Jenney
Vice Chair of the Employment Cttee	Councillor Matt Binley
Chair of Corby Area Planning	Councillor Kevin Watt
Vice Chair of Corby Area Planning	Councillor David Sims

121. Municipal Timetable 2022/2023

Annual Council was requested to approve the Municipal Timetable 2022/2023. Full Council held on the 31st March 2022 had provisionally approved the draft timetable.

The recommendation to approve the draft timetable was **MOVED** by Councillor Lora Lawman and **SECONDED** by Councillor Macaulay Nichol.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Municipal Timetable 2022/2023 be approved

122. Urgent Business

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

123. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 3:16 pm.

Chair

Date

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Full Council 23rd June 2022

Report Title	Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Review of Electoral Arrangements – Proposed Council Size
Report Author	Adele Wylie – Director of Governance and HR Adele.wylie@northnorthants.gov.uk

Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	N/A

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Submission on Council Size

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report sets out the recommendations of the Democracy and Standards Committee meeting held on 12 April 2022, which considered proposals of the cross-party member/officer Boundary Commission Working Group which has been meeting to consider draft proposals for the Council's size as part of the first stage of review of electoral arrangements in North Northamptonshire.
- 1.2. This report does not consider warding numbers, patterns or size, which is not the subject of this stage of the review.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Boundary Commission are undertaking an Electoral Review of North Northamptonshire Council.
- 2.2. The process requires the Commission to seek representation to assist its deliberations. On 16 November 2021 the Democracy and Standards

Committee established a cross party member Working Group with relevant Officer support to formulate and consider recommendations for electoral arrangements for North Northamptonshire and agreed an initial phase timeline.

- 2.3. The Working Group reported back to the Committee its proposals as part of the first phase of the Review on 12 April 2022, which seeks to determine what should be the appropriate size of the Council in terms of the number of Councillors. The attached documents at Appendix A are the culmination of this review, with additional representations of the Labour and Green Alliance Groups also considered at the Committee meeting and which are contained in the background papers to this report.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Council approve the recommendations of the Democracy and Standards Committee to: -
- (a) Note the work of the Member/Officer Working Group on the first phase of electoral arrangements for North Northamptonshire;
 - (b) Approve the completed background evidence and information contained in the council size template at Appendix A, for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE);
 - (c) Approve a Council size number of the Working Group's recommended figure of **99**, endorsed by Democracy and Standards Committee, set out at the end of Appendix A.
 - (d) Notes the alternative options put forward by the Labour and Green Alliance representations set out at paragraph 5.2 of this report;
 - (e) Delegates authority to the Director of Governance and Human Resources in consultation with the Chair of the Democracy and Standards Committee to make any amendments to the proposed submission to the LGBCE prior to its submission in light of any comments from this Council and any minor/typographical changes identified.
- 3.2. *Reason for Recommendations – To update the Committee on the work of the Member Working Group and to agree a submission to full Council.*
- 3.3. *Alternative Options Considered – The Democracy and Standards Committee has considered, in detail, different options available to the Council in terms of keeping the Council numbers at the current size, reducing its number, or increasing it and the pros and cons of each, as set out in Appendix A to this report. the Committee also considered alternative submissions by the Labour and Green Alliance Groups, arising from the Working Group's*

deliberations. The background evidence base is accepted by all members of the Working Group and the Democracy and Standards Committee.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. The template document at Appendix A largely sets out factual and contextual information about North Northamptonshire Council, its governance arrangements and structures, together with information regarding council area, the electorate, housing growth etc.
- 4.2. The summary at the end of Appendix A sets out the conclusions and recommendations of the Democracy and Standards Committee (arising from the Working Group). It has set out what it considers to be the key considerations in terms of future council size and proposes that North Northamptonshire Council should petition the Boundary Commission to agree to an increase to 88 councillors, i.e., 10 councillors to account for the additional workload referenced and that this will allow consideration by Council to appoint to new committees. The Democracy and Standards Committee considers that a further case is evidenced for an increase by 11 Councillors to a final total of **99 councillors**.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. The Working Group has considered the implications for the Council in reducing the councillor numbers below 78, keeping them at the current level, and also increasing them.
- 5.2. Whilst there was agreement in terms of the background evidence and information contained in the council size template at Appendix A, a majority of the Working Group proposed a total of 99 councillors for future council size, which was then endorsed by the Democracy and Standards Committee for recommendation to Council. Alternative views were presented to both the Working Group and the Democracy and Standards Committee by the Labour Group (84 to 86 councillors) and Green Alliance Group (60 councillors), which are set out in more detail within the background papers to this report, at paragraph 8.1.
- 5.3. In considering the evidence provided, it is recommended that Council approves the recommendation of a council size of 99 Councillors and the submission document at Appendix A to the LGBCE.
- 5.4. The only other option for this Council is not to submit a view about Council size to the LGBCE, but this is not advised.
- 5.5. It should also be noted that individual Councillors, political groups, members of the public and other interested parties may also submit their own proposals, recommendations, and evidence to the LGBCE for consideration, separate to that of North Northamptonshire Council.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Subject to approval of this report, a submission will be presented to the LGBCE on behalf of the Council, which will be given consideration alongside any other representations. The LGBCE will then make a decision on council size, expected in August 2022.
- 6.2. In considering the next stage of the review - the ward areas, on behalf of the Democracy and Standards Committee, the Working Group will look at warding numbers, pattern and size, to include effective, reflective, and convenient boundaries taking into consideration community identity, behavioural impacts, and physical barriers such as roads, rivers etc. and report back its findings and recommendations to the Committee, which will in turn report back to Council.
- 6.3. The timeline for the remainder of the review is expected to be as follows: -

Timeline	LGBCE Activity
30 August – 7 November 2022	Invitation to submit warding patterns
7 February – 17 April 2023	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation
4 July 2023	Publication of final recommendations
Summer 2023	Draft order seeking to implement the recommendations
2025	Implementation of final recommendations

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1. The resources required to undertake the next stage of the review are available within the existing North Northamptonshire Member and staffing structure.
- 7.1.2. Technical expertise in the collation of statistical information, mapping and forecasts will also be required from colleagues in planning services.
- 7.1.3. The member/officer working group has representation from across the Council and a timetable of meetings will be agreed.
- 7.1.4. Specialist mapping software is available to assist with detailing proposed boundary changes. The electoral services team are currently investigating the estimated cost, and should a decision be taken to acquire the software it is anticipated the cost would be met from the existing Electoral Services budget.

- 7.1.5. Additional staff overtime costs may become payable in relation to attendance at evening meetings/briefings and to cover any additional hours required in the preparation of future proposals/ responses to recommendations.

7.2. **Legal and Governance**

- 7.2.1. The Council has delegated responsibility to the Democracy and Standards Committee the preparation of submissions on behalf of the Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in relation to the governance of the area. The Committee has established a working group which has assisted it in its decision making. The Committee at its meeting on 12 April 2022 tasked the Working Group to undertake detailed work in respect of, and provide recommendations regarding, stage 2 of the review once the LGBCE completes its initial stage 1 work.

7.3. **Relevant Policies and Plans**

- 7.3.1. The recommendations in this report support the Corporate Plan 2021-25 key commitment of **Connected communities**, in ensuring our communities are connected with one another so they are able to shape their lives and the areas where they live.

7.4. **Risk**

- 7.4.1. If the cross-party member/officer working group was not to continue, this could lead to a disjointed approach to the next stage of the ongoing review resulting in limited options and evidence for Council and the LGBCE to consider.
- 7.4.2. The existing Electoral Services Management Software contract is due to expire in August 2022. A procurement exercise is currently underway to source a new Electoral Management Software System. If an alternative supplier is selected this could have a negative impact on data processing and any mapping facilities that may have been procured to assist with the technical aspects of the review.

7.5. **Consultation**

- 7.5.1. Formal consultation on the draft recommendations and for future stages of the review will be conducted by the LGBCE as part of the statutory review process.

7.6. **Equality Implications**

- 7.6.1. There are no discernible equality implications arising from the contents of this report.

7.7. Climate Impact

7.7.1. No immediate environmental impact has been identified. When undertaking the review, the project team will consider the environmental and climate impact of the project, in line with the council's priorities in this area.

7.8. Community Impact

7.8.1. The primary objective of the review is to improve electoral equality across North Northamptonshire ensuring that each voter has roughly the same representation on the council.

6.7.2 Members of the community will have the opportunity to engage with the review process and submit their own proposals and comment on recommendations as part of the review process.

7.9. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.9.1. There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1. [Democracy and Standards Committee – 16 November 2021](#) (item 10 refers)

[Democracy and Standards Committee - 12 April 2022](#) (item 6 refers)

North Northamptonshire Council

Council Size Submission: Template

[North Northamptonshire Council]

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How to Make a Submission

It is recommended that submissions on future governance arrangements and council size follow the guidance provided and use the format below as a template. Submissions should be treated as an opportunity to focus on the future needs of the council and not simply describe the current arrangements. **Submissions should also demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been considered in drawing up the proposal and why you have discounted them.**

The template allows respondents to enter comments directly under each heading. It is not recommended that responses be unduly long; as a guide, it is anticipated that a 15 to 20-page document using this template should suffice. Individual section length may vary depending on the issues to be explained. Where internal documents are referred to URLs should be provided, rather than the document itself. It is also recommended that a table is included that highlights the key paragraphs for the Commission's attention.

'Good' submissions, i.e. those that are considered to be most robust and persuasive, combine the following *key success components* (as set out in the guidance that accompanies this template):

- Clarity on objectives
- A straightforward and evidence-led style
- An understanding of local place and communities
- An understanding of councillors' roles and responsibilities

About You

The respondent should use this space to provide the Commission with a little detail about who is making the submission, whether it is the full Council, Officers on behalf of the Council, a political party or group, a resident group, or an individual.

This submission is made following resolution by Full Council of North Northamptonshire Council. The submission was recommended to Council following consideration by the Democracy and Standards Committee which is able to address electoral arrangements within its Terms of Reference. The Committee formed a cross-party Member Working Group which undertook the work to complete this template. Members were assisted in their work by senior officers of the Council.

Reason for Review (Request Reviews Only)

Please explain the authority's reasons for requesting this electoral review; it is useful for the Commission to have context. *NB/ If the Commission has identified the authority for review under one of its published criteria, then you are not required to answer this question.*

The Commission will be aware that following local government reorganisation it was both the ambition of the new unitary Council and the expectation of the Ministry of Housing & Local Government (now Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities) that an Electoral Review would commence in the first year of the new Council.

The Context for your proposal

Your submission gives you the opportunity to examine how you wish to organise and run the council for the next 15 - 20 years. **The consideration of future governance arrangements and council size should be set in the wider local and national policy context.** The Commission expects you to challenge your current arrangements and determine the most appropriate arrangements going forward. In providing context for your submission below, please demonstrate that you have considered the following issues.

i) When did your Council last change/reorganise its internal governance arrangements and what impact on effectiveness did that activity have?

North Northamptonshire Council was formed on 1 April 2021 following local government reorganisation and it has no plans to change these arrangements at this juncture.

ii) To what extent has transference of strategic and/or service functions impacted on the effectiveness of service delivery and the ability of the Council to focus on its remaining functions?

Unitarisation has brought with it both opportunities and challenges. The opportunity to create a new single tier authority to work with residents, businesses, and other partners to help strengthen the local economy, create jobs, improve infrastructure and transport links, protect vulnerable people and improve life chances through education and training – supporting greater resilience within families and communities. Financially, the new Council could benefit from economies of scale, and, through the aggregation of the previous sovereign councils, it had the opportunity to streamline processes, consolidate and reduce the number of contracts, better manage assets for the benefit of the area and improve end to end service delivery.

Transformation plays a key part in maximising those opportunities, helping to reimagine the shape of the Council and how it interacts with the community and other stakeholders whilst recognising the need to ensure the Authority can demonstrate value for money, improve services and achieve efficiencies. Over time transformation can deliver real positive change, however, there is a need to first stabilise and create a solid foundation on which to build. Inevitably this takes time and is one of the major challenges facing new Councils such as North Northamptonshire.

For the time being the incomplete aggregation and rationalisation of council services is generating additional workload, in addition to the established norm across the country. This work is likely to be completed over the next 5 years. However, overall, it is considered that North Northamptonshire councillors on NNC will continue to have a greater workload than in other councils with much lower growth, based on the 2011-2031 and 2019-2041 projected growth figures referenced later in the submission.

iii) Have any governance or capacity issues been raised by any Inspectorate or similar?

A second OFSTED monitoring visit was conducted in November 2021 covering the local authority's children's services. The report summarised that "Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, senior leaders have continued to focus on improvement. This has resulted in steady progress in improving services for care leavers and 16- and 17-year-old children in care"¹

¹ [Children's services monitoring visit - OFSTED](#)

iv) What influence will local and national policy trends likely have on the Council as an institution?

Locally, the Council still shares a number of its services with West Northamptonshire Council which are in the process of being disaggregated. This has already led to the decision to have separate Directors of Public Health and Children's Services, having initially been provided on a joint basis.

Nationally, the funding regime is currently on a one-year basis, so any significant changes to the level of grants received, taxation and legislation in the near and medium future may require the Council to review its organisational processes going forward. Furthermore, the reduced funding envelope for local government means the ability to transform services effectively is hampered.

v) What impact on the Council's effectiveness will your council size proposal have?

We are already stretched to the limit over committee membership across the council due to the number of councillors and who can serve on which committees. I.e. Executive cannot serve on Scrutiny and do not have the capacity to serve on regulatory committees. We already have daytime meetings in order to accommodate business and to enable efficient use of officer and member time and availability.

Local Authority Profile

Please provide a short description of the authority and its setting, in particular the local geography, demographics and community characteristics. This should set the scene for the Commission and give it a greater understanding of any current issues. The description should cover all of the following:

- Brief outline of area - are there any notable geographic constraints for example that may affect the review?
- Rural or urban - what are the characteristics of the authority?
- Demographic pressures - such as distinctive age profiles, migrant or transient populations, is there any large growth anticipated?
- Community characteristics – is there presence of “hidden” or otherwise complex deprivation?
- Are there any other constraints, challenges, issues or changes ahead?

Further to providing a description, the Commission will be looking for a submission that demonstrates an understanding of place and communities by putting forth arguments on council size based upon local evidence and insight. For example, how does local geography, demographics and community characteristics impact on councillor casework, workload and community engagement?

1 North Northamptonshire Council

- 1.1 North Northamptonshire Council was created on 1st April 2021 and replaced the legacy councils of Corby Borough Council, East Northamptonshire Council, Kettering Borough Council, Borough Council of Wellingborough and Northamptonshire County Council.
- 1.2 Covering 986.5 km² the area is situated within the valleys of the Rivers Welland and Nene. It is characterised by a broadly rural landscape interspersed with a number of historic market towns and new urban areas including the main centres of Corby, Kettering,

Rushden and Wellingborough, as well as the A6 towns of Rothwell, Desborough, Burton Latimer and Irthlingborough and those along the A45/A605 at Thrapston, Raunds, Oundle and Higham Ferrers.

- 1.3 There are 106 parishes within the North Northamptonshire Council administrative boundary, however it is important to note that there is a wide variance in the distribution and size of parishes situated within the current 26 unitary wards. A number of the smaller parish areas either do not have a parish council or are grouped or warded into larger parish council areas. In total there are 13 town councils, 76 parish councils and 17 parish meetings. The full list of parish areas including the frequency of their meetings (which has a direct impact on councillor workloads) is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 Thrapston Ward is a clear example that demonstrates the range of variances in community size and representation. Covering a total of 25 parish areas ranging in size from around 40 electors in the hamlet of Pilton (which is grouped with the parishes of Stoke Doyle and Wadenhoe) to nearly 5600 electors in the market town of Thrapston.
- 1.5 From 1st April 2021, the newly formed town councils of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough extended the local community tier of governance to the non-parished urban areas previously administered by the legacy local authorities. These newly created parish areas adopted the warding patterns of the previous legacy districts and boroughs with their geographical areas spanning multiple unitary wards.
- 1.6 There are a number of ecologically important wildlife sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the area including the ancient woodland of Rockingham Forest, and the internationally recognised wetland site of The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits which extends across the area from West Northamptonshire and on into Cambridgeshire. In addition, the Irchester Old Lodge Pit has identified connections to the middle Jurassic period and has been categorized as a site of national importance.

2 Economy, Education and Training

- 2.1 Benefitting from exceptional rail and transportation networks, including the A14 'Trans European Route' and the Midland Mainline railway to cities including Nottingham and Leicester in the north, London St Pancras in the south, and on into mainland Europe via Eurostar, North Northamptonshire has a prosperous and diverse economic base which includes high performance technologies, logistics, manufacturing, agriculture, food and drink, tourism and retail.
- 2.2 Situated at the centre of the national distribution network, North Northamptonshire provides a hub for the distribution of goods throughout the country and into Europe. Since the collapse of the local boot and shoe industry and the closure of the Corby steel works, the area has become particularly attractive to logistics companies which benefit the local economy, however, this can result in additional burdens. The volume of road haulage and freight transport has a significant impact on highway maintenance, underground utilities and the throughflow of traffic. There are competing tensions between improving efficiency of freight transport, tackling the impact of road haulage on local communities and reducing environmental impacts and village intrusions. The pressures from out-commuting (around 31% of the employed labour force living in North Northamptonshire) into surrounding economic centres such as Northampton and further afield to Bedford, Milton Keynes, London, Cambridge, Oxford, Leicester and Birmingham also places a significant pressure

on the road and rail networks, as does the lack of an east-west rail-link and an inadequate rural bus network.

