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Meeting: Executive

Date: Thursday 12th October, 2023


Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby, NN17 1QG

To members of the Executive

Councillors Jason Smithers (Chair), Helen Howell (Vice-Chair), Matt Binley, David Brackenbury, Lloyd Bunday, Scott Edwards, Helen Harrison, David Howes, Harriet Pentland and Mark Rowley

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<p>Adele Wylie, Monitoring Officer North Northamptonshire Council</p>  <p>Proper Officer Wednesday 4th October 2023</p>			

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ITEM	NARRATIVE	DEADLINE
Members of the Public Agenda Statements	Members of the Public who live or work in the North Northamptonshire council area may make statements in relation to reports on the public part of this agenda. A request to address the Executive must be received 2 clear working days prior to the meeting at democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk Each Member of the Public has a maximum of 3 minutes to address the committee.	5.00pm Monday 9 th October 2023
Member Agenda Statements	Other 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 Member has a maximum of 3 minutes to address the committee. A period of 30 minutes (Chair's Discretion) is allocated for Member Statements	5.00pm Monday 9 th October 2023

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Minutes of a meeting of the Executive

At 10.00 am on Thursday 14th September, 2023 in the Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby, NN17 1QG

Present:-

Members

Councillor Helen Howell (Deputy Leader of the Council)	Councillor Scott Edwards
Councillor Matt Binley	Councillor Helen Harrison
Councillor David Brackenbury	Councillor David Howes
Councillor Lloyd Bunday	Councillor Harriet Pentland

Also in attendance – Councillors Keli Watts, Lyn Buckingham, Jonathan Ekins, Anne Lee, Dorothy Maxwell, Ross Armour

492 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Jason Smithers and Cllr Mark Rowley.

Apologies were also received from:

- Monitoring Officer, Adele Wylie
- Executive Director of Finance, Janice Gotts
- Executive Director of Children's Services, AnnMarie Dodds
- Executive Director of Adults, Health Partnerships & Housing, David Watts
- Assistant Chief Executive, Guy Holloway

493 Minutes of the Meetings Held on 3rd August 2023 and 17th August 2023

RESOLVED that the Executive agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 3rd August 2023 and 17th August 2023 as true and accurate records of the meetings.

494 Members' Declarations of Interest

A personal interest was declared by Cllr Harriet Pentland relating to any agenda items where she had been in attendance at meetings at which the subject matter in question may have previously been discussed.

495 Notifications of requests to address the meeting

The Chair, Councillor Helen Howell reported that there were requests to address the meeting as set out below:

Agenda Item	Speakers
Item 5 - Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 4 – July 2023)	Cllrs Anne Lee & William Colquhoun
Item 6 - Bus Service Improvement Plan plus (BSIP+) Funding	Cllrs Dorothy Maxwell, Anne Lee and Lyn Buckingham
Item 7 – Kettering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	Cllr Anne Lee
Item 8 - Hackney Carriage De-zoning, Hackney Carriage Byelaws and Hackney Carriage Number Limits	Cllrs Dorothy Maxwell and William Colquhoun Mr Neil Rielly
Item 9 – North Northamptonshire Greenway Strategy	Cllrs Ross Armour, Dorothy Maxwell and Lyn Buckingham
Item 10 – Kettering Artificial Pitch – Lease and Investment	Cllr Ross Armour
Item 11 – Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy	Cllrs Dorothy Maxwell and Lyn Buckingham
Item 12 - The Chief Principal Social Worker’s Annual Report	Cllr Dorothy Maxwell
Item 13 - Energy Procurement Contract	Cllr Dorothy Maxwell
Item 15 - Budget Forecast Update 2023-24 - Period 3	Cllr Anne Lee and Lyn Buckingham

Cllr William Colquhoun was not in attendance at the meeting and consequently did not speak on agenda items 5 and 8.

Cllr Dorothy Maxwell opted not to speak in relation to agenda items 12 and 13.

496 Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 4 - July 2023)

The Chair invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee noted the implication of delays in deciding planning applications, referencing the consequences for those effected by delays. Cllr Lee also raised concerns regarding an increase to the number of children missing from education at the end of July.

The Chair then invited the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, Cllr Lloyd Bunday to introduce a report that sought to provide an update on the performance of the Council across a range of services as measured by performance indicators (PIs), as well as setting out the progress that was being made in the development of the Council’s performance monitoring arrangements.

Cllr Bunday reported that the Period 4 report showed 23 indicators on or exceeding their target, with five inside tolerance levels, nine performing below target levels and 11 having insufficient data to allow for reporting. Of the PIs reported for the period, 25 had shown improvement with nine deteriorating since the previous reporting period.

Cllr Bunday referenced positive performances in regard to indicators for Greener, Sustainable Environment and those relating to Safe and Thriving Places. It was noted that there was a balanced picture for indicators relating to Modern Public Services and Active Fulfilled Lives.

Cllr David Brackenbury spoke to welcome the latest performance indicators and noted the significant work underway to tackle the issue of planning application determinations.

Cllr Scott Edwards spoke to reference Cllr Lee's concerns regarding the number of children missing from education, noting that the figure covered a period to the end of the summer holiday period and figures for the new school year could provide a different picture. Cllr Edwards also stated he would request a report on children missing from education on a long-term basis.

Cllr Helen Harrison spoke to note that the performance indicator for NHS Health Checks offered was on target for the first time, with ongoing work to ensure health checks offered were taken up.

RESOLVED

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 4 (July) 2023/24, set out in the appendix to the report.

Reason for Recommendations: to better understand the Council's performance as measured by Key Performance Indicators as at Period 4 (July) 2023/24.

Alternative Options Considered: Reporting performance data on a less frequent basis is an option but monthly reporting is considered useful at this stage of the Council's existence, reporting alongside budget information.

497 Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP+) Funding

The Chair invited Cllr Dorothy Maxwell to speak in relation to this item. Cllr Maxwell noted a lack of new bus routes being established in recent times, noting a decrease in passenger numbers since the Covid pandemic and a lack of rural service options. Cllr Maxwell also noted the lack of connections to hospitals and other local facilities, stating that services should be increased to offer an effective service for all across Northamptonshire and beyond.

Cllr Anne Lee was invited to address the Executive. Cllr Lee noted that the additional government funding was a positive news story but raised concerns regarding a lack of connectivity to Kettering General Hospital, Kettering Tesco and levelling-up areas.

Cllr Lyn Buckingham then spoke to welcome the report but raised concerns regarding commercial operators potentially ceasing bus services. Cllr Buckingham stated that the Council should be driving improvements to bus service networks for leisure, education and employment, but connectivity would only work if there remained bus services to access.

Cllr Binley responded to the comments made by speakers by referencing the positive nature of the report and the number of bus services retained locally in comparison to other areas outside North Northamptonshire. It was acknowledged that the frequency of certain services may have reduced, but no local routes had been withdrawn since

the Covid pandemic. Cllr Binley noted issues with direct services to Kettering General Hospital but confirmed that there were bus routes that accessed the hospital, although a transfer may be required.

Cllr Binley noted that bus service provision was highly user driven, if services were not utilised, they were in danger of being lost, especially in light of passenger numbers only returning to around 90% of pre-pandemic levels.

Cllr Binley then introduced a report that requested the Executive to note the receipt of Bus Service Improvement Plan plus (BSIP+) funding to the value of £560,412 for 2023/24, and to agree it be spent on improving bus services in North Northamptonshire in accordance with the terms and conditions as detailed in Appendix A to the report.

It was heard that in May 2023, £160m of funding had been allocated from the Department for Transport for local authorities to improve fares, services and infrastructure, with a further £140m provided to bus service operators to help protect essential services. At the same time, the government had also announced the extension of the £2 fare cap until the end of October 2023, rising to £2.50 until the end of November 2024.

The meeting noted government support to the bus industry since the start of the pandemic, with the same level of BSIP+ funding also allocated for 2024/25, dependant on the Council's bus budget being maintained at least at the current level of £275,000 bus subsidy and £2,907,320 of concessionary fares. Any unspent funding for 2023/24 could be rolled over to the next financial year to carry out targeted actions to deliver the best outcomes for the bus services by:

- Continuing to fund existing bus services where they represented value for money or maintained essential connectivity for local communities;
- Increasing service frequency or restoring services withdrawn since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic where there was a reasonable prospect of the service becoming commercially viable within the BSIP+ funding period; and
- Forward funding improvements where S106 developer funding was due before the end of the BSIP+ funding period to increase the time period for the service to achieve commercial viability.

The meeting heard that should the recommendations be approved, the next step would be to work with bus operators to ascertain whether any service reductions were planned, noting that operators were only required to provide 70 days' notice to reduce or withdraw services. Work would also be undertaken with operators in regard to the actions listed above in order to produce a list of proposed service interventions designed to grow long-term patronage and revenues, whilst maintaining service levels to ensure social and economic connectivity for the community.

Cllr Harriet Pentland spoke in support of the aims of the report, recognising the importance of services for local people. Cllr Pentland also referenced the discussion of the topic at the recent Sustainable Communities EAP, that highlighted the need for funding and for it to be maximised locally.

Cllr Helen Harrison welcomed the report and the additional funding that would enable the Council to enhance local bus services, noting the positive impact good connectivity

had on health and wellbeing. Extended rural bus services would be one area for examination should funding be available for this purpose.

Cllr David Brackenbury also welcomed the funding from government, noting the need for the Council to work with service operators to provide the most comprehensive service possible, whilst cognisant of the fact that services needed to be utilised by passengers in order to remain viable.

Cllr David Howes noted the desire to see increases to available services, particularly in rural areas, noting examples of local communities coming together to successfully operate their own services.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the allocation of £569,412 of Bus Service Improvement Plan plus funding for each of the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25;
- b) Noted that the allocation of future funding including the Bus Service Improvement Plan plus funding for 2024/25 is dependent on the Council's overall bus budget (comprising the bus subsidy budget of £275,000 and concessionary fares budget of £2,907,320) not being reduced.
- c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director of Place & Economy to take any actions needed to award the local bus service contracts and any further decisions/actions relating to expenditure of the BSIP+ funding.

Reason for Recommendations – To spend the external funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

Alternative Options Considered – The Council could choose not to accept the external funding or to spend it in ways which were inconsistent with the terms and conditions of the grant. This would not be in the best interest of the community and would jeopardise future funding allocations. Launching new services in areas with limited demand for bus travel is unlikely to represent value for money in achieving the objectives of the funding, and not appropriate with no long-term funding certainty.

498 Kettering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The Chair invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee praised the report and thanked officers for their hard work in producing such a transparent, well-researched document. Cllr Lee noted that availability of safe cycle parking provision at either end of a trip did influence the decision of whether to undertake journeys by bicycle.

The Chair then invited Cllr Matt Binley to introduce a report that sought to provide information on the Kettering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), reported on the findings from the recent public consultation for the plan and sought approval for its adoption and progression of the proposals contained within it.

Cllr Binley thanked Cllr Lee for her comments, noting that the report not only linked into the Greenway Strategy report elsewhere on the agenda, but also Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy that was also set for consideration.

Cllr Binley noted that the results of the public consultation indicated 81% of respondents being in support of the LCWIP, with only 3% against. The report itself contained a significant quantity of supporting information, including the draft plan, engagement report and public consultation report.

It was noted that LCWIPs were recommended by the Department for Transport for short and long-term provisions for cycling and walking within the local area. The plan before members had been developed to identify prioritised cycling and walking infrastructure improvements for future investment. It was also to ensure that consideration be given to cycling and walking within both local planning and transport policies and strategies, and to make the case for future funding for walking and cycling infrastructure.

The meeting noted the significant level of analysis undertaken in regard to current provisions, as well as looking at the potential for new walking and cycling routes. Feedback from the public consultation had been taken into consideration as part of the technical report.

The proposals had been considered by the Sustainable Communities EAP, with no objections raised, while the Place and Environment Scrutiny Committee had welcomed the progress made to date.

It was noted that should the report be approved, a final version of the LCWIP would be published on the Council's website and work would commence on the development of preliminary designs for the routes and improvements identified, helping to form future funding bids.

Cllr Scott Edwards spoke to support the report, stating that he had attended two of the engagement sessions, referencing the need to reduce reliance on cars to transport children to school by improving cycle-friendly transport links.

Cllr Helen Harrison commended the report as an exciting piece of work that would assist in improving sustainable transport options, offering a tangible and positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents.

Cllr Harriet Pentland welcomed the report, noting the level of public support for the proposals and the benefit of its development in conjunction with the community. Cllr Pentland noted the green thread running through the work of the Council in various different sectors.

The Chair concluded debate by speaking in full support of the report and its recommendations.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the findings of the public consultation analysis for the Kettering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which forms **Appendix C** of this report;
- b) Approved and adopted the Draft Kettering LCWIP which forms **Appendix A** of this report as a Council policy document;
- c) Agreed that the prioritisation of routes within the Kettering LCWIP should form the basis of work to develop preliminary designs for the routes within existing budgets to form the basis of future funding bids. Any further external funding secured as a result will form the basis of future report(s) to Executive.

Reason for Recommendations – Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are the recommended Department for Transport approach for planning and co-ordinating provision for active travel modes. They provide a strategic and planned approach for short and long term provision for cycling and walking within the local area.

The Kettering LCWIP has been developed to enable NNC to:

- Identify prioritised cycling and walking infrastructure improvements for future investment;
- Ensure that consideration is given to cycling and walking within both local planning and transport policies and strategies; and
- Make the case for future funding for walking and cycling infrastructure.

Alternative Options Considered – While it would be possible to develop an LCWIP based on a different methodology to that contained in Government guidance on LCWIPs, this is not recommended as it would mean that the Council was less likely to secure Government funding. However, should alternative funding (such as S106) become available for particular corridors, it would be possible to progress lower priority schemes on that basis.

499 **Hackney Carriage De-zoning, Hackney Carriage Byelaws and Hackney Carriage Number Limits**

The Chair invited Cllr Dorothy Maxwell to address the Executive. Cllr Maxwell spoke to support the proposal of replacing the current four Hackney Carriage Zones in North Northamptonshire with one zone for the whole area and referenced the need for consistency across taxi operations.

The Chair then invited Neil Rielly to speak. Mr Rielly objected to the proposal of removing the current zones and made reference to the perceived damage that harmonisation of taxi services had caused to the trade locally. Mr Rielly also made

reference to the increased knowledge taxi drivers would require to ensure shortest routes were taken for fares across North Northamptonshire.

The Chair then invited Cllr David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration to introduce a report that sought approval of the commencement of a consultation process on the potential removal of the current four Hackney Carriage zones and replacement with one North Northamptonshire Zone. A review of associated Hackney Carriage Byelaws would also be required should the consultation process be approved.

Cllr Brackenbury thanked the speakers for their comments and emphasised that no conclusion as to the potential removal of the Hackney Carriage zones had been drawn, and that the views of all respondents to the full public consultation on the matter would be considered prior to any decision being reached.

It was heard that when North Northamptonshire Council had formed, for the purposes of Hackney Carriage licensing, the previous former authority areas continued to be the zones for licensing purposes including licences, vehicle plates, byelaws, fare tariffs and fees and charges. It was suggested that a consultation process be undertaken with a review for the potential removal of these zones to be replaced with one Council-wide zone to allow for efficiencies of scale and to provide the same service for all residents of North Northamptonshire.

It was noted that Department for Transport (DfT) guidance suggested that operation of one zone was best practice, with the consultation, if approved, due to last 12 weeks with input of the trade and its users sought. Cllr Brackenbury thanked officers and the Licensing and Appeals Committee for their work to date and stated that a robust response to the consultation would to be welcomed.

The Chair then invited the Chair of the Licensing and Appeals Committee, Cllr Jonathan Ekins to provide comment on the proposals. Cllr Ekins noted that it was not legally possible to amalgamate zones and also made reference to DfT guidance that one zone was best practice. Cllr Ekins stated that a single zone would reduce travelling costs and offer a more competitive, efficient and environmentally sustainable taxi service in North Northamptonshire. Cllr Ekins noted the consideration of the Sustainable Communities and Prosperous Communities Sustain Executive Advisory Panels (EAPs) and that the consultation outcome would be brought back to the Licensing and Appeals Committee before a final decision was made by the Executive.

Cllr Matt Binley spoke to note that he had chaired the Prosperous Communities EAP where approval had been provided for this matter undergoing public consultation, and noted cross-party support in this consideration.

RESOLVED

That the Executive;

- i) Approved commencement of a consultation process on the potential removal of the current four hackney carriage zones and replacement with one NNC zone;
- ii) Approved that the current Hackney Carriage Byelaws are reviewed.

Reason for Recommendation: Following the alignment of the hackney carriage tariff of fares and implementation of one Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy covering the whole of NNC's area implemented on 1st April 2023, it is appropriate to consider the retention of four separate zones for hackney carriage licencing. The review of the zones necessitates a review of the byelaws which govern hackney carriage licencing.

Alternative Options Considered in relation to the zones;

- i) To take no action and retain the current four hackney carriage zones.
- ii) Determine that this matter requires further consideration, but now is not the correct time to consider this matter and defer consultation to a later date.

Alternative Option Considered in relation to the byelaws;

- i) To take no action and retain the current Hackney Carriage Byelaws.

500 North Northamptonshire Greenway Strategy

The Chair invited Cllr Ross Armour to address the meeting. Cllr Armour welcomed the report but noted that a number of trails for development of the Greenway would rely on the good will of landowners. Cllr Armour also made reference to maintenance of the Greenway and the need for a funding strategy to undertake this. In relation to the Greenway between Wellingborough and Rushden there remained questions around flood-risk assessments as well as access to Irchester Country Park.

Cllr Dororthy Maxwell was then invited to speak. Cllr Maxwell also welcomed the report and noted the work of former East Northamptonshire councillor, Sarah Peacock in helping to create the Rushden Link. Cllr Maxwell thanked all those involved in the production of the positive strategy but noted that there would be a need for additional signage as well as litter and dog waste bins along the route.

Cllr Lyn Buckingham then addressed the Executive and also welcomed the report, noting the importance of the Greenway in linking tourist hotspots, referencing a former bus route that had formerly fulfilled this role. Cllr Buckingham queried whether a river-based taxi could offer a similar service. Cllr Buckingham also made reference to maintenance of waterways and biodiversity net gain considerations as part of the strategy.

The Chair, Cllr Helen Howell thanked the speakers for their comments before introducing a report that sought to introduce the North Northamptonshire Greenway Strategic Masterplan and the Feasibility Study for the proposed Rushden to Wellingborough phase of the Greenway and additionally requested approval to publicly consult on both the strategy and the Feasibility Study.

In response to comments from speakers, the Chair noted that work was ongoing to build relationships with landowners where land formed part of the proposed Greenway and confirmed maintenance of the route would be carried out, with work required in regard to signage and waste provision. The Chair also paid tribute to the work of Sarah Peacock, noting that it was positive to see the legacy of her efforts continuing.

The Chair noted that the Greenway Strategy fed into the Council's developing Tourism Strategy and would encourage local businesses to be involved, such as potentially offering bike hire facilities for use along the network. It was heard that Cllr Harriet Pentland was in contact with the Environment Agency to encourage maintenance of waterways they held responsibility for.

The meeting heard that work on the strategy had commenced in March 2023, alongside Phil Jones Associates, engineering consultants that had undertaken a national and local policy review to inform the context for the strategy, which demonstrated significant policy support for a strategic active travel network. A variety of other data sets had been collected and analysed to inform network alignments. A series of workshops had also been held to engage key stakeholders.

The meeting noted that the strategy would be widely consulted upon and refined following feedback received. Once finalised, the plan would be submitted for adoption to ensure it carried planning weight and could feed into other Council policies and strategies, including the emerging Strategic Plan for North Northamptonshire.

The Chair referenced the Feasibility Study for the Rushden to Wellingborough phase of the Greenway that sought the creation of a new commuter and leisure route utilising existing lanes, Rights of Way and access tracks.

The meeting heard that a Greenway Programme Board had been established in early 2022 with a number of key stakeholders and organisations involved, plus four Council members as area leads to assist in shaping the Greenway throughout North Northamptonshire. The aims of the strategy were detailed to the meeting. The Chair stated that a series of "design recommendation booklets" would be produced providing clear summaries of each Greenway route.

Concluding, the Chair thanked all those involved in the project to date, including officers, internal and external stakeholders and area leads.

Cllr Harriet Pentland welcomed the vital strategy before members and noted that the Greenway was a fantastic asset that was already well-used and would be boosted by expansion. Cllr Pentland noted that the strategy had been discussed at length by the Sustainable Communities EAP, the panel offering strong support for the recommendations.

Cllr David Brackenbury spoke to welcome the excellent report and masterplan that would underpin much of what the Council aimed to achieve in producing a rich, diverse area with opportunities for active lives and travel. Cllr Brackenbury further welcomed S106 developer contributions and noted that other funding pots could be accessed as well as the need to engage successfully with local landowners.

Cllr Helen Harrison noted that the report before members showed the Council leading the way in delivering a key strategic plan that was a vital piece of the work the authority was trying to achieve in North Northamptonshire.

Cllr Matt Binley noted the holistic approach the Council was taking to these kinds of issues and made reference to similar matters previously considered by the Executive that improved outcomes for local residents.

The Chair concluded debate by seeking engagement from as wide an audience as possible to support the development of the strategy before members.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the Greenway Strategic Masterplan for public consultation;
- b) Approved the Feasibility Study for the proposed Rushden to Wellingborough Greenway for public consultation; and
- c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism, in consultation with the Director of Public Health to make any amendments to the documents as a result of the public consultation, ahead of them being brought back to the Executive for adoption.

Reasons for Recommendations

- To support the Council and its partners to prioritise future routes for the Greenway and to inform future feasibility studies which will assist the Council to secure developer contributions and other external funding to deliver the programme.
- To allow for public consultation on the draft strategy and Rushden to Wellingborough Greenway Feasibility Study.

Alternative Options Considered: The alternative option would be to not have a Greenway Strategic Masterplan. However, this would not be a recommended approach as the strategy clearly outlines what the priority routes are for North Northamptonshire, based on comprehensive data and evidence, will inform future feasibility studies, which are required to secure external funding and developer contributions to enable the expansion of the Greenway across North Northamptonshire. It will also ensure a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of the Greenway.

501 Kettering Artificial Pitch

The Chair invited Cllr Ross Armour to address the meeting. Cllr Armour welcomed the report as a good news story, stating that it was key for the Council to develop its relationship with Northamptonshire Football Association (NFA) and how quickly the artificial pitch could be resurfaced. It was heard that once that work had been completed it was vital that use of the facility be made available fairly to allow use by the whole community.

The Chair thanked Cllr Armour for his comments noting that access to use of the artificial pitch would need to be ensured for the whole community. The Chair then introduced a report that sought approval to enter into a concession contract along with

a long-term ancillary lease agreement and submission of a funding bid to the Football Foundation to redevelop the artificial sports pitch and pavilion at Thurston Drive in Kettering.

It was noted that the existing artificial pitch had been in a condemned condition for a number of years, with the pavilion and athletics track requiring investment. The arrangement set out in the report would also support Kettering Harriers Athletics Club and assist in securing future investment into the athletics track and facilities to ensure the club met current and future England Athletics standards. It was heard that the estimated costs of the work were likely to be between £800,000 and £850,000.

The Council had been approached by NFA offering support for the continuation of facility provision at the site and to redevelop both football and athletic facilities. The NFA was keen to have a permanent base on the site to support grassroots delivery of football and to support the development of athletics provision and facilities alongside the Council, Kettering Harriers Athletic Club and England Athletics.

The proposal would be for NFA to take on management of the facility with a suggested 30-year lease and responsible for repairs maintenance, energy costs and Business Rates as well as a requirement to establish a sinking fund of up to £30,000 annually for a minimum of ten years towards future costs of pitch resurfacing. Should facility income generation exceed operational costs, a net profit share arrangement would be in place.

The Executive heard that a contract variation would be required to remove the facilities from the existing Freedom Leisure contract and end the lease with Kettering Harriers Athletic Club.

It was noted that the project offered a good opportunity for the Council to realise investment in leisure provision in Kettering by attracting grant funding, and to deliver high quality and accessible facilities for the community alongside the NFA.

Cllr Scott Edwards spoke to welcome the report, noting the opportunity for great partnership working that would encourage local people to engage in sporting activities across multiple sports.

Cllr Lloyd Bunday also spoke to welcome the report, noting the disrepair of the current pitch provision and the positivity of the NFA wishing to base themselves at the site and take on management responsibility for the facility.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the proposal to develop the Council's relationship with the Northamptonshire Football Association (NFA) by way of a concession contract together with an ancillary long-term peppercorn lease for a 30-year period, to include an agreement for continued use for Harriers Athletics club.

- b) Noted that the grant of the lease will require the NFA to have financial repairing responsibilities for the site including business rates and insurance, the agreement will include a net profit share. The agreement will be a secure business tenancy but will not have an automatic right of renewal.
- c) Approved the proposal for a contract variation for the Freedom Leisure contract to remove the facilities from the existing Leisure contract and end the lease with Harriers Athletics club.
- d) Noted the development of the Football Foundation funding application for the site, by North Northamptonshire Council in collaboration with the NFA.

Reasons for Recommendations

- The artificial pitch, pavilion and athletics track all need investment. The NFA are a credible organisation intent on providing football opportunities for the community. The proposed way forward will enable increased funding opportunities, redevelopment of the site and development of a delivery programme, supporting existing and future users.
- Match funding from the Council of £150k has already been identified within existing Leisure Services Capital budgets, the earmarking of this budget has been discussed and agreed at Strategic Capital Board in April 2022. This would attract maximum return from the Football Foundation with the NFA support.
- The Community will see an increase in quality of the facilities and services on offer in Kettering.
- The NFA will create a sinking fund for redevelopment in future years to comply with Football Foundation funding requirements which will secure investment in future years.
- To have increased opportunities of success to redevelop the areas needed, to ensure that the whole scheme is delivered to support the sports on the site and to achieve maximum leverage of funding from the Council's £150k capital investment, the NFA is the only organisation who will be able to achieve this from the Football Foundation as they are the National Governing body for Football and also have the staff resource to manage the site and deliver the sports development programmes.

Alternative Options Considered.

- *Continuation of scheme by the Council and no NFA involvement* - The Council continue to develop and submit the funding application to the Football Foundation on its own to redevelop the artificial pitch. This would limit the opportunities for success as the Council would not be able to leverage the percentage funding needed for the site and could result in just a resurface of the pitch. This in isolation would potentially be deemed insufficient by the Football Foundation to demonstrate viable security of payback of investment. The level of staffing resource to manage the site and future delivery of the sport development programme would put extreme pressure on the in-house leisure team and restrict other areas of

work for the Leisure Services.

- *Freedom Leisure* - continue with the leisure operator managing the site as part of one of the Kettering Leisure Contracts. The associated revenue and capital investment costs required for the site will put increased cost pressures onto the leisure contractor. The escalating costs of this type of project significantly reduce the viability for leisure providers. The requirement for match funding and the future ability to leverage further funding would be as limited as if the Council were to lead the project, and so could result in the project being just a pitch resurface and deemed insufficient for the Football Foundation funding application. It is fair to assume that there would also be further demands on NNC Leisure to provide expert support in ensuring the funding criteria is met, at a time when workforce demand is at capacity. Under the Football Foundation grant terms and conditions, a sinking fund must be established to ensure £20k/£30k is annually ringfenced for 10 years, to make end of warranty, surface replacement possible. It would be incumbent on Freedom Leisure to ensure that there is enough income generated to cover this and NNC to maintain budgets throughout the lifecycle. There is only 5 years left on the Freedom Leisure contract which makes any investment of resource unattractive to the contractor.
- *Community Asset Transfer* to Northamptonshire Football Association – the asset would be transferred in perpetuity; this would not allow time to fully develop and embed a relationship with the NFA. The delay that this process would entail could undermine the timing of an expert third party seeking an opportunity to deliver from this type of site and may mean they explore a similar alternative elsewhere. There has already been a lengthy delay in re-establishing the provision at the pitch and what this means for the local community who want to see this site back in action as soon as possible.
- *Do nothing on the site and to not invest in the facilities* - this would be of detriment to football and athletics offer for Kettering and North Northamptonshire. The Council is committed to supporting the community to be active and provide quality facilities and opportunities for its residents. The local community, football clubs and development opportunities have been limited and restricted since the pitch was closed for use. The community have been keen to see the pitch resurfaced and opened for use, they have been successful in raising funds for football in the area. The funding contributed towards some goals being installed in the local park so young people could have access to informal football whilst the pitch is out of action. This shows the level of feeling in the community and how important the pitch is to the local area. Not investing in this scheme was not considered an option for local sport or the local community, it would also have a longer term financial and staff resource implication for the Council as there would be a need to upgrade and bring the facility back into use at a later date.

502 Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy

The Chair invited Cllr Dorothy Maxwell to speak. Cllr Maxwell queried the cost of school transport and reinforced the need to encourage children to cycle and walk to school. Cllr Maxwell suggested that more use could be made of public buses while noting the requirement of provision of travel for those pupils with SEND considerations.