- 2.3 The 2011 Census shows that East Northamptonshire residents travel an average 19.3 km to work compared to 15.4 km for Corby, 15.8 for Kettering and 16.3 km for Wellingborough residents. The average for England is 14.9 km and for Northamptonshire 16.5 km.
- 2.4 In addition, the North Northamptonshire Bus Service Improvement Plan 2021 reflects the ongoing development of enhanced partnership working with bus service operators to address issues around the provision of bus services across the council area. Less than half of bus service use is on urban services. Whilst the majority of passengers travel on interurban and rural services linking the main towns and surrounding villages, in some areas issues around a lack of linking services geographically both within and between urban centres still exist. There are many villages that do not have access to a bus service and in some areas (including the larger centres) there is a heavy reliance on voluntary transport services.
- 2.5 Data from the Office for National Statistics (Oct 2019 to Sept 2020) shows that North Northamptonshire has high levels of economic activity. The most recent data suggests that Kettering and Wellingborough experience over 76% of residents (aged 16 to 64) that are employees compared to 66% across the East Midlands and 65% across England as a whole. East Northamptonshire has a significantly higher proportion of self-employed individuals at 16% compared to the national average of 10%, however approximately 60% of East Northants working persons are those that commute to their jobs, out of the area. There is also a correlation between the level of economic inactivity which is mainly as a result of a higher proportion of those economically inactive residents being retired.
- 2.6 The variances in diversity across the area also extend to the average household income and the proportion of qualified residents. England as a whole has an average of 27% who have gained a higher education degree or professional qualification; however, the majority of the area is below this average. The East of the area has the greatest proportion of Level 4 qualified residents at 24%.
- 2.7 The proportion of residents with no qualifications is greatest in Wellingborough with 28% and Corby with 26% compared to 25% across the East Midlands and 22% across England.
- 2.8 In terms of income, the regional average is £36,120, however there is a disparity of approximately £10,000 between the highest earning areas in the East (£41,027) and Corby (£32,014) in the North.
- 2.9 When income is measured against house prices, the average affordability ratio for North Northamptonshire Council is around 7.15 compared to Northamptonshire at 7.73 and England at 7.84.
- 2.10 HM Land Registry statistics show house prices in North Northamptonshire saw a 14.6% increase between December 2020 and 2021 from £219,375 to £251,477. Information specific to the previous district and boroughs prior to amalgamation showed that between January and October 2020, East Northamptonshire saw the biggest annual house price growth of 8.3 per cent, with an average house price of £251,174 according to Land Registry figures. Property prices in Kettering during the same period saw growth of 6.8 per cent with the average price of a house at £216,829.

3 Population and housing

- 3.1 Situated in the southern part of the East Midlands, the area forms part of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth Area and has one of the fastest growing populations in the country. Corby, Kettering, Rushden and Wellingborough have all been identified as growth towns in the Growth Area Strategy and North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.
- 3.2 The North Northamptonshire Variant Migration Model and Joint Core Strategy estimated that 40,000 additional homes would be delivered across the council area which translates into a 23% increase in population between 2011 and 2031. With this additional population comes significant additional infrastructure pressures in terms of considering planning and housing development schemes, other housing issues, school provision, provision of health and leisure facilities, additional mineral extraction from quarries, and environmental concerns and issues associated with flood alleviation.
- 3.3 The table below shows the Office for National Statistics population forecasts from 2021 to 2041. North Northamptonshire shows a growth rate of 13% over this period of the next 20 years. This is higher than the growth in the East Midlands of 9.2% and England 7.11%.

ONS 2018-based subnational population projections

AREA	2021	2031	2041	Increase	% increase in population
Corby	74,467	83,138	89,610	15,143	16.9
East Northamptonshire	97,429	106,357	112,680	15,251	13.53
Kettering	104,797	113,984	121,208	16,411	13.53
Wellingborough	81,290	85,218	88,486	7,196	8.13
North Northamptonshire	357,983	388,697	411,985	54,001	13.1
Northamptonshire	770,276	824,281	863,771	93,435	10.82
East Midlands	4,917,711	5,219,026	5,446,988	529,277	9.72
England	56,989,570	59,389,102	61,353,965	4,364,395	7.11

- 3.4 During the Joint Core Strategy period, large scale housing developments are planned as follows:

Corby	– 14,200 homes
East Northamptonshire	– 8,400 homes
Kettering	– 10,400 homes
Wellingborough	– 7,000 homes

- 3.5 Population estimates suggest the highest percentage increases in population will be in the Corby urban area with an estimated growth rate of around 17% between 2021 and 2041.

- 3.6 Looking forward to 2041, North Northamptonshire is expected to see a 13% increase in population from 2021 equating to an additional 54,000 people. Approximately 28,000 properties are anticipated to be built during the period 2021-2031. Sustainable Urban Extensions are already planned/underway in the following areas:

North East Corby - Priors Hall and Weldon Park

Corby West

East Kettering - Hanwood Park

Rushden East

Rothwell North

Irthlingborough West

Wellingborough East - Stanton Cross

Wellingborough North - Glenvale Park

In addition to the SUEs listed above there is the development of the Tresham Garden Village ² of 1,500 homes and there are also a number of smaller developments either in progress or allocated in local and neighbourhood plans.

- 3.7 North Northamptonshire is also expected to see an increase in life expectancy rates with a greater proportion of the population in the 0-19 and 65-year-old age ranges. In the 0-19-year-old age range the anticipated increase for Northamptonshire is expected to be 7.22% compared to 6.00% for England as a whole leading to greater pressure on school places particularly in North Northamptonshire where the increase is projected to be greatest. The increase in the over 65 population is expected to be greater with a 25.89% increase across Northamptonshire compared to 19.38% for England as a whole over the next 10 years. It is anticipated that by 2041 an estimated 26% of the UK population will be in the 65+ age group.
- 3.8 In Northamptonshire 68.8% of people live in urban areas. With a growing proportion of the population in North Northamptonshire being in the over 65s age group and living in the more rural areas there will be increased pressures in terms of health services and the provision of social care. Poor transport links in the rural areas may add to the isolation of vulnerable groups leading to a greater reliance on voluntary transport services, and an increased need for public open spaces and the provision of more accessible spaces and services.
- 3.9 Across North Northamptonshire there is a wide variance in the ranking score in the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Whilst some areas demonstrate a level of affluence this is in contrast to other parts of the area which show much higher levels of deprivation. A link to the IMD 2019 profile prepared by the historic Northamptonshire County Council can be found below. ³

² [Our Proposals – Tresham Garden Village \(treshamvillage.uk\)](https://www.treshamvillage.uk)

³ [IMD Profile NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - Oct 2019.pdf](#)

3.10 Corby area has the highest concentration of the most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) being ranked 70th in the national tables, compared to Kettering and Wellingborough ranked 161st and 124th respectively. The area previously covered by East Northamptonshire shows the lowest levels of deprivation being ranked 226th in the table.

In 2021, North Northamptonshire Council’s Scrutiny Commission highlighted Avondale (Windmill Ward), Kettering, Kingswood and Hazel Leys, Corby and Queensway, Wellingborough as areas of North Northants which require attention, arising from the Government’s Levelling Up White Paper. A community-based walk around followed by workshops led by community leaders took place to address the work that needs to be done to improve the communities’ standard of living.

3.11 In the Government’s Levelling up the UK white paper published in February 2022 North Northamptonshire is identified as a local authority to benefit from the new Education Investment Areas fund which aims to drive school improvements through funding directed at intervening in underperforming schools, supporting growth of strong trusts, and retaining high quality teachers. In addition, North Northamptonshire has also been highlighted to benefit from the Community Renewal Fund whilst Corby was identified as one of 15 towns in the East Midlands to benefit from a share of the £346m Towns Fund.

3.12 The data also shows that 3 LSOAs have also become more deprived moving from decile 3 into decile 2:

Wellingborough: Ruskin Avenue, Goldsmith Road

Irthlingborough: High Street

Corby: Primrose Close, Dumble Close, Bernshaw Close, Catchpole Close, Waver Close area

Some rural areas have also seen a negative shift towards deprivation including the parishes of Pytchley and the area of Church Street in Broughton with a move from D6 to D4 and the parishes of Ecton, Sywell and Mears Ashby seeing a move from D9 to D7.

3.13 The most common type of tenure across North Northamptonshire is owned households. The table below shows the most recent breakdown of housing tenure as at 2020 (note: the figures do not include temporary accommodation homes).

Area	LA (incl owned by other Las)	Private Registered Provider (previously Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord)	Other public sector	Private Sector	Total
Corby	4615	1176	0	24422	30213
East Northamptonshire	1	5334	6	35363	40704
Kettering	3625	2842	4	39219	45690
Wellingborough	0	6311	0	29257	35568

Corby area has the highest proportion of social rented homes at 19%. [Statutory] Homelessness⁴ across North Northamptonshire is generally low although the rate is above the England average. The highest rate of homelessness of 6.4 per 1000 households is found in the Wellingborough area (2017/18 data), of which 85% of households fall within the White ethnic group, compared with other ethnic groups.

4 Demographic Profile

- 4.1 According to ONS data, the population structure is divided fairly equally between males and females with 49.3% of the population being male and 50.7% being female.
- 4.2 60.8% of the population is in the 16-64 age group with 22.9% in the 0-17 age range and 18.7% in the 65+ age group.
- 4.3 The table below shows a breakdown of the ethnicity of the population in North Northamptonshire. Within this figure there are significant regional variances. Wellingborough has a very diverse and multi-cultural population with a strong sense of community with black and minority ethnic groups representing around 11% of the population of the town. The main minority ethnic groups are Indian and African-Caribbean, whilst other groups include Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Irish, Polish, Romanian, and other Eastern European nationalities.

Office for National Statistics LA population profile (as a % of each ethnic group)

Area	Asian or Asian British	Black, African, Caribbean, or Black British	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	White	Other ethnic group
Corby	1.3	1.6	1.4	95.5	0.2
East	1.3	0.7	1.2	96.6	0.2
Kettering	3.2	1.1	1.4	93.9	0.4
Wellingborough	5.9	3.6	2.9	87.3	0.3
North Northamptonshire	2.9	1.7	1.7	93.4	0.3
East Midlands	6.5	1.8	1.9	89.3	0.6
England	7.8	3.5	2.3	85.4	1.0

5 Electorate Forecasts

- 5.1 The forecasts produced for this electoral review have been made using the methodology set out in the LGBCE guidance for Polling District Forecasting Tool. In addition, local

⁴ <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/housing/homelessness/statutory-homelessness/latest>

Note: - A household is considered statutorily homeless if a local authority decides that they do not have a legal right to occupy accommodation that is accessible, physically available and which would be reasonable for the household to continue to live in.

knowledge and intelligence has also informed some of the estimates, considering anticipated housing developments and future growth.

Statistics drawn from the following sources: -

Office for National Statistics, Population Profiles for Local Authorities

Office for National Statistics, Subnational estimates of population

Office for National Statistics, Subnational estimates of dwellings by tenure

Northamptonshire County Council – Homelessness in Northamptonshire, JSNA Insight Pack August 2019

North Northamptonshire Bus Services Improvement Plan Oct 2021

Northamptonshire County Council – Demography Update JSNA Insight Pack Sept 2019

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities – Table 100, Live tables on dwelling stock

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – IoD2019 Interactive Dashboard

Northamptonshire County Council, IMD Profile Northamptonshire Oct 2019

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy Government Offices for the South East, East Midlands, East of England

North Northamptonshire Joint Planning and Delivery Unit, Joint Health Study January 2018

Levelling up the UK February 2022 Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities by Command of Her Majesty

Council Size

The Commission believes that councillors have three broad aspects to their role.

These are categorised as: **Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulatory and Partnerships), and Community Leadership**. Submissions should address each of these in turn and provide supporting evidence. Prompts in the boxes below should help shape responses.

Strategic Leadership

Respondents should provide the Commission with details as to how elected members will provide strategic leadership for the authority. Responses should also indicate how many members will be required for this role and why this is justified. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic	
Governance Model	Key lines of explanation
	<p>➤ <i>What governance model will your authority operate? e.g. Committee System, Executive or other?</i></p> <p>The Council has adopted hybrid governance arrangements. Although these are legally a Leader and Executive form of governance, it includes the addition of cross-party advisory panels which recommend items to the Executive and promote a more open and inclusive form of decision making. The Council believes that this provides clear leadership and efficient decision making whilst still ensuring cross party involvement in policy formulation and decision making. It is likely that this governance structure will remain in place and is the best governance model for North Northamptonshire. A</p>

diagram of the council's full governance structure can be found at Appendix 2 to this submission.

- *The Executive model, for example, usually requires 6 to 10 members. How many members will you require?*

The Executive is made up of the Leader and up to nine other Executive Members. These will include a Deputy Leader who is chosen and appointed by the Leader. Considering the size of the authority and the breadth of services, it is likely that the maximum number of the members will be appointed to the Executive (as is currently the case).

The Leader may also appoint Assistant Executive Members to advise and assist Executive Members in the discharge of their duties within their portfolios (there are currently three Assistant Executive Members).

Authority is not delegated to officers for Key Decisions and therefore they must be made by the Leader or the Executive. An Assistant Executive Member is not authorised to make any decision normally made by an Executive Member.

- *By what process does the council aim to formulate strategic and operational policies? How will members in executive, executive support and/or scrutiny positions be involved? What particular demands will this make of them?*

Strategic policies are driven and approved by the Executive. There is not an Executive Delegation Scheme in place to individual Executive members however in order to make decision making as efficient as possible it is likely that this may change in the future. For context, the new authority is still stabilising, and the Executive is made up of members from the predecessor councils who, whilst working closely together on a shadow basis, were not formally working together in a sovereign capacity. It is therefore sensible that decisions are taken through the Executive at this time.

The Executive is advised by five cross party Executive Advisory Panels that are chaired by the relevant Executive Member, with other Executive Members attending as necessary. They are able to discuss important reports and policies prior to the Executive considering them. They are able to provide recommendations to the Executive to inform their decision making. They may also help with the formulation of policy allowing cross party involvement in the strategic direction of the authority.

The five Executive Advisory Panels cover the following areas: -

- i) Health and Wellbeing & Vulnerable People
- ii) Climate Change, Environment and Growth
- iii) Education, Skills and Employment
- iv) Service Delivery, Performance and Customers
- v) Planning Policy

The Scrutiny function of the Council is essential to holding the Executive to account and is described in more detail in the relevant section below. The Council has two Scrutiny Committees, one which focusses on finance and resources and the other which is overarching and can scrutinise all other matters. The Committees have the ability to call in any executive item on the Forward Plan (Key Decisions). They focus on key priorities for the Council and make recommendations to the Executive/Council in relation to those areas. Strategic Policy is a likely outcome of recommendations which will then go through the Executive Advisory Panel and Executive as outlined above.

As the governance of the Council matures, it may be necessary to increase the number of Executive Advisory Panels and Scrutiny committees for the future, however based on the current number of councillors and workloads, this is not viable at present and considered unrealistic.

Chief Officers have delegated authority to approve operational policies and they may sub delegate authority further. Executive members are consulted prior to approval. These are however regularly approved by the Executive. It is noted that this is an interim approach due to the nature of the new organisation and the distinction between Executive Members driving strategic policy and Officers within those parameters putting in place operational policy will be more present as the authority stabilises.

The Council has delegated certain non-executive functions which are not reserved to the Council as a whole to Committees listed below and to officers as described later in the relevant section below.

The Council considers that the committee structure is appropriate at the moment for the type and scale of the Authority and in keeping with other similar local authorities. However, the Council is in its infancy and so this may be subject to change in the future and will be kept under review.

Some of the Committees are statutory and therefore they are essential to upholding legislative requirements. Some of the Committees are not statutory but are considered to be essential to effective decision making and ensure good governance for the Council.

The Executive has established two Executive Committees which are joint committees with West Northamptonshire Council. The Shared Services Committee reviews services that are delivered jointly by the authorities and the arrangements for delivering them. This will continue in place until the authorities have disaggregated all services. It is possible that services will not disaggregate and therefore appropriate oversight through the Committee will always be required. The Children's Trust Committee manages the relationship between North and West Northamptonshire Councils in relation to services delivered by the Children's Trust. For context, in 2019 Northamptonshire County Council children's social care services were placed under a "Direction" by the Department for Education for the Council to work with the Secretary of State for Education and/or the Children's Services Commissioner towards the establishment of a council wholly owned Children's Trust. It was formed in November 2020 and now delivers children's social care and targeted early help services on behalf of both North and West Northamptonshire councils.

The Council utilises Task and Finish Groups, Working Groups and Boards to assist with advisory and operational matters. These include the Member Transformation Board, Constitution Working Group and the Boundary Commission Working Group.

Other working groups which would normally be listed as internal to the organisation or included on a separate list of Outside Bodies where this is delivered externally, for example are the

- Corporate Parenting Board
- Adoption and Fostering Panels
- Pension Committee
- Local Pension Board
- (Local Pension) Investment Subcommittee
- Health and Wellbeing Board

Additional committees are also in development and will need to be supported, including The Greenway and Destination Nene Valley Boards.

Children's Services functions are currently carried out by the Children's Trust externally but could be returned in-house in three years' time.

It should be noted that the new authority made the decision to implement a lean committee structure to exercise functions. Although the workload of the new authority was unknown at the time of its first annual meeting in May 2021, we will be looking to increase the number of committees with

a new Grants Committee, a Strategic Grants Committee and a Greenways Committee that will add additional workload to the current councillor membership. There will also be a requirement for a further committee to deal with formal companies and to make key strategic decisions in these areas.

The Council and the Executive have a very high workload, which is to be expected of a new authority where decision making is in its infancy and appropriate levels of officer delegation are still being developed.

In terms of whether the Committees could be streamlined any further, due to the overload of the committees this is not an option and even investigating a merger of the Democracy and Standards Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee is not considered viable as both committees have different remits and skill sets required.

The Council considers it imperative that members have clear focus and skills to consider the matters brought to the Committees and the workload for the Democracy and Standards Committee is already substantial and has led to an increase in its membership from 7 to 13 members to cope with its increasing workload. By not merging it with another committee, this will ensure a strong governance framework is retained. If the review was to determine that council size should be reduced, the Council considers it would be unable to reduce the Committees which demonstrates that it is as lean as possible at the current time.

The Planning Committees are considered in the relevant section of the submission.

In addition to Members' attendance at meetings, Members who act as chairs (and vice-chairs) to contribute to agenda setting, attend conferences, attend additional training and briefings, liaising with lead officers in the service area.

The total average time commitment for training alone, to date across all 78 members, is on average 26 hours per councillor.

Members will also on occasion need to take a place on a committee for which they are a substitute. Depending on the frequency of substitution, this could significantly impact on the level of commitment required of those Members. Substitutions are arranged in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the each of the Committees set out in the Councils Constitution. Named substitutes are appointed to Committees and each recognised political group is able to appoint the same amount of substitutes as substantive

members. Further detail regarding the extensive time commitment required by Members is addressed in the accompanying Options Paper with an analysis of the impact of a smaller or larger cohort of Members on that commitment.

The Council also appoints Members to a number of outside bodies. As a result of unitary transition, there were many instances of duplicate membership of Outside Bodies arising from predecessor council arrangements. The Scrutiny Commission undertook work to ensure that the list of outside bodies was appropriate for North Northamptonshire and that membership added value to the area, approved by the Leader or Council, as required. Representation on outside bodies is therefore at an appropriate level and will be maintained through requirements for members to report on added value from their representation. The list may change further as a result of reporting mechanisms and as a result increase and put further pressure on members. Outside bodies range in frequency, location and complexity, with some appointments more onerous than others. It should be noted that outside of the formal Outside Body process, a number of councillors, both Executive and ward councillors, will also sit voluntarily on local boards, committees and working groups in contributing to the local area. A full list of the Outside Bodies appointed to is available at Appendix 3 to the Submission.

➤ *Whichever governance model you currently operate, a simple assertion that you want to keep the current structure does not in itself, provide an explanation of why that structure best meets the needs of the council and your communities.*

The Council's hybrid governance arrangements were adopted following formulation and debate by the former sovereign councils which formed the Shadow Authority, prior to local government reorganisation on 1 April 2021 and have been in effect for less than 12 months.

These hybrid arrangements provide for effective and streamlined decision making whilst allowing for significant cross-party involvement in aiding decision making and allowing for policy formulation. This is at a time of necessary development and change in service provisions being provided to communities following workforce amalgamation and disaggregation and as the Council supports the local economy in reinvigorating itself following the covid pandemic and its need to adapt to longer term societal impacts, such as climate change.

In operating a hybrid governance arrangement, a key benefit to the Executive and the council as a whole of cross-party

		input is that it is able to represent the wide demography of North Northamptonshire across its towns, villages and countryside.																									
Portfolios	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many portfolios will there be? 																									
	Analysis	<p>The Leader has appointed the maximum number of Executive Members and as stated above, this is unlikely to change considering the scale and type of authority. Each Executive Member is assigned a specific portfolio, the Council currently has ten established portfolios. These are shown in the table below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="660 591 1455 1267"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name of Councillor</th> <th>Portfolio Area</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cllr Jason Smithers</td> <td>Leader of the Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Helen Howell</td> <td>Deputy Leader - Sport, Leisure, Culture & Tourism</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr David Brackenbury</td> <td>Growth & Regeneration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Lloyd Bunday</td> <td>Finance and Transformation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Scott Edwards</td> <td>Children, Families, Education & Skills</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Helen Harrison</td> <td>Adults, Health & Wellbeing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr David Howes</td> <td>Rural Communities & Localism</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Graham Lawman</td> <td>Highways, Travel & Assets</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Andy Mercer</td> <td>Housing and Community</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Harriet Pentland</td> <td>Climate & Green Environment</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A more detailed list of Executive responsibilities can be found at Appendix 4 to the submission.</p> <p>The portfolios were established prior to the approval of the Corporate Plan, which overlap the Council's six priorities, listed below. Portfolios intentionally do not align directly to services to ensure that the authority focuses on delivering integrated services, prevents silo-working, and deals with the opportunities and challenges of local government re-organisation.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="660 1671 1455 2047"> <thead> <tr> <th>Corporate Plan Priorities</th> <th>Services Covered (some cross-over)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Active, fulfilled lives</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Social Care Public Health Housing and Communities (including libraries and leisure services) Levelling-up targets </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name of Councillor	Portfolio Area	Cllr Jason Smithers	Leader of the Council	Cllr Helen Howell	Deputy Leader - Sport, Leisure, Culture & Tourism	Cllr David Brackenbury	Growth & Regeneration	Cllr Lloyd Bunday	Finance and Transformation	Cllr Scott Edwards	Children, Families, Education & Skills	Cllr Helen Harrison	Adults, Health & Wellbeing	Cllr David Howes	Rural Communities & Localism	Cllr Graham Lawman	Highways, Travel & Assets	Cllr Andy Mercer	Housing and Community	Cllr Harriet Pentland	Climate & Green Environment	Corporate Plan Priorities	Services Covered (some cross-over)	Active, fulfilled lives
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		<p>Better, brighter futures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Services • The Children’s Trust • Public Health • Training and further education provision
		<p>Safe and thriving places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth and Regeneration • Highways and Waste • Assets and the Environment • Regulatory Services
		<p>Green, sustainable environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets and the Environment • Growth and Regeneration • Highways and Waste • Regulatory Services
		<p>Connected communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and Engagement • Customer Services • Democratic and Legal Services
		<p>Modern, public services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Council services • Financial Services • Customer Services • Democratic and Legal Services • Policy and Performance Service
	<p>The Leader has appointed non-Executive Members as Assistant Executive Members. Due to the size of the portfolios, it is likely that they will continue to be appointed to in the longer term. Assistant Executive Members will advise and assist Executive Members in the discharge of their duties within their portfolio(s). They do not have decision making powers but are expected to attend Executive meetings.</p> <p>Portfolio holders’ responsibilities necessitate attendance at a much greater number of committee meetings within the Council and associated organisations (i.e. SEMLEP, LGA, Highways etc). The role of Executive Member also necessitates undertaking work in partnership with other local authorities and external organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What will the role of a portfolio holder be?</i> <p>Portfolio holders (as Executive members) have individual and collective responsibility to deliver integrated services and deal with the opportunities and challenges of local</p>		

	<p>government re-organisation. They are responsible for providing strategic direction to the Corporate Leadership Team and individual directors, who in turn are responsible for delivering operationally.</p> <p>Key duties of portfolio holders include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing council policies and leading on them where taken to the Executive and/or Council for approval; • consulting and communicating with members of all-party groups, council officers and key partners to make sure decisions are well formed and that council policies are widely understood and positively promoted; • acting as spokesperson within and outside the council for matters within the portfolio; • having responsibility for liaison with Chief Officers and other senior officers responsible for the services within the portfolio; • answer and account to the council, the community, and the press for matters within the portfolio; • responding within agreed timescales to the recommendations of relevant scrutiny committees and panels • seeking to involve and consult non-Executive members in the area of work for which they have responsibility, particularly through chairing of, and attendance at, monthly meetings of Executive Advisory Panels; • representing the council and the political administration in the community and elsewhere as required by the Leader. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will this be a full-time position?</i> <p>Executive members have to attend a significant amount of both informal and formal meetings, liaise with fellow councillors and officers and provide strategic direction to senior officers. Given the level of responsibility, it is expected that the role of Executive Member is a full-time one. This is backed up by the councillor survey which revealed on average, Executive members spend 76 hours per month working on their portfolios (in addition to their other duties as a councillor).</p> <p>Executive members chair Executive Advisory Panels which are held monthly. These are an integral part of the Council's governance arrangements.</p> <p>More information on executive arrangements can be found within the Council's Constitution. ⁵</p>
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⁵ [North Northamptonshire Council Constitution](#)

		<p>Due to the requirements of Executive Members, it has already been necessary for the Leader to appoint three Assistant Executive Members in order to help manage their workloads. Assistant Executive Members are precluded from sitting on scrutiny and regulatory committees and so also impacts on the workload of remaining councillors.</p> <p><i>Will decisions be delegated to portfolio holders? Or will the executive/mayor take decisions?</i></p> <p>Portfolio Holders do not have delegated authority to make decisions within their portfolios unless specifically authorised by the Executive. It is likely as the Council stabilises and executive arrangements bed in that an Executive Scheme of Delegation will be implemented which will increase workload and accountability of the Executive Members. At the current time, whilst they are not exercising authority regularly, they are involved in high level decision making and are consulted as appropriate. Authority is not delegated to officers for Key Decisions and therefore they must be made by the Leader or the Executive unless urgency provisions are utilised by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.</p>
<p>Delegated Responsibilities</p>	<p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p>	<p>➤ <i>What responsibilities will be delegated to officers or committees?</i></p>
	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>Within the Constitution, a scheme of delegation records the delegations to officers from both the Executive and full Council, intended to provide a streamlined, clear and simple decision-making process. It is designed to empower staff to carry out their functions and deliver the Council's services within the Budget and Policy Framework set by the Council, and subject to the guidelines set by the Council, the Executive and the Corporate Leadership Team.</p> <p>The scheme of delegation excludes key decisions of the Executive, which must be taken at member level, where a decision is likely to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • result in the incurring of expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant (above £500,000); or • be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards. <p>The Executive has delegated the following functions to Joint Committees exercised alongside that of West Northamptonshire Council: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Services – overseeing the management of services yet to be disaggregated from the former County Council, following local reorganisation in April 2021; • Children's Trust - exercising functions on behalf of both Councils insofar as they relate to the joint ownership of,

and commissioning of services from, the jointly owned local authority company 'The Northamptonshire Children's Trust'.

Full Council has delegated the following functions to committees, which in turn may delegate some of its decision making to Subcommittees: -

- Licensing and appeals;
 - The Committee has two subcommittees which consider licensing appeals and taxi-licensing.
- Audit and Governance;
- Democracy and Standards;
 - The Committee has the following Subcommittees and Working Groups: -
 - Constitutional Working Group;
 - Standards Assessment Panel;
 - Standards Hearing Panels;
 - Boundary Changes Committee
- Strategic Planning;
- Local area planning (x4 committees)
- Employment
 - *Two subcommittees have met to date, in order to interview and consider chief officer appointments.*

There are also additional joint committees, including the Pension Board and its subcommittees, and the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

The Council also appoints members to the Corporate Parenting Board and Safeguarding Board, chaired jointly by the portfolio holders for children services at North and West Northamptonshire Councils.

➤ *How many councillors will be involved in taking major decisions?*

All 78 councillors participate in major decisions relating to the budget and policy framework at full meetings of Council. 10 councillors form the Executive and 60 of the remaining 68 councillors are also decision makers as part of the wider formal decision-making processes through the regulatory and joint/partnership committees of the Council.

Of the 60 councillors involved in non-executive decision making, as part of the Council's hybrid governance arrangement, 34 councillors are also members of cross-

		party advisory panels which recommend items to the Executive and promote a more open and inclusive form of policy formulation and decision making.
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Accountability

Give the Commission details as to how the authority and its decision makers and partners will be held to account. The Commission is interested in both the internal and external dimensions of this role. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic	
Internal Scrutiny	The scrutiny function of authorities has changed considerably. Some use theme or task-and-finish groups, for example, and others have a committee system. Scrutiny arrangements may also be affected by the officer support available.
<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<p>➤ <i>How will decision makers be held to account?</i></p> <p>The principal means of accountability within the authority is delivered through the Council's scrutiny process. The Council has Scrutiny Committees which support the council. Scrutiny's role is to hold Council to account and provide reviews into Council functions where appropriate. The Committees are essential to good governance and making sure there is challenge to decision making where appropriate. Scrutiny has a duty to scrutinise other organisations, particularly Health Bodies, however, whilst in the Scrutiny work programme, to date there has been no capacity to fulfil this.</p> <p>➤ <i>How many committees will be required? And what will their functions be?</i></p> <p>Since May 2021 (shortly after the Council was created) two Scrutiny Committees have operated. The Council has adopted an approach to scrutiny that will deliver the most impact.</p> <p>The overarching Scrutiny Commission (with input from Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee) agrees an annual workplan which is informed by matters of concern raised by the public/ members/ stakeholders, the Corporate Plan, the strategic risk register, performance data, the Forward Plan and published decisions. It is able to establish task and finish groups completing work on the agreed workplan, that includes for instance, Assets, Levelling Up and Outside Bodies. This means that not only will the Commission take on its own substantive work, it will provide co-ordination of a number of task and finish groups for matters that have been identified as important within the organisation. The Council believes that this will allow scrutiny to have real impact on the organisation and its external scrutiny responsibilities under the Police and Justice Act 2006 and National Health Service Act 2006.</p> <p>The Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee is a standing Committee which focuses primarily on the budget, as well as</p>

reviewing and scrutinising regular monitoring reports on the revenue budget, the capital programme and the housing revenue account. Task and Finish Groups are established to scrutinise draft budget proposals and for the 2022/23 budget there have been eight meetings of the Groups. The Committee receives feedback and formulates proposals which are presented to the Executive for consideration before they submit their budget to full Council for approval in February. Executive members have been in attendance for their relevant portfolios.

The terms of reference for both Committees are attached to the Submission, as Appendix 5.

Both Committees are able to call in those decisions that have been included on the Executive Forward Plan in relation to their respective terms of reference. However, the inclusion of Executive Advisory Panels, which provide important overview work for policy and development and important decisions, have likely reduced the number of call-ins as a result of cross-party consideration of Executive reports in advance of them being decided upon. To date, the Council has not received a call in of any of its decisions, but it is still early in the life of the Council and the Council is fully supportive of call-in as a process. The Council considers call-in to be a key tool of scrutiny and welcomes the principles behind it and the ability for the Executive to re-consider policy as may be required. This is reflected in the low number of councillors required to instigate call-in as a request shall only be considered to be valid if it is signed by at least 8 members of the Council (10% of the total number of members). Of the 8 members signing, none can be members of the Executive.

Whilst data could be provided about call ins at the predecessor authorities, three of the five councils operated a committee system where call in was not available and neither of the other two remaining councils had similar hybrid governance arrangements.

Whilst providing the opportunity for elected Members to hold the Executive to account it also provides a forum for residents to seek answers to questions from Executive Members and in some cases external organisations, and to challenge proposals. Public participation is now being added to all committees.

The Executive Advisory Panels provide a cross party approach to policy formulation pre-decision, which in other authorities that undertake the more traditional executive system is usually undertaken within the scrutiny environment. They are held monthly.

➤ *How many task and finish groups will there be? And what will their functions be? What time commitment will be involved for members? And how often will meetings take place?*

If an item is added to the workplan then a Task and Finish Group is created to scrutinise and provide in depth review. This allows

	<p>scrutiny to have real impact on the organisation, react quickly and fulfil its statutory functions in relation to crime and disorder, health and education in a way that multiple Committees would not. In 2021/22, there have been three Task and Finish Groups established to complete matters which are key priorities for the Council. These are an additional time commitment for members and dependent on the review, members may be required to not only attend meetings but attend sites, interview the public/organisations and collect data.</p> <p>One off items are also included on the workplan as necessary and recurring items, such as performance, are considered to ensure that there is adequate scrutiny of the organisation.</p> <p>➤ <i>How many members will be required to fulfil these positions?</i></p> <p>Each scrutiny committee has 13 member places. There are currently 13 members of the Scrutiny Commission (with six reserve members) and 13 members of Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee (with seven reserve members). All reserves members are expected to undertake the same training as full scrutiny members, and to keep abreast of scrutiny activity throughout the year.</p> <p>➤ <i>Explain why you have increased, decreased, or not changed the number of scrutiny committees in the authority.</i></p> <p>For the moment the amount of scrutiny committees is the correct number for the authority, noting its hybrid governance arrangements, although this may need to increase in the future. It should be noted that the expectation is that much of scrutiny's activity is undertaken through the work of smaller numbers of councillors via scrutiny reviews.</p> <p>➤ <i>Explain the reasoning behind the number of members per committee in terms of adding value.</i></p> <p>Each Committee has 13 members. This is a consistent number throughout the Constitution and was agreed following benchmarking with other authorities.</p>				
<p>Statutory Function</p>	<p>This includes planning, licencing and any other regulatory responsibilities. Consider under each of the headings the extent to which decisions will be delegated to officers. How many members will be required to fulfil the statutory requirements of the council?</p>				
<p>Planning</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1765 552 1899"> <p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p> </td> <td data-bbox="552 1765 1540 1899"> <p>➤ <i>What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?</i></p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 1899 552 2054"> <p>Analysis</p> </td> <td data-bbox="552 1899 1540 2054"> <p>From 1 April 2021 to 31 January 2022, 133 planning applications have been considered by members. From the period of 1 April to the 31 December 2021, 1,705 applications have been considered under delegated powers. Our Planning Policy was recently changed by the Democracy & Standards Committee to ensure a</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p>	<p>➤ <i>What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?</i></p>	<p>Analysis</p>	<p>From 1 April 2021 to 31 January 2022, 133 planning applications have been considered by members. From the period of 1 April to the 31 December 2021, 1,705 applications have been considered under delegated powers. Our Planning Policy was recently changed by the Democracy & Standards Committee to ensure a</p>
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		<p>smoother and consistent approach throughout our planning process.</p> <p>Although the dates sourced are slightly different, this gives an approximate total of 7.24% of applications determined by members.</p> <p>➤ <i>Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?</i></p> <p>Comparative data is not readily available from the predecessor councils for this purpose, noting the differences in delegation arrangements following local government reorganisation, however changes to the approach adopted by North Northamptonshire Council are not currently expected.</p> <p>It is worth noting however that (in government figures released in December 2021) in England the total number of district level planning applications has risen year on year by 19% (after a large dip in 2020 following the start of the pandemic and a subsequent recovery in early 2021). It is not known how quickly this is likely to return to historical averages, but at present puts a pressure on the local authority planning system.⁶</p> <p>➤ <i>Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?</i></p> <p>The Council has a Strategic Planning Committee, comprising 13 councillors, which relates to town and country planning and development management in respect of applications for large scale major development, including residential developments over 250 dwellings, non-residential of 10,000m² or more, all minerals and waste developments, energy production of 10MW or more, significant highway infrastructure implications, and cross boundary applications (relating to area committee boundaries).</p> <p>The Council believes in considering less strategic planning applications, as close to residents as possible. It has four Area Planning Committees, comprising 9 councillors whose wards are situated within the defined local government boundaries of the predecessor Borough and District Councils.</p> <p>The number of councillors is felt should be increased to 13 to use more local knowledge, unfortunately due to the restrictions of 78 councillors, this is currently not possible. Non planning councillors are also involved in ward related planning matters and need to keep up to date with applications and the relevant planning laws. They also attend planning meetings to speak about planning applications.</p>
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⁶ [Planning applications in England: July to September 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

The purpose of the Area Committees is to consider area-based planning matters not otherwise reserved for consideration by the Strategic Planning Committee or else dealt with by planning officers under delegated powers.