Cllr Lyn Buckingham was then invited to address the Executive. Cllr Buckingham welcomed the report and the consultation process that would commence if approved. Cllr Buckingham noted that the latest Sustainable Modes of Travel to School guidance from government had only recently been published and should be reflected within the consultation so parents could better understand the partnership between them and schools.

The Chair then invited Cllr Scott Edwards, Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills to introduce a report that sought to provide an update on the progress of the Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy and further sought approval for its public consultation.

Cllr Edwards noted that the Council had a statutory duty to produce and publish a Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy on an annual basis. The report before members was a positive opportunity to examine travel habits for children attending local schools, with a six-week consultation planned seeking input from schools, parents and pupils. The strategy would be reviewed and updated following the consultation and be brought back to Executive for adoption.

It was heard that the draft strategy had been developed in line with other strategic and emerging Council policies such as the Corporate Plan, Local Development Framework, Greenway Strategy and Local Walking and Cycling Investment Plans.

Cllr Edwards outlined the four main elements to promoting sustainable modes of transport to schools, noting that the engagement would facilitate conversation about current and future journeys to educational settings and would also ensure more effective adoption and delivery of the plan.

Four strategy targets were detailed to the meeting as below:

- Children and young people aged between 5 and 18 should average at least 16 minutes of moderate or intensely physical activity every day
- Every school should have a School Travel Plan by 2023
- All schools should have an Air Quality rating below WHO air pollution limits
- 55% of primary school aged children walk to school by 2025

Cllr Edwards detailed the benefits of utilising sustainable modes of transport to access education, both physical and mental, also noting the beneficial community impacts such as increased footfall for businesses and reduced parking issues, traffic congestion and driving emissions.

Cllr Matt Binley spoke to offer support for the report in encouraging individuals to use active forms of transport to get to school. Parking around schools remained an issue with certain schools in North Northamptonshire.

The Chair stated that development of such strategies by the Council offered beneficial impacts for everyone involved.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive agreed to the consultation of the Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy for six weeks from 14th September to 26th October 2023.

Reason for Recommendations: The consultation of the Strategy allows for the community and in particularly the school community to comment on the strategy whilst complying with the requirements to have an updated strategy by the required deadline of 19th September.

Alternative Options Considered:

- To adopt the Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy and engage with the community through its delivery
- Not update the Northamptonshire Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy.

None of these options are recommended.

503 The Chief Principal Social Worker's Annual Report

The Chair invited Cllr Helen Harrison, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing to introduce the Chief Principal Social Worker's Annual Report. Cllr Harrison noted that Sarah Morris, the Chief Principal Social Worker was in attendance to provide a thorough overview of the work undertaken during 2022/23, her reflections on this and the priorities for work in 2023/24.

Cllr Harrison noted that the role of the Chief Principal Social Worker was to lead and oversee the support, learning and development of social workers and social care workers to develop excellent social care practice for the people of North Northamptonshire.

Sarah Morris was then invited to present her annual report that offered the opportunity to reflect on the past year, the progress made and challenges faced, as well as priorities identified for 2023/24. It was noted that the report laid out a number of areas regarding learning and development and detailed the achievements made in 2022/23.

It was reported that the Council worked alongside a number of universities offering accredited courses, with three social worker apprentices recently concluding their degrees and qualifying. A further five individuals were a year into their course with another five recommended to begin their degree courses. In addition, courses were available in respect of more specialist roles, including Approved Mental Health Professionals, Best Interest Assessors and Practice Educators. Less formal development courses were also available for social workers and social care workers.

The meeting heard that work had been undertaken in tandem with colleagues in the Housing Team in relation to the use of the Mental Capacity Act, and the delivery of training regarding the Safeguarding Adults Review.

It was noted that as Chair of the Social Worker Development Group, Sarah and colleagues had worked together to develop the learning social care workers required, with a monthly practice audit put in place to audit work on particular cases to better understand the quality of work being delivered.

It was noted that as part of the support in place for social workers, the Chief Social Worker for England had met with colleagues and been impressed with work undertaken, with the visit boosting team morale. It was heard that Sarah offered support with individual cases or managers having Human Resources concerns and was the single point of contact with Social Work England.

It was reported that Sarah also Chaired the Learning and Development Group for Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board, which fitted well with learning and development needs across the rest of the service. Work was also focussed on developing strength-based best practice, putting people at centre of what the team was doing and drawing on resources within the local community. A practice framework detailing how Adult Social Work colleagues would like to deliver social care across North Northamptonshire had been developed and rolled out across the team.

The meeting noted positive feedback from Local Government Association (LGA) annual social work health-check, staff felt that the Council was providing more continuous professional development, although workloads had been highlighted as a challenge and work was ongoing work in reviewing structures to ensure manageable caseloads for staff.

With regards to future priorities, work was required around the area of assurance, developing a much clearer understanding of performance and reporting mechanisms. The other main priority was co-production, working with the people of North Northamptonshire regarding services offered and receiving feedback to better improve services.

Cllr Harrison thanked Sarah for her report and attendance, noting that the contents were very positive and that training programmes in place allowed the Council to develop its own staff, with feedback from the LGA being hugely positive. It was also noted that being clear about challenges and the direction the service needed to go in was beneficial.

The Chair spoke to note the positive feedback from the LGA for a Council that was still in its infancy.

Cllr David Brackenbury spoke to welcome the clarity and easy reading of the report which provided good explanation to non-specialists. Cllr Brackenbury noted the high level of positivity around the service, noting that morale and good leadership were key in achieving this.

RESOLVED

That the Executive accepted and noted the Chief Principal Social Worker's Annual Report and agrees the priorities for the forthcoming year.

Reasons for Recommendation- These priorities are ones which have been identified through the Chief Principal Social Worker's work, through work with the Senior Leadership Team and with front line workers, and they align with Adult Social Care's priorities to provide an excellent service for the people of North Northamptonshire.

Further priorities may be identified during the year and work picked up. The Chief Principal Social Worker's work includes wider themes and priorities will continuously be monitored and reviewed.

Alternative Options Considered: The Chief Principal Social Worker is responsible for completing an annual report to highlight work undertaken, priorities for the forthcoming year and the Chief PSW's view of the Council's Adult Social Care Services. As such it is important the Executive is provided with the same report that has been presented to Corporate Leadership Team; not to do so would leave Executive without information that has been presented to CLT and that is provided within an annual report from a postholder within a role which sits within statute.

504 Energy Procurement Contract

The Chair invited Cllr Matt Binley, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets to present a report that sought approval to secure a new energy broker contract with the intention of harmonising Council energy supplies across its whole estate from 1st October 2024 until September 2028, utilising a public buying organisation (PBO) under a fully managed service.

The meeting noted the various energy supply contracts inherited from legacy authorities, with these contracts set to expire in September 2024 offering an opportunity for harmonisation and obtaining improved value for money. By continuing to use a PBO, energy could be procured at better rates, while the organisation would invest in and retain the resources to provide energy monitoring and advice whilst providing a proactive, knowledgeable resource to monitor accounts and challenge utility providers on the Council's behalf.

Cllr Binley made reference to Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin and recent reports that on days of low wind and solar power generation, electricity was derived from fossil fuel sources instead. It was noted that the cost of entering into such a scheme would be approximately £500,000 per annum more expensive and it was therefore not proposed to pursue such a scheme and instead explore options for direct investment into other energy projects which could offset the Council's carbon footprint, such as energy efficiency projects or retrofitting buildings with renewable energy sources.

The meeting heard that the proposal had been reviewed by the Sustainable Communities EAP, with their observations highlighted, specifically concerns raised regarding Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive: -

- a) Noted the requirement to progress the procurement of a new energy contract to take effect from 1st October 2024
- b) Approved the procurement of Energy Supplies via a Public Buying Organisation, noting the proposed use of a Flexible Purchase in Advance (PIA) option, subject to the rates received.
- c) Approved the purchase of a Fully Managed Service (FMS) including a bureau service.
- d) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Assistant Director Assets & Environment to procure and award the contract following conclusion of the Council procurement process.

Reason for Recommendations:-

- To accord with the Council's procurement requirements.
- To support the Council's carbon management plan, and target to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- The recommended approach allows the Council to be supported by energy expertise and corporate landlord monitoring.
- The recommended approach supports budget forecasting by mitigating the risks of having supplies out of contract.

Alternative Options Considered:

- The Council currently does not have the expertise or resources available to undertake an individual procurement for energy supply, as the sovereign councils, like most Local Authorities, utilised public buying organisations.
- Do Nothing – this is not an option as it would not comply with procurement legislation or the Council's procurement policy. Additional costs would arise as any supplies not part of an agreed contract would be liable for 'out of contract' penalty rates. Moreover, there will be high uncertainty around utility costs as their prices are directly affected by market volatility.

505 The Establishment of a North Northamptonshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

The Chair invited Cllr Scott Edwards, Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills to introduce a report that sought approval for the establishment of a North Northamptonshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996.

Cllr Edwards noted that the current SACRE was countywide, with the proposal seeking the establishment of a North Northamptonshire specific SACRE, a body that supported the effective provision of Religious Education and collective worship in schools, with a multi-denominational membership.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive approved the establishment of a North Northamptonshire SACRE.

Reasons for Recommendation:

- To ensure the best outcomes for all children in North Northamptonshire for Religious Education (RE) and collective worship, and access to a high quality RE curriculum.
- To ensure that the following SACRE duties are met for North Northamptonshire Council:
 - Advise the local authority (LA) on matters related to agreed syllabus Religious Education (RE) and collective worship;
 - Publish an Annual Report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups;
 - Monitor the provision and quality of Agreed Syllabus RE and of collective worship in order to provide targeted advice and support on teaching Agreed Syllabus RE;
 - Advise the LA on the provision of training of teachers;
 - Consider complaints about RE and collective worship referred to them by their LA;
 - Consider whether changes need to be made to the Agreed Syllabus, in partnership with the LA;
 - Offer advice to the LA in respect of the Agreed Syllabus and its implementation.

Alternative Options Considered: There are no alternative options as legally each local authority must have its own SACRE according to Section 390 of the Education Act 1996. There is no reason why North Northamptonshire SACRE cannot work collaboratively with West Northamptonshire SACRE once they are both established in the future should this be agreeable.

506 Budget Forecast Update 2023-24 - Period 4

The Chair invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee expressed concerns in regard to the continued overspend of Northamptonshire Children's Trust and the possibility that the organisation could fail to deliver further planned savings. Cllr Lee also sought clarity regarding specific items contained within the appendix to the budget report.

Cllr Lyn Buckingham was then invited to address the Executive. Cllr Buckingham echoed concerns regarding the Children's Trust and also queried mitigations in place for the Dedicated Schools Grant overspend. Cllr Buckingham also sought clarity regarding savings details in the appendix to the report.

The Chair thanked the speakers for their attendance before inviting Cllr Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation to introduce a report that set out the forecast outturn position for the Council based on the Period 4 monitoring forecasts for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The meeting heard that the overall forecast for the General Fund, as at Period 4, was a forecast overspend of £7.354m based on the emerging data for 2023/24.

It was reported that uncertainty remained regarding the level of pay award for staff for 2023/24 as this was yet to be agreed. The main budgetary pressure remained that of the Children's Trust where the forecast overspend was £22.954m, an increase of £768,000 since the last reporting period. The cost to the Council of this overspend was £10.136m, with the meeting noting that this pressure would pose a significant financial risk to the Council should it not be mitigated.

Cllr Bunday made reference to directorate budgets, including those of Adults Services showing a £750,000 adverse movement, with the service seeing a significant increase in demand-led services. Public Health and Communities had a £100,000 adverse movement with the main factor being supplies and service costs. The Place directorate was showing an £874,000 favourable movement due to a reduction in utility costs, an increase in planning fees and reduction in operating costs.

The Council's overall outturn forecast for the Housing Revenue Account was an overspend of £16,000.

It was also reported that the Dedicated Schools Grant had a forecast pressure of £4m, with pressures relating to the high needs funding block that supported SEND provision.

Inflationary impact and changes in demand-led service volumes provided the main challenges to the Council's budgetary position going forward, with officers and members working hard to balance finances while protecting vital services, particularly those for the most vulnerable residents.

Cllr Helen Harrison spoke to note the importance of paying staff appropriately for their work and referenced the unprecedented level of service demand on Adult Services. It was heard that urgent work was required to understand and consequently mitigate these pressures.

Cllr Scott Edwards made reference to the frustration at the continued overspend by the Children's Trust and also raised the issue of the Dedicated Schools Grant overspend and the need to understand the increase in demand that had led to that position.

RESOLVED

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the Council's forecast outturn position for 2023/24 as summarised in Section 4, alongside the further analysis, risks and other considerations as set out in Section 5 to Section 7 of the report.
- b) Noted the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2023/24 savings proposals in **Appendix A**.
- c) Approved an increase in the gross budget of £471k to be funded from the Homelessness Prevention Grant for Ukraine as set out in paragraph 5.71.

Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2023/24 as at Period 4 and consider the impact on this year and future years budgets.

Alternative Options Considered: The report focuses on the forecast revenue outturn against budget for 2023/24 and makes recommendations for the Executive to note the current budgetary position as such there are no specific choices within the report.

507 Urgent Items

Cllr Scott Edwards read out a statement on behalf of The Leader of the Council, Cllr Jason Smithers that offered heartfelt thanks to the Executive Director of Children's Services, AnnMarie Dodds for her hard work and commitment to the Council, her staff, members and most importantly everyone in North Northamptonshire the Council served during her tenure.

The statement noted that being the Director of Children's Services was not an easy job, but AnnMarie had carried out her role steadfastly with her knowledge and experience being invaluable to Cllr Edwards as portfolio holder, the Leader and other Executive colleagues.

The meeting noted that AnnMarie had been in the role since March 2022, and as Assistant Director prior to that, being instrumental in the safe transition of Children's Services from the former county council to North Northamptonshire Council and through this professional leadership the Council had secured significant levels of funding to help develop family hubs in the area. In addition, there had been school upgrades and capital improvement works, improvements to SEND provision and a range of measures and initiatives that put the Council in a stronger position to move forward.

The Leader's statement concluded by wishing AnnMarie well in her new role at another authority, noting that she would leave Children's Services in a good position for her successor to pick up from.

Cllr Edwards stated that he had learnt much in his current role from AnnMarie and offered his own thanks to her for that.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 12.57 pm

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 5 – August 2023)
Report Author	Tom Barden, Head of Performance, Intelligence and Partnerships Tom.Barden@northnorthants.gov.uk
Lead Member	Cllr Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation

Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Detailed Performance Indicator Report Period 5 2023/24 (August 2023)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide an update on the Council's performance across a range of indicators as measured by the Council's suite of Key Performance Indicators for period 5 (August) 2023-24.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report provides an assessment of the Council's performance in respect of the Key Performance Indicators for 2023/24 as at period 5.
- 2.2. A detailed assessment of the performance of services as measured by key performance indicators for period 5 has been included as **Appendix A**.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive:
 - a) Note the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 5 (August) 2023/24, set out in the appendix to this report.
- 3.2. Reason for Recommendations – to better understand the Council’s performance as measured by Key Performance Indicators as at Period 5 (August) 2023/24.
- 3.3. Alternative Options Considered: Reporting performance data on a less frequent basis is an option but monthly reporting is considered useful at this stage of the Council’s existence, reporting alongside budget information.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. A detailed assessment of the performance of services as measured by Key Performance Indicators for period 5 has been included as **Appendix A**. This includes comments / exception reports on each of the performance indicators reported.
- 4.2. 59 Key Performance Indicators are reported for this period, of which 54 are reported on a monthly basis, 4 on a quarterly basis and 1 on a termly basis. The 4 quarterly indicators were due to be reported last period (quarterly, one month in arrears), but were delayed, so they are included in this period’s report.
- 4.3. The list of Key Performance Indicators, to be reported throughout this financial year (2023-24) was approved by the Executive Committee at their meeting on the 16th March and can be found in item 405 ([Performance Management and Reporting Arrangements 2023-24](#)).
- 4.4. Queries raised by Members on the content of this report will be responded to within 12 working days of the Executive meeting, as agreed with the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. It is important that the format and presentation of performance data meets the needs of its audience. Therefore, the Council will always welcome any feedback and/or suggestions on how the performance report could be further developed to help facilitate understanding and performance improvement.
- 5.2. It is envisaged that additional indicators will be added to the Key Performance Indicator set as time goes on. Any changes to indicators will be reported to the Executive and Corporate Scrutiny committee.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. To continue to develop and embed a strong performance management framework and culture at North Northamptonshire Council.
- 6.2. To continue to embed and review the suite of Key Performance Indicators so that the Council can more effectively measure how it is performing against its vision and key commitments outlined within its Corporate Plan.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. Performance monitoring allows the Council to drive continuous improvement for North Northamptonshire and identify areas of concern early. Services that submit data returns have many projects that are subject to the Council's Transformation Plan. Accurate and consistent corporate performance data may also assist the compilation of, and aid the success of, external funding bids.
- 7.1.2. This report should be read alongside the Budget Forecast 2023/24 monthly reports once available. By considering both reports together, a broader view of the Council's performance and the relationship between resource allocation and service delivery can be understood.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. The Council is required to provide statutory monitoring and funding returns to central government departments and their agencies. The Council is currently on course to comply with these requirements. Note that the workload and deadlines for achieving these statutory and mandatory deadlines can prove challenging, particularly where returns are significantly increasing in complexity (this is currently the case for Adult Social Care and Education returns).
- 7.2.2. Monitoring performance is a key element of the Council's Governance Framework. The Council has made performance measurement and management a priority and views it as central to both Council transparency and to the Council's improvement agenda. The Council has adopted a written [Performance Management Framework](#) which describes its principles and processes for Performance Management.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. Effective performance management directly contributes to the delivery of the key commitments set out within the Council's Corporate Plan.

7.4. Risk

7.4.1 There are a number of risks relating to performance information:

(a) Poor data quality – Inaccurate data will inevitably lead to less accurate decision making.

(b) Lack of data – Failing to measure key service activities can leave the Council without a clear view of its performance. This prevents the effective oversight of key services, including those affecting the safety and wellbeing of residents.

(c) Incorrect interpretations – Caution should be applied to the interpretation of performance data, particularly given the adjustments that have been made by services to adapt when there was a COVID pandemic. Misunderstanding the performance picture can lead to ineffective decision-making, reputational damage, and inaccurate resourcing.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. Formal consultation was carried out in the development of the Corporate Plan.

7.5.2. Informal consultation with relevant stakeholders, including Executive Members and Scrutiny Members (through the scrutiny committees) was completed for the Key Performance Indicators included in this report and for the development of the new suite of Key Performance Indicators for 2023/24.

7.5.3. Informal consultation with relevant stakeholders will continue to take place as we continue to develop the Council's Performance Management Framework.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This report serves as information in respect of the Council's performance for Period 5 (August) 2022/23, therefore consideration by the Executive Advisory Panel was not necessary.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. Performance reports will be considered by future meetings of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, following reports to the Executive.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. Equality-related performance indicators are in development.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. The Council continues to develop its set of indicators that provide information about how it is meeting its key commitment to helping deliver a green and sustainable environment.

7.9.2. For 2023-24, the Council is measuring and reporting on the following Green, Sustainable Environment key performance indicators:

Indicator Reference Number	Indicator Name	Frequency
GSE01	Number of E-Scooter trips	This was measured monthly in 2022-23 and is to be measured quarterly in 2023-24.
GSE02	Number of E-Scooter users	This was measured monthly in 2022-23 and is to be measured quarterly in 2023-24.
GSE03	Co2 savings from E-Scooters	This was measured monthly in 2022-23 and is to be measured quarterly in 2023-24.
GSE04	Number of electric vehicle charging points publicly available	This was reported on once a year in 2022-23 and featured in the P7 (October) report. It is to be measured quarterly in 2023-24.
GSE05	Number of electric vehicles per charge point	This was reported on once a year in 2022-23 and featured in the P7 (October) report. It is to be measured quarterly in 2023-24.
GSE06	Fly tipping: number of fly tips reported	This is reported quarterly.
GSE07	Percentage of waste diverted from landfill	This is reported quarterly.
GSE08	Co2 saving from Delivery Robots	This is a new KPI for 2023-24 and is to be reported quarterly.
GSE09	Volume of pesticides used within NNC grounds services operations	This is a new KPI for 2023-24 and is to be reported quarterly.

GSE10	Habitat area improved for pollinators (hectares)	This is a new KPI for 2023-24 and is to be reported annual.
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7.9.3. The Assets & Environment service area have developed a Carbon Management Plan which was considered and approved by Executive at their meeting on 22nd December 2022. The Tree Management and Care Policy and Pollinator Strategy was considered and approved by the Executive at an earlier meeting on 25th August 2022. These policies will consider the Council's commitment to achieving Net Zero by 2030 and provide appropriate performance indicators to measure progress to achieving this target. This will include indicators that measure the councils carbon emissions along with other environmental projects currently being developed.

7.10. **Community Impact**

7.10.1. Effective policy and decision-making, and scrutiny, guided by good quality, timely and relevant performance data can make a significant difference to the delivery of public services and therefore have an equally significant impact on the local communities.

7.11. **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1. No crime and disorder impacts have been identified.

8. **Background Papers**

8.1. [Performance Indicator Report Period 4 \(July\) 2023-24](#) reported to the meeting of the Executive on 14th September 2023.

8.2. [Performance Management and Reporting Arrangements 2023-24](#) reported to the meeting of the Executive on the 16th March 2023.

8.3. The Corporate Plan, reported to the meeting of the [Executive on 18th November 2021](#), adopted by Council on the 1st December 2021.



North Northamptonshire Council Performance Report - August 2023

Key to Performance Status Colours

Progress Status Key:
Green - On target or over-performing against target
Amber - Under-performing against target but within 5% corporate tolerance (or other agreed tolerance as specified)
Red - Under-performing against target by more than 5% (or other agreed tolerance as specified)
Dark Grey - Data missing
Grey - Target under review
Turquoise - Tracking Indicator only

Children's Trust Progress Status Key:
Green - At target or better
Amber - Below target - within tolerance
Red - Below target - outside tolerance
Grey - No RAG

Direction of Travel Key	
An acceptable range = within 5% of the last period's performance	
↑G	Performance has improved from the last period – Higher is better
↓G	Performance has improved from the last period – Lower is better
↑	Performance has deteriorated but is still on or above target or within an acceptable range of 5% of the last period – Lower is better
→	Performance has stayed the same since the last period
↓	Performance has deteriorated but is still on or above target or within an acceptable range of 5% of the last period – Higher is better
↑R	Performance has deteriorated from the last period – Lower is better
↓R	Performance has deteriorated from the last period – Higher is better
↑	Actual increased - neither higher or lower is better
⇒	Actual has stayed the same since the last period - neither higher or lower is better
↓	Actual decreased - neither higher or lower is better

Children's Trust Direction of Travel Key	
↑G	Performance improved since last month
→	Performance the same as last month
↓A	Performance declined since last month

Performance Terminology key

TBC	To be confirmed
TBD	To be determined
n/a	Not applicable
Actual	The actual data (number/percentage) achieved during the reporting period
Benchmark	A comparator used to compare the Council's performance against. The 2020/21 average for Unitary Councils in England has been used where available unless otherwise stated.
Numerator	Number as part of the percentage calculation which shows how many of the parts indicated by the denominator are taken. See example below.
Denominator	The total number which the numerator is divided by in a percentage. See example below.
EXAMPLE Performance Indicator	% Calls answered
Numerator	Number of calls answered
Denominator	Total number of calls received

Place & Economy														
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 23-24	Year to Date 2023-24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
Growth & Regeneration														
Safe and thriving places	STP15	Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or within agreed extension of time)		Yes (we have set the target higher than statutory level)	94% (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform Q4 2022/23)	92.31%	84.00%	75%	75%	→	Higher is better	90%	85% - 90%	Performance this month has remained steady, but because case numbers for major applications are relatively low, this is the result of two applications being determined outside of the statutory time frame. Year-to-date performance is slightly below target and tolerance. Since the number of applications is relatively low at this stage, individual case performance significantly impacts the overall results.
Safe and thriving places	STP16	Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or within agreed extension of time)		Yes (we have set the target higher than statutory level)	87% (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform Q4 2022/23)	73.91%	78.40%	81.82%	86.49%	↑G	Higher is better	85%	80% - 85%	Performance against the target has improved this month, and is above the target. Planning officer capacity remains challenging, but recruitment is ongoing. Unfortunately, the capacity has also been impacted in the last couple of months by sickness.
Safe and thriving places	STP17	Percentage of other (including householder applications) planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or within agreed extension of time)		Yes (we have set the target higher than statutory level)	88% (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform Q4 2022/23)	83.81%	85.06%	89.02%	85.33%	↓	Higher is better	88%	83% - 88%	Performance has dropped this month, and is slightly below target, but within tolerance. Planning officer capacity remains challenging, but recruitment is ongoing. Unfortunately, capacity has been impacted in the last couple of months by sickness.

Place & Economy														
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 23-24	Year to Date 2023-24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
Highways & Waste														
Safe and thriving places	STP29	Number of Defects Outstanding on the network (at end of period), split by category		No - Contractual	n/a	4069	20178	3533	3114	↓G	Lower is better	No target - tracking indicator only	N/A	The carriageway defects decreased slightly in the August, which is typical during summer. Existing backlog slights with the expected levels for each category based on monthly reports and completion schedules.
		P1 (Target response time within 24 hours)				0	0	0	0	→				
		P2 (Target response time within 7 days)				0	58	13	4	↓G				
		P3 (Target response time within 28 days)				608	3378	398	281	↓G				
		P4 (Target response time within 26 weeks)				3461	16742	3122	2829	↓G				
Safe and thriving places	STP30	Number of Defects Repaired in the network in period, split by category		No - Contractual	n/a	4953	7900	1575	1372	↓R	Higher is better	No target - tracking indicator only	N/A	The total carriageway defects decreased this month. The number of P3 and P4 defects requiring repair has slightly decreased compared to July. This reduction is anticipated due to fewer overall defects, enabling the contractor to speed up P4 repairs. More of the works identified as requiring a 26 week repair, will have been completed before pothole numbers increase again next winter.
		P1 (Target response time within 24 hours)				6	6	0	0	→				
		P2 (Target response time within 7 days)				217	398	54	127	↑G				
		P3 (Target response time within 28 days)				2863	3911	530	518	↓				
		P4 (Target response time within 26 weeks)				1867	3585	991	727	↓R				
Safe and thriving places	STP31	Percentage of defects responded to within the timeframes specified, split by category		No - Contractual	n/a	86.81% (3737 out of 4305)	91.95% (9658 out of 10503)	97.15% (1090 out of 1122)	96.78% (1291 out of 1334)	↓	Higher is better	P1 and P2 97.5%	No Tolerance	All targets have been met again this month.
		P1 (Target response time within 24 hours)				100% (6 out of 6)	100% (6 out of 6)	N/A (0 out of 0)	N/A (0 out of 0)	→		97.5%		
		P2 (Target response time within 7 days)				99.09% (217 out of 219)	99.5% (402 out of 404)	100% (57 out of 57)	100% (128 out of 128)	→		97.5%		
		P3 (Target response time within 28 days)				86.72% (2293 out of 2644)	94.68% (427 out of 451)	95.91% (445 out of 464)	94.68% (427 out of 451)	↓		90%		
		P4 (Target response time within 26 weeks)				85.03% (1221 out of 1436)	97.48% (736 out of 755)	97.84% (588 out of 601)	97.48% (736 out of 755)	↓		90%		

Finance Services															
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	August 2022/23	Quarter 1	Year to Date 2023/24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
Revenues & Benefits															
Modern Public Services	MPS05	% of council tax collected in the year debit raised	<p>Line chart showing % of council tax collected in the year debit raised from April to March for 2022/23 and 2023/24. The chart shows a steady increase from approximately 10% in April to 100% in March. The 2023/24 data is slightly above the 2022/23 data.</p>	Yes, reported on a quarterly basis but no target set by government	95.97% (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform 2022/23)	48.55% (YTD) 103.30% achieved of the monthly target (47.00%)	29.39% (YTD) 104.96% achieved of the target (28.00%)	47.82% (YTD) 101.74% achieved of the target (47.00%)	38.60% (YTD) 101.58% achieved of the monthly target (38.00%)	47.82% (YTD) 101.74% achieved of the monthly target (47.00%)	↑G	Higher is better	98% (Annual target)	No tolerance	Performance is above target, however it is slightly below compared to the same point in time last year. This is likely to be due to the cost of living crisis and we will continue to monitor the situation closely.
						£22,518,235.17 (collected in Aug)	£71,233,944.18 (collected YTD)	£116,007,803.53 (collected YTD)	£22,340,264.84 (collected in July)	£22,433,594.51 (collected in Aug)					
Modern Public Services	MPS04	% of business rates collected in the year debit raised	<p>Line chart showing % of business rates collected in the year debit raised from April to March for 2022/23 and 2023/24. The chart shows a steady increase from approximately 10% in April to 100% in March. The 2023/24 data is slightly above the 2022/23 data.</p>	Yes, reported on a quarterly basis but no target set by government	97.13% (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform 2022/23)	46.36% (YTD) 98.64% achieved of the monthly target (47.00%)	28.92% (YTD) 103.29% achieved of the target (28.00%)	47.38% (YTD) 100.80% achieved of the target (47.00%)	38.79% (YTD) 102.08% achieved of the monthly target (38.00%)	47.38% (YTD) 100.80% achieved of the monthly target (47.00%)	↓	Higher is better	98% (Annual target)	No tolerance	Performance is above target and above last year's collection at the same point in time, which represents a strong start to the year. Close monitoring will continue due to the impact of the cost of living crisis.
						£12,774,678.67 (collected in Aug)	£47,126,437.48 (collected YTD)	£76,508,574.09 (collected YTD)	£15,720,547.42 (collected in July)	£13,661,589.19 (collected in Aug)					