➤ *Will executive members serve on the planning committees?*

No, executive members do not serve on the planning committees of the Council due to the workloads they undertake and also not wishing to influence members undertaking regulatory decision making.

➤ *What will be the time commitment to the planning committee be for members?*

On average, the time commitment spent at each planning committee meeting (excluding travel time) is as follows: -

Committee	Average length of agenda setting meetings	Average length of each meeting	Total number of meetings as of 15 February 2022.
Strategic Planning	1 hour	1 hour, 12 mins	5
Area – Corby	1 hour	1 hour, 15 mins	5
Area - Kettering	1 hour	1 hour, 7 mins	7
Area – Thrapston	1 hour	2 hours, 20 mins	7
Area - Wellingborough	1 hour	1 hour, 18 mins	7

Chairs and Vice Chairs of Planning Committees will also spend additional time in preparing for agenda setting meetings, briefings and liaising with Democratic Services on matters such as public speaking on applications.

All planning committee members (including substitutes) are required to undertake six hours of training (1 day) prior to participating on the committee, with annual refresher training also required. Substitutes are also expected to keep abreast of planning matters at their designated committees through the year. All members on average will also spend up to half a day's preparation time on average to read the papers in advance of the meeting

Following approval by Council of a site visit protocol for Planning Committees in December 2021, it is expected that additional time will also be required of members to undertake site visits in advance of committee meetings, on an ad-hoc basis. Each member of a Planning Committee is also required to spend a significant amount

		of time reading through papers to enable them to exercise their quasi-judicial responsibilities effectively.
Licensing	Key lines of explanation	<p>➤ <i>How many licencing panels will the council have in the average year?</i></p> <p>The Council has a Licensing and Appeals Committee dealing with functions relating to licensing registration, enforcement and duties and powers contained within relevant Licensing Act 2003, functions under the Gambling Act 2005, responsibilities under the Criminal Justice and Police Act and the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 and other relevant legislation.</p> <p>Over the first nine months that the Council has been in existence, the Committee, comprising 13 councillors has met once, with the majority of its business undertaken through 11 ad-hoc licensing sub-committees and taxi licencing panels; equating to average of 15 such meetings per annum.</p> <p><i>All licensing committee members and substitutes are required to undertake six hours of training (1 day) prior to participating on the committee, with annual refresher training also required. Substitutes are also expected to keep abreast of licensing matters through the year.</i></p>
	Analysis	<p>➤ <i>And what will be the time commitment for members?</i></p> <p>Each sub-committee/panel consists of three members, with up to half a day's preparation time to read the papers in advance of the meeting and two hours required on average to conduct the panel's work (excluding travel time).</p> <p>➤ <i>Will there be standing licencing panels, or will they be ad-hoc?</i></p> <p>Licensing panels are held on an ad hoc basis, as and when required, with any trained licensing committee member able to participate in an individual panel.</p> <p>➤ <i>Will there be core members and regular attendees, or will different members serve on them?</i></p> <p>To date, the majority of licensing sub-committees and taxi licensing panels have been served by a core membership of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Licensing and Appeals Committee, together with a third ad-hoc committee member. Other members are being encouraged to participate in future meetings, to widen the experience and pool of available members.</p>
Other Regulatory Bodies	Key lines of explanation	<p>➤ <i>What will they be, and how many members will they require?</i></p> <p>The Council has three additional regulatory bodies, as follows; -</p>
	Analysis	<p>i) Democracy and Standards Committee;</p>

The Committee comprises of 13 members (which only recently has increased from an original number of 7, due to its large amount of casework).

Much of the work of the committee is in making necessary recommendations in relation to decision making governance, elections, Community Governance and Boundary Reviews on behalf of the Council. The Standards responsibilities of the Committee are to oversee and develop the Council's Code of Conduct and the overall standards of conduct for Council Members, co-opted Members, and Parish and Town Councillors of North Northamptonshire.

The committees and working groups require up to half a day's preparation time to read the papers in advance of the meeting and two hours required on average to conduct the individual working group's work (excluding travel time) A very high level of familiarisation work is required on the Constitution. All members are required to undertake training on standards matters, to deal with standards cases. A standards case may take extensive time with the assessment and decision processes.

Very detailed and time-consuming work is required for the Boundary Changes Working Group and has already required extensive preparation and many meetings within and off committee environment.

The Committee has established a standing Constitution Working Group, comprising six members of the Committee on a cross party basis. The Working Group meets monthly and reviews the operation of the governance of the Council, making regular recommendations for changes to improve the operation of the Constitution, as is to be expected from a living document at an early stage of the Council. Such recommendations are considered by the Committee and in turn, full Council. The Monitoring Officer is able to make changes to the Constitution utilising their delegated powers, where such changes are minor and/or consequential (for example, as a result in the change of legislation).

ii) Audit and Governance Committee;

The purpose of the Committee, comprising 10 members and 3 external independent persons, is to act as an advisory committee to the Council and the Executive on audit and governance issues. The functions that are discharged by the Committee are not Executive functions and cannot be discharged by the Executive. Responsibilities include the audit functions, the regulatory framework, accounts, and risk management of the Council,

		<p>The Committee meets bi-monthly, six times per annum, on average for two hours (excluding travel time) at each meeting.</p> <p><i>iii) Employment Committee</i></p> <p>The purpose of the Committee, in general, is to deal with employment matters relating to specified senior officers. It also determines pay awards on locally agreed Pay Conditions and approves significant staffing and organisational reviews.</p> <p>The Employment Committee is able to appoint Sub Committees and in its first year of operation has appointed two such Committees, delegating to them the power to make senior officer appointments.</p> <p>➤ <i>Explain the number and membership of your Regulatory Committees with respect to greater delegation to officers.</i></p> <p>The number and breadth of regulatory member bodies that the Council has is considered the correct number required in order to support delivery of the Council's strategic vision. In this, managerial and operational decisions are taken at the most appropriate level, which is usually the closest point of contact to the resident. Officers are empowered through the Officer Scheme of Delegation to carry out regulatory functions and deliver the Council's services within the Budget and Policy Framework set by the Council, and subject to the guidelines set by the Council, the Executive and the Corporate Leadership Team. Decisions taken by Officers carry the same weight as any decision taken by the decision-making body.</p>
External Partnerships	<p>Service delivery has changed for councils over time, and many authorities now have a range of delivery partners to work with and hold to account.</p>	
<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<p>➤ <i>Will council members serve on decision-making partnerships, sub-regional, regional or national bodies? In doing so, are they able to take decisions/make commitments on behalf of the council?</i></p>	
Analysis	<p>Members are appointed by North Northamptonshire Council to serve on a range of Outside Bodies. An "Outside Body" covers organisations such as national and regional Key Strategic Bodies, Trusts, Voluntary Bodies, Charities, Community Associations, and Companies. Service on Outside Bodies is an established part of a Councillor's role and a Member appointed to an external body will be able to use their knowledge and skills both as a Council Member, and as a representative of their communities, to assist the organisation to which they are appointed, as well as the Council which they represent.</p> <p>A Panel, established by the Scrutiny Commission, drew up a list of notified Outside Bodies for the Council in its first year. Due to the size and scale of the Authority, and member commitments, it has</p>	

been necessary to be as strategic as possible on deciding which Outside Bodies to appoint to, with there currently being 63 such Outside Bodies. The list will be reviewed on an annual basis as to whether the appointment is a statutory requirement, is consistent with the Council's strategic objectives and/or adds value to the Council's activities.

A copy of the full list of Outside Bodies appointed to by the Council is at Appendix 3 to the Submission.

- *How many councillors will be involved in this activity? And what is their expected workload? What proportion of this work is undertaken by portfolio holders?*

The Leader and three other members of the Executive are members of the Local Government Association, and the Leader is also a member of East Midlands Councils.

The leader appoints to 37 strategic bodies that require at least 42 appointments in total, many of which are taken up by portfolio holders, with a further 10 significant partnership register bodies that require appointment to as well.

In terms of community outside bodies, the Council appoints to 14 such bodies (one member for each). In surveying across all members, the average time spent on outside bodies per month is 11 hours, however when focussing specifically on portfolio holders the average rises to approximately 20 hours.

- *What other external bodies will members be involved in? And what is the anticipated workload?*

As well as participating in the activities of the Council, members also have a vital responsibility at the centre of community life, including working with a variety of local organisations such as health services, schools, police, local businesses, town and parish councils, and voluntary organisations. Members are expected to develop a shared understanding of local issues and ensure that communities make the most of all the opportunities available to them.

In addition to Outside Bodies, on average, councillors spend seven hours per month preparing for/attending community boards and their working groups.

Community Leadership

The Commission understands that there is no single approach to community leadership and that members represent, and provide leadership to, their communities in different ways. The Commission wants to know how members are required to provide effective community leadership and what support the council offers them in this role. For example, does the authority have a defined role and performance system for its elected members? And what support networks are available within the council to help members in their duties? The Commission also wants to see a

consideration of **how the use of technology and social media by the council as a whole, and by councillors individually, will affect casework, community engagement and local democratic representation. Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic	Description	
Community Leadership	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<p>➤ <i>In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?</i></p>
	Analysis	<p>Councillors take their representational role with electors extremely seriously, engaging with their constituents in a number of ways to participate in the work of the Council, for example: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Bringing the views of their communities into the council's decision-making process; ii) Effectively representing the interests of their ward and of individual constituents; iii) Dealing with individual casework and acting as an advocate for constituents in resolving their particular concerns or grievances; iv) Responding to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially; v) Promoting and bringing to the attention of constituents ways of participating in decision making, such as through formal consultation, presenting petitions, asking questions at meetings, and applying for grants through individual ward councillors' Member Empowerment Funds. <p>It should also be noted that a number of councillors have very rural wards and have to travel large distances, not just to carry out council meetings, but to attend parish meetings and deal with constituent enquiries that require face to face liaison.</p> <p>➤ <i>Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?</i></p> <p>The Council does not have area committees, other than those for local planning decisions. However, a Member Empowerment Fund is being established which will provide each of the 78 ward councillors a fund of circa £2000 per annum from 2022/23 onwards to support local projects.</p> <p>➤ <i>How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?</i></p> <p>Based on a recent survey responded to by half of the current North Northamptonshire Councillors, the average time spent on casework is 15 hours per week, the vast majority of which are via email and telephone. To a lesser extent, councillors also receive and respond to letters, hold surgeries, visit schools and other community groups, conduct walk-about and meet in person –</p>

		<p>however direct interactions have necessarily been curtailed during and arising from the pandemic. Increasingly, councillors are utilising social media channels, such as Facebook and twitter as alternative and new methods of communication with, and to gain the views of, their constituents.</p> <p>The average number of constituent contacts is 13 per week, per councillor.</p> <p>➤ <i>Are there any mechanisms in place that help councillors interact with young people, those not on the electoral register, and/or other minority groups and their representative bodies?</i></p> <p>Councillors receive a copy of the electoral register and a monthly list of electoral roll changes and so are able to monitor changes to their electorate over time and help them engage in canvassing. Councillors also address schools, minority groups and other representative bodies to encourage electoral participation and visiting officers will engage on the doorstep in the months outside of the annual canvass to maintain the accuracy of the electoral register and provide the opportunity for constituents to engage in the electoral process.</p> <p>➤ <i>Are councillors expected to attend community meetings, such as parish or resident's association meetings? If so, what is their level of involvement and what roles do they play?</i></p> <p>Councillors are involved at all levels of the community, this can involve representing their constituents at commemorative events and services, local markets, community fetes, welcoming and encouraging new and existing business owners to understand and apply for grants, supporting local residents to increase the wellbeing of the local area, such as addressing crime, flood risk, health messaging etc.</p> <p>➤ <i>Explain your approach to the Area Governance structure. Is your Area Governance a decision-making forum or an advisory board? What is their relationship with locally elected members and Community bodies such as Town and Parish Councils? Looking forward how could they be improved to enhance decision-making?</i></p> <p>The Council does not currently have an area governance structure and there are no plans to put one in place at the current time.</p>
Casework	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<p>➤ <i>How do councillors deal with their casework? Do they pass it on to council officers? Or do they take a more in-depth approach to resolving issues?</i></p>
	Analysis	<p>Based on the same councillor survey described above, councillors spend an average of 15 hours per week dealing with</p>

constituents' casework, representing/supporting the community and/or attending Town/Parish Council meetings.

➤ *What support do members receive?*

Councillors undertake their own casework, but are encouraged to contact Democratic Services staff, who can direct them to the appropriate support that may be needed, should officer engagement be necessary. Councillors are also provided with the contact details of the relevant senior managers in each service area should they need to access them.

➤ *How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?*

On the basis that more and more interactions between councillors, constituents and officers are online, all councillors are offered either a laptop or iPad (including peripherals such as a mouse, keyboard, headsets, protective covers and laptop bags) to undertake their constituency work, almost all of whom have taken up this offer, and interact with their electorate. Councillors are expected to pay for broadband/telephone use from their basic allowance.

Councillors are provided training and access on their laptop/iPad to be able to use modern communication methods such as MS Teams and Zoom, which they can use to access their electorate remotely, they can also make use of outlook to assist them with diary management, email management and their workload generally.

As a result of the covid pandemic, online interactions, emails, social media interactions with constituents has increased significantly and this is expected to be the case in the long term. In the modern media landscape, the expectation of constituents is that councillors will respond immediately, putting further pressure on work-life balance.

➤ *In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors?*

The Council promotes in the first instance for service users to contact the Council directly with any suggestions, queries, concerns, complaints via its website, utilising an increasing number of accessible online forms to initiate interaction across its service areas. Recognising that a number of users do not (or are unable to) use online technology, constituents are also able to telephone the council, Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm, as well as an emergency out of hours service. They are also very welcome to access the Council's services in person at any of the council's access points, including the main council offices in its

		<p>largest towns of Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough, Thrapston and customer service centres in Rushden and Oundle.</p> <p>The Council offers a direct compliments, comments and complaints service for constituents to use, either through general complaints, or specifically in relation to one of its 16 service areas. Where a complaint arises a senior member of staff will provide a written response within 20 days. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, a review of that complaint will take place by an independent senior manager. If the complainant is still dissatisfied, then they have the right to ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to investigate the matter.</p> <p>Where a councillor is approached by a constituent they are encouraged to direct them to the council's primary communication channels, however it is recognised there are times when matters need to be directly escalated by councillors and they can do this either by contacting named senior managers within each of the service areas, or by emailing a dedicated enquiries email address set up for members.</p>
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Other Issues

Respondent may use this space to bring any other issues of relevance to the attention of the Commission.

The Council is perhaps unique in being extremely rural with a number of market sized towns, but no single large urban conurbation as its centre. Travel from east to west boundaries is approximately 27 miles and 45 mins, and north to south 37 miles and 50 minutes.

On that basis, there are four main offices within the council area which require a great deal of travel depending on meeting locations, be they strategic or local, which also includes a number of meetings in Northampton which is out of area but the location for a number of shared services and Children's Trust, Pension and Police, Fire and Crime meetings. This all adds to the large workload already experienced by councillors in North Northamptonshire and their ability to maintain their work/life balance. It should be noted that travel time is excluded from the figures provided above arising from the recent councillor survey undertaken, in February 2022 (attached as Appendix 6).

Summary

In following this template respondents should have been able to provide the Commission with a robust and well-evidenced case for their proposed council size; one which gives a clear explanation as to the governance arrangements and number of councillors required to represent the authority in the future.

Use this space to summarise the proposals and indicate other options considered. Explain why these alternatives were not appropriate in terms of their ability to deliver effective Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulation and Partnerships), and Community Leadership.

Introduction/Background

The Democracy & Standards Committee was asked to form a cross party working group with a membership as follows: Conservative (3), Labour (1) and Green Alliance (1), being the major groups on North Northamptonshire Council and to prepare a response to the Boundary Commission of the view of this council on its size.

We took into consideration the cross-party views, the data available from ONS and also our own councillor survey, to assess the average workload of a councillor and made an effort to ensure that, in future, North Northamptonshire Council will be able to draw on younger councillors and make membership available to all as well as manageable by all.