Children's Services

Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 2023-24	Year to Date 2023-24	April 2023/24	May 2023/24	June 2023/24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
Children's Trust (This data is for the whole of Northamptonshire)																	
Better, brighter futures	BBF05 (KPI 2)	% of referrals with a previous referral within 12 months		Yes (also contractual) - target is contractual but not statutory	21.9% Mean for Northamptonshire Children's Services LAIT near neighbours 2021/22	26% (2,467)	25.8% (3,747)	28% (703)	23.3% (924)	25.4% (840)	22.6% (690)	31.0% (590)	↓ A	Lower is better	29%	25% - 40%	Re-referrals have declined this month but within tolerance. It remains an area of ongoing focus with audit and review for learning. The front door review and subsequent action plan which will be developed with the partnership in October is expected to reduce re-referrals going forward. The dedicated education roles in MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) are working positively with schools to ensure appropriate referrals, and positive feedback from schools about their roles is increasing. Work with all partners continues to ensure appropriate and robust application of thresholds. Steps have been taken to strengthen the Early Help partnerships with Partnership Support Team (Early Help MASH) being placed in the MASH pods and a leaner step down process. It is anticipated that the strengthened model in MASH and developments in Child & Family Support Services (CFSS)/Early Help will continue to support appropriate reduction going forward in addition to the external front door review. The high number of cases stepping down is presenting challenges in regards to capacity in Family Support/Early help partnership. COVID: and cost of living crisis has an impact on volume and quality of re-referrals (Trust commentary).
Better, brighter futures	BBF06 (KPI 3)	% of single assessments authorised within 45 working days		Yes (also contractual) - target is contractual but not statutory	88% We are in the process of identifying more up to date benchmark data for this PI.	95% (2,792)	93.3% (4,857)	94% (774)	92.7% (928)	92.7% (1,090)	95.3% (1,032)	92.2% (1,033)	↓ A	Higher is better	85%	85% - 95%	Assessment timescales remain consistently above target and national average, decreasing to 92.2% this month. All managers monitor this very closely via daily reports. A narrative is provided for cases that go beyond 45 days and this remains a very small minority. Whilst staffing has presented challenges due to vacancies and staff performance issues in Duty & Assessment Team (DAAT), there is now a positive move towards more appropriate staffing levels being achieved and sustained. In addition to timeliness, we work on increasing the quality of assessments and more effective use of Signs of Safety (SoS) in our interventions (Trust commentary).
Better, brighter futures	BBF07 (KPI 8)	% Children in care with three or more placements in the previous 12 months		Yes (also contractual) - target is contractual but not statutory	10% Mean for Northamptonshire Children's Services LAIT near neighbours 2021/22	11.1% (1,191)	12.1% (1,179)	10.5% (1,212)	10.6% (1,205)	11.1% (1,191)	11.3% (1,191)	12.1% (1,179)	↓ A	Lower is better	10%	5% - 15%	Performance has declined to 12.1% this month. Consideration of various options to improve sufficiency is continuing, including exploration of capital investment, additional in house resources, as well as improved engagement with the market. Planning permission granted for two new emergency homes and valuing care project (Circle2Success) demonstrating positive impact. Through improved edge of care arrangements, the close oversight on admissions to care, and the developments within placement sufficiency, we are confident we can reduce the need for child to move home as frequently. Positively, Children's Home Capital Programme application with the Department for Education (DfE) has been successful, and that should also support progress in this area. COVID: Placement sufficiency remains a challenge, sustained performance in this work should also have a positive impact on KPI 7 (Trust commentary).
Better, brighter futures	BBF08 (KPI 9)	% of young people now aged 17 - 21 and in employment, education or training who were looked after when aged 16		Yes (also contractual) - target is contractual but not statutory	56.95% Mean for Northamptonshire Children's Services LAIT near Neighbours 2021/22	62.7% (684)	63.3% (689)	64% (687)	63% (686)	62.7% (684)	62.9% (685)	63.3% (689)	↑ G	Higher is better	55%	50% - 60%	This month has seen performance increase slightly to 63.3%, still comparing favorably with 58% across England. Focus in this area continues to be driven through arrangements with local colleges, the virtual school and the senior personal advisor (Education and Employment) with further review of contracted arrangements (Prospects) to be undertaken to ensure we have the best approach/ support for young people. Work with councils to ensure Education, Employment & Training (EET) opportunities and support is in place for our care leavers. COVID: has had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of care leavers, targeted work support care leavers to access EET (Trust commentary).
Better, brighter futures	BBF09 (KPI 10)	% of young people now aged 17 - 21 and living in suitable accommodation who were looked after when aged 16		Yes (also contractual) - target is contractual but not statutory	89% (All English Authorities 2020/21 - LG Inform)	95.5% (684)	93.3% (689)	95% (687)	97.2% (686)	95.5% (684)	94.7% (684)	93.3% (689)	↓ A	Higher is better	90%	85% - 95%	Performance for this month decreased to 93.3%, still above the target of 90%. We know that we have some young people in unsuitable accommodation, including a number of young people sentenced to custody, and some who have no accommodation at all. We work hard to address this, tenaciously seeking to engage with young people who may see our attempts at support as interference. The care leavers housing protocol is in place and work is being progressed under the governance of a strategic group; this includes a review of the housing panels and engagement with the housing associations. Helpful discussions with colleagues in the Councils is placing the housing sufficiency needs of care leavers as central to their housing strategies. The Accommodation Transitions Panel is now in operation and ensures all young people have a comprehensive, accommodation-focused, shared, and timely transition plan (Trust commentary).
Better, brighter futures	BBF27 (KPI 5)	% of initial child protection conferences held within 15 days of a strategy discussion being initiated		Yes (also contractual) - target is contractual but not statutory	84.3% Mean for Northamptonshire Children's Services LAIT near neighbours 2021/22	36% (343)	27.0% (560)	13% (134)	47.1% (104)	56.2% (105)	21.8% (87)	5.4% (130)	↓ A	Higher is better	81%	66% - 86%	Performance declined this month, and is well below where we need it to be. High volumes of initial child protection conferences (ICPC) demand continues (August - 130). It is positive to have 83% ICPC conversion to Child Protection (CP) Plans. June / July data is negatively impacted by high numbers of 1st review Review Child Protection Conferences (RCPC's) required after record high number of ICPCs in April; this impacted on CP Chair availability for ICPC's in-month. All new Child Protection Conferences (CPC)'s need to be planned into already busy diaries - CP Chair average caseload remains above 100 (well above recommended levels). Average no. days from strategy discussion initiated to ICPC in August = 28. Performance is negatively impacted by 3 business support vacancies in CP business support, making SQAS capacity the main reason for late ICPC's in August. Recruitment is in progress. Late convening requests continue to contribute to this, and are spread between Safeguarding and DAAT teams. DAAT business support gaps continue to present challenges and an additional post will be in place from the end of the month. ICPC's are tracked and referring managers are challenged to identify causes of delay and ensure individual, team or whole-service learning is addressed. Staff changes continue to impact on performance as new staff become familiar with local procedures / systems. DAAT managers support Social Workers with additional training on process, recording and requesting strategy discussions and convening conferences. A refreshed duty CP Chair system is in place to assist referring managers with threshold decision-making and this is promoted to all teams (Trust commentary).

Children's Services																		
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 2023-24	Year to Date 2023-24	April 2023/24	May 2023/24	June 2023/24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments	
Better, brighter futures	BBF28	Number of children with a Child Protection Plan		Yes	565 Mean for Northamptonshire Children's Services LAIT near neighbours 2021/22	714	711	680	687	714	702	711	↑	No polarity	TBD			<p>771 children were subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) in August 2023. This marks an increase in CPPs compared with last month (+69 children). Prior to May 2023, there were less than 700 children were in the cohort between. However, the last three months have registered between 702-771 children with CPPs.</p> <p>There are 131 children more in the CPPs cohort than one year ago and 125 more children than two years ago. The cohort has increased by a net 95 children since the beginning of the academic year 2022-23. By comparison, the corresponding period in the last two years saw decreases instead.</p> <p>81.7% of Child Protection (CP) visits were on time in August 2023. This marks a decline since last month (91.0% in July 2023). In the last twelve months, an average of 86.9% of children on CP plans has an up-to-date CP visits. An average of 86.8% of visits have been on time in the last six months, slightly below the averages of the corresponding periods of last year (90.2%) and two years ago (87.5%).</p>
Better, brighter futures	BBF29	Number of children in care		Yes	1,050 Mean for Northamptonshire Children's Services LAIT near neighbours 2021/22	1,191	1,179	1,212	1,205	1,191	1,191	1,179	↓	No polarity	TBD			<p>The number of children in care was 1,179 at the end of August 2023. There are now 47 children less in care than a year ago. August 2023 marks the third consecutive month where less than 1,200 children have been recorded in this cohort. Prior to July 2022, the cohort had never exceeded 1,200. However, between July 2022 and May 2023, the number of children in care ranged from 1,205 to 1,241. August 2023 marks the third consecutive month where less than 1,200 children have been recorded in this cohort. So far in 2023-24, an average of 1,195 children have been reported to be in care. An average of 1,216 children have been reported to be in care in the last 12 months, a slightly higher outturn compared with the average during the same period of last year (1,184) and two years ago (1,150).</p> <p>120 children in care were also identified in the Education Health Care (EHC) cohort this month (ICF commentary).</p>
Learning, Skills & Education																		
Better, brighter futures	BBF18b	% of EHC (education health care) plans completed in month issued within 20 weeks (including exceptions)		Yes (part of SEN 2 return)	37.8% Mean for NNC Children's Services LAIT near neighbours 2021/22	66.7%	73.8%	69.6%	46.7%	83.7%	74.1%	87.7%	↑G	Higher is better	Target under review	n/a		<p>The summer has allowed the team to focus on writing and finalising plans.</p> <p>The team have worked hard over the past three months to develop a data dashboard and a weekly leadership team meeting to monitor key areas of team performance and highlight any issues that may prevent the team from achieving. This strategy alongside the piloting a new organisation of the team which was started in July 2023 has hugely benefitted the team and its ability to write plans and achieve the 88.9%. This figure does not reflect the number of plans finalised by naming a specific school. The team have systems and processes in place to complete the 20-week process including naming however the team are unable to achieve this at this time due to the impact of late advices. The team are working collaboratively with the Educational Psychology (EP) services and health to try to improve the timeliness of returned advices (Service commentary).</p>
						96 out of 144	203 out of 275	39 out of 56	21 out of 45	36 out of 43	43 out of 58	64 out of 73						
Better, brighter futures	BBF19 (E1)	Percentage of school age Child/Children in Care (CIC) who had a PEP (personal education plan) in the previous academic term.			n/a	n/a Termly reported	95%	95%	n/a Termly reported	n/a Termly reported	n/a Termly reported	94%	↓	Higher is better	95%	90% - 95%		<p>PEP (personal education plan) compliance at statutory school age has dipped below the 95% target. The downward trend mirrors an upward trend in the number of children and young people in care. The number of PEPs completed has actually increased since last term. We will work with, and support our partners (Northamptonshire Children's Trust and education settings across the country) to meet the challenges presented by the increase in numbers.</p> <p>PEP completion rates for the early years subgroup can see big % swings due to small cohort numbers. PEP completion rates also reflect the case-by-case decisions made by the corporate parent as to whether a child should attend nursery provision. To support this subgroup further, for this academic year the Virtual School (VS) has filled a previously vacant achievement officer post, which will focus exclusively on the early years cohort.</p> <p>PEP performance at Post 16 has been sustained and PEP quality improved despite an increase in the cohort size. Challenges remain in increasing compliance to statutory school age levels. Stability in the VS Post 16 work force should assist in this aim, however if recent increases in the cohort size are sustained improving compliance further could prove challenging.</p> <p>The Virtual School provide an effective system and process that ensures that PEPs are completed consistently. This includes: commissioning and maintaining an online PEP system, ensuring those who require it have access to the system, providing training and guides on using the system, providing regular communication and prompts to partners to book and hold the meeting, and providing regular reporting to Northamptonshire Children's Trust on the progress of meetings held (Service commentary).</p>
						342 out of 362	333 out of 352					342 out of 362						

Children's Services																		
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 2023-24	Year to Date 2023-24	April 2023/24	May 2023/24	June 2023/24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments	
Better, brighter futures	BBF22	Number of children without a school place		No		274	316	100	140	274	291	316	↑R	Lower is better	Target under review	n/a	<p>The number of children without a school place rose by 25 to 316 children at the end of August 2023, the highest volume reported in the four months for which figures are available.</p> <p>During the last four months, the proportion of the total children without a school place who are in School Admissions processes has risen from 33.8% in May to 57.0% in August. During the same period of time, the number of children without a school place who are in School Admissions processes has more than doubled. By comparison, the number of children without a school place in Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support/ Educational Health Care (EHC) Services has increased by a net 8 children and the number of children without places in Educational Inclusion & Partnership (EIP) Services has decreased by a net 3 children (Children's Performance Team commentary).</p>	
Better, brighter futures	BBF32	Current number of home educated children		Not yet statutory but reported as part of "Elective Home Education/ Children missing in education" data return to DfE.		855	790	855	876	855	783	790	↑	No polarity	N/A - Tracking	n/a	<p>790 children were electively home education at the end of August 2023. Over 800 children were home educated between March 2023-June 2023. This marks the second consecutive occasion in six months that volume of home educated children was below 800.</p> <p>A peak of 876 was registered in May 2023, the highest number of electively home educated children so far. This time last year there were 638 electively home educated children, so the cohort is 19% greater than it was at the end of August 2022.</p> <p>35% of electively home educated children have been educated at home for more than two years (274) and a further 18% have been educated at home for 1-2 years (144).</p> <p>Out of the 790 home educated children in August, 25 children were also in the social care caseload, 24 children were in the Children in need (CIN) cohort, 1 child was in the Child Protection (CP) cohort, 2 children were in the Children missing in education (CME) cohort and 59 children were in the Education, Health & Care (EHC) cohort (Children's Performance Team commentary).</p>	
Better, brighter futures	BBF33	Number of children currently missing from education (Year 1-11)		Not yet statutory but reported as part of "Elective Home Education/ Children missing in education" data return to DfE.		103	133	142	123	103	165	133	↓G	Lower is better	N/A - Tracking	n/a	<p>At the end of August there were 133 children missing from education, an improvement from last month's performance of 165 children missing from education. In the last twelve months, the lowest number of CMEs was recorded in 2023. There were 7 children less in the cohort during the same month last year and 12 children less during the same month two years ago. August marks the third consecutive month that no children missing for +2 years were reported.</p> <p>74.4% of children have been missing between 0-3 months, 15.8% of children have been missing between 3-6 months, 6.6% of children have been missing between 6-12 months, 3.8% of children have been missing between 1-2 years.</p> <p>There are now 51.1% fewer children missing from education than there were at the beginning of the academic year 2022-23. An average of 150 children were missing from education each month in the academic year 2022-23.</p> <p>Out of the 133 children missing from education in August, 4 children were also in the social care caseload, 4 children were also in the Children in need (CIN) cohort, 1 child was in the Child Protection (CP) cohort and 1 child was in Electively Home Education (EHE) cohort (Children's Performance Team commentary).</p>	
Better, brighter futures	BBF36	% Education Health Care Plan Annual Reviews completed within 4 weeks of meeting		Statutory Duty but not reported		63.9%	59.4%	72.3%	79.6%	46.7%	44.8%	N/A reported one month in arrears	↓	Higher is better	N/A - Tracking	n/a	<p>A new Annual Review (AR) template has been designed and training organised for all settings (Early Years, primary, secondary, college, out of authority (OOA), independent, special) for the 26th September. The team feel that updated training is needed to all settings to improve the standard of annual reviews being returned to the team. Clear expectations and a consistent approach will be shared – this should make the amendments completed by the Education Health Care (EHC) team much more streamlined.</p> <p>The weekly data dashboard illustrates the returned annual reviews and we can see the types of settings where annual reviews are not being completed – again with the new team organisation, we will be able to contact settings and challenge this. The caseworkers have been allocated a group of settings and have issued a spreadsheet of the AR's due date for 2023-24 academic year and highlighted if previous AR's are out of time. The annual review team manager has developed a system for monitoring these moving forward. The annual review team leader will complete the weekly data dashboard and capture any issues arising – these will be discussed at the weekly leadership team meeting. This system will enable the team to give a % for each setting of the return AR data which again will enable to team to challenge and ensure that AR's are taking place consistently in all settings (Service commentary).</p>	

Customer & Governance															
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 4 22-23	Year to Date 2023-24 (Quarter 1)	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
Information Governance															
Modern Public Services	MPS12	% of Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests completed in 20 working days		Statutory duty	80.08% (Average of 40 Unitary Councils 2021/22 - benchmarking exercise conducted by Brighton and Hove Council)	65.20%	86.74%	90.54%	82.52%	88.24%	↑G	Higher is better	90%	85% - 90%	Performance has shown fluctuations in the first quarter, but the year-to-date figures, through below target, are within tolerance levels. The new Case Management System will enhance processing efficiency moving forwards. The current dip is due to the Information Governance team and the organisation adjusting to the new system and processing methods.
Modern Public Services	MPS13	% Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) Requests completed in 20 working days		Statutory duty	TBD	92.33%	98.36%	100.00%	97.73%	97.62%	↓	Higher is better	90%	Tolerance 85% - 90%	Despite a slight decline in performance, the number of processed cases remains high and within tolerance. The figures still significantly exceed the target.
Modern Public Services	MPS14	% Individual Rights requests completed within statutory timescale (Data Protection (DP) Right to Access requests)		Statutory duty	TBD	61.90%	89.55%	86.36%	92.00%	90.00%	↓	Higher is better	90%	85% - 90%	Whilst the overall quarterly figure is slightly below it remains within tolerance levels. It is anticipated that the figures will stabilised as a result of efficiencies created by the Information Governance team case management system.
Modern Public Services	MPS21	% Transparency publications completed on time.		Statutory duty	n/a	75.00%	87.50%	(Reported quarterly)	(Reported quarterly)	(Reported quarterly)	↑G	Higher is better	100%	No variation	The outstanding publications required under the Local Government Transparency code are: The Social Housing Assets for the y/e 31.03.23 (which is in progress and is due to be published by the end of September), and the Parking Account (for the y/e 31.03.23), which has recently been finalised and is in the process of being uploaded to our website.

Adults & Housing

Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 23-24	Year to Date 2023-24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
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Adult Social Care

Active, fulfilled lives	AFL03	Percentage of New Requests for Services (all ages) where Route of Access was Discharge from Hospital, that had a sequel of short term services to maximise independence (ST-MAX i.e. reablement)		No	The source data is from the SALT (Statutory) return. There are no gov targets. This indicator is included in our regional benchmarking.	2021/22 SALT Report: - England: 37%	38%	38%	38%	39%	↑G	Higher is better	35%	5% points	There were 26 new requests from individuals aged 18-64 and 362 for people aged 65 and over. There is positive growth year to date, with the rate higher than those reported throughout 2022/23 and above year-end target.
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL04	Number of new safeguarding concerns received per month		Yes	(Annually in the SAC (Safeguarding Adults Collection) return)	n/a - there are differences in what authorities record as a 'concern'	1119	1476 (Apr - Jul)	357	N/A Reporting one month in arrears	↓G	Lower is better	No target - tracking indicator only	N/A	There was a notable decrease in the number of new concerns received (-45). Despite this decline, the figure remains considerably higher than the average observed over the previous financial year (318).
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL05	New safeguarding concerns determined to be enquiries (both s42 and other) <i>*(A S42 enquiry must take place if there is reason to believe that abuse or neglect is taking place)</i>		Yes	(Annually in the SAC (Safeguarding Adults Collection) return)	n/a	162	221 (Apr - Jul)	59	N/A Reporting one month in arrears	↑	No polarity	No target - tracking indicator only	N/A	There was a minor increase in the number of concerns determined to be enquiries (+3). The proportion seen (17%) remains lower than the average seen over the previous financial year (22%).
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL06	Total number of open Deprivation of liberty Safeguard (DoLS) cases		Yes	(Annually)	n/a	1267	1286	1292	1286	↓G	Lower is better	No target - tracking indicator only	N/A	BI comments: The number of open DoLS cases decreased slightly this period (-6). This remains notably lower than the average observed across the previous financial year (349 fewer). SM Comments: This slight decrease is mainly due to lower allocations to BIAs due to the summer holidays and higher new referrals.
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL07	Long-term support needs met by admission to residential care and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population (older people 65 years +)		No	The source data is from the SALT (Statutory) return. There are no gov targets. This indicator is included in ASCOF, (Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework) regional benchmarking and BCF (Better Care Fund) returns.	546.17 (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform) 2021/22 SALT Report: - East Midlands: 562 - England: 539	170.7	291.1	214.9	291.1	↑R	Lower is better	Year-end target: 564 Monthly target: 47	TBD - for now applied standard 5%	This is a cumulative measure which increases throughout the financial year; resetting each April. A year-end data review was carried out and found some potential issues with reported admissions. As a result, the actual admissions rate is likely to be lower. The Business Intelligence team will work with Adult Social Care colleagues to review the data recording process, make any necessary changes and/or suggest additional guidance for recording in order to accurately reflect actual admissions. 191 admissions have been recorded to date; 136 admissions following an assessment for new people, 9 following an episode of reablement for new people, 4 following an episode of reablement for existing people, and 42 as a result of change in setting following a review. The average monthly growth in 2022/23 was 55 per 100k which is slightly lower than our current rate of 57.
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL08	Number of people who were prevented from requiring statutory care, or whose need was reduced Delaying and reducing the need for care and support having received short term services to maximise independence (ST-MAX) services'		No	The source data is from the SALT (Statutory) return. There are no gov targets. This indicator is included in ASCOF and regional benchmarking.	84.6% East Midlands Average, we are in the process of identifying more up to date benchmark data for this PI. This is an 'Office for Local Government' OFLOG Metric	71.40%	74.4%	72.1%	74.4%	↑G	Higher is better	80%	5% points	The rate shows positive growth year to date but remains lower than expected compared to 2022/23 trends, which typically ranged between 74-77%. There is a higher proportion of people accessing reablement support as a result of hospital discharge when compared to the same period previous year, along with higher proportions of these requiring long term support following their reablement episode, contributing to lower than expected performance.

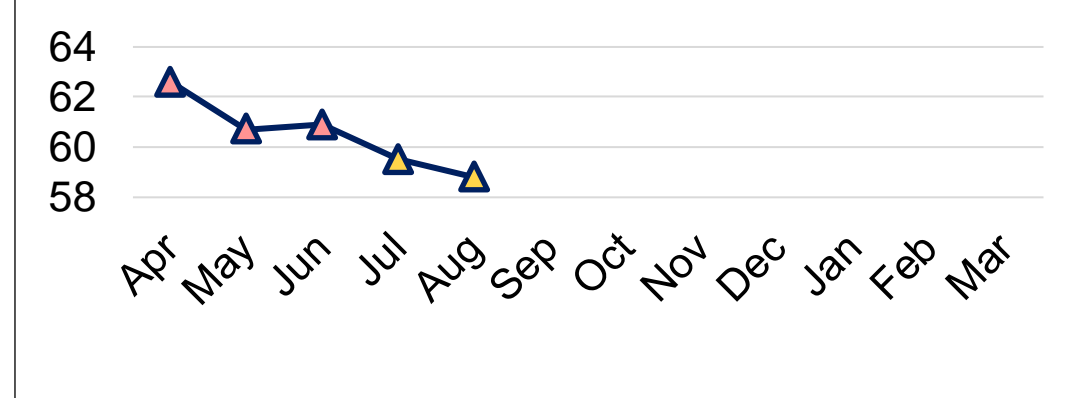
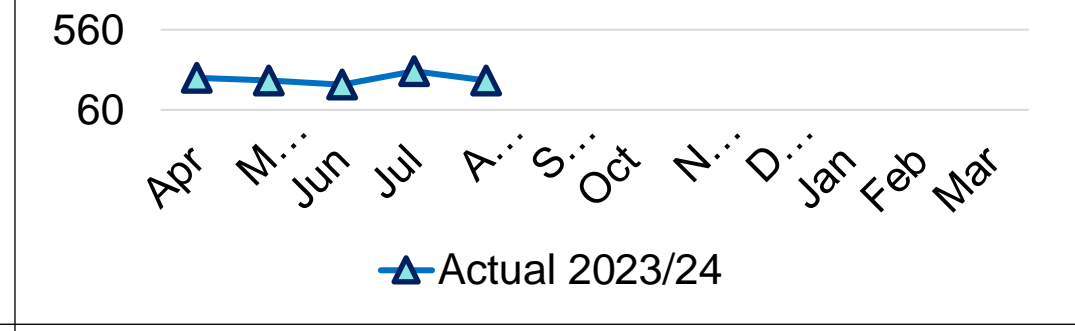
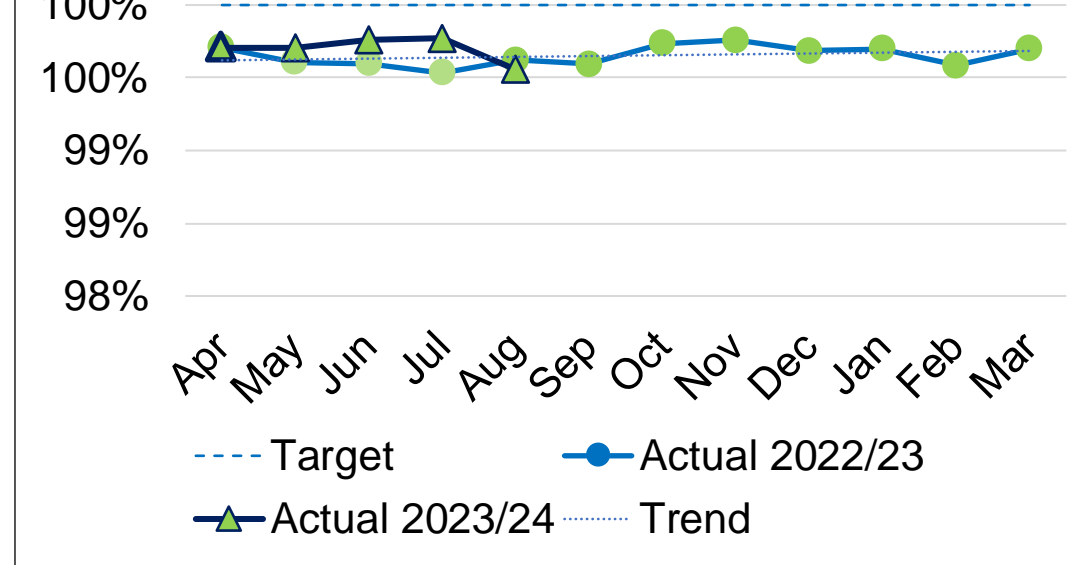
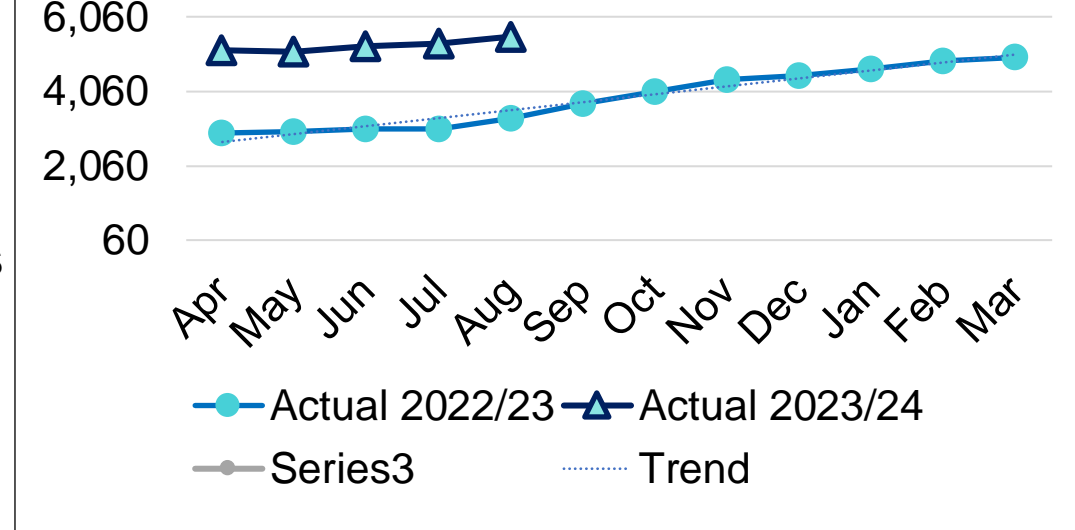
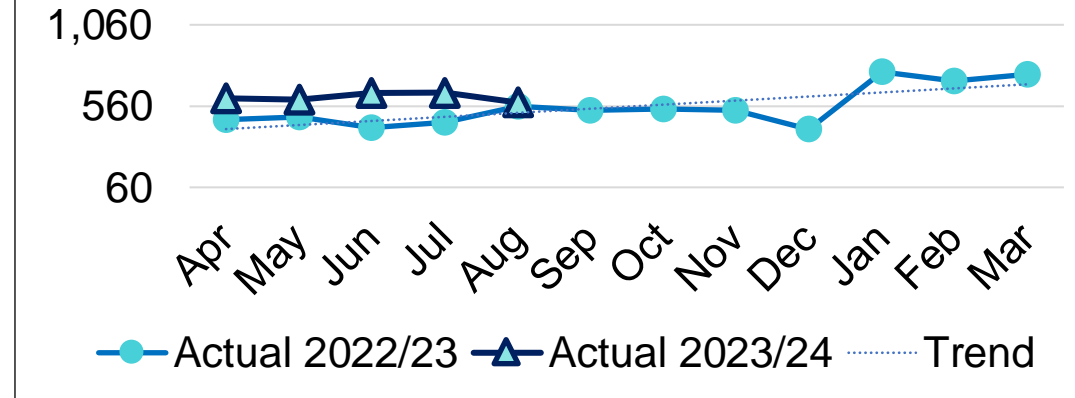
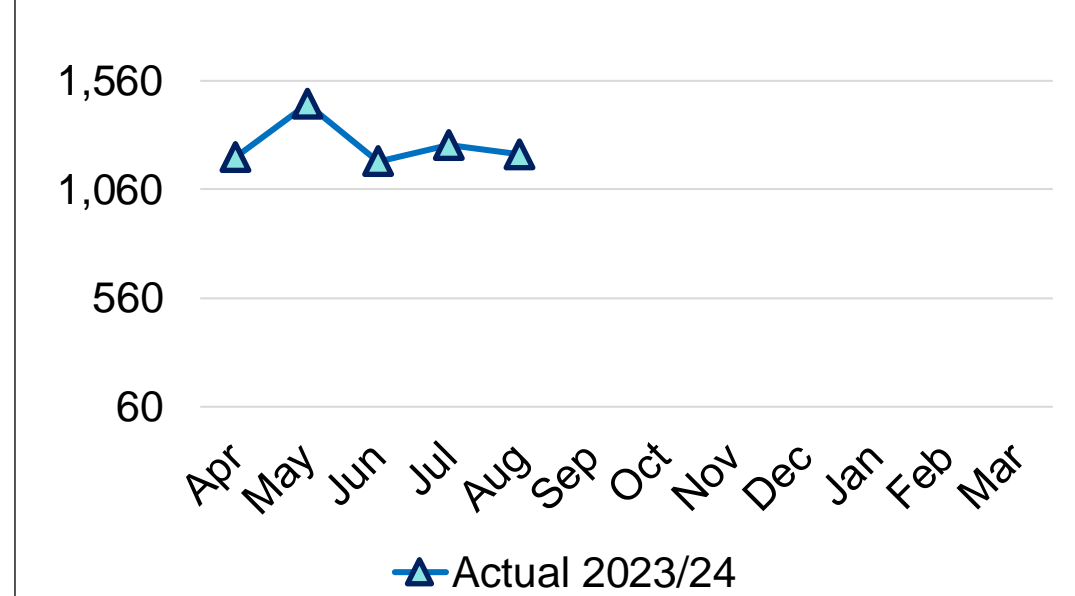
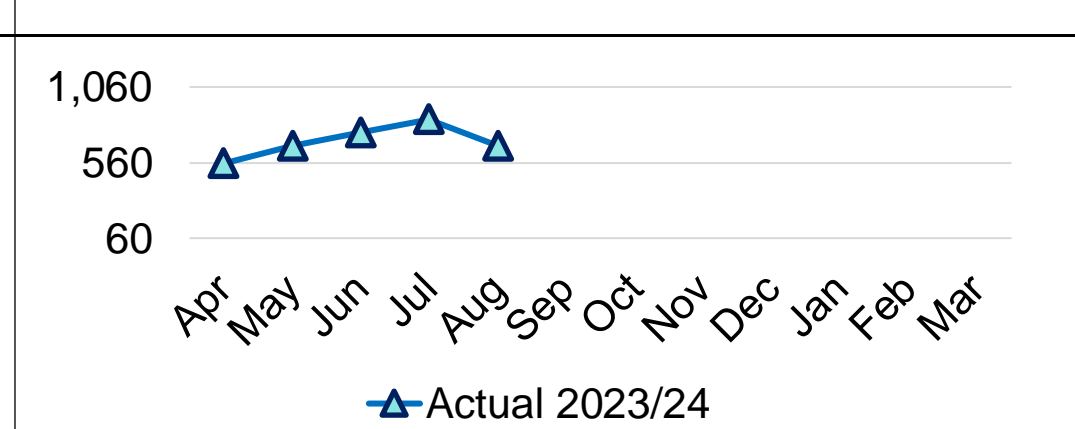
Adults & Housing

Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 23-24	Year to Date 2023-24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
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Housing Services

Active, fulfilled lives	AFL12	Number of rough sleepers - single night snapshot		Yes (DLUHC monthly rough sleeping survey, and target agreed with our RSI adviser from DLUHC)	7 (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform)	16	n/a	13	12	↓G	Lower is better	9	9 to 12	During the month of August, there has been a further reduction in numbers (12 single night). The team are now at full capacity and numbers are beginning to reduce month on month. Long-term rough sleepers, (which is measured if seen 3 or more months of last 12 months) is 11 for the month, most of these are our most complex cases which have refused offers of temporary accommodation. The Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) project is now in place and is aimed at the Multiple exclusion homelessness cohort working with the Housing First principles. The aim is to move people into these RSAP units as soon as possible.
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL13	Number of households whose homelessness was prevented		Yes (DLUHC - quarterly H-CLIC returns, no target set)	101 (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform) Demand in some areas must be much higher.	75	116	24	17	↓R	Higher is better	252 (21 per month)	18-21	Performance continues to fluctuate between months due to a variety of factors. This reflects the difficulties the Housing Options Team are having trying to secure accommodation solutions, particularly in the private sector in order to prevent or relieve households homelessness locally. There is a recognised need for the team to move its focus further upstream to maximise homelessness prevention opportunities and action plan is being developed in this regard.
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL14	Number of households whose homelessness was relieved		Yes (DLUHC - quarterly H-CLIC returns, no target set)	75 (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform) Demand in some areas must be much higher.	86	132	22	24	↑G	Higher is better	300 (25 per month)	22-25	Performance continues to fluctuate between months due to a variety of factors. This reflects the difficulties the Housing Options Team are having trying to secure accommodation solutions, particularly in the private sector in order to prevent or relieve households homelessness locally. There is a recognised need for the team to move its focus further upstream to maximise homelessness prevention opportunities and action plan is being developed in this regard.
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL15	Total number of homeless approaches		Yes (DLUHC - quarterly H-CLIC returns, no target set)	n/a	1468	2442	525	449	↓	N/A	Tracking - monitoring levels of demand only	N/A	3,863 households approached the Council as homeless during 2021/22, which is an average of 320 approaches per month. 4778 households approached the Council as homeless during 2022/23. This is an increase of just over 900, and an average of 400 approaches per month. Currently the Housing Options Team have a live caseload of 1141 cases. During Aug there was a substantial decrease in the number of approaches from 525 to 449, likely to have been caused by the school holidays.
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL17	Total number of households living in temporary accommodation		Yes (DLUHC - quarterly H-CLIC returns, no target set)	202 (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform)	n/a	n/a	233	230	↓	Lower is better	245	No tolerance	The number of households living in temporary accommodation remains stable. We are starting to see the delivery of units through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) programme for homeless Afghan and Ukrainian families. As these placements will need to be retained on homelessness and temporary accommodation caseloads because of tenancy/letting issues, a rise in the number of households living in temporary accommodation should be expected (LAHF round 1 should deliver 26 homes by November 2023, and a further 11 homes under LAHF round 2 will follow in 2024). As at today 3 LAHF units are included in this figure. *This figure is for statutory duty placements only and does not include the additional cohort of rough sleepers accommodated using discretionary powers*
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL18	Number of households with family commitments* living in bed and breakfast accommodation		Yes (DLUHC - quarterly H-CLIC returns, no target set)	11 (Mean Average CIPFA Near Neighbours - LG Inform)	n/a	n/a	5	2	↓	Lower is better	5	No tolerance	While there are 2 households with family commitments living in B&B, the household with the longest stay is a single woman with 3 children who were placed on 23 August (8 nights as at 31.08.2023). The family have already been offered self-contained accommodation within the Council's own stock, but the applicant has refused the offer because the property doesn't have its own garden. The temporary accommodation team keep these cases under daily review to ensure households with family commitments spend as little time in B&B as possible. * Households with family commitments are a) a pregnant woman; (b) with whom a pregnant woman resides or might reasonably be expected to reside; or, (c) with whom dependent children reside or might reasonably be expected to reside.

Adults & Housing														
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 23-24	Year to Date 2023-24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
Active, fulfilled lives	AFL24	Number of Temporary Accommodation placements out of NN area		Yes (DLUHC - quarterly H-CLIC returns, no target set)	TBD	n/a	n/a	1	1	→	Lower is better	0	3	The household that is living out of area in the neighbouring area of West Northamptonshire was placed there in November 2021 (prior to the temporary accommodation service review and while teams were working on a locality basis). They have recently had a S202 review decision in their favour and have since accepted an offer of temporary accommodation in North Northamptonshire within the Council's own stock; unfortunately the void time has continued to slip which continues to delay their move in (the temporary accommodation team haven't had another 2 bed to offer as an alternative). A tolerance of 3 has been added to this KPI as a target of 0 is unrealistic, for example in circumstances where people may also have local connections or for safety such as domestic violence situations.
Safe and thriving places	STP38	Percentage of rent collected		No	n/a	96.37	97.34	96.08%	97.34%	↑G	Higher is better	97%	5%	This is a cumulative rent collected as a percentage of rent owed figure. There has been an increase in August due to the rent free week.
Safe and thriving places	STP12	Number of (council house) dwellings vacant and ready to let at month end		Yes (Annual LAHS return to DLUHC, no target set)	n/a	25	n/a	10	8	↓G	Lower is better	10	10 to 15	At the end of August there were 8 properties Ready to Let. The weekly void meetings are helping to ensure that this number is kept to a minimum.
Safe and thriving places	STP36	Number of voids - Kettering Area		No	n/a	n/a	n/a	60	64	↑R	Lower is better	No target - tracking indicator only	N/A	This indicator provides a snapshot at the month end of the number of live Housing Revenue Account (HRA) voids. At the end of August there was a reduction in the number of voids in the Corby area and a slight increase in the Kettering area. The overall NNC snapshot has been reducing each month and has reduced from 125 to 120 from July to August. Note: This is the number of HRA voids only and does not include non-HRA temp, acquisitions or Out of Management properties
		Number of voids - Corby Area		No	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	56	↓G				

Adults & Housing														
Key Commitment	Ref No.	Description of Performance Indicator	Infographic / Chart	Statutory Reporting Required? (Yes / No)	Benchmark	Quarter 1 23-24	Year to Date 2023-24	July 2023/24	August 2023/24	Direction of Travel (since previous period)	Polarity	Target	Tolerance	Comments
Safe and thriving places	STP37a	Average time taken to re-let NNC standard void properties		Yes (Annual LAHS return to DLUHC)	8 weeks (56 days) House Mark	60.9 days	58.8 days	59.5 days	58.8 days	↓ G	Lower is better	56 days	56 to 60 days	From April 2023 onwards void turnaround time is reported by standard and major properties for NNC. The figure reported is the cumulative average turnaround time for those properties let in the month. This will help remove the impact a long term major void has when been empty for a long time and provide a more accurate reflection of void turnaround for standard properties. In August 23 there were 34 standard void properties let. The total number of void days for these 34 properties was 1881 days which provides a monthly average turnaround for August of 55.3 days. This has brought the cumulative average turnaround time down to 58.8 days which is within the target tolerance.
Safe and thriving places	STP37b	Average time taken to re-let NNC major void properties		No	n/a	217 days	243 days	301 days	243 days	↓ G	Lower is better	No target - tracking indicator only	N/A	In August 2023 there were 13 major void properties let. These 13 properties had a total number of void days of 3094. The number of void days for these properties meant there was a decrease in the overall cumulative average void days to 238 days. Using turnaround days for major voids at the present time is not the best indicator as there is no set approach to how major voids are resourced has been agreed. Number of major voids may be a more appropriate indicator to monitor.
Safe and thriving places	STP08	% of properties with a valid gas safety certificate		Yes (Regulator of Social Housing - TSM, no target set)	n/a	99.8% 7884 out of 7903	n/a	99.8% 7883 out of 7901	99.6% 7861 out of 7896	↓	Higher is better	100%	99.5% and above is green, 99% and above is amber	As at the end of August, 35 out of total 7,896 properties did not have a valid gas certificate.. Of the 35 properties outstanding, in the Corby area, 6 properties have a court date booked for 12/09/2023. 5 properties are in the legal stages awaiting next available court date. 1 property has been visited but a repair was found to be needed so appliance to be re-serviced once repair has been undertaken. In the Kettering area, one property has now been completed, 6 properties have appointments booked and three remain outstanding. 12 addresses have been put into 'bulk planning' these include acquisition properties. (There is a limit to the number of properties that can be taken to court each fortnight to obtain right of entry warrants, so this can impact compliance).
Safe and thriving places	STP04	Number of active households on Keyways (as at 1st month)		No	n/a	5263	n/a	5349	5527	↑	N/A - Tracking	N/A - monitoring levels of demand	N/A	This provides a snapshot of the number of applicants active on the Council's housing Register (Keyways). Total housing applications active have increased and new applications remain high. Please note that as applications are made active, previously active applications have the status changed to pending, suspended, closed, and housed. This figure therefore is not how many applications are being assessed in total. Annual renewals are currently suspended due to staff resources. Once in place this will reduce the active total due to applicants non-contact and change of circumstances.
Safe and thriving places	STP05	Number of new Keyways applications received		No	n/a	1850	3075	643	582	↓	N/A - Tracking	N/A - monitoring levels of demand	N/A	582 new applications last month which was a 9.5% decrease on the previous month, however, more consistent with the same month last year which was 561. Average for the year to date 615.
Safe and thriving places	STP39	Number of repair jobs awaiting completion		No	n/a	1,188	n/a	1,266	1,223	↓	N/A - Tracking	N/A - monitoring levels of demand	N/A	This is a new measure to help monitor the current repairs jobs awaiting completion outside of the backlog jobs listed at the 1/3/23. A snapshot at the end of August shows there was a total of 1,223 repair jobs across Kettering and Corby that are awaiting completion. This is a reduction of 43 jobs awaiting completion compared with the snapshot at the end of July 23. The team continue to monitor closely whether the responsive repairs team are staffed, to be able to manage the level of new jobs received each month.
Safe and thriving places	STP40	Number of repair jobs awaiting completion which are outside of target timescale		No	n/a	762	n/a	844	671	↓	N/A - Tracking	N/A - monitoring levels of demand	N/A	This is also a new measure to help monitor the current repairs jobs that are outside of target timescale. Again the lag between shifting backlog work off of the regular responsive repairs teams and onto the newly created backlog team is seen as the main reason why there are already a number of jobs post 1st March 2023 that are out of target time. The team will monitor closely from now on whether the responsive repairs team are staffed to be able to manage the level of new jobs received each month or not. The number of jobs outstanding which are out of timescale reduced from 844 at the end of July to 671 at the end of August, this is a reduction of 173 jobs.

EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	North Northamptonshire Future Vision – Big50 Progress Update
Report Author	George Candler, Chief Executive (Interim)
Lead Member	Cllr Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council

Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Feedback from the Big50 conference held in July 2023

Appendix B – Revised draft Big50 Vision document

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide a progress update on the work carried out on creating a vision for North Northamptonshire up to 2050.
- 1.2. To provide feedback from the Big50 Conference that took place in July 2023.
- 1.3. To recommend the development of actions to help further develop the Big50 future vision and ensure its delivery on a short, medium and longer-term timeframe.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Everyone in North Northamptonshire has hopes and aspirations for what we want for ourselves, our families and our place. It is clear that the only way to achieve those ambitions is for communities, the Council, businesses and

voluntary sector organisations to come together to imagine and deliver a better future for North Northamptonshire.

- 2.2 North Northamptonshire Council is proud to be a place ambassador and to convene the right people to really effect change and realise the vision for the future. It recognises that great partnership working is the key to succeeding in ensuring the best life in North Northamptonshire.
- 2.3 In May 2023, the Executive commenced an ambitious piece of work on creating the vision by considering the rationale, thinking and work carried out at that time on creating a vision for the future of North Northamptonshire up to 2050.
- 2.4 The report explained that the proposed vision for the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 had been based around three key priorities:
 - **A Proud Place:** A place with clear goals and a plan of how to get there, where people feel inspired and safe.
 - **A Prosperous Place:** A place full of thriving businesses and a skilled population who can achieve their ambitions.
 - **A Proactive Place:** A place which understands the issues its people face and how to address them early, so everyone can live the best life.
- 2.5 The report recommended holding a Big50 conference to bring together a wide range of stakeholders to help test the draft priorities and refine the wider vision for North Northamptonshire.
- 2.6 This report provides the outcomes of the Big50 conference which was well attended and considered a huge success. In addition, it sets out the specific actions arising for which the Council is responsible in terms of further development and delivery of the vision.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive:
 - a. Note the progress that has been made on developing an area-wide vision for North Northamptonshire up to 2050.
 - b. Acknowledge the positive contribution made towards the development of the vision through the work of the Big50 Steering Group, the Big50 conference and all who took part in it.
 - c. Endorse the co-design of a short, medium and longer-term action plan with the Steering Group.

3.2. Reason for Recommendations – Local councils are ideally placed to act as place shapers and enablers of change in their area. North Northamptonshire Council, in its Corporate Plan adopted in December 2021, made a clear commitment to work in partnership with a wide range of organisations from public, private and voluntary sectors to help improve the quality of life in North Northamptonshire. The work on setting out a broader, longer-term vision for North Northamptonshire represents the next natural step in the achievement of this aim. A shared vision for the future of North Northamptonshire will help focus the efforts of organisations working locally on achieving a common set of priorities and goals for the area. The recommendations ensure that the work carried out to date by all entities involved progresses in a transparent, inclusive and engaging way.

3.3. Alternative Options Considered:

- i) Continue ‘as is’ without a wider area vision – In practical terms, this would mean continuing to focus on the Council’s own vision and leave partner agencies to focus on theirs. There is nothing wrong with this approach. Indeed, there is already a lot of activity focused on aligning approaches and target outcomes which are embedded in the current ways of working. It would however leave a gap in terms of a cross-cutting, widely adopted vision for the area. Given the clear support for a wider area vision evident at the Big50 conference, failure to pursue the opportunity would represent a suboptimal position.

4. Report Background

4.1 North Northamptonshire is already a place that we should be proud of; we have a balance of idyllic countryside, villages, and waterways with the convenience of major towns; all of this is coupled with fantastic connectivity with easy access to major cities within England. We are however ambitious for the future; we want better lives and opportunities for future generations. This is a shared ambition for everyone who lives, works or cares for our place.

The start of the Big50 Conversation

4.2 The Council is proud to have started the conversation (late 2022) with a small group of stakeholders about what the future for North Northamptonshire could look like up to 2050. In May 2023, this initial work was considered by the Executive which allowed them to clearly set out the rationale, thinking and work carried out at that time.

4.3 The Executive were clear however that to truly start to create a vision for what the best life for North Northamptonshire looked like, a wider group of stakeholders would need to come together. It was agreed that a Big50 conference would be convened.

The Big50 Conference

4.4 To help ensure the early development of broad ownership of the vision, the Council set up a partner-led stakeholder steering group to oversee the planning and delivery of the Big50 conference. Representatives from the voluntary,

business, education, private sector housing, police, health and the Council worked at pace to organise and deliver the conference.

- 4.5 The conference was held on 11th July 2023 and was very well attended by a range of stakeholders. It produced a wide range of beneficial outcomes in terms of feedback on the draft vision and priorities as well as ideas to help future delivery.
- 4.6 The conference in effect provided a litmus test. It showed that there is broad support and appetite for a wider, longer-term vision for the area. Indeed, despite the relatively short planning window between May's Executive report and the conference in July, the event was full to capacity.
- 4.7 Those who attended the conference were asked to consider a vision for the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 based around three key priorities:
- **A Proud Place:** A place with clear goals and a plan of how to get there, where people feel inspired and safe.
 - **A Prosperous Place:** A place full of thriving businesses and a skilled population who can achieve their ambitions.
 - **A Proactive Place:** A place which understands the issues its people face and how to address them early, so everyone can live the best life.
- 4.8 The draft vision and covering report that was considered at the May's meeting of the Executive can be accessed via the following weblink: [Draft Vision](#)

Feedback from the Big50 Conference

- 4.9 The Big50 conference was attended by 117 delegates which 65 different organisations represented at the event. There were 875 plus responses recorded in response to key questions and 80 plus future commitments were provided by delegates.
- 4.10 Attendees were asked to consider '**What does a good life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 look like?**'. Clearly there are things that we cannot possibly know yet such as economical and environmental changes, technological and medical advances and the changes to how people live their lives as a result of these. However, the question was based upon what we know now, and what we can rationally predict.
- 4.11 The following areas made up over half of the responses provided by conference attendees:
- Health;
 - transport;
 - community;
 - education & skills;
 - the environment;
 - and jobs.
- 4.12 For each of the areas identified in 4.11, delegates provided more detail as to what is required, and this detail is provided in the conference feedback provided

as **Appendix A**. For example, against the 'Health' category, delegates associated the following with having a good life in 2050:

- Living longer, healthier lives
- Easy access to healthcare services
- Great healthcare services
- Improved mental health services
- Inclusive activities for all ages

4.13 There was also clear feedback on the key question '**What needs to be true to deliver the vision?**'. A number of themes emerged from the results including:

- Education and training
- Jobs and skills
- Community
- Business and employment
- Transport
- Environment
- Funding; and Action

4.14 For each of the areas identified in 4.13, delegates provided detail as to what they felt will be required to deliver the vision. This detail is provided in the conference feedback provided as **Appendix A**. For example, against the 'Education and training' category, delegates described the following factors that need to be true to deliver the vision:

- Local collaborative policies are required
- We need to be brave in the targeting of resources
- We need to link up more businesses with education and training providers,
- Skills need to be targeted across a broad curriculum
- A focus on physical and mental wellbeing is required

4.15 The detailed feedback from the event has provided the opportunity to update the vision document. This amended vision document has been provided as **Appendix B**.

4.16 Given the positive attendance at the conference, it is clear there is demand for a wider vision for North Northamptonshire. As our shared ambitions grow, there is an opportunity to engage with more organisations, involving them in the further development of the vision and importantly, its delivery.

4.17 Another key piece of feedback from the Big50 conference was focused on the role of North Northamptonshire Council. A number of delegates commented that they feel that the Council is well placed to provide a coordination and leadership role in developing the wider vision for the area. This, coupled with the constructive feedback received on the proposed vision itself, provides a clear case for continued activity on the development and delivery of a broader vision for the area.

5. Issue and Choices

- 5.1 The immediate next step is that an action plan is co-developed with partners in order to further develop and deliver the Big50 Vision. The Steering Group were very mindful of the fact that any long-term vision needed to be able to deliver results in the short term as well as the medium and longer-term. Work will continue with the Steering Group to develop this action plan and ensure that there are clear points where progress can be monitored.
- 5.2 Whilst the action plan is an important document to support delivery, there will be a number of outcomes that can be delivered at pace by those stakeholders who attended the conference. An example of this is the Principal of Tresham College, who has been quick to convene a skills meeting to help to drive forward the skills development agenda.
- 5.3 There will be clear themes that actions will fall within, and it is likely that a governance structure will need to be quickly developed by the Steering Group to support delivery. Education and skills development was a recurring theme through the conference, and it was acknowledged that it cuts across all sectors. This is an obvious theme and already following the initial skills meeting that was convened, a skills conference is being planned for the first half of 2024.
- 5.4 It was proposed by a number of Big50 attendees that another conference is held 6th February 2024 to help keep momentum behind the vision, its development and critically, its delivery. This would provide the opportunity to reach out more widely to partners and stakeholders and ensure that momentum is maintained. This will be determined by the Steering Group with a view to making this event happen.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 A number of actions have been identified for the Council in relation to the Big50 vision:
 - (a) Continue to support the regular meeting of a Big50 Future Vision Steering Group.
 - (b) Co-produce, with the Big50 Steering Group, a future vision action plan to help progress the development and delivery of the Big50 future vision.
 - (c) Assist with the organisation of a second Big50 conference, suggested 6th February 2024
 - (d) Identify ways to engage more broadly in the local community on the draft vision for North Northamptonshire and on activities that help expedite its delivery.
 - (e) Identify specific actions for the Council to help in the continued delivery of the future vision and its development. This could, for example, involve the Council using its role as a community ambassador, to help promote the Big50 Vision and kickstart partner-led workstreams and initiatives.

- (f) Ensure that the Council continues to learn and adapt its approach to community leadership based on its experiences, such as those learnt in developing a draft vision and convening the Big50 Conference.
- 6.2 Work has started on the development of a Big50 Future Vision action plan. This will be co-produced with the Big50 Steering Group.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. The work undertaken to date included the commissioning of consultants for the first phase of work. This was procured following the Council's current procurement and the use of a call off contract. This initial phase of work has been met from within existing budgets.
- 7.1.2. The next phase of works that follows the first conference is still being scoped out. It is envisaged that a lot of this work can be carried out within existing resources, working with partners such as the Steering Group. It is likely that a further procurement will be required if external resource is required to organise a second Big50 conference. If the Council leads on this, then this would be carried out within existing budgets and in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules.
- 7.1.3. The action plan that will be developed may lead to additional budget implications for the Council although these will be addressed in future reports where necessary.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. Any Council decisions which arise out of the Vision will need to be considered in accordance with usual decision-making processes.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. The development of a North Northamptonshire Vision is likely to support a broad number of the Council's corporate policies and plans and will be reflected in the action plan that will be developed.

- 7.3.2. Based on the proposed three vision priorities of:

- **Proud Place:** A place with clear goals and a plan of how to get there, where people feel inspired and safe.
- **Prosperous Place:** A place full of thriving businesses and a skilled population who can achieve their ambitions.
- **Proactive Place:** A place which understands the issues its people face and how to address them early, so everyone can live the best life.

7.3.3. All six of the Council's key commitments and strategic priorities relate to these three headline vision priorities and will contribute to their delivery.

7.4. Risk

7.4.1. There are no significant risks to the Council arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.4.2. There may be wider risks at the conclusion of this work for the Council which may include:

- Additional costs to the Council to deliver on specific aspects of the action plan
- Failure to deliver on the action plan due to capacity constraints
- Diverting attention away from North Northamptonshire Council's core business to deliver on the action plan.

7.4.3. This will need to be carefully managed and considered, although it is expected the action plan is likely to compliment and re-enforce wider strategic activities the Council wishes to undertake as part of its own corporate strategy.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. Engagement with a range of partners, community representatives, elected members and staff has been held, to set out this first proposal of what the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 could look like. Detail of the early part of this engagement activity is outlined in the May report on the future vision considered at Executive.

7.5.2. The Big50 conference that was held in July this year allowed the vision to be further socialised and tested on a broader cohort of participants. Wider engagement with partners and residents now needs to be considered and this will form part of the Steering Group led Big50 Action Plan.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This report has not been considered by any of the Executive Advisory Panels but could be part of the Forward Plan over the next few months as the work evolves.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. This report has not been considered by the Scrutiny Commission at this stage but could form part of its future work programme.

7.8. Equality Implications

- 7.8.1. An Equality Screening Assessment (ESA) has been completed and is available on request. As the work on the development of the North Northamptonshire Vision is evolving it is difficult to predict at this stage what impacts the outcomes of this work will have on protected groups, and therefore there are no positive or negative impacts highlighted within the assessment.
- 7.8.2. It is proposed that a further ESA is completed following the development of the action plan.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

- 7.9.1. The North Northamptonshire Vision has the climate and the environment heavily referenced throughout. It is recognised that one of the key drivers that have helped shaped the vision thus far is centred on protecting the environment.
- 7.9.2. The Big50 Vision document references our wonderful countryside and waterways that need to be protected, a focus on reducing our carbon emissions as well as attracting green growth and harnessing the wide range of environmental plans and strategies held by organisations, businesses and groups working to protect our local environment and the planet.
- 7.9.3. The three priorities that will drive action also have a strong focus on sustainability and the wider environment, and especially in Prosperous Place and the areas of Green Growth, Tourism, Transport and Housing.
- 7.9.4. Climate and environmental considerations were raised at the Big50 Conference and are evident in the detailed feedback appended to this report. This will likely form one part of the focus of the action plan.
- 7.9.5. It is anticipated that specific actions will evolve from the Big50 conference and will allow the Council's own Climate Management Plan to feed into this area of focus.

7.10. Community Impact

- 7.10.1. The North Northamptonshire Vision recognises that not everyone has the best chance in life yet and that there are areas of deprivation across North Northamptonshire both in urban and rural areas. The three vision priorities reflect this and there are some clear priority goals identified across all areas including Civic Leadership, A stake in society, Community Empowerment, Route Causes and Prevention, and Giving Children the best start in life.
- 7.10.2. As with the climate and environment, the action plan that evolves over the coming weeks will reflect the Council's own work in this environment, such as the Left Behind Communities Scrutiny Review and Action Plan and the evolving Local Area Partnerships, as well as bringing further partner

engagement and resource to accelerate the work across North Northamptonshire.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

- 7.11.1. The North Northamptonshire Vision highlights, under one of its three priorities of a Proud Place, that it will be renowned for being an inspiring, safe place for all. It also highlights a specific priority goal to be developed under Safety, and specifically that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods, on the roads, using our facilities. Where issues of crime or disorder are identified we use preventative approaches and education to reduce them.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1. A North Northamptonshire Vision report was considered at the May meeting of Executive. This set out the draft vision and the rationale for a Big50 Conference that was held in July this year.



North Northamptonshire: The Big 50 Conference

THE BIG 50 FUTURE VISION CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

APPENDICES

All feedback from the Big 50 Future Vision Conference that took place on 11 July 2023 is set out in this report. This feedback is from the post-it notes completed as part of the 2 workshops on the day in response to the following questions:

- What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?
- What needs to be true to deliver this vision?
- What will you do?

APPENDIX 1: Exercise 1 Notes

Delegates were asked: What does the best life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050? Responses were written onto post-its and then grouped into topics for discussion.

Note: Summary Category field – high-level grouping of topics post conference; Table Theme field – theme given on table at conference; Note field – content of post-it or facilitator notes

Responses are grouped by summary category, sorted from most responses to least.

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Health	Access to services	More preventative work done around health and social care
Health	Access to services	Less waiting for crisis to respond
Health	Access to services	Less waiting lists for health and social care support
Health	Access to services	Joined up working of all health and social care services
Health	Integrated	
Health	Prevention	Locally accessible services
Health	Health	Integrated services - seamless for local population
Health	Health	Longer, healthier lives
Health	Health	Timely access to healthcare and enough to go around
Health	Health	Health, social, economic wellbeing
Health	Health	Excellent healthcare
Health	Health	Increase in local healthcare
Health	Health	Access to health services
Health	Health	Best in class preventative healthcare
Health	Health	Easy access to health services
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Mental health
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Health - equality of health
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Can book dentist/doctors in minutes (or seconds!)
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Insulated and ventilated housing
Health	Health & Wellbeing	New Kettering hospital
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Great health and support services
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Better health outcomes
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Good access to healthcare
Health	Health & Wellbeing	Support of health and wellbeing
Health	Health	Clear message that people feel better proactive health very important. Clear that there was a line to many other areas
Health	Services	Better services - healthcare provision etc

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Health	Health	Healthier population
Health	Health	Length of healthy life
Health	Health	A best in class health provision
Health	Health	Healthy and active
Health	Health	Shift in behaviours that address health inequalities
Health	Health	Safe healthy
Health	Health and wellbeing	Town and parish councils is positive and needs to be identified and celebrated - create a health and well being plan for each town
Health	Health	Nobody is obese
Health	Health	Be able to see your GP before next year!
Health	Health	Access to healthcare
Health	Health	Health care well being
Health	Health	Be independent/maintain my independence
Health	Health	Unpaid carers are supported through funding by health and social care
Health	Health	More funding into community mental health
Health	Health	Easy access to doctors/healthcare
Health	Health	Preventative approach - education, healthy green spaces
Health	Health	Help to get to appointments/check ups
Health	Health	Accessible services
Health	Health	Accessible health services
Health	Health	Care spend that can deal with demand
Health	Health	Quality support for vulnerable
Health	Health	Adult social care system is coherent
Health	Health	Improved mental health support/access to support
Health	Health	Living longer
Health	Health	Quality of life
Health	Health	Preventative health and social care
Health	Health	Healthy (quality of life measurement)
Health	Health	Great health and well being at place
Health	Health	Access to public services when people need them
Health	Health	Longer life expectancy
Health	Health	Great health care
Health	Health	Wraparound healthcare (cradle to grave)
Health	Health	Access to health services
Health	Health	Good access to health services
Health	Health	Ample mental health support services
Health	Health	Quick and fair access to primary care services

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Health	Health	Increased focus on mental wellbeing in adult social care
Health	Health	Better access to healthcare - particularly rural
Health	Health	Access to healthcare
Health	Health	Enjoyable
Health	Health	Access to quality healthcare
Health	Health	No one is homeless
Health	Health	Wellbeing opportunities
Health	Health	Mental health
Health	Health	Improve mental health and critical care support and addiction
Health	Health	Improved care for older people
Health	Health	Accessibility to good healthcare
Health	Health	Integrated care services
Health	Health	Support young mental health
Health	Health	More opportunity for people with disabilities
Health	Health	Inclusive activities for every age
Health	Health	Community hubs/spaces
Health	Health	Community
Health	Health	Healthy youth population
Health	Health	Access to health care
Health	Health	Ensure doctors surgeries are available
Health	Community	Healthcare in the community
Transport	Transport	Decent transport for all
Transport	Transport	Rural transport developments
Transport	Transport	Rural communities connected
Transport	Transport	Connected journeys transportation
Transport	Transport	Accessible, affordable and green transport
Transport	Transport	Crossrail
Community	Resilient	Resilient communities with great support networks
Community	?	Neighbourhoods of choice
Community	Civic society	A strong sense of community
Transport	Transport	Fully electric intelligent highways
Transport	Transport	Adapt to future mobility (transport)
Transport	Transport	Integrated transport system
Transport	Transport	Improved public transport-less reliance on car ownership
Transport	Transport	Zero/low carbon connections and environment
Transport	Transport	Well connected
Transport	Transport	Good railway service

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Transport	Transport	Electric busses/shuttles, ever 20 minutes, everywhere
Community	Community	Community hubs - connecting services
Community	Community	Community empowerment to host own events
Community	Community	Connected communities
Community	Community	Activities for young people and adults
Transport	Sustainability	Electric waterway transport
Community	Community	All feel that already a strong sense of community. Well served by voluntary sector. But this sector needs better coordination to make the most of limited resources.
Transport	Transport	Improve rural transport
Transport	Transport	Active travel
Transport	Transport	People feel connected, valued and able to contribute to life/community
Community	Family and friendship	Strong family
Community	Family and friendship	Support family life
Community	Family and friendship	Friends
Community	Thriving communities	Resilient sustainable thriving
Community	Thriving communities	Community working together
Community	Thriving communities	Community engagement
Community	Thriving communities	Sense of community
Transport	Challenges	Rural transport is an issue
Community	Family and friendship	Social isolation - address
Community	Family and friendship	Family hubs are solution we all need to get behind(?)
Community	Family and friendship	But if we get other things right strong families will result
Transport	Transport	Clean transport: EVs, bikes, [?]
Transport	Transport	Safe walking/cycle paths
Transport	Transport	Good walk and cycle routes
Transport	Transport	Transport for all exists
Transport	Transport	Good, affordable public transport
Transport	Transport	Free transport to be able to be part of communities
Transport	Rural access	Good facilities within easy access
Transport	Rural access	Easy access to services - both rurally and in urban areas
Transport	Rural access	Increased public transport in rural areas
Community	Community	Active communities
Community	Community	Engaged, connected, helpful communities
Community	Community	Creating communities for people to live in
Community	Community	Not to feel isolated or forgotten
Community	Community	Opportunity to thrive
Transport	Transport	Clean, green transport available and low cost or free

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Transport	Transport	Good cycle/walk network e.g. Greenway
Community	Community	Enable local people to come together and help their communities
Community	Community cohesion	Communities looking after each other
Community	Rural agenda	Vision filtering down to communities - not in an ivory tower somewhere in North Northants
Transport	Transport	Improved rural transport
Transport	Transport	Transportation - don't lose public transport to enable people to visit the countryside
Transport	Transport	Improved transport
Transport	Transport	Successful community transport for rural communities
Transport	Transport	More green routes
Transport	Transport	Pollution free transport
Transport	Transport	Create walk / cycle routes using disused railway links
Community	Community	Community owned and managed centres
Transport	Transport	Transport for rural areas to enable access to learning / sport / leisure/ health /jobs
Transport	Transport	Sustainable transport network with rural / urban integration
Community	Community	Community space a priority for all parishes
Community	Community	Sense of belonging
Community	Community	Sense of community
Community	Community	Community spirit is real and genuine
Community	Community	Connected to people
Community	Community	Build local supportive communities
Transport	Transport	Reduce rat runs with ring road around Northampton
Transport	Transport	Increased availability of public transport
Transport	Transport	Connected communities
Transport	Transport	Connected communities (transport)
Transport	Transport	Transport mobility
Community	Community	Don't lose community
Community	Community	Sense of community
Community	Community	More opportunities to support the engagement of young people in the community
Community	Community	A greater sense of pride in the area
Community	Community	Integrated communities
Community	Community	Preserve the village pub as a centre of the village community
Community	Community	Community co-working spaces
Community	Community	Intergenerational working (old helping young and vice versa)
Community	Community	Doing to rather than with
Community	Community	Prepared for future emergencies e.g. pandemics
Community	Community	Sense of pride in community (sports/arts)
Community	Community	Connected to our boundaries

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Community	Community	A place you want to stay
Community	Community	Communities feeling connected and inclusive
Community	Community	Communities that feel well and celebrate food
Community	Community	Quality of life over money/ possessions
Community	Community	Range of fully accessible and inclusive community groups - arts/sports/social
Community	Community	A green patch in every town and village
Community	Community	Social inclusion
Community	Community	Everyone has a voice and feels listened to
Community	Community	Strong inclusive community hubs
Community	Community	Keep sense of community
Transport	Transport	Transport links through
Transport	Transport	Bike and scooter routes - old railway tracks?
Community	Community	A community which knows itself and each other
Community	Community	Community projects
Community	Community	The old and young working together
Transport	Transport	Improve community transport
Transport	Transport	Rural public transport
Transport	Transport	Everyone has affordable public transport access
Transport	Transport	Accessible rail links
Community	Community	Community
Transport	Transport	15 minute towns/cities
Transport	Transport	I want to cycle safety anywhere
Transport	Transport	Good transport
Transport	Transport	Community busses
Transport	Transport	Blue way
Transport	Transport	Transport links
Transport	Transport	Safe and efficient highways
Transport	Transport	No need to drive to shop for essentials
Transport	Transport	A society with less cars
Transport	Transport	Sustainable rural transport links
Transport	Transport	Continued transport link development
Community	Community	Use community buildings more effectively and imaginatively (e.g. Tresham sites at weekends etc)
Community	Community	FAIR
Community	Community	Normalised sharing /community repair
Community	Community	Aspirational
Community	Community	Community wide events
Community	Community	Frequent community events

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Community	Community	Rural environment enhanced
Community	Community	Community led
Community	Community	Enhanced role of market towns
Transport	Transport	Autonomous transport system
Transport	Transport	Fantastic public transport
Transport	Transport	Infrastructure to support growth
Transport	Transport	Active transport normalised
Transport	Transport	Metro transport and land trains
Transport	Transport	More electric vehicles in 2050
Transport	Transport	Improved public transport from rural locations - access to employment opportunities
Community	Collaboration	Activating communities
Transport	Infrastructure	Busses to local places = Chester House (?)
Community	Community	Using community spaces – e.g. use empty colleges at the weekends
Community	Community	Community sharing and fixing things: sustainability
Community	Community	What does the community want?
Transport	Transport	Fantastic transport
Transport	Transport	Allows access to jobs/attractions
Transport	Transport	Land trains Metro
Transport	Transport	Good level of public transport
Transport	Transport	Community bus services
Transport	Transport	Bus services are currently dying - new infrastructure is needed
Transport	Transport	Improved facilities for learning how to drive (this is becoming easier)
Transport	Transport	No commercial service - no Uber?
Transport	Transport	Making it more accessible for out of country visitors to attend
Transport	Transport	80% car - people without car can't access
Education / Skills	Education	Teachers choosing to come to NN - no recruitment crisis
Education / Skills	Education	Equal access to quality education (at all ages)
Education / Skills	Education	Greater educational opportunities
Education / Skills	Education	Improved outcomes for education, employment, health etc
Education / Skills	Education	Better access to services in early years (0-5)
Education / Skills	Education	Easy access to a range of SEND support services
Education / Skills	Education	Access to good quality education at every level
Education / Skills	Education	Enough school places/ enough of the RIGHT school places
Education / Skills	Workplaces of the future	Ambition
Education / Skills	Workplaces of the future	Align to future sector trends
Education / Skills	Workplaces of the future	Everyone has access to quality education, job or voluntary opportunities
Education / Skills	Education	Better educational opportunities

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Education / Skills	Opportunities	Pathways from education to employment
Education / Skills	Opportunities	High quality skilled workforce
Education / Skills	Opportunities	Upskilling opportunities and a slick system to find / apply
Education / Skills	Education	Quality education - skills development(?)
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Chances to succeed
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Opportunities for all
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Jobs & skills to [??]
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Education access to local schools
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Everyone is able to realise their potential regardless of background
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Above UK average level 4 qualifications
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Education for all
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Skills
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Improving aspirations of young people in deprived areas
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	More engaged young people
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	I get good education and exams
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Having good quality schools
Education / Skills	Skills	Good education for all ages
Education / Skills	Skills	Access to skills training
Education / Skills	Skills	Job creation
Education / Skills	Skills	Education attainment / skills gap on par/above national average
Education / Skills	Skills	Educational transitions are well managed
Education / Skills	Skills	Can reach potential
Education / Skills	Skills	Good educational opportunities
Education / Skills	Skills	Accessibility to skilled vocational training for rural areas - online programmes learning in hubs
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Good (or excellent) education
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Aspirational opportunities for children
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Better educational opportunities
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Increase in work experience opportunities
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Extend provision for children with challenges
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Encourage training of skilled employees
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Access to employment (not just warehouses!)
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Opportunities for all
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Apprenticeships "centre of excellence" for logistics industry
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Routes to employment for SEND (in all its forms)
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Bigger confidence of NTRE(?)
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Access to good education for ALL
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Creativity - arts and culture, thriving

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Great opportunities for young and old
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Truly inclusive education 0-25
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Meeting potential
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Great links to the arts
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Improved education at all levels and ages
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Mobile schools to help
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Education which meets the need
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Build a university
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Build aspirations in very young people
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Young people meeting their full potential
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Leading R&D facilities
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Apprenticeship hub
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Education aligned to work
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	What do people without qualifications want? How can we include and help them?
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	North Northants university
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Good schools and higher education
Education / Skills	Education / Skills	Excellent education and opportunities for all
Education / Skills	Collaboration	Working with Tresham - setting up a community repair shop
Education / Skills	Skills	Working with Tresham College
Education / Skills	Skills	Breakfast meetings with businesses / council / Councillors
Education / Skills	Skills	Education
Education / Skills	Economy	Linking up with colleges, schools
Education / Skills	Skills	Everyone able to meet their potential - whatever that may be
Environment	Environment	Environment/full clean air
Environment	Environment	Carbon neutral
Environment	Environment	Great open spaces
Environment	Environment	Improved green spaces
Environment	Environment	Clean green net zero
Environment	Environment	Striving for a sustainable lifestyle
Environment	Environment	Preservation of green spaces
Environment	Environment	Increase recycling/reduce waste
Environment	Environment	Better facilities for cyclists
Environment	Environment	Clean environment - less litter
Environment	Environment	Good facilities for education and recreation
Environment	Environment	High quality green space
Environment	Environment	Don't lose green spaces
Environment	Environment	Peaceful life

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Environment	Environment	High quality of space & Design
Environment	Environment	Fields in trust
Environment	Environment	Accessible and inclusive access to green space
Environment	Environment	Cycle paths!
Environment	Community	Well considered well designed green living solutions /extensions
Environment	Sustainability	100% renewable
Environment	Sustainability	Solar on all warehouses
Environment	Sustainability	Flood prepared
Environment	Sustainability	Carbon neutral (green)
Environment	Environment	Big recognition of quality of current green spaces but desire to do more with them - especially linked to health and wellbeing
Environment	Environment	More accessible green and open spaces
Environment	Environment	Protected green spaces
Environment	Environment	Have a positive impact on the environment
Environment	Environment	Green and pleasant
Environment	Clean industry	Affordable clean energy locally
Environment	Clean industry	Prosperous pollution free industry 0 Tata, Tayto[??] etc
Environment	Clean industry	EVs, green thinking
Environment	Clean industry	2050 Corby power station GREEN or redundant
Environment	Environment	Green spaces
Environment	Environment	Access to green spaces
Environment	Economic development	Net zero capabilities
Environment	Environment	Clean air (net zero commitments)
Environment	Environment	Sustainable energy
Environment	Affordable	Affordable green energy (fuel poverty)
Environment	Environment	More local businesses with green ethos
Environment	Environment	Sustainable farming producing minimum food miles
Environment	Environment	Self sufficient in power generation
Environment	Environment	Sensitive exploitation of green locations
Environment	Environment	Front and centre of policy
Environment	Environment	Sustainable
Environment	Environment	Sustainability
Environment	Environment	Great community where I live
Environment	Environment	Creating sustainable communities where people can thrive
Environment	Environment	Sustainable community - a secure future for upcoming generations
Environment	Environment	Environment
Environment	Environment	Climate crisis - energy, climate change, water

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Environment	Technology	Electric solar panels in the year 2050
Environment	Technology	Showing how nature and technology can coexist
Environment	Environment	Clean environment
Environment	Environment	Exemplar of natural world stewardship
Environment	Environment	Green environment - green spaces
Jobs	Careers	Career pathways and retaining talent
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	Vested interest employers
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	Great opportunities for ALL ages
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	Sector spread job opportunities
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	Employment opportunities
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	A broad range of job opportunities
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	Increased job opportunities
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	Independence for older people
Jobs	Workplaces of the future	Progressive employment opportunities
Jobs	Opportunities	Range of employment opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	Greater provision of jobs outside
Jobs	Jobs	A more balanced industrial profile where logistics are not the main player
Jobs	Jobs	Employment opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	Employment opportunities
Jobs	Drivers	Decent housing employment and transport
Jobs	Jobs	Career pathways for a range of jobs, not just academic
Jobs	Jobs	High quality, skilled jobs
Jobs	Jobs	Low unemployment
Jobs	Jobs	Good, fulfilling jobs
Jobs	Jobs	Employers greater working towards social responsibility
Jobs	Jobs	Job prospects
Jobs	Jobs	Stable employment opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	Great jobs!
Jobs	Jobs	Varied spread of employment opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	Build on the high tech industries in the county
Jobs	Jobs	Improved wealth creation
Jobs	Jobs	Quality employment
Jobs	Jobs	Everyone that wants to is able to have a job / opportunity to volunteer
Jobs	Jobs	More high level jobs - level 4 and education
Jobs	Jobs	Give opportunities to the qualified
Jobs	Jobs	Jobs after university
Jobs	Jobs	Job security

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Jobs	Jobs	Skilled and rewarding employment
Jobs	Jobs	Break the benefits cycle
Jobs	Jobs	Career
Jobs	Jobs	Future
Jobs	Jobs	Tourism
Jobs	Jobs	Job opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	Good jobs
Jobs	Jobs	Meaningful employment
Jobs	Jobs	Range of employment
Jobs	Jobs	Heritage hub
Jobs	Affordable	Reduction in worklessness
Jobs	Jobs	A chance of higher increase in population in 2050
Jobs	Jobs	A balance of job opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	Increased accessibility to educational upskilling opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	Job opportunities
Jobs	Jobs	The abilities to gain skills and employment
Jobs	Jobs	Varied and multi sector
Jobs	Jobs	Liaison between private and public skills sectors
Jobs	Infrastructure	EG: Why did Ball chose Kettering?
Jobs	Finances	Supporting people off benefits
Jobs	Economy	Companies support emerging talents, creating internships
Equality	Equal for all	Equality of opportunity for all
Equality	Equal for all	Thriving civil society
Equality	Equal for all	Accessible opportunities for disabled people
Equality	Equal for all	Equal opportunities
Equality	Equal for all	Diverse & inclusive
Equality	Equalities	A disability aware and disability confident community
Equality	Equalities	Reduced inequalities
Equality	Equalities	Diverse population mix
Equality	Opportunities	Better equality between areas
Equality	Inclusion opportunity & social mobility	Recognition that not all parts of the county offer equality of opportunity and a desire to see some levelling up - especially for young people
Equality	Equality	Embracing diversity
Equality	Equality	Digitally connected
Equality	Equality	Can access local offers close to home
Equality	Equality	Reduction in poverty
Equality	Equality	Reduction in inequalities

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Equality	Equality	Life is inclusive, equitable and diverse
Equality	Equality	Access for all
Equality	Equality	Freedom from discrimination
Equality	Equality	Equality of opportunity for all
Equality	Equality	Training and education needed. Better data analysis to understand where we are. Improved tolerance and acceptance. Challenge the status quo. Listen to underrepresented groups and co produce with them. Use more representation on decision and policy making bodies. More openness and transparency for decision making.
Equality	Diversity	Diversity of our communities embraced and shared
Equality	Diversity	Conferences are represented by diverse people in NN
Equality	Diversity	Diversity is real and wanted
Equality	Diversity	Global ethnic majority are at the table of change
Equality	Diversity	Be representative ethnically of our population in everything we do
Equality	Diversity	Overcome language and cultural barriers
Equality	Community cohesion	Tolerant, cohesive communities
Equality	Community cohesion	Deprivation gaps are closed
Equality	Rural agenda	Opportunities for all
Equality	Social mobility	Social mobility
Equality	Equality	Addressing inequality of deprivation
Equality	Equality	Integrated local facilities
Equality	Equality	Reduce urban deprivation
Equality	Equality	Equality for all - listened to
Equality	Equality	Everyone treated with mutual respect
Equality	Equality	Equality of opportunity for all
Equality	Equality	Attract diverse population
Equality	Inclusion	Opportunities for everyone - not just those who can (disability) or who can afford (wealth)
Safety	Safety	Crime prevention
Safety	Safety	Feeling safe
Safety	Safety	safe places and spaces
Safety	Safety	More police presence - "bobbies on the beat"
Safety	Safety	Reduced knife and drug related crime
Safety	Safety	Stop ASB
Safety	Safety	Safe neighbourhoods
Safety	Safety	Anti social behaviour
Safety	Safety	Reduce crime
Safety	Safety	Safer streets
Safety	Safety	Safe and secure

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Safety	Safety	I feel safe in my house
Safety	Safety	Crime has reduced
Safety	Safety	Feeling safe
Safety	Safety	Feel safe in my community
Safety	Safety	NN should be seen as the centre for inclusive practice and communities
Safety	Safety	LGBTQ+ community feels safe and welcome in public spaces
Safety	Safety	Safe streets
Safety	Safety	A feeling of safety in the streets
Safety	Safety	Safe environment
Safety	Safety	Safe communities
Safety	Safety	Crime reduction
Safety	Safety	A safe place to live
Safety	Safety	Safe and resilient communities
Safety	Safety	Reduced crime
Safety	Safety	Feel safe and secure
Safety	Safety	Safe place (live work) - perceived and real
Safety	Safety	Focus on support services for substance misuse in deprived areas
Safety	Safety	Safer streets (reduced crime)
Safety	Safety	Improve safety of the town streets
Safety	Safety	Proportionate policing - how is this designed?
Safety	Safety	A safer community
Safety	Safety	More policing for drug culture
Safety	Safety	A safe place to live
Safety	Safety	Safe environment
Safety	Environment	Safe environment
Housing	Housing	A suitable house to live in
Housing	Housing	Affordable living for all
Housing	Housing	Good new housing
Housing	Housing	Affordable for future generation
Housing	Housing and place	Recognition that the quality of some housing stock needs to improve and that there is an opportunity to improve some aspects of place
Housing	Housing	Affordable (modular) housing
Housing	Housing	Sufficient housing to cater for all needs
Housing	Housing	Well planned low carbon new housing development
Housing	Housing	Future proofing new communities/developments
Housing	Housing	Countryside - don't lose all of it to buildings
Housing	Housing	Affordable housing in rural areas

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Housing	Housing	Future proof housing
Housing	Housing	Access to housing
Housing	Housing	Better housing
Housing	Housing	Well considered development
Housing	Housing	Housing to match employment
Housing	Housing	Housing quality efficiency
Housing	Housing	DWELL
Housing	Housing	Local plan to central government
Housing	Housing	Housing crisis - efficient homes, affordable homes
Housing	Housing	Connected communities
Housing	Housing	Warm, healthy homes (insulated)
Housing	Housing	Affordable, decent housing
Housing	Environment	Affordable Housing
Housing	Housing	Building bigger housing for wealthy families, but building housing for lower income homes
Housing	Housing	Affordable housing - help to buy scheme
Housing	Housing	Better rental rules to protect those who cannot afford to purchase.
Green space	Green space	Protect green spaces - identifies areas of outstanding natural beauty
Green space	Green space	Protect rivers health of countryside
Green space	Green space	Pollution free
Green space	Green space	Access to nature and green space
Green space	Green space	Clean air and water
Green space	Green space	Protect areas of green space - beauty for all
Green Space	Access to spaces	Leisure
Green space	Green space	Engaged active older people
Green space	Green space	Older people keep good health and meet more outdoors
Green space	Green space	Retain its history
Green space	Green space	Green spaces easily accessed and used in lots of ways
Green space	Green space	Keep the countryside
Green space	Green space	Preserve green spaces
Green space	Green space	Climate improvement - warehouses vs green spaces
Green space	Green space	Less building - keep green space protected
Green space	Green space	Maintain green spaces
Green space	Green space	Keep green spaces
Green space	Green space	Land availability for development for housing, infrastructure, leisure
Green space	Green space	Increase in more countries having much more space and increasing the size of the countries
Green space	Green space	Green space/nature in towns
Green space	Green space	Community green space

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Youth	Youth	More for younger generation
Youth	Youth	Youth at centre of everything
Youth	Youth	Increase youth provision / services
Youth	Youth	Education access to local schools
Youth	Youth	Spaced to deal with youth boredom
Youth	Community leadership	Inspire next generation (opportunities)
Youth	Opportunities	Place where young people can prosper
Youth	Rural agenda	More activates/opportunities for young people in rural locations
Youth	Youth	Young people with a voice and purpose
Youth	Youth	Children feel safe outdoors - more spaces to play
Youth	Youth	Motivated younger people who want to live here
Youth	Youth	More toddler groups supported by council
Youth	Youth	Listen to the young people - don't judge
Youth	Youth	Involve young people in care
Youth	Youth	Engage kids at an early age in what the community offers
Youth	Youth	Focus on future activities: education, leisure
Youth	Affordable	Affordable child care
Youth	Youth	What do young people want?
Youth	Community	What do young people want?
Identity	Identity	Places people want to visit
Identity	Identity	Excellent reputation across country
Identity	Identity	Interaction with neighbours
Identity	Identity	Civic pride
Identity	Identity	We want North Northamptonshire to be viewed as number 1 county: "Rose of the shires"
Identity	Identity	Understanding of heritage
Identity	Identity	Sense of place
Identity	Identity	Inclusivity
Identity	Identity	Strong identity - what is NN known for?
Identity	Identity	Attractive and positive place to visit
Identity	Identity	Environmentally focussed places and practices - national leaders
Identity	Community	A place to call "home"
Identity	Identity	Very strong desire to have a sense of identity "NN is known as xxx". People you speak to knowing automatically about North Northamptonshire
Identity	Identity	What is the cultural identity of north Northamptonshire?
Identity	Visitor economy	NN is on the map
Identity	Identity	Branding?
Identity	Identity	Clear what place means locally nationally internationally

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Identity	Infrastructure	North Northants Festival - Shouting / sharing our successes
Economy	Commercial	Provision of high tech commercial premises
Economy	Commercial	Encouraging business investing in R&D
Economy	Community	Business community (shop local)
Economy	Visitor economy	Tourism attraction
Economy	Visitor economy	Thriving visitor economy
Economy	Economy	Healthy economy
Economy	Environment	Accessible green space
Economy	Economic development	Entrepreneurial
Economy	Economic development	Centre for automation and robotics
Economy	Economic development	Green logistics hub
Economy	Business	North Northants open for business
Economy	Economy	Relative wealth to live
Economy	Economy	Everyone has enough money to live
Economy	Economy	Sustainable night-time economy
Economy	Economy	Economic industrial diversification
Economy	Tourism	Tourism
Economy	Community	Developing on the market/rural towns
Economy	Economy	Tourism bodies to support the growth
Finance	?	No poverty and zero hunger
Finance	?	No food poverty
Finance	Identity	Understanding of Local Government Funding
Finance	Opportunities	Financially well (relative)
Finance	Challenges	Investment and balancing the books is the elephant in the room.
Finance	Rural agenda	Everyone has the means to live comfortably
Finance	Financial stability	Can afford to live
Finance	Financial stability	Financial stability
Finance	Affordable	Affordable for all
Finance	Finance	Financial crisis - central government department affects services, work / employment
Finance	Finance	Funded
Finance	Finance	Delivery of services
Finance	Affordable	Low/no poverty
Finance	Affordable	Financial independence from benefits - support with progression
Finance	Finances	Where's the money coming from? Priority funding
Finance	Finances	Project needs to be financially viable
Finance	Finances	Affordable childcare
Leisure	?	Entertainment facilities to be proud of