There are obvious areas, such as remuneration that, in our joint view, must be similar to other employment Councillors may hold. If the workload is too high, it could preclude or limit employment, care giving/receiving and other interests and factors. It would be a too prescriptive council if we had not considered the existing workload of councillors and officers.

CURRENT NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS 78 (AVERAGE HOURS PER WEEK EQUALS ~ 42)	
<u>NEW COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS</u>	<u>QTY OF CLLRS</u>
GREENWAY BOARD	6
ASSETS	5
STRATEGIC GRANTS	6
SMALL GRANTS	6
FUTURE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT MEMBERS (POSSIBLE ESTIMATE 5 TOTAL)	2
NEW MEMBERS TO ACCOMMODATE FUTURE NEW COMMITTEES AND SUBSTITUTES	4
SUB-TOTAL	29
ADDITIONAL COUNCILLORS REQUIRED (from above new committees estimated mix of current and new councillors) – additional numbers of councillors are needed now already – so we could not support to disregard the population growth. Complete of 29 councillors as per the column QTY uses 19 existing councillors and asking for 10 additional ones	10
IMMEDIATE NEED TO INCREASE COUNCILLORS TO 88 BASED ON INCREASE IN COMMITTEES ETC	88
BASED ON AN EVIDENCED 13% INCREASE IN POPULATION – USING SUPPLIED ESTIMATES FROM ONS DATA – RESULTS IN A REQUIREMENT FOR THE FORTHCOMING 10 YEARS	99

Working Group Proposal for the Boundary Commission:

North Northamptonshire Council to petition the Boundary Commission to agree to an increase to 99 councillors, i.e., 21 additional councillors to account and distribute the current and additional workload for the next 10 years and allow new committees to be set up and accommodate the evidenced 13% increase in population = 99 councillors for the next 10 years.

Implications if we keep current number at 78 councillors

- During 2020/21, during a period of significant change for North Northamptonshire, the Shadow Authority was formed of 167 councillors (152 when taking into account dual-hatted members), made up of all the councillors from the five sovereign authorities. This number was reduced to 78 following the first elections to North Northamptonshire Council in May 2021 (see table below). The remaining 78 new Councillors are already working approximately 42 hours per week on council related business. This is more than the average working week and the executive portfolio holders work approximately in excess of 50 hours per week, that contravenes the Working Time Directive.

Sovereign Council Area	Number of Councillors pre May 2021	Number of Councillors post May 2021
Northamptonshire (north area)	26	(N/A – combined with areas below)
Corby	29	15
East Northamptonshire	40	21
Kettering	36	24
Wellingborough	36	18
TOTAL	167	78

- Councillors who have other paid employment are struggling to fit the council work around their job and to attend many daytime meetings.
- The role of a Councillor is continuously expanding, i.e., additional committees are being set up for Strategic Grants, Small Grants, Greenway Board, Strategic Partnership Board etc. and there is already a struggle to find members who have the time to go onto existing, let alone new, committees or become substitutes.
- It is the expectation that there is the requirement to create new committees in the not-too-distant future, i.e., there is a potential need to strengthen with a further Scrutiny Committee to investigate other services, i.e., possibly Children’s Services, Health Services, Educational Needs etc. West Northamptonshire Council for instance investigates via an additional Scrutiny Committee. We strongly recommend we do the same.
- We need additional EAPs and may also require 2 additional Assistant Executive Members in the future. There is too much constraint already and it will be very difficult to carry out our statutory functions, if the councillor numbers stay the same.
- North Northamptonshire is a fast-growing area. The population is expected to rise by a minimum of 13% over the next few years. People are coming to our area and commute to either London and Birmingham and that is having an impact on increase in population too. We currently have 3,344 electors per councillor. With an anticipated 13% growth figure this will lead to 3,778 per councillor.

- The current population per councillor is 4,492. With 13% growth it is estimated to be 5,076 per councillor.
- The area's population is also ageing and that will create additional demands on the workload for councillors involved in adult services, public health etc. It is only going to get more pronounced over the next 10 years.
- The growth will lead to the need for increased planning applications, more quarries for the minerals, additional schools, further Supported Living, Health Services and Residential Care Homes for the ageing population. There will be increased demands for additional roads and by-passes, replacement and new leisure facilities and more flood prevention measures. Businesses will be settling in the attractive North Northamptonshire area and will put increasing demands on our transport system.
- All of this will have the involvement of Councillors and creates further workload, especially on ward matters and in the planning of these services

The outcome for a reduction in councillor numbers below 78

- A poorer service for the residents
- Councillors who are already stretched will not be able to cope with the extra workload and are at risk of suffering from stress-related illnesses.
- It will be a fulltime job for every councillor and could require councillors to give up any other employment.
- Although it is not within our remit as per the introduction, our comment is that the remuneration of councillors would have to rise to 'compensate' for the fact that councillors could not hold down additional employment. Quality candidates would not put themselves forward for election; only those who could afford to stand. We could see only wealthy or retired candidates putting themselves forward for election – thus eroding democracy and proper representation
- Councillors are supposed to represent and be embedded in their community. With reduced numbers of councillors we will end up with a cadre of professional Councillors, who will drift away from the communities that they are supposed to represent.
- It will discourage young people from standing for the council as they will have to give up aspirations of other careers.

The case for increasing the councillor number as per the calculations

- Councillors will have a more manageable workload. Using the Councillor Survey, it was assessed that Councillors worked at an average 42 hours a week on councillor business, in comparison to say to a full-time employee working an average 37 hours per week.

- The extra councillor numbers will help to 'spread this load', particularly when the population increases over the next 10 years and hopefully those in employment will still be attracted to becoming councillors. Councillors will be able to fit council meetings around their other commitments and create a better work/life balance.
- The extra committees we are currently setting up will be able to be accommodated. We will not be constrained by the number of councillors available to sit on committees. as we are at present.
- We will be able to scrutinise other areas better, such as Children's Services, Health and the Police. We can make provision for the potential return of the Children's Trust in-house.
- We will be able to add additional Executive Advisory Panels to improve decision making.
- We will be able to appoint a possible 2 further Assistant Executive Members in the future, to take some of the workload off the Executive, who are currently working at an average 50 hours per week, which contravenes the Working Time Directive.
- We will be able to appoint substitutes as per our constitution (currently we have a lot of vacancies).
- It will be possible for people from a variety of backgrounds and ages to become councillors.
- A more evenly shared councillor workload will lead to a broader, more representative set of councillors. That in turn will mean better decision making.
- We will be able, as a Council, to cope better with additional demands arising from population growth, such as increase in planning applications for schools, homes, factories/businesses, quarries etc. resulting in a better service for the Public.
- We would like to refer to the highly respected Lichfields report, which analysed the New Standard Method for projected housing growth in December 2020. This was subsequent to the Government's reversal of their August 2020 proposal for 300,000 extra houses a year in the UK (3,009 a year in North Northants). Lichfield's estimate is 1,837 new houses a year under the new Standard Method for North Northamptonshire, instead of the 1,750 proposed in the Core Spatial Strategy.
 - <https://lichfields.uk/grow-renew-protect-planning-for-the-future/how-many-homes-the-new-standard-method/#method>

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North Northamptonshire Council

Analysis Parish Electorate Totals for February 2022 Register

Parish	Polling District	Electorate	Type	Meeting Frequency
Aldwincle	THA - Aldwincle	261	Parish	Every 6 weeks
Apethorpe	OUA - Apethorpe	132	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Ashley	DEA - Ashley	220	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Ashton	THB - Ashton	153	Parish	Montly
Barnwell	THC - Barnwell	320	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Barton Seagrave	ISA - ISB & WSA - WSB Barton Seagrave	5,134	Parish	Monthly except August
Benefield	OUB - Benefield	344	Parish	Every 6 weeks
Blatherwycke	OUC - Blatherwycke	39	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Bozeat	ICA - Bozeat	1,678	Parish	Monthly
Brampton Ash	DEB - Brampton Ash	63	Parish	Quarterly
Braybrooke	DEC - Braybrooke	344	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Brigstock	THD - Brigstock	1,108	Parish	Monthly except August & December
Broughton	BBA - Broughton	1,827	Parish	Monthly except July & August
Bulwick	OUD - Bulwick	139	Parish	6 times a year
Burton Latimer	BBB - BBE Burton Latimer	7,457	Town	Monthly
Chelveston-Cum-Caldecott	HFA - Chelveston-Cum-Caldecott	461	Parish	Monthly
Clopton	THE - Clopton	117	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Collyweston	OUE - Collyweston	431	Parish	Monthly
Corby	CRA, CWA - CWGH, KIA - KIG, LLA -LLH, OAA - OAD Corby	43,007	Town	Monthly
Cotterstock	THF - Cotterstock	129	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Cottingham	CRB - Cottingham	803	Parish	Monthly except August
Cranford	ISC - Cranford	316	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Deene & Deenethorpe	OUF - Deene & Deenethorpe	168	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Denford	IBA - Denford	228	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Desborough	DED - DEG Desborough	8,705	Town	Monthly
Dingley	DEH - Dingley	163	Parish	Monthly except August
Duddington with Fineshade	OUG - Duddington, OUI Fineshade	159	Parish	6 times a year
Earls Barton	EBA - Earls Barton	4,907	Parish	Monthly except August & December
East Carlton	CRC - East Carlton	232	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Easton Maudit	ICB - Easton Maudit	78	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Easton-on-the-Hill	OUH - Easton-on-the-Hill	874	Parish	Monthly except August

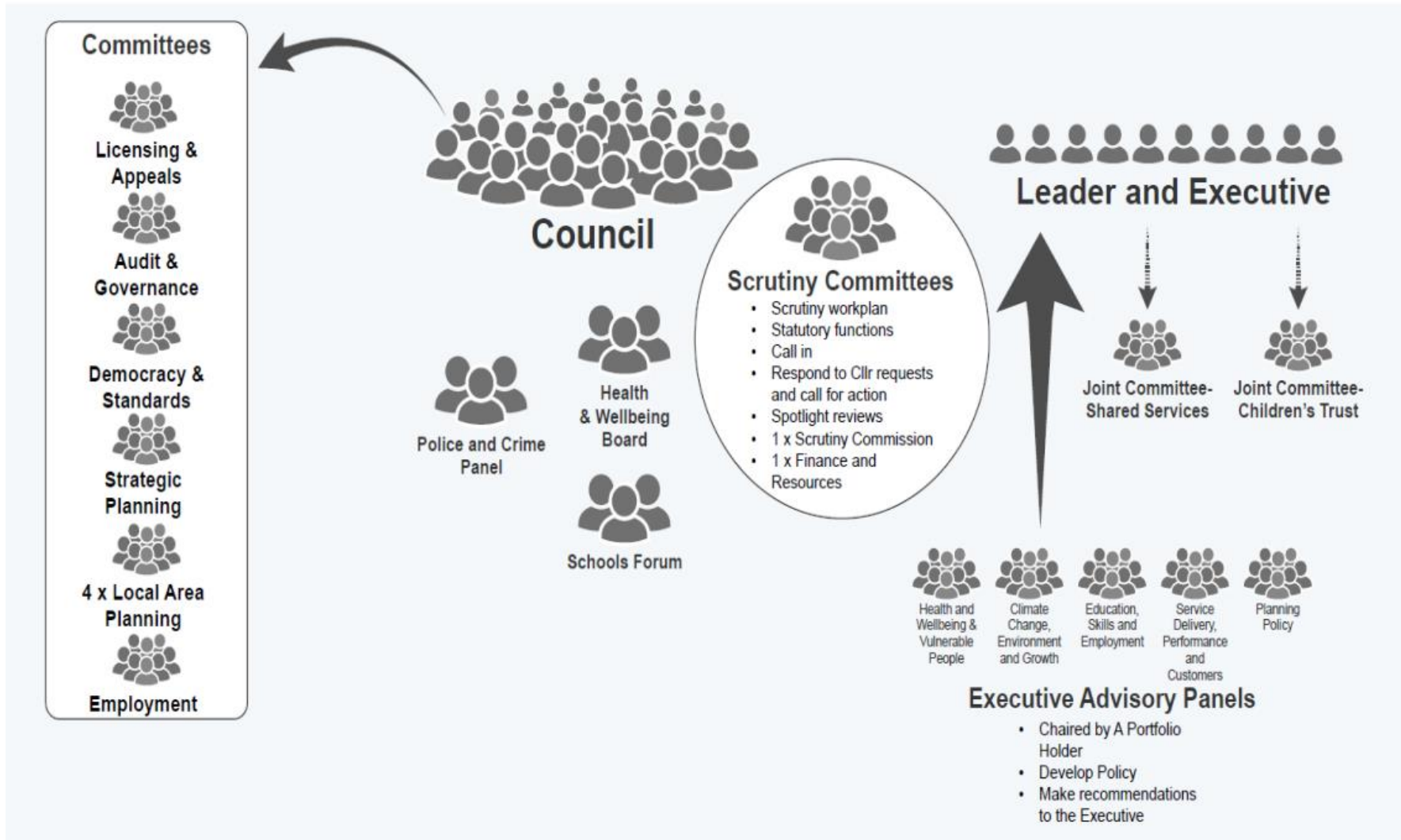
Ecton	EBB - Ecton	409	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Finedon	FIA - Finedon	3,565	Town	Every 6 weeks
Fotheringhay	OIJ - Fotheringhay	110	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Geddington, Newton and Little Oakley	ISD - Geddington, ISI - Little Oakley, ISJ Newton	1,293	Parish	Monthly
Glaphorn	OJK - Glaphorn	244	Parish	Monthly
Grafton Underwood	ISE - Grafton Underwood	117	Parish	Quarterly
Great Addington	IBB - Great Addington	223	Parish	Monthly
Great Cransley	RMB - Great Cransley	260	Parish	Monthly except December
Great Doddington	EBC - Great Doddington	917	Parish	Every 4 to 6 weeks except August
Great Harrowden	EBD - Great Harrowden	81	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Grendon	ICC - Grendon	447	Parish	Monthly
Gretton	CRD - Gretton	1,192	Parish	Monthly
Hardwick	EBE - Hardwick	71	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Hargrave	RAA - Hargrave	194	Parish	Monthly
Harrington	RMC - Harrington	128	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Harringworth	OUL - Harringworth	208	Parish	Unknown
Hemington, Luddington & Thurning	THG - Hemington, THK - Luddington, THV - Thurning	211	Parish	Unknown
Higham Ferrers	HFB - HFD - Higham Ferrers Chichele	6,583	Town	Monthly
Irchester	ICD - Irchester, ICE - Little Irchester	3,788	Parish	Monthly except July
Irthlingborough	IBC - IBE Irthlingborough	6,991	Town	Monthly except August
Isham	EBF - Isham	669	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Islip	THH - Islip	650	Parish	Monthly except August
Kettering	CHA - CHG, ISF - ISH, NOA - NOG, WMA - WMG, WSC - WSE Kettering	39,630	Town	Monthly
Kings Cliffe	OUM - Kings Cliffe	1,191	Parish	Monthly
Laxton	OUN - Laxton	167	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Lilford-Cum-Wigsthorpe & Thorpe Achurch	THI - Lilford-Cum-Wigsthorpe & Thorpe Achurch	225	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Little Addington	IBF - Little Addington	258	Parish	Monthly except August
Little Harrowden	EBG - Little Harrowden	744	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Little Stanion	CRE - Little Stanion	1,414	Parish	Monthly except July August & December
Loddington	RMD - Loddington	373	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Lowick	THJ - Lowick, THO - Slipton	223	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Lutton	THL - Lutton	131	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Mawsley	RME - Mawsley	1,686	Parish	Monthly

Mears Ashby	EBH - Mears Ashby	385	Parish	Monthly
Middleton	CRF - CRG Middleton	347	Parish	Monthly except August
Nassington	OUO - Nassington	679	Parish	Unknown
Newton Bromswold	RSA - Newton Bromswold	64	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Orlingbury	EBI - Orlingbury	406	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Orton	RMF - Orton	71	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Oundle	OUP - OUQ Oundle	4,227	Town	Monthly
Pilton, Stoke Doyle & Wadenhoe	THM - Pilton, THP Stoke Doyle, THY Wadenhoe	205	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Polebrook	THN - Polebrook	351	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Pytchley	BBF - Pytchley	382	Parish	Monthly
Raunds	RAB - RAC Raunds	7,899	Town	Monthly
Ringstead	IBG - Ringstead	1,159	Parish	Monthly
Rockingham	CRH - Rockingham	105	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Rothwell	RMH - RMI Rothwell	6,459	Town	Monthly except August
Rushden	HFE, RPA - RPG, RSB - RSI - Rushden	23,745	Town	Monthly
Rushton	RMA - Glendon, RMG - Pipewell, RMJ - Rushton	465	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Southwick	OUR - Southwick	132	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Stanion	CRI - Stanion	783	Parish	Monthly
Stanwick	RAD - Stanwick	1,515	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Stoke Albany	DEI - Stoke Albany	285	Parish	Monthly except January & August
Strixton	ICF - Strixton	30	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Sudborough	THQ - Sudborough	168	Parish	Monthly except August
Sutton Bassett	DEJ - Sutton Bassett	79	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Sywell	EBJ - Sywell	796	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Tansor	THR - Tansor	153	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Thorpe Malsor	RMK - Thorpe Malsor	107	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Thrapston	THT - THU Thrapston	5,606	Town	Monthly
Titchmarsh	THW - Titchmarsh	488	Parish	Monthly
Twywell	THX - Twywell	166	Parish	Unknown
Wakerley	OUS - Wakerley	67	Parish Meeting	Annual Parish meeting
Warkton	ISK - Warkton	114	Parish	Monthly
Warmington	THZ - Warmington	830	Parish	Monthly
Weekley	ISL - Weekley	147	Parish	Quarterly
Weldon	CRJ - CRK Weldon	4,797	Parish	Monthly except August
Wellingborough	BQA - BQI, CSA - CSH, EBK - EBM, FIB - FIF, HPA - HPG	38,419	Town	Monthly except August and December
Weston-By-Welland	DEK - Weston-By-Welland	144	Parish	4 meetings per year
Wilbarston	DEL - Wilbarston	528	Parish	Monthly except August

Wilby	EBN - Wilby	535	Parish	Bi-Monthly
Wollaston	ICG - Wollaston	2,691	Parish	Monthly except August
Woodford	IBH - Woodford	1,175	Parish	Monthly
Woodnewton	OUT - Woodnewton	367	Parish	Monthly
Yarwell	OUU - Yarwell	433	Parish	Monthly except August
	Report Total	261,862		

Governance Model

North Northamptonshire Council Constitution - Part 4.1 - Governance Structure



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STRATEGIC OUTSIDE BODIES

Key Strategic Partnerships

Participation contributes to the Council's strategic functions priorities and community leadership role. Appointments shall be made by the Leader of the Council and notified to the Monitoring Officer. The Significant Partnerships Register is included within these but is shown separately below.