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Leisure	Wellbeing in own environment	Everyone has access to sports and swimming pool facilities
Leisure	Wellbeing in own environment	Everyone is physically active every day
Leisure	Wellbeing in own environment	A place where culture, arts, recreation is as valued as work, logistics, transport etc
Leisure	Activities	Sports centres for students
Leisure	Culture	Thriving cultural offer and identity
Leisure	Leisure	Sport and leisure facilities
Leisure	Leisure	Leisure facilities for all ages
Leisure	Leisure	Great sport facilities
Leisure	Leisure	Improved entertainment facilities
Leisure	Leisure	Multi-use community centre of excellence for extreme sports, theatre, games, clubs and community (Corby)
Leisure	Leisure	Integrated sports platform
Leisure	Leisure	Great leisure facilities
Collaboration	Community	Involvement in local government
Collaboration	Challenges	Mobilise the whole business and communities as well as public sector
Collaboration	Collaboration	Private and public sector working together
Collaboration	Collaboration	Increased partnership working
Collaboration	West Northants	Are we Balanced with West Northants?
Collaboration	Collaboration	TRUE partnership
Collaboration	Collaboration	Big decisions are inclusive
Collaboration	Collaboration	Thematic multiagency partnership
Collaboration	Collaboration	True partnership
Collaboration	?	International collaboration? Tourism?
Collaboration	Collaboration	Big decisions are inclusive
Collaboration	Collaboration	Joined up thinking
Collaboration	Collaboration	Effective partnerships
Collaboration	Collaboration	Replacement for SEMLEP - cross border forum
Collaboration	Economy	Commitments from local organisations
Infrastructure	Connections	Resilient & fit for purpose telecoms network
Infrastructure	Community cohesion	Sustainable surgeries and schools
Infrastructure	Growth	Growth
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Investing in infrastructure
Infrastructure	Affordable	Robust infrastructure (water, power, digital)
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Exploitation of brownfield sites
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Infrastructure to support new builds

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Good infrastructure
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Housing - but better infrastructure
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Infrastructure to support housebuilding
Town Centres	?	Regenerated, inclusive safe and vibrant mixed use urban centres
Town Centres	Visitor economy	Vibrant town centres
Town centres	Town Centres	Attractive town centres (refurbished shop fronts)
Town centres	Town Centres	Thriving town centres
Town centres	Town Centres	Investment in town centres
Town centres	Town centres	Improve the high street in town with spaces for traditional shops
Town centres	Town centres	Town centres and planning system
Town centres	Economy	Regeneration of town centres - town centres, who owns them?
Town centres	Economy	Adaptions of town centre premises users
Digital	Access to services	Digitised accessibility to all services and VCSE orgs
Prevention	Prevention	Greater focus on prevention
Prevention	Prevention	Increased facilities to prevent homelessness
Prevention	Anchor institutions	Constitutions where I know I can go/I can refer people to for support
Prevention	Wellbeing in own environment	Help for those who need it
VCSE	Community	Coordinated voluntary groups
VCSE	Community	Volunteering is rewarded
Digital	Connectivity	A desire to see better connectivity both physical (e.g. public transport) but also broadband
Prevention	Prevention	Shift in investment to prevention and early intervention
VCSE	Thriving communities	Increased volunteers
VCSE	Thriving communities	Thriving VSC
Digital	Digital	Digital enabled
VCSE	VCSE	VCSE are on stage first and have power
VCSE	VCSE	Good investment in VCSE Sector
Digital	Digital	Digital inclusivity
Prevention	Services	Good public services
Digital	Connectivity	Give people access to technologies to beat isolation in villages and remote areas
Digital	Connectivity	Decent digital connectivity
Civic leadership	Community leadership	A network of system leaders to develop local policy and responses
Civic leadership	Community leadership	Where publicly funded officers are from or understand and COMMIT to their area. "Interimness" - it's everywhere!
Civic leadership	Community leadership	A well organised and resourced local Council
Civic Leadership	Civic leadership	Having motivated and engaged local government
Civic Leadership	Civic leadership	Political leadership

EXERCISE 1: What does a good life look like in North Northamptonshire in 2050?

Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Empowerment	Civic society	Greater sense of community and community empowerment
Empowerment	Workplaces of the future	Empowerment of individuals
Empowerment	Action	Ensure people feel they can challenge and be empowered to have a voice
Empowerment	Empowerment	anticipation in democratic processes is very high
Clean Environment	Pride	More pride in environment - especially litter
Clean Environment	Pride	Clean streets
Access to services	Access to services	No barriers / red tape
Practical	Other points	Badges too small to see names on
Wellbeing	Drivers	A quantifiably happier population
Purpose	Aspiration	Desire to live - not feeling worthless
Rural	Rural agenda	Initiatives being less town-centric
Technology	Technology	Holograms
Purpose	Finances	Hope, prosperity
	?	No barriers / red tape
	Suited to our needs	
	Opportunities	Work life balance
	Action	Place model - LAPS, but money needs to go to targeted areas
	Affordable	Hope/prosperity
Engage	Community	How do we engage people?
	Community	Incentives
Planning	Transport	A failed planning system - needs improvement.
Query	Infrastructure	Has growth been within or people moving into area?

APPENDIX 2: Exercise 2 Notes

Delegates were asked: What needs to be true to deliver this vision? Responses were written onto post-its and categorised on the table for discussion.

Note: Summary Category field – high-level grouping of topics post conference; Table Theme field – theme given on table at conference; Note field – content of post-it or facilitator notes

Responses are grouped by summary category, sorted from most responses to least.

There were a number of post-its which did not fit into summary categories. These have been collected at the end, sorted into specific opportunities and challenges.

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Collaboration	Challenge	Public services work in silos
Collaboration	Collaboration	Council and public sector who have office job back into the office - can't have collaborative environment without
Collaboration	Collaboration	Collaboration across sectors. ALL sectors!
Collaboration	Collaboration	Less "it's not my/our job" - if we have a joint goal it's everyone's job.
Collaboration	Collaboration	Collaborative partnerships
Collaboration	Collaboration	Better use of the village hall network
Collaboration	Collaboration	Constraints - lack of joined up working and funding
Collaboration	Collaboration	Create a common purpose
Collaboration	Collaboration	Joined up working between sectors / organisations
Collaboration	Collaboration	Challenge - how do we truly work in partnership?
Collaboration	Collaboration	Joined up thinking! Groups working together
Collaboration	Collaboration	Build a structure
Collaboration	Collaboration	Open and inclusive
Collaboration	Collaboration	Multi agency partnership
Collaboration	Collaboration	Logistics and right mechanics
Collaboration	Collaboration	Steering group - who?
Collaboration	Collaboration	Improve communication
Collaboration	Collaboration	Reduce duplication of contracts and budgets
Collaboration	Collaboration	Evidence based relationships with colleges
Collaboration	Collaboration	Sharing space and resource bringing people together
Collaboration	Collaboration	Breaking down working parties
Collaboration	Locality	Local solutions with strength of collective solutions
Collaboration	Locality	Build on current partnership work
Collaboration	Locality	Work with West Northamptonshire

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Collaboration	Locality	Location lends itself to shared hub working(?)
Collaboration	Locality	Lack of joint work with West Northants
Collaboration	Opportunities	Fact find and use ideas from other areas/countries
Collaboration	Unblockers	Bringing organisations together (Especially voluntary)
Collaboration	Unblockers	Unify around shared vision
Actions	Action	Opportunities in local organisations to support soft retention
Actions	Action	Identify 3 key priorities - action plan
Actions	Action	Get on with the obvious
Actions	Action	What happens next?
Actions	Action	All on table vision - 3 or 5 year plans and annual review
Actions	Action	Need to see action not words - 2 months, 20 months etc
Actions	Action	Forum to decide what can / can't be done now
Actions	Action	Clear mechanics for change with the right people (public/private/VCS)
Actions	Action	Identify low hanging fruit - e.g. river, unclaimed government money, duplication, what already doing)
Actions	Action	Map problems - want to change or link to
Actions	Action	Identify undervalued spaces and offer them for free events
Actions	Action	Embed groups and prioritising identified projects
Actions	Action	Projects with biggest HOLISTIC impact - e.g. jobs transport education
Actions	Action	Increase awareness of what doing / what already happening - not just council doing this
Actions	Action	Review and analysis
Actions	Action	North Northamptonshire utopia
Actions	Action	A detailed framework is needed, facilitating partners working together
Actions	Action	Mapping out problems for change - identifying tools that relate to it. Understanding who does what.
Actions	Action	1-2 years: Delivery, identify the projects
Actions	Action	What is the problem we are trying to solve?
Actions	Actions	Let it evolve
Actions	Focus	What is the problem we are trying to solve? Why are we here?
Actions	Focus	Drive - what is it: social change, education?
Actions	Locality	Post event momentum opportunity
Actions	Taking action	Follow up on ideas so they become actions
Actions	Taking action	Joined up working towards common goal! Big 50!
Funding	Challenge	Immediate cost pressures impacting investment in future
Funding	Finance	Barrier: finance
Funding	Finance	Challenge - cost /money
Funding	Finance	Project needs to be financially viable
Funding	Finance	Priority of funding
Funding	Finance	Working together know what funding is there

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Funding	Finance	Finances - where is the money coming from?
Funding	Funding	Need to work around overcoming funding restrictions
Funding	Funding	Accountability from Council to progress Highway issues and make decisions
Funding	Funding	Constraint - lack of funding and resources for community engagement and other projects
Funding	Funding	Constraint - too much short term funding and monies restricted by ringfencing
Funding	Funding	Funding issues - lobbying to resolve?
Funding	Funding	Council funding - barrier
Funding	Funding	Barrier - funding
Funding	Funding	Needs funding
Funding	Funding	Identify funding initiatives and what grants can be completed
Funding	Investment	Recognition that some areas need investment (fund)
Funding	Transparency	Need more transparency around expenditure
Funding	VCSE	Need security of funding
Health	Action	Improved technology for ? Help for primary care
Education / Skills	Challenge	Young people don't stay after university - brain drain
Education / Skills	Education / training	Online and face to face life-long learning opportunities
Education / Skills	Education / training	Local collaborative policies
Education / Skills	Education / training	Ensuring children are ready for education, emotional stability
Education / Skills	Education / training	Being brave to target resources
Education / Skills	Education / training	Skills targeted across a broad curriculum
Education / Skills	Education / training	A focus on physical and mental wellbeing
Education / Skills	Education / training	Evidence and needs based: forward thinking
Education / Skills	Education / training	Hooks into young people
Education / Skills	Education / training	Improve educational attainment, minimise exclusion
Education / Skills	Education / training	Competing generational priorities - no teaching of interactions
Education / Skills	Education / training	Ongoing dialogue with schools - we need to be doing even better
Education / Skills	Education / training	Sustainability champions in schools - investing for future
Education / Skills	Education / training	Opportunity - linking up more businesses with education / training partners
Education / Skills	Education / training	Education
Education / Skills	Jobs / Skills	Blended learning opportunities - eLearning
Education / Skills	Knowledge	University knowledge transfer partnership (Claire, Cranfield University)
Education / Skills	Skills	Training with the college - repair shops, community hubs
Health	Health	Integrated services
Health	Health	Focus on prevention
Health	Health	High quality / Full access
Health	Health	Increased focus on mental health
Health	Health	Access to primary care

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Health	Health	Education as access to health and wellbeing services
Health	Health	Behaviour change to improve health and wellbeing
Health	Health	Hardest conversation with public about expectations of NHS
Health	Health	Join up public services and VCSE at front end (support North Northants model_
Health	Health	Co-produce services[?] with service users
Health	Health	Empower our future staff to do what is needed
Health	Health	Be innovative
Health	Health	Look forward not backwards
Health	Health	Share information out - be contactable
Health	Health	Surgeries
Health	Health	Enough time and people to listen
Health	Health	Barrier - increased waiting times to reach GPs and especially dental
Community	Assets	Investment in place-based community assets across urban and rural areas (including digital)
Housing	Challenge	Not enough professional roles. Is the housing offer right?
Housing	Challenge	Quality vs quantity - mixed incentives (for housing?)
Community	Community	Pandemic showed willingness to work in partnership
Community	Community	Professional people who work in communities and know needs: use them!
Community	Community	Mobile community hubs
Community	Community	What brings people together? Problems/issues. Positive events
Community	Community	Get better at collaborating
Community	Community	Actions need to be neighbourhoods EMPOWER
Community	Community	We can all contribute - how to bring to table?
Community	Community	Use LAPS and CWFs to plan and come together
Community	Community	Use parish councils more - they know their place well
Community	Community	Build communities not development dormitories
Community	Community	Activate communities and educate - basics
Community	Community	Getting community buy in for everything that's being done
Housing	Housing	Housing of the right kind
Housing	Housing	Affordable
Housing	Housing	Replace/upgrade obsolete housing stock
Housing	Housing	The 15 minute community - access to school/retail/green space/community facility (e.g. GP, library)
Housing	Housing	Provision for an aging population
Housing	Housing	Regenerate and redesign communities. Homes - transport.
Housing	Housing	Healthy happy community - a holistic approach
Housing	Housing	Build homes not houses
Housing	Housing	Address sub standard housing
Housing	Housing	Challenge - 57,000 more people mans 20,000 new homes needed or more

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Housing	Housing	Challenge - legacy housing and existing inequalities
Housing	Housing	NIMBYs (solve by co-designing incentives)
Community	Opportunities	Use skill of diverse community to share skills - e.g. ethnic healthy food
Transport	Transport	Fully electric
Transport	Transport	Zero carbon - active travel routes
Transport	Transport	Independent and collective movement (shared ownership of vehicles)
Transport	Transport	Transport to work
Transport	Transport	Better public transport / integrated - Housing, health, education closely linked
Transport	Transport	Transport change needed - joined up transport
Transport	Transport	Build roads like Cambridge
Transport	Transport	Take specific services TO people - e.g. skin cancer check
Transport	Transport	Invest in mobile actions and make it regular
Transport	Transport	A constraint
Transport	Transport	(heading)
Transport	Transport	Good transport links
Transport	Transport	Can we make things more accessible
Transport	Transport	Infrastructure for electric cars / replacement - technology
Business	Business	Local business to invest in infrastructure
Business	Business	Business rates go into central pots
Business	Business	Small business support
Business	Business	Reinvent Kettering future partnership for CISS(?) and small enterprises to work together
Business	Business	SME Business support
Business	Business	Success of Ball - why did they chose Kettering?
Business	Business	Replacement for SEMLEP - cross border forum
Business	Business	Coming together with industry - breakfast meetings
Business	LAPS CWF	Local businesses buy in
Business	Opportunities	Financial incentives for businesses to invest locally
Governance	Action	Get a task group together with educators across sectors, young people, economists to develop a skills strategy - interest in joining such a group - Rothwell Town Council
Governance	Actions	Having a clear mechanism for change, with the right people around it
Jobs	Challenge	Recruitment to certain sectors - hospitality, retail, care is a challenge
Jobs	Employment	Alignment to future trends - critical mass identity
Jobs	Employment	Broader range of employment opportunities
Jobs	Employment	Attraction of smaller / local businesses + Maturing
Jobs	Employment	Integration with the local community
Jobs	Employment	Quality employers who care
Jobs	Jobs / Skills	More high quality jobs needed across diverse industries

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Jobs	Jobs / Skills	Public sectors as employers - need to do more on apprenticeships/placements, links to educators
Jobs	Opportunities	More on the job recognised training opportunities
Governance	Governance	NN Needs a steering group that is accountable - cross sector with challenge
Governance	Governance	Change is bound to one Council term (elections = policy change)
Governance	Governance	Needs political will
Governance	Governance	Understanding at a political level
Governance	Opportunities	What can elected members do?
Governance	Unblockers	Golden thread of governance - like Milton Keynes
Governance	Unblockers	Clear focus for organisations
Government	Action	Change legislation? If needed, e.g. Electricity act
Government	Challenge	Government policies - e.g. electric cars too soon
Government	Governance	Challenge - political will/ changes in government
Government	Governance	Challenge - government policy / joined up
Government	Government	Barrier - government policy
Government	Government	Legality change - such as power chargers
Government	Lobby	Lobby for changes in legislation
Government	Lobby	Involve MPs
Civic Leadership	Churn	Churn in Local Authorities / Politics
Civic Leadership	Churn	Continuity of people / wishes
Civic Leadership	Churn	Longer term plan - sustainability to Big 50
Civic Leadership	Civic leadership	Needs ownership of organisation and civic leadership
Civic Leadership	Civic leadership	Opportunity: NNC to facilitate further collaboration
Civic Leadership	Civic leadership	Not to be constrained by politics
Strategy	Strategies	Housing strategy, nature strategy, industrial strategy, wellbeing strategy, INFRASTRUCTURE
Strategy	Strategies	The strategy isn't up to date, we are operational focussed and not strategy
Strategy	Strategies	Sticking to a set strategy and not just what is popular
Strategy	Strategies	Flexibility is needed - challenging if there are political changes
Strategy	Strategies	Concern about how we keep the strategy pushed
Strategy	Strategies	What's actually strategy work and what's "Just do it" day to day operation?
Environment	Environment	Investment in green infrastructure
Environment	Environment	Education - e.g. plant based diet promote with cooking sessions
Environment	Environment	Net Zero
Environment	Environment	Design in sustainability to infrastructure
Environment	Environment	Use rural expertise to help Co2 savings
Planning	Action	Fully funded planning system
Prevention	Challenge	We continue to haemorrhage funding with high cost high demand services
Green space	Green space	Better access and awareness/visibility

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Green space	Green space	Range of activity
Green space	Green space	Improved cycling provision
Green space	Green space	Incorporate green space (into buildings)
Prevention	Preventative	Investment in preventative work to maximise opportunities for next generation
Prevention	Preventative	Fundamental shift needed towards prevention and early intervention
Prevention	Proactive	We need to be proactive not reactive
Planning	Planning	Growth plan - led by NNC and shared with all stakeholders
Planning	Planning	Challenge - planning inspectors and current laws
Planning	Planning	Planning system
Capacity	Challenge	Capacity to deliver
Capacity	Challenge	People wanting change but not the facility for it
Safety	Crime	Reduce ASB
Empowerment	Empowerment	Empowering people in organisations to make decisions
Empowerment	Engagement	Community engagement / ownership and empowerment - voice
Empowerment	Engagement	More engagement is needed at local public sector, being able to vocalise the system
Safety	Safety	Promote and engage community safety
Safety	Safety	Barrier - social behaviour
Capacity		There are lots of duplicates of works to achieve this
Digital	Digital	Connected communities (digital) - opportunity
Digital	Digital	NN = centre for robotics and automation? (uni)
Identity	Identity	What does North Northants want to be?
Identity	Identity	Marketing of our successes
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Barrier - Lack of infrastructure (national grid)
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Improve power generation - electricity hydrogen!
Infrastructure	Challenge	Good internet capability across all areas
Leisure	Leisure	North Northants festival
Leisure	Locality	NNC unitary looking at NNC as a whole together
Practical	Practical	Could we have a delegate list?
Practical	Practical	Could we have swapped tables in afternoon?
Communication	Communication	Communication with community
Equality	Diversity	[No specific notes but noted as a theme]
Data	Opportunities	Use data better to be effective: e.g. benefit advise where high unemployment
Youth	Transitions	Poor transitions of children and parents - schools and social care
VCSE	VCSE	Longer funding for Vol orgs to allow work to build towards big 50
Challenge		Lots of work wasted
Challenge	Apathy	Barrier - apathy
Challenge	Challenge	How do we evaluate prospects for non-financial benefits?

EXERCISE 2: What needs to be true to deliver this vision?		
Summary Category	Table Theme	Note
Challenge	Challenge	"it's too hard"
Challenge	Challenge	Conflicting technology and recommendations
Challenge	Cynicism	Overall cynicism & Why are we here?
Challenge	Focus	What is the VALUE?
Challenge	Governance	Barrier - competence of officials and politicians
Challenge	Knowledge	Constraint - lack of awareness of what's available
Challenge	Risks	Acute pressures derail long term plans
Challenge	Risks	NSRA
Challenge	Services	Growing services need to meet population demand
Challenge	Short term	Barrier - short-termism
Challenge	Volunteers	Constraint - volunteer fatigue
Opportunity		Resources - skills and knowledge
Opportunity	Assets	Opportunity to be creating in using assets
Opportunity	Economy	Villages contribution to economy
Opportunity	Funding	Sometimes a little in the right place can be a lot
Opportunity	Knowledge	"exploit" elderly / retired knowledge
Opportunity	Opportunities	Seek out the creative minds in NNC area
Opportunity	Opportunities	Reinstate the Northants Ambassador programme - that NEP (?) SEMPLER?
Opportunity	Opportunity	Will to be involved - lot of people here, will in the room
Opportunity	Social capital	Using social capital well and best
Opportunity	Tourism	Tourism body? Blueway bigger?
Opportunity	Town Centres	Turn empty town centre buildings into community hubs
Opportunity	Unblockers	Community champions - vision holders

APPENDIX 3: Actions

Responses are sorted by name of delegate where stated, with anonymous actions collated at the bottom.

Delegates were asked what they would do to work towards the vision, and which priorities this fed into (not all delegates stated a theme aligned to their action).

Action: what will you do?			
Delegate	Organisation	Action	Priorities
Aaron Scott	NNC	As chair of the NN LGBT forum link with staff networks across organisations to strengthen communication across the community and to share opportunities	
Abby Smith	The Bedford College Group	Help link local businesses with the Tresham college; to inform curriculum design and meet local skills needs. Maybe a 6-weekly breakfast!	Proud Productive Proactive
Beccy Hurrell	BITVA Axis Hub CIC	Continue to obtain funding to purchase the former Bingo hall in Kettering, to help young people have an identity, bring a new identity to the town and bring services in 3rd sector and businesses together!!!	
Bill Wright	3rd Group Associates Ltd	Attempt to improve my living standard in my old age for myself and my children. Involved in a number of projects that will assist growth in industrial/commerce/history	
Christopher Pompkins	Vistry Homes / Staton Cross Developments	Having been impressed by the impressive social value initiatives across the county, will reach out to organisations to see how Stanton Cross Developments can support	Proud Prosperous Proactive
Cllr Emily Fedorowycz	NNC	Connect with Robin on the upskilling agenda and engage with industries that I think we need to upskill into (renewable energy, care, NHS, social enterprises, retrofit, tech, engineering, hydrogen)	
Cllr Helen Howell	NNC	Continue to strive to work with all stakeholders to promote the leisure, sport, culture and tourism offering throughout NN and beyond to bring jobs, training and grow the economy.	
Cllr Lloyd Bunday	NNC	Encourage the building of homes and communities not houses and dormitories	
Cllr Mark Rowley	NNC	Work within NNC exec Members to enhance NN and have a coherent plan for the future	
Cllr Richard Barnwell	Great Cransley and Mawsley Councils/ President Kettering Civic Society	Continue to try to enable the public to feel a better sense of pride and place in my hometown of Kettering	Proud Prosperous Proactive
Cllr Rosemary Smart	Earls Barton Parish Council	Work with partner organisations to help achieve the vision set out for NN	Proud Prosperous Proactive
Cllr Scott G(?)		Work with education providers to get a better skills network within NN	
Creating Tomorrow Trust	Creating Tomorrow Trust	Take part in the Local Area Partnerships	Proactive

Action: what will you do?			
Delegate	Organisation	Action	Priorities
David Brackenbury	Electric Places	Work to promote the power of the private, public and education sectors across our area. We have huge talent. Let's keep talking!	Proud Productive Proactive
David Fuller	NCALC	Be happy to support the young people to engage with others based on my experience as a teacher, help establish youth ambassadors to take on a role to support young people	
Felicity Ryan	Corby Town Council	Continue to work with partners to raise the profile of Corby in the NN network	
Gabriella Van Beek	Healthwatch NN	Continue to focus and work on improving and making recommendations for local healthcare and wellbeing services, aim at increasing access and decreasing health inequalities.	
Geneviere Roberts	Kier	Continue to promote our current innovative technological improvements and look to introduce new technology to further improve the roads.	
Giles West		Drive the creation of vibrant community centres/hubs including rotating and pop up to widen coverage	Proud Proactive
Greg Ward	NNC	Work with key partners on specific initiatives that will have impact in a snowballing and integrate (?) way	
Jack Pishhorn	Chester House Estate	Deliver the Greenway Project	
Jo Hutchinson	NNC	Liaise with Robin (Tresham) to be part of working party re: broader curriculum AND transitions through education re employment, future jobs	
Jo Moore	Accommodation Concern	Be a participant in ensuring the voice of the voluntary sector is at the table.	Proactive
Jo Moore	Accommodation Concern	Follow up contacts made today	Proactive
Jo Savage	Greatwell Homes	Work more closely with schools in our area to support educational achievement	Proud Prosperous
Jo Williams	Apethorpe Village Meeting	Communicate to rural communities and gather feedback to represent the rural voice	Proactive
Kasam Hussain	Openreach	Continue to build full fibre broadband cross NN as part of our Full Fibre ambition across the UK. Will work in partnership with Digital Northants to address any gaps.	
Kate Williams	Groundwork Northamptonshire	Follow up on contacts from today	
Kate Williams	Groundwork Northamptonshire	Think more and talk wider about the vision and how we get there	
Kate Williams	Groundwork Northamptonshire	Involve communities	
Katie Boyce	Northants Open Studies	Connect with like minded people/organisations that can help bring the communities together in isolated areas and bring access to arts and heritage	
Kevin Hoctor		Take back North Northant's ideas back into central government to inform national government decisions	Proud Prosperous Proactive
Lisa Forsyth	Max Associates	Speak to Electric Places re: decarbonising the Council's swimming pools to impact NN2NZ	
Mark Hunter	Chelveston-cum-Caldecott PC	Push for public EV chargers in the Parish	

Action: what will you do?			
Delegate	Organisation	Action	Priorities
Mark Hunter	Chelveston-cum-Caldecott PC	Investigate EPC mapping of this parish and agree session on (?) improvements (inc. Crast Rowed)(?)	
Mike Page	Weldon Parish Council	Get to know better the enablers in NNC/their agents to bring forward our ideas to improve our environment in Weldon	Proud Prosperous Proactive
Miriam Kiernan	Police	Work with partners to problem solve	
Naomi Eisenstadt	ICB	Improve NHS/ICB engagement with local population N+W	
Ozlem Icer	Longhurst Group	Promote and take part in partnership working with external agencies to help create connected communities	Proactive
Patrick Banham	NNC	Promote NN and network with other directorates within the authority and also third party organisations to help our community	
Peter Reed	DWP	Identify and encourage progressive work opportunities with local employers	Prosperous
Peter Stevens	Electric Places	In 2 months present vision in local terms, develop plan funded in two years, independent lives in 20 years (including shared transport cities(?))	
Phil Arkell	Citizen's Advice Corby and Kettering	Continue to serve those living in the most deprived communities in NNC	
Richard Lewis	NCALC	Continue to be positive about NNC as it develops, albeit not underestimating the task!	
Robin Webber-Jones	Tresham College	Work with NNC to create a group exploring educational opportunities	
Rupert West	King West Chartered Surveyors	Try harder to think out of the box in my professional life in property. Very depressed by the education/skills challenges that have been outlined.	
Samantha Fitzgerald		Link with Robin from Tresham to explore opportunities re: education and engagement in NNC	Prosperous Proactive
Steve Freeman	Police	Work with partners and the community to make Northants a safe place to live	
Tim O'Callaghan		Engage with the community, listen and contribute to actions that improve wellbeing.	
Tom Lyons	GSS Architecture	Having been involved in a range of similar initiatives as a masterplan architect and regeneration specialist in NN together with currently involvement in many developments, this experiment/knowledge/thread needs communicating with chief exec, Tresham etc	
Wayne Cattell	Environment Agency	Work better with organisations outside those I work for	
	Adrenaline Alley	Crete a multi use community centre of excellence with a diverse range of services and activities for the community to create opportunities for the future.	

Action: what will you do?			
Delegate	Organisation	Action	Priorities
		Help with evolving the knowledge that we already have to give us more experience with future skills or the future examples of life choices	Proactive
		Allow people to get out of their comfort zone and try new things to broaden their skills	Proactive
		Talk to our congregations young and old about what they want to see in 2050	
		Commit to building long term partnerships with other agencies	
		Try to build lines between college and industry	
		Community approach to in work poverty - DUP - employers educational providers, stakeholders working together to collaborate and overcome barriers to progression	
		Reach and build a new partnership with Tresham College to develop a sustainable place-based employer relationship	Aspirational Productive Innovative
		Improve the college with a lot more subjects, and have a lot more students	Proud
		Work with Tresham to upskill young people and adults to meet retrofit needs of community to create warmer, healthier homes.	Prosperous Proactive
Page 89		Discuss how our offer can support the vision (e.g. green skills /careers)utilise our expertise to support the growth of companies.	Prosperous
		Continue to target local projects to improve the community I live in.	
		Endeavour to continue to employ local people within our business and provide opportunities for work experience and training.	
		Ensure an efficient and effective public health function	Proud Prosperous Proactive
		Develop a strategy for the business to aim at carbon neutrality	
		Try and make connections with local education institutes to help further education	Proactive
		Work with colleagues to develop cost avoidance/"cost forgone" models to aid transformational activities.	
		Need to continue to lead the Big50 message / ownership and promote collaboration	
		Create some future scenarios to guide our thinking	
		Try to filter the message down to my parish council to encourage community engagement which should help identify needs/issues	
		Build collaborative relationships - VCSE-education-business	
		Encourage the Parish Council to take measures to reduce carbon emissions to achieve to NN2N2 Policy Target	
		Work to better integrate our business with the local community - education, training and employment and supporting local initiatives	Prosperous Proactive

Action: what will you do?			
Delegate	Organisation	Action	Priorities
		Employ locals, giving them opportunities to develop their skills and make a career, working together as a team supporting each other	
		Young people give more opportunities	
		Better bus service	
		Greater engagement with communities to determine what they desire and there needs to be	
		I will continue to raise awareness of the benefit of heritage, arts and culture and the contribution they make to communities, economy and the planet	
		Ensure my refugee/resettlement are linked with Bell re: employment opportunities	
		Do all I can to make the support NN VCS/System early intervention wider work and secure investment from the system to extend it	
		Offer more 121 input with schools and young people on YP's career and aspirational opportunities	
		Organise our "cycle hub" activities WITHIN communities (e.g. free cycle marking, repairs), rather than expecting them to come to us	
		Identify short term wins and aspirational goals to move this forward - work to establish a mechanism to make change	Proactive

BIG50

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE VISION

DRAFT

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FOREWORD

So often in our working lives we have to focus on the tasks or problems immediately in front of us and do not get the time to think about the wider picture or longer-term future. We have certainly felt this in recent years, as have many of the partners and organisations we work with. That's why it is so important for us all to take a step back from our everyday, to consider the whole place of North Northamptonshire and the future we want to create here.

We are in a great position to now look to the future, to imagine the place that North Northamptonshire can be in 2050, to consider the place that residents deserve to live in and refocus our energies and plans to make that a reality.

If all of us are invested in making North Northamptonshire the best place possible and have a picture of what this looks like we can understand how every one of us has a part to play in designing that future, planning the actions which get us there and holding each other to account to make sure those things happen. With this knowledge, when we all set out plans, actions and strategies they will not just be for our own organisations but a building block of working together towards the Vision for North Northamptonshire's future.

We created this Vision through conversations with a range of partners and community representatives, this set out our first proposal of what the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 could look like. We then took this proposed Vision and socialised it at the Big 50 Conference in July 2023, where we engaged with many more partners to gather wider views on it, to check what points people agree with, and where change or additions are needed.

We were delighted with the number of different organisations that attended, from local businesses, the voluntary sector, health, and elected members and importantly some our young people. Not only did they provide valuable insights to shape the Vision for the good life, they started the conversation about what can be done to work toward achieving the best life. We have begun the partnerships which will set out and deliver the actions to make this a reality. Our proposed Vision for North Northamptonshire has been updated with the insights gathered from the conference.

This Vision is not about North Northamptonshire Council, but as its Leader and Chief Executive we felt that we had a responsibility to begin this work, to give it impetus and to bring together everyone who will work together to make the best future for North Northamptonshire. We are extremely pleased and excited to see how enthused so many partners and residents are to make this best future happen.

We look forward to working in partnerships with the many organisation who have helped to make the Vision truly reflect the wants of the whole community and working with you to create the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050, through the actions we have committed to take together over the next months, years and decades.

Cllr Jason Smithers, Leader of North Northamptonshire Council

George Candler, Chief Executive of North Northamptonshire Council

1 INTRODUCTION

We are the heart of England. One of the fastest growing areas in the country. A place where businesses naturally flock to and where they grow.

North Northamptonshire has a unique place as the heart of the country, offering an ideal work life balance for modern employment. The pace at which it has grown shows the strength and attraction of North Northamptonshire as a place to live, work, do business and visit. This Vision is our chance to use the opportunities here to set the highest standards of the best life in 2050.

North Northamptonshire is a place of places, from its major towns (Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough) to idyllic villages, countryside and waterways. Almost everyone has easy access to high quality green space, even those living in our most urban areas.

North Northamptonshire is the heart of England, 38 million people – 63% of the population of England – can be reached within two and a half hours by road. Major employment centres are within easy commutable distance of areas of the authority, including London, Birmingham, Leicester, Cambridge and Northampton.

North Northamptonshire is one of the fastest growing places in England. From 2011 to 2021 the population increased across all age groups by 13.5% - over double the England average, with the working age population increasing by nearly three times the England average.

North Northamptonshire has long been a thriving hub for logistics and manufacturing jobs due to its central location. This has continued, with businesses expanding their operations and new businesses bringing high tech and green industry jobs to the area in recent years.

However, not everyone is able to enjoy these opportunities currently. There are places of deprivation across the larger towns, while many rural areas lack the connectivity to access employment. We are ambitious and want to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all across North Northamptonshire.

Our lack of public and sustainable transport connectivity means that 80% of our journeys are made by car, often on congested roads. As well as the environmental issues this causes, it contributes to lack of access to good employment, as well as isolation and loneliness for our more vulnerable residents. Most rural areas have over a quarter of their population aged over 65, and without being able to access activities and social interaction these people are more likely to need help from the state or charity partners earlier in life.

North Northamptonshire is in a unique moment to set out its ambitions. In 2050 we want to be able to look back to this point and be proud that we took bold and ambitious decisions to make this the best place it can be, with the best life possible for the people of North Northamptonshire.

We will be proud that we worked together to find the part which all residents, organisations, partners and businesses can play in building this future. We will have a place which not only has the excellent opportunities we have now, but where everyone benefits from them. There will not only be a thriving business community here, but one which employs local people at all levels. We will continue to attract new residents, but “grow our own” and ensure our working age population have the skills to achieve their ambitions in the developing employment market, Whether young people want to stay local or move further afield, we must ensure they have the skills to do so and that there are also the local employers and jobs which match their ambitions.

We will work for a greener future, not just ensuring our residents and businesses act in the most environmentally friendly ways, but by supporting business to thrive which drive down harmful emissions or waste across the country and the world.

2 WHAT IS A VISION?

A Vision is an inspirational statement for the whole community of an idealistic future of a place and its communities and outlines what a place would like to ultimately achieve. It also helps to communicate what needs to be done for its employees, residents, businesses, and wider communities. It is not just for a single organisation because its aims are bigger than any one organisation, it points to the best future that everyone working for North Northamptonshire can work towards.

This is the Vision for North Northamptonshire, setting out an ambition of the best life here in 2050. It draws on work done through the establishment of the unitary authority, discussions with Members, staff, partners including the business community and voluntary sector.

From these discussions came clear priorities: the opportunities set out in this Vision, but also the complex challenges which could hold North Northamptonshire back from achieving the best future possible. It is clear that these difficult issues cannot be solved by any one organisation but need everyone with a stake in North Northamptonshire to work together.

This Vision has been created through discussions with a wide range of partners – from business, the voluntary sector, education providers, statutory services, social enterprises, council offers and elected representatives from the local authority, town and parish councils. It has drawn on a wide range of existing plans, information and public feedback given to consultations from a range of partners from recent years. It did not start with a blank page but actively worked to refocus the strong work already in place to set a clear direction for everyone with a stake in North Northamptonshire's future.

This Vision does not set out to be a detailed plan which maps out the ideal future. Major, lasting change is by its nature emergent and evolves over time. Instead, this Vision sets out the overall direction for North Northamptonshire. It is the beginning of working together to deliver this future and hold each other accountable for making it happen.

2.1 The Vision is...

A Vision – it is an attempt to describe the best life in North Northamptonshire and to consider how this can be worked towards.

The beginning of a new collaboration – it has been created in collaboration with a number of different organisations, businesses, communities and residents.

Calling for action – it is a call to everyone in North Northamptonshire, the organisations and businesses who work here, to ask how we can work together over time to make this place the best it can be.

2.2 The Vision is not...

Perfect – it is the best version of where we want to get to, based on input from a wide range of partners across our area, but it will always need to evolve over time to reflect more inputs and any changes we could not foresee.

The only strategy or plan – organisations and partnerships have put considerable effort into creating their own plans, strategies, and Visions for their own work – including work done before the formation of North Northamptonshire. This Vision aims to pull together the aims of those and guide future plans to be written with an understanding of how they fit into building this best future.

Owned by one organisation – the Council have set out this Vision to spark a response and make a call to action for everyone in North Northamptonshire. The Council have a convening power to bring the community and partners together to work towards these goals, and this partnership for North Northamptonshire will constructively hold each other to account to make this future real.

3 DRIVERS

These are the reasons why North Northamptonshire needs to create a Vision for the future, based on the conversations held to date. Some of these are opportunities and strengths we must make the most of; some are challenges which we need to address. Some are very specific to North Northamptonshire; some are issues for the whole country or even the world but need a local response.

All great places have challenges. A Vision must identify problems which stop people living their best life. This will help us to tackle those complex problems head on and capture the opportunities of a changing world.

This is a long-term Vision, and over time there may be new perspectives and different drivers for change. These can be added to the growing understanding of the current and future situation of North Northamptonshire and inform the change we all want to create.

3.1.1 Not everyone has the best chance in life yet

While North Northamptonshire has generally good health and educational outcomes on average, there are areas which are less prosperous. The average life expectancy in North Northamptonshire is in line with the national average, but there can be up to nine years difference between specific areas. There are notable areas of deprivation across all the larger towns, but also in many more rural areas – where issues are often worsened by a lack of services, transport and digital connectivity which impacts on health and financial inequalities. We must ensure everyone in North Northamptonshire has a good chance of having the best life.

In improving the areas with poor outcomes now, we must not forget to also help the areas which are at risk of developing issues, and make sure that everywhere in North Northamptonshire is able to thrive.

3.1.2 Our fast-moving business environment

New businesses keep coming in and existing businesses keep expanding. This is a great place to set up business due to the great central location in the country and amount of available space.

This is a major strength of North Northamptonshire, but we should take stock of what businesses we want to see here. We are in an enviable position to be able to consider this, and if we don't think about it we will receive the good future we are handed, rather than the best future we choose for ourselves. Collectively we can use our relationships with existing and incoming businesses to continue to grow our traditional industries which have supported so many local people, while ensuring they become more environmentally sustainable, as well as attract new companies, emerging industries and different job roles to diversify the range of jobs and raise the average income.

We also know that there can be hard times for businesses as well as growth. By having a more diverse range of industries and types of job here the employment market will be more resilient, meaning that if jobs are unfortunately lost in one sector there are other opportunities for residents and new companies can come in to replace them.

3.1.3 Skills gaps

Businesses continually say that they can't find the right skilled employees locally. This happens across industries and refers to specific skills within businesses as well as general levels of being ready for the workforce. This means bringing in workers from further afield – meaning local people aren't best placed to take advantage of local jobs and increasing traffic at peak commuting times.

We need to ensure local people have the skills needed to get the new skilled jobs coming in and are prepared for the changing working environment and emerging industries of the future. This comes through ensuring our young people are getting the right training to be ready for the careers of tomorrow and adult education which will reskill those already in the workforce to take advantage of new jobs.

3.1.4 Protecting our environment

North Northamptonshire has fantastic countryside, with wonderful green spaces and waterways. This must be protected for future generations. This includes reducing our carbon emissions through generating green power and reducing carbon emissions from transport.

But we can also do more to reduce harmful emissions and waste across the country and the world by attracting and developing environmentally friendly industries here and supporting and encouraging our

existing businesses to increase their sustainable practices. We must ensure that new developments are respectful of these spaces, and that everyone has easy access to great quality open green space for all the mental and physical health benefits it gives them.

Across North Northamptonshire there are a wide range of environmental plans and strategies held by organisations, businesses and groups working to protect our local environment and the planet. Bringing these together to build the knowledge base of aims and information will give an overarching picture of the work needed to do to ensure we are working in as an environmentally friendly way as possible.

3.1.5 Rapid population growth

Over the last ten years North Northamptonshire has seen some of the biggest population growth of any local authority in England. Between 2011 and 2021 the population grew by almost 43,000 people – 13.5%, which is over double the England average. This increase has been predominately in the working age population, which has increased by 2.8 times the England average, but younger people and the over 65 population have also increased dramatically. This shows how many people want to come here, what a great place North Northamptonshire is to live in, and is something we should be proud of.

However, we need to make sure that we have the right infrastructure in place for this new population, and to support future growth. We have seen a lot of house building and have worked to include the necessary infrastructure with this. However, to keep supporting growth we need to make sure we also create the right transport links, schools and health facilities, as well as activities for residents. We need to do this in ways which enhance the character of our places rather than overwhelm them.

Age	England	North Northamptonshire	Larger Increase
0-15	5.0%	10.9%	2.18x
15-64	3.6%	10.3%	2.83x
65+	20.1%	30.4%	1.51x
Overall	6.60%	13.50%	2.05x

Table compares England average population increase to that in North Northamptonshire, and showing the proportional difference.¹

3.1.6 An aging population

We have an aging population who are more likely to need care now or in the coming years. Between 2011 and 2021 the over 65 population increased by 30%, a rate 50% higher than the national average and one of the highest rates of older population increases in the country. In most rural areas over a quarter of the residents are aged over 65, which is particularly notable to the East of North Northamptonshire. Older populations are more likely to experience loneliness, which can have a major impact on their health and wellbeing and make them more likely to need care services earlier in life.

Providing these services to people in rural areas is expensive, and care services are a major and growing cost to public services. We can use this to rethink how services are provided and develop new ways to proactively connect people to local community and statutory services, which support them to live their best life for longer.

3.1.7 Rising costs of public services

We know that the public sector and everyone supporting our residents and communities must deliver great services with diminishing resources. This means many of us need to be more effective with the

¹ Source: ONS <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E06000061/> .

resources we have. Doing this requires a proactive understanding of need to address the root causes of people’s issues, to work with them before they hit crisis, or enable them to live well for longer before they need a higher level of care. Prevention is better than cure – not just for the budgets of services but for the people who use them.

3.1.8 Lack of rural transport

One of the main barriers to people accessing the best life and opportunities is being cut off from accessing them. While North Northamptonshire has excellent and fast transport links across the country, much of its rural areas lack suitable public transport which prevents residents from accessing jobs, education and services. This also damages the environment by making people much more reliant on cars to make journeys, which clogs up the road network. This presents a chance to create innovative transport solutions, using sustainable and active travel as well as traditional public transport and responsive options.

4 A VISION FOR NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

4.1 The best life we want, not the one we are handed

Our Vision for 2050 is the best life for all in North Northamptonshire.

Our Vision is to give the best life for all because we know North Northamptonshire now gives a good life to many people. For most of the people here it is a great place to live, work, do business and spend time, but there are some who are experiencing real difficulties. By setting out these goals we can understand what the best life in North Northamptonshire is and begin to set out how to ensure that best life can be lived by everyone here.

4.2 Vision Priorities

The Vision for the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 has been based around three key priorities under which sit the suggested goals for our Vision.

These have been created from our discussions with partners, where the aims for North Northamptonshire were to ensure that: residents and businesses could prosper here; it was a place for everyone to feel proud of and safe in; and there was a need to get on the front foot to ensure everything works well. Now we are using these goals to call people to action and create an environment where everyone with a stake in North Northamptonshire works together to create that best life.

Our key priorities – a proud, prosperous and proactive place are set out below.

A PROUD PLACE	A PROPEROUS PLACE	A PROACTIVE PLACE
<p>A place with clear goals and a plan of how to get there, where people feel inspired and safe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold civic leadership • Everyone has a stake in society • Communities that are empowered • Strong partnerships with a shared vision • A place of many places that all benefit from the wider growth • People feel safe, and safety is baked-in by design 	<p>A place full of thriving businesses and a skilled population who can achieve their ambitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is the right education and skills for the future • All Children have the best start in life • Thriving jobs in both traditional and emerging sectors • Transport that allows everyone to access everything the area has to offer • Pioneering green growth across living, industry and the environment • An environment that allows entrepreneurs to thrive • A thriving tourism sector • Development complements the delivery of the future vision and cares about the area • Good quality, affordable housing 	<p>A place which understands the issues its people face and how to address them early, so everyone can live their best life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear focus on prevention and tackling root causes to problems • People are encouraged and supported to lead healthier lives • Decisions and resources focused by joined-up data and local knowledge • Services that are connected to their communities, who are actively engaged in their co-design • Equality and diversity across services and in community engagement • Integrated services that deliver better outcomes together

North Northamptonshire is already a great place for so many – we know this from the amount of people who have moved here in recent years and the number of companies who want to move or expand here. But our conversations have given us an understanding of the issues which are causing some people problems, and of the emerging opportunities and risks.

By understanding this we can work to address some of the issues which are holding back some residents and areas from making the most of the current and future opportunities – such as rural public transport and job-ready skills. These are not small challenges, but they are things we can work on more quickly to create change in the next few years.

We can also ensure that we identify and proactively address upcoming challenges. Most critical is the pressures on the health and social care sectors. We know that ensuring we work with people as early as possible in ways which identify and address the root causes of their problems and the whole person or household. This not only helps them to be in control of their life but reduces the need for more intensive services. Facing up to this challenge and making changes to how we all work with people gives an opportunity to help people who might otherwise fall into crisis to be supported into living the best life.

Through this work we will create a strong identity for North Northamptonshire to ensure it will be well known throughout the region, the country and further afield. Through setting out the aims for the area and seizing our opportunities to innovate we will become known for our successes.

4.3 What we want to be in 2050:

We are the heart of the country and the heart of change in the 21st century. We are a thriving hub of innovative businesses. We are the perfect place for work / life balance. We have opportunities for all, and our unique, diverse places offer the perfect home for everyone.

We are an interconnected place of places – with strong towns and beautiful countryside, all within easy reach of the rest of England.

All our residents live good lives, supported to enjoy all the opportunities here and overcome the obstacles which might hold them back.

We proactively prevent the issues which could stop our residents from thriving.

We are driven by data and insights into the lives of our residents and treat the root causes of issues early.

We support innovative businesses to start and grow, especially those which help to power and support the country in an environmentally friendly way.

We inspire our residents to aim for great jobs and ensure they can gain the skills to get them.

We grow in a sustainable way, welcoming development but ensuring it enhances local character and has the infrastructure it needs.

5 PRIORITY 1: PROUD PLACE

5.1 Renowned for being an inspiring, safe place for all

In 2050, North Northamptonshire will be a proud place.

Top Line: People are proud to live and work in North Northamptonshire, of their local area and the whole place. North Northamptonshire has a clear identity locally and nationally – while strengthening and valuing the specific characteristics of individual places.

This Vision gives a sense of clear direction for everyone to work towards and common goals to achieve together. It has been refined by working with partners from statutory organisations, voluntary groups and the community – leading by listening and responding to the needs of the people it affects, both at the start of the process and as it develops.

Everyone knows not just what the aim is, but how we want to get there, how they can contribute to it, and how they can discuss emerging changes. People understand the needs and aims of the whole place as well as their immediate location, and as well as the pride they have long felt of their own town or village they now feel a connection to the wider area.

The opportunities and successes of North Northamptonshire are known and felt by our residents, but also further afield. We are looked to across the country as a place which can achieve what it sets its mind to, and which has a clear offer to residents and businesses. We can't say now exactly what identity North Northamptonshire will have in 2050, because it needs to develop collaboratively as we do this work together.

People are proud not just of their own place, but of the whole place. Because of the excellent transport links, opportunities and developments in one place create benefits which are felt by the whole area and there is no rivalry between our diverse places. People can choose to live in one place for its individual charm, while enjoying all the positives of the wider area.

The community spirit and close partnership working, which has been in place for many years and was strengthened in the early 2020s, has been built on, and organisations in North Northamptonshire talk to each other to share issues and best practice. Everyone knows how to reach out to a wider group to solve problems which are too big to be taken on alone. People see the positive changes, how they benefit from them, and how their hopes and concerns have helped to shape North Northamptonshire.

Everyone feels that they have a stake in society here, and they are safe here – in our clean streets and on our clear roads. By listening to the concerns of our communities we have addressed the root causes of what makes people feel unsafe. Strong education and activities which make sure people know they have part to play in our community reduces crime and anti-social behaviour, while transport innovation and infrastructure for active travel has made people feel safe to use the wide range of ways to travel beyond the car.

5.2 Priority Goals:

Civic Leadership

North Northamptonshire is known as a place with strong civic leadership, which listens to residents and affects change based on their needs. There are clear priorities so everyone knows where we are trying to get to, how we are going to do it, and what their part to play is. Where conversations are difficult, we have them honestly and openly.

A stake in society

We have plenty of activities, which are accessible, for our young people and people who have previously felt left out. We actively reach out to groups which have been underrepresented in the past and incorporate their views into developing North Northamptonshire. Everyone feels valued and a part of society – able to contribute to it and has a sense of being part of a community.

Community Empowerment

All communities feel empowered to be able to make the changes they want to see and are supported to do this, with appropriate recognition. Groups who have been underrepresented in the past are confident in being able to talk about what they need and that it will be acted on.

Strong partnerships

All local organisations know what we are working towards, how they contribute to it, and how they can talk about and resolve issues which are bigger than any one partner to create needed change.

A Place of Many Places

Everyone can feel part of their own town or village, but also the wider North Northamptonshire. No town or village feels “forgotten” and all are able to enjoy the benefits of growth.

Safety

People feel safe in their neighbourhoods, on the roads, using our facilities. Where issues of crime or disorder are identified we use preventative approaches and education to reduce them.

6 PRIORITY 2: PROSPEROUS PLACE

6.1 Thriving businesses employing skilled local people

In 2050, North Northamptonshire will be a prosperous place.

Top line: Everyone has a well-paid, fulfilling and secure job. We are a great place to do business – for large industries, emerging sectors and start-ups. We have the infrastructure needed for modern business, and are prepared for changes to our key industries. Our residents are skilled and ready for the workforce here or wherever their ambition takes them – both for the jobs of today and the future.

Our central location and affordable land continues to bring in great businesses and jobs. We continue to attract our traditional manufacturing and logistics jobs, but companies also bring their headquarters and research facilities here to access the skilled workforce and affordable land. These also bring in new industries, with high-tech and green businesses flocking to North Northamptonshire. In the 2020s we looked ahead to the developing automation, robotics and green industries, and our reputation for working with innovative businesses and delivering the skilled workforce for them means that emerging industries of 2050 look to us as the place they can thrive.

Our people of all ages are inspired to work towards these jobs through the varied range of education and skills programmes. Our schools are excellent and we have new further education facilities which prepare people for the modern workplace so they can meet their high ambitions. We have responded to the changing world of work as automation has altered job types and ensured that people are not left behind as industries hire different skills. Our employers, education and skills providers understand the specific needs of people with disabilities and / or special educational needs and can deliver what they require for them to get into and sustain excellent employment.

Our focus on net zero business and living has brought more innovative industries to the area. We are known as a place which not only produces green energy where all businesses are net zero carbon contributors but has supported the rest of the country and beyond to decarbonise and live more sustainably through our environmentally conscious industries.

We are also a great place to start a business – with excellent digital connectivity as well as transport links. We have places which support people to create their new business and grow it alongside peers in ways which help to grow the local economy.

We are known nationally as a transport innovation hub which has hugely reduced its use of private vehicles. The towns and villages are connected by excellent greenway links to enable active travel between them, with a range of sustainable personal travel options. Rural areas are served by affordable, reliable, accessible, and green public transport which ensures that all residents can reach jobs, shopping, socialisation and support when they need it. Through this, we have reduced the use of private cars substantially, and where vehicles are used they are electric or other low-polluting technology.

We have grown our tourism industry and are known as a great countryside getaway, with a range of hotels and accommodation options. People from across the major cities nearby know that the Nene Valley is a great place for a break and regularly visit for a day or longer getaway.

We have the right homes where people want them – developments have been designed with what people want in mind: whether it's a family home within reach of their work or a downsized home to retire to. These homes are built to fit into the existing places and people can become part of the community, with all the infrastructure that this growth requires. Older housing stock has been maintained well to ensure it is excellent quality for residents, with good insulation and green heating options to minimise their environmental impact.

6.2 Priority Goals:

Education and Skills

Every child gets an excellent education, in a high-quality environment near their home which prepares them for the modern workforce. Every adult is able to refresh and improve their skills to get the great jobs in the area, with an understanding of current and future jobs.

All children get the best start

Children who have additional needs are given the appropriate support to meet them, including help to get and sustain employment in adulthood. This includes children with Special Educational Needs, children with physical disabilities, children in care and at-risk children.

Jobs

As well as continuing the growth of our traditional industries where people already work, we will attract new and innovative jobs and industries here. Our skilled workforce will be able to move into these sectors, and they will also attract more jobs here. Employers and skills providers support people with additional needs to get into and sustain good employment.

Transport

Towns and villages are accessible to everyone via public transport and sustainable routes, in a safe, affordable way so that people can access everything North Northamptonshire has to offer.

Green Growth

North Northamptonshire is known nationally as a pioneer for net zero living: for its contribution to green industries, and the environmental sustainability of all its businesses.

Entrepreneurs

There is a supportive environment for small businesses and social enterprises to star, thrive and scale up – while ensuring their work is environmentally sustainable.

Tourism

A thriving tourism industry with visitors to the North Northamptonshire countryside from across the region, UK and abroad.

Holistic Development

We work with developers who care about the needs of the area and build the right infrastructure to support growth, as well as the right homes in the right places.

Housing

We build enough homes to meet the needs of our growing population and the housing waiting lists, to ensure that people who want to remain in their local area have affordable options to do so. We ensure that older housing stock is kept in excellent condition and limit the environmental impact of our homes through excellent insulation and green energy generation.

Infrastructure

Because we anticipate growth, we ensure there is the physical, digital and social infrastructure needed to support population and business expansion. However, we also ensure that doing this respects our natural environment and green spaces.

Town Centres

Our town centres are thriving, pleasant places which have the services and facilities people want to use – without pricing out residents and long-standing businesses.

7 PRIORITY 3: PROACTIVE PLACE

7.1 Acting early in an informed way to give the best life to all

In 2050, North Northamptonshire will be a proactive place.

Top line: In the 2020s we identified causes of issues in people's lives and moved from treating the symptoms to addressing the problems at the heart of them.

We know what the issues are which cause people to need support and proactively work to address them early, no longer waiting for people to hit crisis. Instead of intensive statutory services, people receive lighter support at the start of issues such as debt. We know the signs to look for and use data and local knowledge to reach out to the people more likely to experience issues when they are a smaller worry to stop them spiralling and combining with other problems.

We recognise the importance of good mental health as well as physical health. Our pro-active drug and alcohol services and range of positive activities for young people not only help to keep people well but help to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. There are places for residents to come together and socialise with their neighbours, to build a sense of community and end social isolation – from leisure activities and community spaces to cafes and the village pub.

Our organisations talk to each other to understand the problems residents and communities face and how they can address them together. When changes in society happen which affect people, we respond fast as a partnership to identify what problems this might create and proactively design solutions to mitigate them before they happen. We are not firefighting problems as they arise but carefully considering what problems are occurring and how we can address them across our systems, in ways which lead to better lives for the people of North Northamptonshire.

In the 2020s we looked carefully at the places and people which most needed support – both places experiencing deprivation and those at risk of it – and created plans to address their needs. We designed solutions across our whole system which responded to the needs of those places and people. These solutions are designed to meet these needs, not around traditional structures of our organisations, to make sure they work for the people who need them.

We have worked hard to understand what holds people back from achieving their best life, whether this is the area they live or any characteristics which are more likely to experience structural barriers to thriving. We have removed these barriers to ensure that wherever or however someone is born in North Northamptonshire they have every opportunity to live out their high ambitions.

Organisations are able to think long term due to clear strategic direction and suitable long term funding settlements as much as possible. This enables them to plan for the future and delivering the best for North Northamptonshire rather than worrying about current funding pressures.

7.2 Priority Goals:

Root causes/Prevention

We understand the underlying issues in people's lives and work to address them, across North Northamptonshire and at a family level.

Good Health

People are encouraged and supported to live healthy, active lifestyles which help to keep them physically and mentally well for longer. This includes an emphasis on active travel, leisure activities and enjoying culture as part of people's regular routines. We treat mental health as seriously as physical health and have services for people who need support with either or both.

Data and local knowledge

We utilise data and local knowledge to spot people who are at risk of issues developing or worsening and support them to stay on track.

Joined up services and data

Organisations connect to share their understanding of current and emerging need, in formal meetings but also through a wider network of collaboration as part of their regular work. Datasets are appropriately shared to help build the best picture of life in North Northamptonshire at an overall, local and household level. This means we all collaborate to deliver what people need based on the needs of our residents rather than organisational structures.