1	East Midlands Councils	<p>Represents the interests of local councils for Government and national organisations. They support councils to work together on key issues of common concern and provide local advice and service on employment, training and development, housing, health, asylum and refugee resettlement, transport, economic growth and planning.</p> <p>The Council pays a subscription to be a member.</p>	<p>No. of Appointees- One</p> <p><i>EMC write to Political Group Leaders annually to seek expressions of interest for Boards. Members should notify the Monitoring Officer if they are accepted.</i></p>
2	District Council Network (DCN)	<p>Cross party member led network of 183 councils. They are a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association and provide a single voice for district services within the LGA.</p> <p>The Council pays a subscription to be a member.</p>	<p>No of Appointees One</p>
3	County Council Network (CCN)	<p>Cross party Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association representing County local authorities. They act as the voice for county authorities across Westminster to key influencers and within the Local Government Association and local government sector.</p> <p>The Council pays a subscription to be a member.</p>	<p>No of Appointees One</p>
4	Anglian Northern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	<p>Established by the Environment Agency under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. These bring together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and independent members with relevant experience for 3 purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines. 2. to promote efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that optimises value for money and benefits for local communities. 3. to provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to bring about mutual understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area. 	<p>No of Appointees One</p> <p><i>North Northants have 2 seats on the Anglian Northern RFCC: one stand-alone, and one shared with WNC</i></p>

5	Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	The Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood and Coastal Committee is a body managed by DEFRA. It prioritises flood mediation measures in the Anglia (Great Ouse) Region. The Councillors on it vote to select which schemes get funded. They also vote to determine the levy that is imposed upon NNC to pay for those schemes.	No of Appointees One
7	South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP)	Helps economic growth thrive across the South East Midlands. Steered by a business-led Board, they work to build a strong economy by tackling barriers to sustainable growth and supporting job creation for the future prosperity of communities across the South East Midlands.	Appointees One
8	Northamptonshire Sports Partnership	The Northampton School Sport Partnership, based at Northampton Academy, is a collaboration of 79 Primary, Secondary, Sixth and Special Schools. The Partnership runs a comprehensive School Games competition programme engaging children and young people with a range of abilities and interests, high quality leadership training and deployment programme in both primary and secondary education settings and an Enhanced School offer for those primary schools looking for additional PE, School Sport and Physical Activity opportunities for their pupils and staff.	Appointees One
11	Most Sparsely Populated Council's Group (SPARSE)	Pressure group/promotor of best practice of very rural local authorities	Appointees One
12	Northampton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust is governed by a Board of Directors. It's made up of Executive Directors, appointed to specific roles within the organisation, and Non-Executive Directors, who bring a range of external expertise with them. The trust board has a number of key responsibilities, including framing the strategic direction of the trust, taking financial decisions, monitoring and controlling performance, approving business plans, ensuring efficient and effective application of resources and operation of the trust's services.	Appointees One
13	Northamptonshire Rights and Equalities Council	The Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council (NREC) is a non-profit organization that:	Appointees One

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports and represents individual victims of discrimination - Supports victims of hate incidents Monitors hate incidents - Raises awareness of the rights of individuals - They undertake their work regardless of race, colour, religion, disability, age, sexuality, transgender status, or gender. <p>This is the local branch of a national campaigning organisation.</p>	
14	Northamptonshire Action with Communities in Rural England	Northamptonshire ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) is a countywide, independent charitable organisation working with rural communities in Northamptonshire to improve their quality of life, especially the disadvantaged. Based at the Hunsbury Hill Centre, Northampton, NN4 9QX. Our funding comes from membership fees, consultancy fees, an annual grant from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), project funding and valuable income generated from a wedding and conference event business we run at the Centre through a wholly owned subsidiary trading company, The Barns at Hunsbury Hill	Appointees One
15	Chester House Project Board		Appointees One
16	Corby Town Deal Board	Businesses, community groups and public sector bodies board to develop and progress the Corby Towns Fund partnership	Appointees Two
17	GLAM Project Board		Appointees One
18	Strategic Transport Leadership Board for England's Economic Heartland	The Board will continue to ensure our focus on driving outcomes and delivering investment for the benefit of the region in relation to transport.	Appointees One
19	Transport for the East Midlands (Teems)	Brings together 9 Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) across the East Midlands under the auspices of East Midlands Councils (EMC). TfEM provides collective leadership on strategic transport issues in the East Midlands, agrees major investment	Appointees One

		priorities and provides collective input into the work of Midlands Connect, the Department for Transport and its delivery bodies.	
20	Corporate Parenting Board	Delivered through the Children's Trust	Appointees Five
21	Adoption Panel	Delivered through the Children's Trust	Appointees TBC
22	Fostering Panel	Delivered through the Children's Trust	Appointees TBC
23	Arc Leaders Group	The Arc Leaders Group is made up of local councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships. It is responsible for delivering regional planning for housing and business growth and delivering the perceived benefits of the Arc.	Appointees One
24	SACRE	A Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), is an independent body which considers the provision of religious education in the area under the jurisdiction of its Local Authority, advising it and empowered to require a review of the locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education (RE). The legal constitution of SACREs is set out in the 1996 Education Act.	Appointees Two
25	Kettering High Street Heritage Action Zone project board	<i>This project is key to the regeneration of Kettering town centre with the aim to push forward recovery and growth, both economic and cultural. Kettering has a rich history, and I am looking forward to being part of the team ensuring that the Historic England funding, matched by the Council is put to great use in and around Kettering town centre.</i>	Appointees Two
26	Northamptonshire Records Office - Technical and Advisory Panel	Northamptonshire Record Office (or Northamptonshire Archives) , Technical and Advisory Panel - this was chaired by the Lord Lieutenant and was made up of partners (Northampton university, Northamptonshire record society, Northamptonshire heritage forum, other heritage groups in county, individuals) and included representees from Northamptonshire County Council.	Appointees One

		It met twice a year but hasn't met for over 4 years now. The Record Office serves the whole of Northamptonshire but lies in West Northants, whilst Chester House Estate which is the Archaeological Archive for the county is in North Northamptonshire and has the Chester Farm Project Board which is made up of partners e.g. English Heritage, Heritage Lottery and was developing its Board. I believe with both councils there is a joint working arrangements but little in the way of member representation or partnerships with outside bodies/individuals.	
27	River Nene Regional Park	The board are responsible for making key financial decisions and prioritising the direction in which the River Nene Regional Park goes in terms of its future delivery.	Appointees One
28	Greenway Board	The East Northamptonshire Greenway (the Greenway) makes attractive and safer walking and cycling routes available in the heart of the Nene Valley. The Greenway is being developed in phases, some of which are already completed and others will follow within the next few years. The Greenway will help connect East Northamptonshire's communities to a central route that will run from Wellingborough Railway Station in the south and to Peterborough railway station in the north and vice-versa. It will link open spaces together with opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport to services and facilities. The project will also provide safe routes for young people who walk and cycle to school.	Appointees One
29	Groundwork Northamptonshire	Community, youth and environmental regeneration charity working across Northamptonshire.	Appointees One
30	Destination Nene Valley	Destination Nene Valley (DNV) is a new pathfinding partnership project which aims to build on existing frameworks to better position and promote the Nene Valley. The project will demonstrate that the Nene Valley is a competitive, sustainable destination offering world class wildlife to a mixture of local, national and international audiences.	Appointees Two

31	Local Government Association	To provide for consultation as to the common interests of member authorities.	Appointees 4
32	North Northants Community Safety Partnership	The Board acts as the strategic oversight body for the North Northamptonshire Community Safety Partnership, working together with partners and the community to deliver a safer North Northamptonshire	Appointees Two
33	Kettering Local Strategic Partnership	National government encourages all areas to have a Local Strategic Partnership to ensure effective joint working between organisations and agencies. The Kettering Partnership is made up of numerous groups and panels that are working across Kettering area to improve quality of life. The board has its own terms of reference and was chaired by the Leader of the Council and meets 4 times a year including an annual conference.	Appointees One
34	Wellingborough Town Centre Partnership	The Wellingborough Town Centre Partnership works with businesses in Wellingborough Town Centre and provides a link between the public/private sectors in promoting the town centre. This work relates to everyday operations and a vision for the future of Wellingborough Town.	Appointees One
35	Northamptonshire Traveller Unit (NTU) Executive Board	CTU consisted of the predecessor authorities and the Chief Constable and worked towards creating a sustainable environment throughout Northamptonshire in which the rights and responsibilities of both Travellers and the settled community are respected. Its functions were to co-ordinate and where appropriate to undertake or contract for work relating to Traveller and Gypsy issues. The CTU has now become the NTU, Northamptonshire Travellers Unit which is a single body that manages Gypsy and Traveller related issues on behalf of North and West Councils.	Appointees Two
36	Northamptonshire Local Access Forum (NLAF)	Local Access Forums (LAFs) are advisory bodies that provide independent advice on public access to land, for recreational and other functional and utility purposes. The function of the Northamptonshire Local Access Forum (NLAF) is to advise North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Councils, as appointing authorities for the area, regarding matters affecting public access within the county. The main remit of the group is to advise the	Appointees One

		unitary councils, along with other local authorities, on the management of the county's public rights of way. The advice of the group is to ensure the continued improvement and protection of public rights of way in Northamptonshire for the purposes of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the countryside. This is an established lobby and interest group, supported by WNC and NNC officers to discuss walking and cycling matters, esp PRowS	
37	APSE	<p>Access to APSE's Principal Advisors who work across a range of front line service and policy portfolios including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The environment: Refuse collection and recycling, street scene, parks, public realm, cemeteries and crematoria ▪ Cemeteries and Crematoria Services ▪ Sports and leisure including health and well-being issues ▪ Transport, fleet and vehicle maintenance ▪ Facilities management including building cleaning, caretaking and catering (APSE is also the secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Group on school meals) ▪ Highways, winter maintenance and street lighting ▪ Environmental health and trading standards. (Trading standards is a newly developing service) <p>Other networks and opportunities also available.</p>	Appointees TBC

Significant Partnership Register Appointments

Where the Council owns an asset/company and therefore has a financial interest in it then it must have adequate governance in place. These Outside Bodies shall form part of the Outside Bodies appointments but will be picked up through a "Significant Partnerships Board".

1	Oakley Vale Community Centre	Oversee the management of the Community facility (Oakley Ward) Charity no. 1152468 OVCC (oakleyvalecommunitycentre.org.uk)
2	Priors Hall Community Centre	Oversee the management of the Community facility (Corby)

		Rural Ward) Home (priorshallparkcommunitycentre.org)
3	Corby Cube Theatre Trust	Trust established to oversee the management of The Core Theatre in The Cube. Company no. 07210297 Charity no. 1139035 Home - The Core at Corby Cube (thecorecorby.com)
4	Beanfield Community Centre	Oversee the management of the Community facility (Corby West Ward) Charity no. 1001086 Beanfield Community Centre, Corby (beanfieldcentre.co.uk)
5	Danesholme Communicare	Oversee the management of the Community facility (Oakley Ward) Charity no. 270614 Danesholme Community Centre, Corby (danesholme-community.org.uk)
6	Arran Community Centre	Oversee the management of the Community facility (Corby West Ward) Arran Community Centre - Home Facebook
7	Electric Corby CIC	Company no. 08073299 Electric Corby Switched On Thinking
8	Pathfinder (LGSS Law)	Shareholder in Pathfinder for legal services which were previously delivered to NCC but now delivered for ex county functions.
9	Wellingborough Norse Board and Wellingborough Norse Liaison Board	Wellingborough Norse, working in partnership with Borough Council of Wellingborough, is ideally placed to deliver a comprehensive range of services. Our services include cleaning, cleansing, ground maintenance, tree services, sports construction, renovation and maintenance, trade refuse collection, facilities management and bin cleaning, to public and private sector clients alike.
10	Nene Valley Crematorium Board For clarification - it is called Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd but the Board meetings have always been classed as Nene Valley Crematorium Board meetings.	Board that oversees the running and management of the Crematorium as Doddington Road, Wellingborough which is owned by NNC but run by a separate trading company with its own employees, Nene Valley Crematorium Ltd.

COMMUNITY OUTSIDE BODIES

Community

Participation is not necessary to fulfil strategic or key partnership role but, nonetheless, beneficial in terms of leading, engaging and supporting the community from North Northamptonshire perspective. Nominations will be sought from Groups and appointed to at Council.

1	Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Rail Action Committee (LANRAC)	This is a lobbying, consultation and information exchange body between many council in Leics and Northants, East Midland Railways, Network Rail and DfT and user groups. It meets only occasionally and is useful to discuss matters and provide expert advice in support of our rail infrastructure and service.	Appointees One
2	Stanwick Lakes Management Board	Management of Stanwick Lakes Country Park in Northamptonshire, a social enterprise, and SSSI site Educational and heritage programmes for schools and communities linked with our environmental conservation and heritage work. Health and well-being activities which reach out to those at disadvantage who most benefit from contact with the natural world	Appointees One
3	University of Northampton Court	The University of Northampton Court is an extensive body comprising of business and civic leaders throughout the whole of the County and acts as a forum for the University to inform the people of Northamptonshire about what they are doing and what plans they have for the future	Appointees One
4	Rural Services Network	RSN is the national champion for rural services, ensuring that people in rural areas have a strong voice.	Appointees One
5	Longtown Outdoor Education Centre	Longtown Outdoor Education Centre offers a wide range of challenging adventurous activities and courses for young people, adults, families and businesses. It is located on the edge of the Black Mountains of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The fully equipped residential centre has excellent on-site facilities set in 16 acres of private grounds. Longtown OEC has recently created a partnership with The Pathways Group Development Training Organisation.	Appointees One
6	Victoria Centre Management Committee	This is a local community centre and charity in Wellingborough, established over 40 years ago and has a faith remit and is very involved in providing support to incomers to the country as well as running EYC & kids clubs.	Appointees One
7	Campaign to Protect England (CPRE)	Countywide group of a national organisation which supports and promotes the countryside.	Appointees One

8	Industrial Alliance	This supports Ex-Steels Towns and Industrial areas. Corby have been members since formation 30 years ago.	Appointees One
11	Wellingborough School - School Council	Link between the Council and the School. Community engagement by the school having an elected representative	Appointees One
12	Northampton General Hospital Governors Council	The Council of Governors represents the interests of staff, patients, public, service users and carers as well as other local organisation in the running of the Foundation Trust. The Council used to largely be made up of Council members. The Board meets regularly to discuss the Trusts plans.	Appointees One
13	Kettering General Hospital Governors Council	The Council of Governors represents the interests of staff, patients, public, service users and carers as well as other local organisation in the running of the Foundation Trust. The Council used to largely be made up of Council members. The Board meets regularly to discuss the Trusts plans.	Appointees One
14	Domestic Violence Forum	Forum in relation to Domestic Violence in Northamptonshire.	Appointees One

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The Executive

CLLR JASON SMITHERS

Leader of the Council



Communication and engagement
Corporate health & safety
Democratic and legal services
Emergency planning
Human resources
Information governance
Policy and performance
Registration and the Coroners Service

CLLR HELEN HOWELL

*Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism
(Deputy Leader)*



Chester Farm
Culture services
Sport and Leisure
Libraries
Visitor economy

CLLR SCOTT EDWARDS

Children, Families, Education and Skills



Commissioning & partnerships:
Children's Trust

Education services
Skills & further education

CLLR HELEN HARRISON

Adults, Health and Wellbeing



Adult learning; Assistive technology
Care commissioning & health partnerships
Personal budget support
Prevention and therapy; Provider services
Public health and wellbeing services
Quality Assurance Social Work & Safeguarding

CLLR LLOYD BUNDAY

Finance and Transformation



Customer services
Financial strategy & Capital programme
Income and debt management
Money and debt advice
Procurement and insurance
Revenues and benefits service
Risks management, pensions and audit
Transformation and ICT

CLLR DAVID BRACKENBURY

Growth and Regeneration



Bereavement services
Building control & environmental health
Development management
Flood risk management
Growth and economic development
Licensing and trading standards
Planning and planning policy
Town centres and regeneration

CLLR GRAHAM LAWMAN

Highways, Travel and Assets



Grounds maintenance
Highways and transport
Parking (on street and car parks)
Property and estates management
Property capital projects
Refuse, recycling and waste
Street cleansing
Street lights

CLLR MATT BINLEY

Housing, Communities and Levelling Up



Community safety
Homelessness
Housing
Private Sector Housing

CLLR DAVID HOWES

Rural Communities and Localism



Digital infrastructure
Parish and town councils
Travellers Unit

CLLR HARRIET PENTLAND

Climate and Green Environment



Climate Change
Country parks
Energy management
Green environment policy
Parks and open spaces

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Appendix 5 – Scrutiny Committees' Terms of Reference (*Extract from the Constitution*)

Scrutiny Commission

- i) To review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any function (other than those outlined in the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee terms of reference).
- ii) To ensure that Scrutiny directly responds to corporate and public priorities, is used to drive service improvement, provides a focus for policy development and engages members of the public, key stakeholders and partner agencies.
- iii) To make reports or recommendations to Council or the Executive as appropriate with respect to the discharge of any function (other than those outlined in the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee terms of reference).
- iv) May recommend that an executive decision that is either a Key Decision or a decision which has been entered onto the Forward Plan made but not yet implemented, be reconsidered by the Executive through the Call In Procedure.
- v) To fulfil all the functions of the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee under the Police and Justice Act 2006.
- vi) To fulfil all the functions conferred on it by virtue of regulations under the National Health Service Act 2006 (local authority scrutiny of health matters).
- vii) Provide responses to Councillors Call for Action.

Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee

- i) To review and scrutinise regular monitoring reports on:
 - a) The Revenue Budget; and
 - b) The Capital Programme
 - c) The Housing Revenue Account
- ii) To develop a budget review process and ensure that budget proposals are subject to rigorous challenge.
- iii) To consider organisational performance for corporate support services (ICT, legal, financial and HR services)

In respect of i) to iii) above only:-

- a) To consider reports on issues identified and on which further information has been requested.

- b) To make reports or recommendations to Council or the Executive as appropriate.
- c) May recommend that a Key Decision or a decision which has been entered onto the Forward Plan made but not yet implemented made but not yet implemented, be reconsidered by the Executive through the Call In Procedure.

Boundary Commission Working Group - Councillor Survey Feedback

2 March 2022

1. Number of Respondents

42

Analysis

54% of councillors responded to the survey in total.

2. Types of Respondents

- representatives across all political groups;
- Executive members;
- Chairs of Committees;
- Members of Scrutiny;
- Backbenchers

Analysis

A broad range of councillors have responded to the survey, allowing for confidence that answers provided are representative of the cross section of councillors as a whole.

3. Average number of hours spent **per week** on casework, representing/supporting the community or attending Town/Parish Council meetings.

15.0 (based on 41 responses)

Analysis

Whilst the average number of hours was 15.0 per week, there is significant variance between the lowest, at 3 hours, and the highest, at 50 hours. Just over half of respondents' responses were within a range of between 10 and 20 hours.

4. Average number of contacts, **per week**, received from Members of the Public (Queries, comments etc)

13 (based on 39 responses)

Analysis

The lowest amount of contacts with members of the public reported was 3 per week, with the highest being 50 per week.

Just over a third of respondents (16) reported having fewer than 10 contacts per week, whilst just under a fifth (8) reported 20 or more contacts.

5. Of the contacts with members of the public, the main methods of communication are:-

● Email	41
● Telephone	31
● Letter	5
● Surgeries	7
● Other	17



Analysis

Consistent with more modern forms of communication, significantly the most reported forms of communication used are by email (98%) and telephone (74%).

Other methods of contact reported include:-

- i) walkabouts/out in the ward;
- ii) social activities;
- iii) in-person;
- iv) social media;
- v) Texting;
- vi) neighbourhood associations.

6. Average number of hours spent, per month, on preparing for/attending meetings of outside bodies (Excluding travel)

11 hours (based on 42 responses)

Analysis

The lowest response was 0 hours (3 respondents), with the highest being 'about 30 to 40 hours' (1 respondents). Whilst the average is 11 hours, a significant number, 33%, (14 respondents) spend 15 hours or more on such activities.

7. Average number of hours spent, per month, preparing for/attending Community Boards and their Working Groups (Excluding Travel)

6.8 hours

Analysis

A significant number, 21%, provided the lowest response of 0 hours (9 respondents), with the highest recorded being 40. 24% (10 respondents) reported undertaking 10 or more hours on this activity.

8. Average number of hours spent, per month, preparing for/attending Council/Committee meetings/working groups (Excluding Travel)

26 hours (based on 41 responses)

Analysis

The lowest number of hours spent per month is 2, with the highest being 100 (2 respondents). 32% (13 respondents) spend 10 hours or less a month on this activity, with a further 32% (13 respondents) spending 30 or more hours on this activity.

9. Average number of hours spent, per month, dealing with a portfolio (e.g Executive Member) or as a Chair/Vice-Chair of a Committee? (Excluding Travel)

22.8 hours (based on 42 respondents)

Analysis

12% (5 respondents), report not having a portfolio and so 0 hours, but of significance is the 76 hours per month averaged by executive members responding, with a further 19 hours averaged undertaken by Chairs of Committees.

10. Given the above answers, do Councillors feel they have:-

- Enough time to adequately pr... 28
- Not enough time to adequate... 14



Analysis

A significant majority of councillors, 67%, consider they have sufficient time as councillors to prepare adequately for meetings. 33% do not.

Of the members who deal with a portfolio (Executive members and Chairs of Committees) 58% (12) believe they have sufficient time and 38% (8) do not.

End of Survey

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Full Council 23rd June 2022

Report Title	Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) – Review of Members’ Allowances 2022
Report Author	Adele Wylie (Director of Governance & Human Resources/Monitoring Officer)

Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	N/A

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Copy of the IRP Report 2022

Appendix B – Copy of table showing impact of recommendations if adopted in full

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. For Full Council to consider the report and recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) into its review of Member Allowances conducted in 2022.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Council’s Independent Remuneration Panel has met to review the Allowances payable to councillors in undertaking their respective roles. It was agreed in 2021 that the current Allowance Scheme be reviewed 12-months after the creation of the new unitary authority. The outcome of that review is attached as Appendix A.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that Full Council:
- (i) Adopt the recommendations of the IRP report in full effective from 1st July 2022, as detailed in Appendix A;
- 3.2. *(Reason for Recommendations – The IRP was established to review Member Allowances in line with statute and good practise. The IRP have conducted their review and have submitted their recommendations for consideration. Full Council is entitled to approve in full or part the recommendations included in the IRP report under Appendix A).*
- 3.3. *(Alternative Options Considered –*
- (i) Adopt the recommendations in full or part effective from the 1st April 2023. There would be no additional cost in 2022/23 and any increases can be included in the budget-setting process for 2023/24;
 - (ii) Note the recommendations but hold implementation in abeyance until further notice; until instructed by Full Council;
 - (iii) Note the recommendations but reject implementation of the recommendations; the current approved scheme remaining in place until any subsequent review is commissioned.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. On 5th February 2021, the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) conducted a review to consider the role of members of North Northamptonshire Council and subsequently made recommendations on a scheme of members allowances. A scheme for North Northamptonshire Council was then adopted by the Shadow Authority at a meeting held on 25th February 2021.
- 4.2. The current scheme for North Northamptonshire Council took effect from 1st April 2021. Appendix B details the current level of allowances, which includes the 1.75% uplift for 2021/22 based on the NJC pay award.
- 4.3. It was further agreed that the adopted scheme be reviewed after 12-months.
- 4.4. A Briefing Report for the exercise was prepared and the IRP requested to consider the following areas: -
- Ward Councillors – Basic Allowance
 - The Executive
 - Leaders of Opposition Groups
 - Chairs and Vice Chairs
 - Independent Persons and Co-opted Members
 - Information Technology
 - Childcare and Dependant’s Carers’ Allowance

- Travel, Mileage and Subsistence Allowances

In addition, albeit covered by separate legislation, the IRP were requested to advise on “civic allowances” in relation to the Chair and Vice Chair of NNC.

- 4.5. To ensure that councillors had an opportunity to submit representations to the IRP for consideration, the exercise formally commenced in mid-January 2022, with a deadline for submissions of 24th February 2022. The IRP made allowance in its work programme to meet with councillors via virtual meetings on request. The Chair also was available to speak to councillors on the telephone where requested. By the close of the consultation period, the IRP had received 6 written representations from councillors, had met with the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council, the senior statutory officers of the Council and held a virtual meeting with two other councillors and a telephone conversation with a third councillor.
- 4.6. The Democracy and Standards Committee at its meeting on 12th April 2022 received a copy of the IRP report. The Committee noted its contents without formal comment to Full Council. There was debate around whether implementation of the recommendations at this time was to be recommended, however the Committee resolved to make no recommendations at this time and allow Full Council to consider and determine.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. Full Council are required to consider the recommendations made by the IRP. The determination whether to adopt the proposals contained in the IRP are a matter for Council. Full Council may be minded to adopt the proposals in full or in part. Full Council may determine to delay implementation of the proposals to a later date, or to acknowledge receipt of the proposals and determine not to implement.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Full Council are requested to consider the IRP report and determine whether the Panel’s recommendations in full or part be implemented. If the recommendations are approved an implementation date of 1st July 2022 is suggested.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1. As detailed in Appendix B, there would be an increase of £128,671 on current SRA if the IRP’s recommendations are implemented in full over a 12-month period.

7.1.2. In addition to those detailed in Appendix B, allowance is made in the IRP report for the following sums –

Scrutiny Panel Chair's Fund - £13,230 (IRP recommendation 8)
Licensing Panel Chair's Fund - £10,000 (IRP recommendation 11)
Independent Persons - £400/meeting (IRP recommendation 16)

7.1.3. It should be noted that it is being recommended that should Full Council determine to approve the IRP's recommendations in full or part that any increases be effective from 1st July 2022.

7.1.4. Any increase in costs as a result of approval of the IRP recommendations in full, or in part, will be met from within the overall council resources.

7.2. **Legal and Governance**

7.2.1. The review was undertaken within the regulations laid down by statute. Full Council are required to consider the outcome of the review process and give appropriate consideration of the recommendations made. Full Council have final responsibility for determination of this matter and whether to approve the recommendations made in full or part.

7.2.2. The IRP are recommending in their report that following the outcome of the current Boundary Review process, Full Council may wish to reconvene an IRP to consider what if any the implications of the outcome of the Boundary Review Process may have on the local authority (IRP Recommendation 19).

7.3. **Relevant Policies and Plans**

7.3.1. The preparation and approval process for the Members' Allowance Scheme is governed by statute and the approved Scheme included within the Council's Constitution.

7.4. **Risk**

7.4.1. No specific issues relating to this report.

7.5. **Consultation**

7.5.1. Consultation with councillors and senior officers was requested by the IRP. All councillors were invited to submit written representations. The IRP indicated that it was also willing to accept telephone or virtual meeting representations.

7.5.2. By the close of the consultation period, the IRP had received 6 written representations from councillors, had met with the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council, the senior statutory officers of the Council and held a virtual meeting with two other councillors and conducted a telephone interview with a third councillor.

7.6. **Equality Implications**

7.6.1. The Council was keen to ensure that councillors who have childcare or other caring responsibilities are not disadvantaged from fully participating in council activities. The IRP was asked to review the current annual limit of £6,500 and consider whether this allowance should be increased to ensure that it met the requirements of the Living Wage criteria. The IRP received no representations on this issue and are recommending that the currently agreed criteria stand.

7.7. **Climate Impact**

7.7.1. No specific issues relating to this report.

7.8. **Community Impact**

7.8.1. No specific issues relating to this report.

7.9. **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.9.1. No specific issues relating to this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1. [North Northamptonshire Council Constitution – Part 8.6 Scheme of Members' Allowances.](#)

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Appendix A

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES IN NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Report of the Independent Review Panel.

Background

- 1.1. The current Independent Review Panel (IRP) for North Northamptonshire comprises the Chair, Steve Leach (Emeritus Professor of Local Government, De Montfort University): Ged Dempsey (retired CEO of an international retail company and member of the Judiciary and the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Justice): and Sue Watts (Business Development Director, Age UK, Northamptonshire). In February 2021, it submitted a report to North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority, setting out its recommendations for members allowances for the year 2021-22. This report was considered and approved at a meeting of the Shadow Council in March 2021. One of the Panel's recommendations was that the Panel should be reconvened in a year's time, to test out the resilience of its conclusions and recommendations, made for a council that had not yet come into being, in the light of members' experience of operating the decision -making structure.
- 1.2. The Panel held a virtual meeting on March 4th 2022, at which it heard evidence from the leader and deputy leader, two other councillors and three senior officers of the council. In addition, six councillors had submitted written evidence and one relayed his views through a phone call. The Panel is grateful to all those who took the time and trouble to communicate their views, to Anne Ireson and Lorraine Hogg for their invaluable support and to Adele Wylie for the provision of helpful information and prompt response to queries raised by the Panel.
- 1.3. The panel was made aware that a Boundaries review of North Northamptonshire is scheduled to take place during the 2022-23 municipal year. It is impossible to forecast the outcome of this review and the Panel has had little choice, but to work on the basis of existing ward definitions and councillor numbers. Once the recommendations of the Boundary Commission have been agreed, it may be necessary for a further review of allowances to take place. Depending on the extent of the changes involved, it may be that this could be a relatively brief, selective review, rather than a comprehensive one.
- 1.4. During the meeting of March 4th, the Panel was made aware of the disquiet on the part of some members regarding the disparities between the allowances recommended in North and West Northamptonshire respectively. This issue is addressed in the following section. But it is important that members understand that the two Panels carried out their work independently, and were unaware of the recommendations of their counterparts, when submitting their reports to the commissioning authorities in February 2021.

Analysis

- 2.1. Two key issues emerged from the representations which the panel received: first, that the workload of and time commitment required from all councillors in

the new authority, but particularly those on the executive, had been extremely high, unprecedented in their experience: and second, that it was felt to be unfair that the levels of allowances paid in West Northamptonshire were significantly higher than those in the North.

- 2.2. The Panel has little doubt about the reality of the unprecedented workload. This would be expected in any newly established authority and particularly in one where the number of total number of councillors involved in the government of the area has fallen from 152 to 78, a drop of almost 50%. In the view of the Panel, some reduction in workload and time commitment might reasonably be expected in subsequent years, as the working processes of the authority become more embedded and familiar, but only to a limited extent.
- 2.3. It was pointed out by some councillors in leadership positions that, taking into account the number of hours they were putting in each week, their hourly rate for local government work was little more than the minimum wage. This may well be true. But members allowances were never expected to provide a full level of compensation for the time put in. In the Panel's 2021 report, it is made clear that 'its recommendations should acknowledge the fact that not all of the time commitment of members should be deemed eligible for allowances: 50% is the proportion commonly specified' (para 2.1.). The other 50% is seen as the voluntary, public service element of a councillor's role. This 50% criterion is widely adopted in the recommendations of IRP elsewhere.
- 2.4. Even so, the overall allowance currently allocated to the council leader in North Northamptonshire (including the basic) is close to 40,000, that of the deputy 30,000 and that of executive members 26,000. Taking into account the 50% discount principle, these seem not ungenerous rates of remuneration
- 2.5. Although the Panel can well understand that comparisons between the allowances paid in North and West Northamptonshire will be made by councillors, it does not accept, as some have suggested, that the response to the disparity should be an uprating of allowances in the North to match those in the West. No responsible Panel could make an emotive response of this nature, which would involve discarding the carefully thought-through methodology which informed the conclusions and recommendations of its earlier report.
- 2.6. The reality is that Northamptonshire no longer exists in local government terms. There are now two separate authorities North and West, with different socio-geographic configurations. Had they been named Welland Valley and Neneside (for example) the apparent survival of 'Northamptonshire' would have been less apparent.
- 2.7. The report of the West Northamptonshire Panel makes it clear that West does indeed have a different socio-geographic configuration to North. It states (para 4.3) that 'without any embroidery, it has to be recognized that West Northamptonshire Council retains a major conurbation in Northampton.' It is, in effect, a small city region focused on Northampton itself, which was until 2021, the largest district council in the country.

- 2.8. North Northamptonshire, in contrast, lacks an urban focus of this nature. The Panel described its settlement pattern in its earlier report as ‘a range of small and medium-sized towns in a predominantly rural setting’ (see para 2.3), a characterization about which it feels would be unlikely to be disputed. A comparison between the schedule of SRAs in authorities which contain or are part of a conurbation and authorities of similar population size which do not or are not consistently reveals a significantly higher level of allowances paid in the former than the latter.
- 2.9. Both Panels adopted a similar methodology, in that they sought to identify local authorities with similar characteristics and to use their allowances schemes as benchmarks against which to develop recommendations. In the case of the North, the criteria used were as follows: the authorities had to be unitary authorities: their social geography should be similar to the dispersed settlement pattern of the North; and they should have broadly similar population sizes as the North. On this basis, ten comparable authorities were identified (see para 2.4). The West report was less explicit about the criteria it adopted, citing only ‘councils which have gone through a similar process in the forming of a new unitary authority’ but selected seven as ‘appropriate comparators’ (see para 4.1). There were four authorities selected by both Panels – Cheshire West and Chester, Durham, Dorset and Wiltshire.
- 2.10. Given that the range of comparator authorities was justifiably different, it is not surprising that the analysis revealed different outcomes regarding the average level of SRAs for the various positions of responsibility. This is what explains the differences in the recommendations made in the two reports – an unsurprising outcome of a logical process. It should also be noted that in several cases, the SRAs recommended (and then adopted) by the West panel were higher than the averages for the seven comparator authorities, as a result of the panel using multipliers of the basic allowance to decide on their recommendations for the special responsibility allowances (SRAs) of executive office holders. The use of multipliers was not adopted in the North report and the Panel can see little justification for adopting this practice
- 2.11. The panel sees no reason to depart from the methodology it deployed in its first report, although it is prepared to make some minor adjustments to its earlier recommendations which reflect what it learned from its interviews in March 2022. It could not retain its integrity as an independent panel if it did otherwise. The Council can of course ignore or amend some or all of the panel’s recommendations. That is their choice.
- 2.12. Even if the Panel felt that there was a strong argument for recommending substantial increases in allowances, which is not the case, it would be wary about doing so. The next year is likely to be a difficult one financially for the nation; inflation is rising steadily, and wage increase are not keeping pace with the cost of living. Fuel prices -domestic and motoring – are predicted to soar. Many councils would find it hard to justify substantial increases in members allowances in these circumstances.

Recommendations

The Basic Allowance

- 3.1. This is the one form of allowance, where the Panel considers that parity throughout what used to be Northamptonshire can be justified. The Basic Allowance is primarily a compensation for the grassroots work which all councillors are required to undertake such as dealing with constituents' problems and representing their interests in the authority. There is also the expectation that all councillors will serve on a range of committees and panels, without qualifying for SRAs. These expectations and their associated time commitments will be broadly similar throughout the area of the former county. This workload will undoubtedly have increased markedly since the new authority was established, reflecting the fact that there are now half the number of councillors operating in North Northamptonshire than used to be the case. The panel recommends that the Basic Allowance be increased to £13,750 – the current figure in the West - and that it be uprated in accordance with the NJC officers pay settlement for 2021-22, as recommended in the Panel's earlier report. This increase, not yet formally accepted by the Unions, has been set at 1.75%. This would result in a basic allowance of £14,000 (subject to modification if the final NJC figure differs from this). The Panel would wish to make it clear that, in its view, this allowance should include an element covering councillors' expenditure on IT, and also include remuneration for holding minor positions of responsibility, including most vice-chair positions.

Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive members

- 3.2. As explained in 2.5 above, with the exception of the basic allowance, the Panel cannot justify recommendations which would result in parity between North and West Northamptonshire. But in response to what it was told about the time-consuming pressures experienced by the leadership group in the North, it is prepared to recommend more modest increases, using the following rationale. In its 2021 report, the Panel identified ten comparator authorities, but in deciding upon the SRAs it wished to recommend for the leader, deputy leader and executive members of the authority, excluded Dorset and Wiltshire from its calculations, on the grounds that 'there were historical reasons why the leaders' SRAs in these two authorities were untypically high (see para 2.11). Whilst continuing to hold this view, the Panel recognises that, having selected these two authorities as comparators, it would be consistent to continue to include them in its calculations. The effect of so doing would be to increase the SRA for the leader to £28,390, that of the deputy to £21,200 and that of the other executive members to £15,590. This is the recommendation proposed by the Panel, in recognition of the particular challenges of leading a newly created authority in the first two or three years of its existence. Applying the 1.75% uprating (see para 3.1 above) these allowances should be set at £28,890, £21,570 and £15,590 respectively for 2022-23.
- 3.3. Since May 2021, the administration has decided to introduce the posts of assistant executive members (AEMs), of which three are currently in post, with

an expectation that more will be appointed in the coming months. This practice can be found in several other authorities. Such posts cannot involve formal executive responsibility, because to do so would effectively increase the size of the executive beyond the legal maximum of ten. But such posts do provide support for overworked executive members and also provide helpful experience for future executive members. Although in some cases such posts do not qualify for SRAs, in many, a small allowance of between £2,500 and £5,000 is allocated.

- 3.4. Given that the proposals set out in 3.2 above will have the effect of increasing the total SRA allocated to the executive members (other than leader and deputy leader) by £15,390 (£15,660 when the 1.75% increase is applied) as a response to the particularly challenging circumstances of establishing and running a new authority, it would be logical to recommend that any SRAs for AEMs should be deducted from this enhanced overall allowance, which is intended to cover collective executive responsibilities. There would be different ways of managing these deductions. If the SRAs for assistant executive members were set at £2,000, then if posts were introduced for all eight executive members (other than the leader and deputy leader) then the net increase of £15,660 recommended above would cover the cost of these SRAs. Alternatively, they could be deducted from the SRAs of the executive members who choose to appoint an AEM. A further option is that no SRAs should be allocated, with these posts being considered as part of the range of more minor responsibilities which all members can be expected to undertake, to which the proposed increase in the basic allowance is a response. The council could decide to allocate SRAs for AEMs (of between £2,000 and £5,000) in addition to the recommended overall increase in the SRA allocated to the executive, but this is not an alternative supported by the Panel, as it would be inconsistent with the application of its methodology.

Opposition Party Leader

- 3.5. The only opposition group of significant size in North Northamptonshire is the Labour Group, with 14 seats. The leader of the Labour Group, as the largest opposition group, receives a SRA of £10,000. The leader of the minority Green Alliance Group (4 members) receives a SRA of £4,000. The deputy leader of the Labour Group does not currently receive a SRA (the 20% of council membership criterion narrowly excludes this payment). Given the importance of the opposition role in the democratic viability of a local authority, the Panel is clear that it would be right to retain the SRA of £10,000 (uprated to £10,175) for the opposition leader, on similar grounds to those set out in para 2.21 of the Panel's 2021 report, and the SRA allocation to the leader of the Green Alliance Group should continue at £4,000 (uprated to £4,070).
- 3.6. In its 2021 report, the Panel recommended that an SRA of £4,000 should be paid to the deputy leader of the main opposition group, if its membership comprises 15 (20% of council membership) Its current size falls short of this total by a single councillor. Given the minimal size of the other opposition

groups the Panel is of the view that this allowance should now be paid, which would contribute to the Panel's concern to reflect the importance of the opposition's role in the allowances scheme.

Overview and Scrutiny

- 3.7. In its 2021 report, the Panel highlighted the importance of overview and scrutiny in providing checks and balances on the power of the executive. In the original decision-making structure, only one scrutiny committee was established. This has now been increased to two, with the introduction of a Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee to complement the Scrutiny Commission. The Panel welcomes this move and recommends that the Chairs of both bodies should continue to be allocated an SRA of £13,500 (uprated to £13,735), which is significantly above the average for the comparator authorities, a difference which the Panel feels is justified (see 2.24 and 2.25 of the 2021 report). The overall allocation of £40,000 (uprated to £40,700) should continue, with the remaining allowance allocated to members (other than the two chairs) who are appointed to chair a major scrutiny project (for example, one which would be expected to run for six to twelve months). As it is unlikely that more than three such projects would be scheduled in any one year, the Panel recommends that an SRA of £3,250 should be allocated to the members chairing such projects. This allocation should include the ongoing panel on 'levelling up' working group and the budget-setting scrutiny working group. The Panel would be happy for the Council to use its discretion in the detailed allocation of the remaining Scrutiny fund over the coming year.
- 3.8. The case was made to the Panel that the workload of the vice-chairs of the two scrutiny committees merited the allocation of an SRA to these positions. There did appear to be a substantial workload involved in each case, and the Panel was certainly pleased to see that the importance of scrutiny had been recognized and appeared to be adding value in a variety of ways. The Panel's views on the case for SRAs for vice-chairs are set out below. But in the case of the Scrutiny committees, there is a viable alternative. If the vice-chairs were to be deputed to chair one of the major projects (see 3.7 above), which would seem an appropriate allocation of responsibilities, then this would provide recompense for their wider contribution to the scrutiny process.

Committees (1) Planning

- 3.9. In its original structure, North Northamptonshire established a Strategic Planning Committee and two Area Planning Committees. The panel's recommendation was that SRAs of £7,500 should be allocated to each of these three positions. The total allocation for the planning function was £22,500, which compared favourably with most of the comparator authorities, but which could be justified on the grounds of the decentralization of the development control function. During the course of the year, the council considered that the level of workload involved was such as to justify a further sub-division into four area planning committees. As a result, the council reduced the SRA payable to the chairs of the four area committees to £3,750.

- 3.10. Details were provided to the Panel of the frequency, duration and number of reports dealt with at each of the four area committees over the June 2021 to October 2021 period. There were significant variations between the committees, but on average, meetings have been held monthly, with the number of items dealt with varying between one and ten and an average meeting duration of 75 minutes. This average figure conceals a major discrepancy between the Thrapston area committee (average meeting time 140 minutes) and the remainder, including Strategic Planning (average meeting time 48 minutes).
- 3.11. In so far as the panel can judge, there was a justification for increasing the number of area planning committees, and there is a case for increasing the SRAs of their chairs. It recommends an increase to £5,000 (uprated to £5,090). It would not be feasible to vary the SRA concerned to respond to the particularly heavy workload of the Thrapston area committee, as the workloads of the various committees may well change over time. This recommendation would have the effect of increasing the overall SRA allocation to the planning function to £27,500, which is the maximum the Panel could justify on the basis of comparative evidence.
- 3.12. Representations were received by the Panel concerning the case for allocating SRAs to the vice-chairs of the council's committees, with the vice-chairs of the various planning committees seen as having a particularly strong case in this respect. The Panel's views about the remuneration of vice-chairs (and other such positions) was made clear in its 2021 report: 'the panel's view is that if the basic allowance is set at a relatively generous level (as in North Northamptonshire), then this allowance should be seen as covering a range of minor responsibilities, which all councilors should be expected to take on board from time to time' It would not be appropriate to allocate SRAs to all positions of responsibility in any council, including North Northamptonshire. To do so would increase the proportion of members receiving an SRA to well above one third, the figure specified in the government's guidance regarding allowances. S stands for 'special' which implies distinguishing between 'greater' and 'lesser' levels of responsibility, in making judgements about SRAs.
- 3.13. If the panel were to recommend SRAs for the vice-chairs of planning committees, but not others, it would be likely to generate claims of 'unfairness' from other vice-chairs, claims which the Panel would find it difficult to resolve without further detailed information collection and analysis. It therefore endorses the recommendation made in its 2021 report that SRAs should not be paid to vice-chairs of committees. This recommendation is consistent with current practice in a wide range of other allowances schemes of which it has knowledge (including that of West Northamptonshire).
- 3.14. What is important is that if a vice-chair is required to take over the chair's role for one or more committee cycles, due to the illness of the incumbent (or some other justifiable circumstances), then a financial adjustment should be made to acknowledge the fact that he or she has assumed the Chair's responsibilities

for a specified period of time. The Panel's recommendation would be that, in these circumstances, the relevant proportion of the chair's SRA should be transferred to the vice-chair. For example, for a committee which meets quarterly, two such substitutions would merit the transfer of 50% of the chair's allocated SRA.

(2) Licensing

3.15. In the Panel's 2021 report, the recommendations regarding Licensing were that the Chair should receive an SRA of £7,500 (equivalent to that received by the Chair of Strategic Planning) and that a fund of £10,000 should be set aside, to be allocated retrospectively to those charring topic-specific panels, which is where most of members involvement in Licensing takes place, rather than in the parent committee per se. The Panel was informed that of the fifteen panels which have operated since May 2021, twelve have been chaired by the Chair of the Licensing Committee himself. That is his choice, and assuming this practice is likely to continue until May 2025, the Panel considers it would be appropriate to raise his SRA to £10,000 (uprated to £10,175). The Panel would be happy for the Council to use whatever basis of distributing the remaining £10,000 Licensing fund that seems appropriate over the coming year.

(3) Other Committees

3.16. The panel received no representations regarding the SRAs paid to chairs of the other committees established in North Northamptonshire, nor about other positions not covered in the 2021 report which might qualify for SRAs. As a result, the Panel sees no reason to modify its original recommendations, beyond the application of the 1.75% uprating. However, it did note that there was considerable variation in the number of meetings that the different committees held. At the lower end of the scale, in the period up to January 2022, the Employment Committee had not met (although the Panel understands that it has done so on a couple of occasions since. It is hard to justify paying an SRA to the Chair of a committee which meets only infrequently, and the Panel recommends that from 2022-23 onwards, there should be a minimum of three meetings held in the municipal year, if the Chair is to qualify for the allocated SRA.

Civic Allowances

3.17. A similar status quo conclusion was reached about the civic allowances paid the Chair and Vic-chair of the council, which, as it happens, are close to the allowances recommended in the West Northamptonshire IRP report. These allowances should remain as they are, subject to the across-the-board uprating

Other issues

3.18. One councillor questioned the appropriateness of allocating an attendance allowance (of £400) to co-optees who play a major role on a council committee, suggesting that an annual payment (as in West Northamptonshire) would be a preferable option. In the Panel's view, this alternative would not take into

account the significant variation in the number of meetings per annum that the co-optee might be required to attend. It would be inequitable if someone who attended six meetings received the same allowance as someone who attended only two. The Panel would prefer to retain the existing attendance allowance model but can see value in imposing a cap on the total amount which can be claimed by a co-optee in any given year. The suggested figure is £2,000, which is less than half of any of the SRAs recommended for North Northamptonshire councillors.

- 3.19. There was also one representation which argued for a reintroduction of a separate IT allowance for each member, rather than this allowance being subsumed within the basic allowance, which the Panel recommended in 2021, and which has been adopted. A separate IT allowance is complex to administer and most authorities of which the Panel are aware have not retained a separate allowance. As the Panel's proposal is to increase the basic allowance to £14,000, so the argument for subsuming the IT allowance within it becomes stronger.
- 3.20. As regards the Panel's 2021 recommendations regarding childcare and dependent carers' allowances, travel and subsistence rates and the use of the NJC annual pay award to officers, no representations arguing for change were received and the Panel recommends the continuation of current practice in each case. Similarly, there should also be retention of the provision that, should a councillor hold more than one position which qualifies for an SRA it is only the higher of the two allowances which can be claimed.
- 3.21. The total estimated additional cost of the Panel's recommendations is close to £150,000.

4. Summary of Recommendations.

- (1) The Basic Allowance should be increased to £14,000, this figure includes the 1.75% uprating following the 2021-22 NJC officers award, as do all subsequent recommendations.
- (2) The SRAs for the members of the executive should be increased as follows
Council Leader: £28,890
Deputy Leader: £21,570
Executive Members: £15,590
- (3) If the Council wishes to allocate SRAs to the assistant executive members, it should do so within the overall executive budget increase of £15,660. Para 3.4 above sets out alternative ways of doing this. The Panel does not support the idea of additional resources being allocated for SRAs for these positions.
- (4) The Leader of the largest opposition group should receive an SRA of £10,175.
- (5) The deputy leader of the largest opposition group should receive an SRA of £4,070.

- (6) The leader of the Green Alliance Group should receive an SRA of £4,070.
- (7) The Chairs of the Scrutiny Commission and the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee should both receive an SRA of £13,736.
- (8) A fund of £13,230 should be made available to members chairing scrutiny panels (other than the two chairs cited above) which are dealing with major projects, such as 'levelling up' and budget-setting scrutiny, SRAs of £3,250 are recommended for this purpose.
- (9) The SRAs of the Chairs of the four Area Planning Committees should be increased to £5,090.
- (10) The SRA for the Chair of the Licensing and Appeals Committee should be increased to £10,175.
- (11) A fund of £10,000 should be retained for distribution to members (other than the chair of the Licensing Committee) who chair licensing panels.
- (12) The SRAs for the Chairs of the other Committees should remain unchanged (apart from the NJC uprating) as follows:

Strategic Planning Committee, Audit and Governance Committee and Democracy and Standards Committee: £7,631.

Employment Committee, Police and Crime Panel and the Health and Well-being Board: £4,070.
- (13) SRAs should not be paid to the Chair of any Committee which meets on less than three occasions in a municipal year.
- (14) SRAs should not be allocated to vice-chairs of Committees (see 3.12 – 3.13 for justification). However, if a vice-chair is required to deputise for a Chair (due to illness or other legitimate reasons) for one or more committee cycles, then the proportionate part of the Chair's SRA should be transferred to him or her (e.g., 50% if deputising for two out of four committee cycles).
- (15) If a member qualifies for more than one SRA, it is the higher SRA only which should be payable
- (16) Co-optees (*Independent Persons*) on committees should continue to be paid £400 per meeting attended, subject to a maximum of £2,000 per person over a municipal year.
- (17) The civic allowances of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council should be retained at current levels (£10,175 and £5,088 respectively).
- (18) The NJC annual pay award should continue to be the criteria used for the annual uprating of members allowances.
- (19) With regard to childcare and dependent carers allowances and travel and subsistence rates, the current arrangements should continue.

- (20) When the recommendations of the Boundary Review have been agreed, the Panel should be notified to assess what kind of allowances review (if any) is required.

March 2022

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Appendix B

Position attracting a SRA	2021/22 Allowance inc. 1.75% (current) per person	IRP Proposed Allowance per person	£ difference from 2021/22 per person	% increase over 2021/22
Basic Allowance (x78)	12718	14000	1282	10.08
Leader of the Council	27472	28890	1418	5.16
Deputy Leader of the Council	18315	21570	3255	17.77
Leader of the Labour Group	10175	10175	0	0
Deputy Leader of the Labour Group	0	4070	4070	NEW
Leader of the Green Alliance	4070	4070	0	0
Executive Member (x8)	13736	15590	1854	13.49
Chair Scrutiny Commission	13736	13736	0	0
Chair Finance & Resources Scrutiny	13736	13736	0	0
Chair Strategic Planning	7631	7631	0	0
Chair Area Planning Corby	3815	5090	1275	33.42
Chair Area Planning Kettering	3815	5090	1275	33.42
Chair Area Planning Thrapston	3815	5090	1275	33.42
Chair Area Planning Wellingborough	3815	5090	1275	33.42
Chair Licensing	7631	10175	2544	33.33
Chair Audit & Governance	7631	7631	0	0
Chair Democracy & Standards	7631	7631	0	0
Chair Employment	4070	4070	0	0
Chair Police Panel	4070	4070	0	0
Chair Health & Wellbeing Board	4070	4070	0	0
Chair of NNC	10175	10175	0	0
Vice Chair of NNC	5088	5088	0	0
	1262653	1391324	128671	10.19
	<i>Current Allowance Total</i>	<i>Potential Allowance Total</i>	<i>Potential additional cost</i>	

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