A solid foundation

Public services are built on a solid foundation of reliability. They resolve simpler issues quickly when they emerge and learn how to stop them happening again. There are enough well-run services for all, ensuring that people can access a GP or dentist when they need one to stop problems from getting worse.

Connected communities

Services are connected to the community, who are actively engaged to co-design where appropriate.

Equality

There is equality of access to public services, including schools and healthcare. Data and engagement with communities is used to identify where there are postcode lotteries and structural inequalities and these are addressed to ensure that everyone has access to the best life.

Integrated services

There are single front doors and a unified offer of support when people need them. People can tell their story and explain their needs once rather than to a number of services.

8 NEXT STEPS

Now we are working to convene the Big 50 Conference more regularly to set out the actions which are needed to deliver the Vision, ensure we are working towards them and check our ambitions are still the right ones. This will set out the actions and outcomes we need to make this future happen, including work over the coming months, years and decades.

No one organisation or person can create this future. We all must make it a reality by working together, not just in meetings or workshops but in how we communicate, share ideas and trust each other every day to be doing the right things for our community. The first Big 50 conference helped to show us the power of bringing people together – with partners telling us about the connections they have been making through this which will help them to collaborate on work towards these ambitions.

Wider Socialisation

This Vision is now being shared with the wider community to get further detail on the ambitions, opportunities and challenges. This will also help to make more organisations and residents aware of the Vision and be inspired to start working towards delivering these priorities.

Development

As further feedback comes in from the wider community of North Northamptonshire through our developing partnership, the document will be refreshed to include what residents, partners and businesses say they want to see now, in the next few years and far into the future.

Collaboration

Now we have our priorities, organisations need to come together to understand how we can work together to create the best future and create the strong, collaborative partnerships required to achieve these sizable long-term goals –following the Big 50 conference, the has already started.

Targets

It is clear that that our community want to see actions committed to and taken. We are now using the feedback given at the Big 50 conference to develop specific areas for action and what we can do to begin working towards them. We will all work in partnership to set clear targets and share data on how we are performing against them and identify the issues we need to address.

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022-23
Report Author	Thomas Norford, Corporate Parenting Project Officer, Northamptonshire Children's Trust. Thomas.Norford@NCTrust.co.uk
Lead Member	Councillor Scott Edwards, Executive Member Children, Families, Education & Skills

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022-23

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide the Executive with an update on the Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The annual report is structured as follows:

- **Executive Summary.** Summarising the report as a whole.
- **Governance and Statutory Context.** Sets out the legal underpinning of corporate parenting, and the structure and role of the Board, including in light of the creation of the Trust and creation of two unitary councils.
- **Board activity.** Summarises the activity of the Board during the reporting period, including meeting arrangements, membership and service reports.

- **Young people’s participation and successes.** Including details of the summer celebration event for children in care, and how the Board celebrates and includes young people.
- **Corporate Parenting Board diagnostic.** Details about a diagnostic exercise carried out with the Local Government Association, with identified strengths, risks and opportunities for development.
- **NCT’s Improvement Plan progress.** Setting out progress achieved and areas for development under the improvement plan’s six key headers.
- **Appendix: four priorities.** Progress and areas of development in respect of the four priorities set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-25.

3. Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that the Executive:

- i) Approve the content of the Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report which gives an overview of the Corporate Parenting Board’s activities.
- ii) Note that the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-25 sets out four key priorities and the update on each areas progress contained in the annual report.

3.2. Reasons for Recommendations:

- To promote and monitor the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Corporate Parenting Strategy.
- To encourage all Members and employees to recognise their role as corporate parents.
- Provides members with an overview of the work of Northamptonshire Children’s Trust and supports the discharge of their Corporate Parenting duties.

3.3 Alternative Options Considered – Do Nothing – The Council has statutory duties as Corporate Parent for children in care and care leavers. Whilst the role of the Director of Children’s Services and Lead Member is defined in legislation there are wider corporate responsibilities on all staff and elected Members. Not approving the Corporate Parenting Annual Report would mean that the Council may fail to deliver all or parts of its statutory responsibilities in this area.

4. Report Background

4.1. Local Authorities and their partners are responsible for ensuring that Children in care and care leavers are as safe and well cared for as any other child. This responsibility is called ‘Corporate Parenting’ and applies equally to children who have entered the UK from overseas and are separated from their families. Corporate Parenting responsibilities rests not only with social workers and their

managers, but also Council Officers and Members and any other agency that provides services and support to children in care such as health services, housing departments, the police and schools. Corporate parents have specific duties for young people leaving care and making the journey to independence.

- 4.2. The report sets out the role, structure and activity of the Corporate Parenting Board, including progress achieved against the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Improvement Plan and the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 Being a Corporate Parent means doing everything we can for every child in the Council's care, and every care leaver, to give them the opportunities that other children get. This covers everything from keeping an eye on their progress at school, to looking after their health and wellbeing, to preparing them for life as independent adults – and supporting them when they get there.
- 5.2 The Council has statutory duties as a Corporate Parent for children in care and care leavers. Whilst the role of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member is defined in legislation there are wider corporate responsibilities on all staff and elected members.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. For the Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report to be presented to Members in accordance with the Council's governance framework.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. The annual report sets out the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities and aspirations for children and young people and is intended to help the local authority devote appropriate finances and resources to meeting these aims.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1 The collective responsibility for Local Authorities in terms of Corporate Parenting is set out in the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The central role of councils as effective Corporate Parents has been emphasised by government in the publications Care Matters: Time for Change (DCSF 2007), Care Matters: Time to Deliver (DCSF 2008) and consolidated in aspects of the Children and Young Persons Act (2008) alongside other legislation and statutory guidance that determines our duties as set out in the annual review. The Board itself is not a statutory body, however, selected

service reports are required to be seen by a suitable oversight body, and Board fulfils this function.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1. The Annual Report aims to help the Council and Northamptonshire Children's Trust meet its Corporate Parenting objectives and priorities.

7.3.2. The Council has identified 'Brighter, Better Futures' as a key priority of the corporate plan. This will be done by supporting partners and the Children's Trust to provide higher standards of support. The Annual Report enables the Council to gain oversight of the services delivered by NCT and to help the Council to understand how better support for Children, Young People and Families can be delivered.

7.4. Risk

7.4.1. Relevant risks are those associated with the Council and the Trust failing to meet its Corporate Parenting responsibilities and aspirations for children and young people, including:

- Children and young people have poor outcomes and do not achieve their potential.
- NCT and Council employees do not recognise their role as corporate parents.

7.4.2. Overall, these risks imply a deleterious impact on the outcomes for children in care.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. The Council continues to work with partners including Northamptonshire Children's Trust to promote the objectives and outcomes within the report as needed.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This report has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. This report has not been considered by the Council's Scrutiny committees.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. The report considers the safety and wellbeing of North Northamptonshire children in care and care leavers, including those living out of county.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. None specifically identified.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1. The recommendations aim to improve outcomes for North Northamptonshire children and young people in care and care leavers, including in the community.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1. None specifically identified.

8. Background Papers

8.1. None

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Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2022 – 2023

*“Children, Young People and Families at the heart of all we do - in every decision
we make and every action we take”*

Olivia Ives
Assistant Director Corporate Parenting

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Introduction

Welcome to the annual report for Northamptonshire's Corporate Parenting Board. This sets out the activity of the Board for the 2022-23 period, and some of the exciting developments happening within Northamptonshire Children's Trust.

Corporate parenting means giving the same level of care and support that any parent would want for their own child. Parenting does not simply stop as a young person reaches maturity, so this responsibility extends to helping children in care successfully transition to independent adulthood. Celebrating children and young people is also important, and it is wonderful that we have reintroduced large-scale, annual celebration events. As well as celebrating 'headline' achievements such as sporting and academic excellence, we want to highlight the small steps our children make which add up to massive progress. This can mean simply feeling able to sit with foster carers for a meal or having a phone call with a family member.

Young people have made an increasingly important contribution to Board over the year, not least our new care-experienced Board member, and our fantastic care-experienced Apprentice Champions. There is more to do, however, to make sure young people have a major say in the operation of the Board and shaping our services.

Many innovative and far-reaching initiatives are helping to improve outcomes for Northamptonshire children and young people, and partnership working with other organisations is a recurrent theme of these initiatives. New monthly panels, for example, are helping children secure a permanent home at the earliest possible stage, and helping older young people transition to independence. The Valuing Care project, which commenced in February 2023, is helping the right resources reach the children who need them most. The project is taking place in collaboration with Impower and operates through the principles of therapeutic care.

A diagnostic exercise with the Local Government Association highlighted many strengths of the Board, as well as opportunities and areas for improvement. The outcomes of this were insightful and welcome. The decision has been taken that henceforth each council will operate its own Board, in keeping with Ofsted's requirement to assess each council's data separately. We relish this challenge, which will increase elected members' capacity to scrutinise and challenge services for children and young people in their areas.

Executive Summary

Corporate parenting means promoting the same outcomes that any good parent wants for their child. This responsibility for local authorities and their partners is set out in legislation, government publications and statutory guidance.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust delivers children's social care across the county on behalf of West and North Northamptonshire Councils. During the financial year 2022-23, the Corporate Parenting Board met five times, and remained a single entity covering the whole county. It was chaired by both councils' elected lead members with cabinet responsibility for children's social care. As of May 2023, the Board has disaggregated, with each council facilitating its own Board.

Aside from its own annual report, during 2022-23 the Board received and scrutinised annual reports from the Independent Reviewing Officer Service, fostering and adoption services, the Virtual School, and the Integrated Care Board. Statutory health assessments remained an issue of intense scrutiny for the Board, but members were somewhat reassured by the remedial actions being undertaken.

Every Board meeting included a scorecard of selected metrics, prompting debate and challenge from Board members. This showed recovery in terms of some key health-related metrics, and continuing strong performance in terms of care leavers in employment, education and training. Ad-hoc and thematic reports to the Board included a detailed presentation around the sufficiency of foster places and the challenges therein; services available for young people leaving care, including disparities in council tax exemption schemes between the two councils; an update on a national safeguarding review for children with disabilities in residential placements; and care-experienced people's contact with the criminal justice system.

Although there is more to do, the Board made sure young people's voices were heard and utilised. A care-experienced young person was recruited to the Board as a full member, and the Board liaised with the Trust's participation groups. In many cases, young people contributed to the reports and presentations which came to Board, particularly the leaving care item. Every Board included a dedicated slot for celebrating the achievements of children and young people, and a very successful celebration event took place in July 2022 with children nominated for awards in four categories.

The Local Government Association diagnostic exercise in March 2023 highlighted many strengths of the Board and areas for opportunities and improvement. The Trust's Young Inspectors team contributed to this valuable process. Key outcomes included the need for greater young people's participation in Board, and a shared vision of corporate parenting among members.

Northamptonshire's improvement journey is captured in the overarching Improvement Plan, which lists aims and activities in six key areas: excellent leadership; recruit, retain and develop an awesome workforce; relationship-based practice; quality assurance and learning; healthy partnerships; and effective use of resources. Key developments include the Valuing Care project, the Sufficiency Strategy and new panels created to promote children's early permanence and transition to independence.

The Trust's Corporate Parenting Strategy includes four aims which we want to achieve for children and young people: live safe, be safe; fulfil potential; develop resilience; and enjoy good health and wellbeing.

1. Governance and Statutory Context

What is corporate parenting?

Local authorities and their partners are responsible for ensuring that care-experienced children and young people are as safe and well cared for as any other child. This responsibility is called 'corporate parenting' and applies equally to children who have entered the UK from overseas and are separated from their families. Corporate parenting duty rests not only with social workers and their managers, but also any other agency that provides services and support to children in care such as health services, housing departments, the police and schools. Corporate parents have specific duties for young people leaving care and making the journey to independence.

Legal background

The collective responsibility for local authorities was first laid out in the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The central role of councils as effective corporate parents has been emphasised by government in the publications *Care Matters: Time for Change* (DCSF 2007), *Care Matters: Time to Deliver* (DCSF 2008), and consolidated in aspects of the Children and Young Persons Act (2008). Other legislation and statutory guidance that determine our duties include:

- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 Children and Adoption Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 (as amended by the Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014
- The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013
- Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014
- The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2000

Principles of corporate parenting

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 provided a welcome distillation of corporate parenting responsibilities through seven principles of corporate parenting. Local authorities and their partners are required:

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The Act introduced some new responsibilities relating to children in care and care leavers. These include a requirement to publish a 'Local Offer to Care Leavers,' setting out the services available to young people leaving care, extend the provision of personal adviser support to all care leavers up to the age of 25 and to provide education advice and guidance to young people formerly in care. The Act also introduces a number of requirements to ensure that court processes are focussed on long term plans for and specific needs of the child.

The Care Leavers Charter

The Care Leavers' Charter is a set of promises to care leavers, published by the Government in 2012. It is "Designed to raise expectation, aspiration and understanding of what care leavers need and what the government and local authorities should do to be good corporate parents." The Charter will "Remain constant through any changes in legislation, regulation and guidance."

We promise:

- To respect and honour your identity
- To listen to you
- To believe in you

- To inform you
- To be a lifelong champion
- To support you
- To find you a home

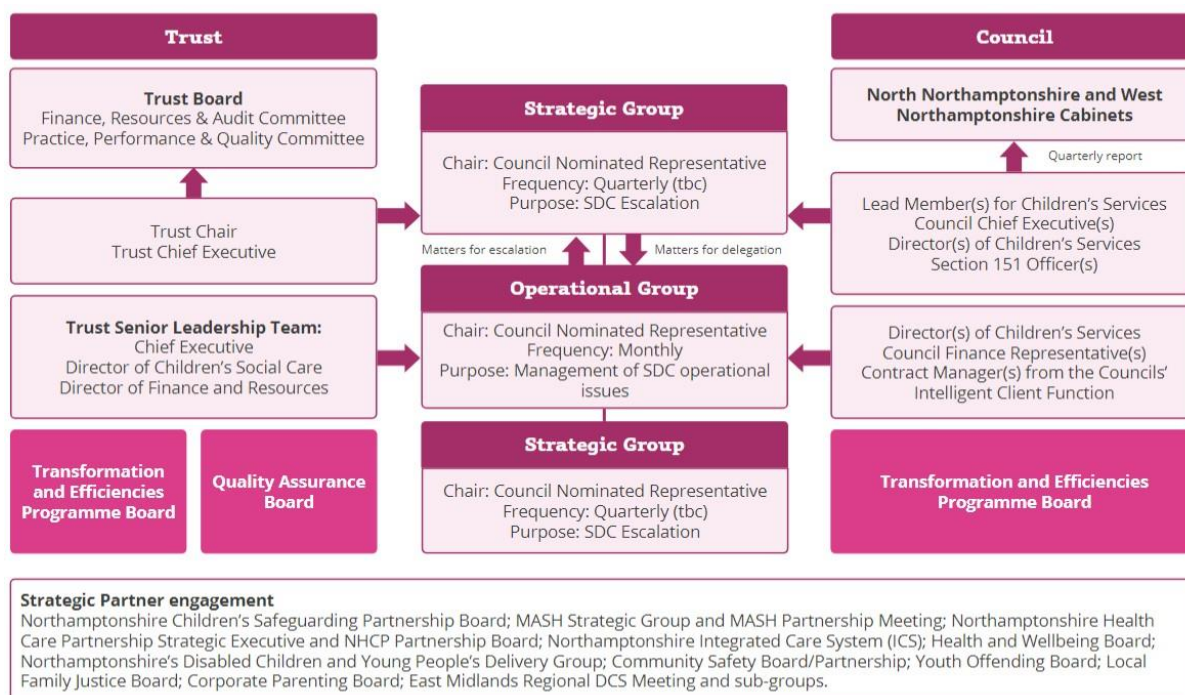
NCT has developed a separate set of promises to care leavers which have been adopted by the Board.

[NCT and the move to unitary authorities](#)

From April 2021 Northamptonshire County Council and seven district and borough councils were replaced by two new councils: North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. Some services which were delivered by different councils were brought together (aggregated), while others which were delivered by the county council were split (disaggregated).

Northamptonshire Children's Trust was established on the 1st of November 2020 to deliver children's social care across the county. It is owned by West and North Northamptonshire councils but in order to achieve operational independence it has its own board of directors which sets strategic aims for the Trust, oversees its management and holds the executive team to account.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust governance arrangements



The disaggregation of the Corporate Parenting Board, 2023

A decision was taken at the inception of NCT for there to be a single Corporate Parenting Board inclusive of both councils, with shared chairing duties. However, as of May 2023, each council will hold its own Corporate Parenting Board. This decision was geared to allowing each council greater scrutiny and accountability, and ultimately better outcomes, for children and young people under their remit. The decision to disaggregate also reflects Ofsted's requirement for disaggregated data for the two councils.

The Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers

The Board's pledge to young people in care and care leavers was drawn up in conjunction with the Children in Care Council and is available to view on the Young Northants and the Trust's websites.

We will help you be physically and emotionally healthy

We will have achieved this when:

- You have the right support for your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and you do not have to wait too long for it.
- The adults close to you understand your needs.
- You have a good understanding of your health needs and history, when you are in care and when you leave care.

We will make sure you are living in the right place

We will have achieved this when:

- You are living with people who understand you, care for you well and build a positive relationship with you.
- You have a safe and stable home life.
- Where you are living does not affect how well you are looked after.

We will make sure you have great relationships in your life

We will have achieved this when:

- You have regular contact with those who are important to you, as long as it's safe.
- You understand why you are in care and are involved with the plans that affect your life.
- We are warm and courteous towards you, do what we say we will, and respect your culture and identity.
- You have enough quality time with the adults (social worker, personal adviser, teacher, doctor, nurse) who are there to support you, at a time that is convenient to you.
- Changes of social worker or personal adviser are avoided wherever possible. Any changes are explained to you, and you are introduced to the new person properly.

We will make sure you get a good education

We will have achieved this when:

- You are achieving the best you can.
- You have a stable school where you feel safe.
- You feel part of your school community and are able to take part in clubs and activities.
- You have adults who understand your needs and put the right things in place to support them.

We will help you prepare for the future

We will have achieved this when:

- As you become independent, you have a suitable place to live which feels like a proper home.
- You are in education, employment or training, helping you reach your potential.
- You are helped to manage your money effectively and get the right benefits.
- You have access to leisure services and can get around easily.

We will involve you in developing our services and holding us to account

We will have achieved this when:

- We celebrate your successes.
- We actively seek and take account of your views, wishes and feelings to improve our services to you.
- You can access useful and accurate information about services available and the people who can support you.
- You feel able to share complaints compliments and comments about our services.
- There is a range of opportunities for you to get involved to with helping to improve all services to children and young people.

2. Board Activity, 2022-23

Membership and meeting arrangements

During the reporting period, a single Corporate Parenting Board operated in the county, with representation from both councils. It met every two months, aside from July 2022 when the meeting was cancelled to allow focus on the Children in Care Celebration and Awards. Meetings took place both in person and via video link. Cllr Scott Edwards (North) and Cllr Fiona Baker (West) shared chairing duties. As of March 2023, the membership of Board was as follows:

West Northamptonshire members:

Fiona Baker (Chair, Con), Louisa Fowler (Con), James Hill (Con), Stephen Hibbert (Con) Harry Barrett (Lab).

North Northamptonshire members:

Scott Edwards (Chair, Con), Lora Lawman (Con), Macauley Nichol (Con), Gill Mercer (Con) [replaced Cedwien Brown], Leanne Buckingham (Lab) [replaced Zoe McGhee].

Board was also attended by Trust officers and other representatives, including:

- Chief Executive Officer and Director of Children’s Social Care for Northamptonshire Children’s Trust (NCT).
- Directors and Assistant Directors for Children’s Services, West and North Northamptonshire Councils.
- Assistant Director and Strategic Manager for Corporate Parenting, NCT.
- Head of Adoption, Fostering and Children’s Homes, NCT.
- Strategic Manager, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service, NCT.
- Principal Social Worker, NCT.
- Head of The Northamptonshire Virtual School.

- Head of the Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service.
- A Children's Trust board member.
- A care-experienced young person.
- Vice Chair, Northamptonshire Foster Carers Association.
- Assistant Director, Housing and Communities, WNC.
- Chief Nursing Officer and Designated Nurse, Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board.
- Corporate Parenting Project Officer (providing administration and other support), NCT.

Other NCT officers and representatives of partner agencies attended as required, on invitation.

Annual reports

While Board is not a statutory body per se, legislation requires that an appropriate oversight body has sight of certain statutory annual reports. Our Board fulfils this function, providing scrutiny and oversight to NCT services. Where possible, reports for Board are summarised for presentation during the meeting, with the full reports being shared a week prior.

The following annual reports were scrutinised by Board during 2022-23. Note, however, that the annual reports related to the year 2021-22 unless otherwise stated.

The Independent Reviewing Officer Service.

Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) ensure care plans meet the needs of children and young people. They follow up on agreed actions and make sure people do what they say they will do. IROs chair children's statutory annual reviews, and make sure the child's voice is an integral part of the process.

NCT has 16 full-time and 1 part-time IRO, who between them chaired over 3000 children and young people's reviews during 2021-22, compared with just under 3000 the previous year. 87% of initial reviews took place within the statutory timeframe, with this figure rising to 90% for second reviews and 95% for those subsequent. Pleasingly, 92% of children participated in their review in some way, whether through the Mind of My Own children's mobile app, in person, a letter or other means. In many cases, children chaired their own review and chose the meeting location. Every IRO report now includes a letter written directly to the child or young person themselves. Government guidance recommends an IRO caseload of between 50 and 70. Our average caseload was 74 for the reporting period, reflecting the increasing children in care population.

During the year a new care plan format was developed in consultation with young people, which they reported finding easier to follow. The service continues to work closely with CAFCAS and regional IRO forums, to develop good practice and escalate concerns.

Locally, IROs raise formal and informal escalations on individual cases where there could be significant impact for children and young people. Key findings from this process are shared in a

quarterly report to the Quality Assurance Board. Arising themes are addressed in regular service managers' meetings and monthly performance clinics.

Ongoing priorities for the IRO service include ensuring that the voice of children and young people is central to review and care planning processes, and holding monthly meetings with service managers to share concerns and good practice. IROs are being encouraged to fully evidence the direct and indirect contact they have with children and young people and their families.

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report.

The Board approved its annual report for the year 2021-22.

The Fostering Service.

NCT's Independent Fostering Agency operates on behalf of both councils. The service undertakes many statutory functions concerning foster carers, including assessment and review, approval, supervision, support, and training.

At the end of the reporting period, 72% of children in care lived in a fostering placement, as opposed to residential care or other arrangements. Nationally and locally, recruitment and retention of foster carers remains a huge issue. Around 41% of Northamptonshire children in care live in agency foster care placements as opposed to 'in-house' placements. Finding suitable in-house placements for sibling groups, older children, and those with complex needs remains a challenge. 34 new foster carers were recruited by the end of the year, and although this was 3 less than the previous year, it represented a net gain of 2 households. The percentage of children who lived in the same placement for 2-plus years remained strong, at 66%, indicating that most children are placed in homes that meet their needs. In April 2022 there were 213 approved mainstream in-house fostering households, as well as 122 approved family and friend households.

The service undertakes a wide ranging of marketing activities to recruit new carers, including the use of Google adverts, Facebook campaigns, and web videos. Awareness days throughout the year such as Mother's Day and Hidden Heroes Day were also used to reach a wider audience. Our Christmas advent calendar on social media showed a different reason to foster for each day of the month, as shared by our carers. Through social media, the service shared 'a day in the life of' different roles such as a foster carer, social worker, panel advisor, and foster carers' birth children.

Other developments in the service include streamlining recruitment, assessment and approval processes; improving reporting systems; appointing a new registered manager; holding timely retention meetings with carers who are thinking of leaving; and further development of the resilience carer scheme, for children with complex needs. Staff have undergone secure base attachment and dyadic development training. Our foster carers, meanwhile, now have access to the National Association of Therapeutic Parenting. This provides access to training, webinars and

networks of support with a focus on therapeutic approaches. The service continues to strengthen its links with the Northampton Foster Carers Association, the vice-chair of which attends Board.

Board challenged the service regarding Regulation 24 cases. These are cases in which children are placed with people with whom they already share a connection. Fostering agencies are required to assess these places within a certain period, which can be extended to 24 weeks. The majority of the service's cases are assessed within timescale; if they are not assessed in time, it is often due to delays with medical or background checks. In some cases, it is appropriate for the child to be placed with their connected persons, without those persons being officially approved as foster carers, and the service understands the narrative behind all such cases.

The Adoption Service.

Like the fostering service, the adoption service operates on behalf of both councils. Its remit includes recruiting and assessing prospective adoptive parents; family-finding for children who are being adopted; supporting families both before and after adoption; and helping adults who were adopted to access their records. The service includes the Adoption Panel, which considers approvals for adopters and proposed matches of children with adopters. The service is now part of Family Adoption Links, a Regional Adoption Alliance (RAA). This allows access to a wider range of training and resources, particularly in terms of finding matches for children, while retaining strategic control.

During the reporting year 26 children were matched with and placed with adoptive families. 41 children had a plan for adoption agreed, compared to 29 the previous year, an increase reflecting a recovery from the pandemic period. 26 new adopter households were approved, from 187 initial enquiries. 38 adoption orders were granted by the court. Positively, there were no adoption disruptions (that is, where a placement breaks down before the adoption order is granted) during the reporting year.

As with fostering, recruitment and retention activity includes a wide range of social media campaigning, in-person follow ups to enquiries, a comprehensive training offer, regular support groups and responsive actions taken when families are struggling. The service includes workers who are trained in therapeutic life story work and video interactive guidance. During the reporting period the service also sourced almost £1 million from the national Adoption Support Fund.

Board and the service itself agreed that the service's data collection systems require improvement; better systems will allow more time for practitioners to actively work with families. Other plans for the service include improving the feedback mechanisms for children and families, launching a new staff training plan and implementing the RAA's core training offer for adopters.

The Virtual School.

The Virtual School (VS) is a statutory body which promotes the educational attainment of children in care. This involves monitoring and improving the timeliness and quality of Personal Educational Plans (PEPs); monitoring children's progress, attendance and exclusions; and devolving the centrally funded money set aside for the education of children in care. For the first time, the VS presented to Board separate reports for the North and West authorities. The reporting period was for the 2021-22 academic year. During that time, the VS quality assured 1083 PEPs for statutory school-age children for the North, and 1313 for the West, reflecting the children in care population size for each area. For both authorities, just under 80% of PEPs were rated Good, a substantial improvement from 64% (North) and 65% (West) in the previous academic year.

The VS continued its school holiday activity programme, with 139 children taking part in events, and delivered a wide range of training to school governors, teachers, carers, parents and guardians. After an update to legislation, the VS now also delivers advice and guidance to previously looked after children.

Priorities for the VS include improving the quality and timeliness of the bespoke early years and post-16 PEPs; supporting schools around new exclusions guidance; and helping services ensure they discharge their duties to children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities. The VS is also exploring the potential widening of its remit to include any children with a social worker.

Board challenged the VS regarding figures around fixed term exclusions for pupils, but acknowledged that the team proactively works with schools to explore alternative options. When appropriate the NCT Chief Executive has worked with council directors to avoid permanent exclusions for children in care.

The Integrated Care Board and the Health of Looked After Children.

Northamptonshire's Integrated Care Board (ICB) reported to the Board on how it had met its statutory responsibilities for children in care. While they may of course have similar health needs to their peers, children in care often have more acute needs because of a history of neglect and abuse. This is particularly the case for children from overseas who are separated from their families; the ICB carries out specific programmes for these children, such as screening for blood-borne diseases.

Performance around statutory health assessments for children in care has been a protracted issue in Northamptonshire and nationally, particularly the timeliness of initial health assessments when a child first enters the care system. This issue was raised at most Board meetings through the year, with members providing robust scrutiny. Challenges have included the availability of paediatricians, and the difficulty of assessing children with complex needs placed out of county. Remedial actions taken to improve this picture include detailed mapping and analysis of health assessment procedures and extra staffing to address a backlog of review assessments. Board was reassured that as of December 2022, the proportion of initial assessments taking place on time had risen to around

84%. It should be noted that while too many children's health assessments are late, any child with a known health issue is prioritised and receives a timely assessment and follow-up care. Board's ICB representative is also part of a regional group which intends to lobby central government to effect changes which would help local authorities and their health partners meet their statutory obligations.

Evidencing that children in care undergo a timely dental check has also been an ongoing challenge, not least due to issues with recording the checks when they happen. This picture has improved somewhat at the time of writing, however, and all accommodation providers have been asked to provide dental check details for all children in their care. Carers have also been provided with a letter to show to dentists, highlighting that children in care should be treated as a priority.

Northamptonshire's specialist Looked After Children's Mental Health Team continues to provide vital care and guidance; nearly 300 children were open to the service in 2022. Through a Public Health project, the team has now recruited an advanced mental health specialist to work in the Trust's Leaving Care Team. Ongoing priorities for the ICB include further improving the timeliness of health assessments, undertaking a review to understand the needs of separated children and improving data-sharing practices with the Trust. The Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ) is a short behavioural and emotional screening questionnaire, which aims to provide information about a child's wellbeing. There have been challenges with the SDQ pathway in Northamptonshire and work has been undertaken with key partners to develop a new pathway and improve the SDQ process.

Performance scorecard

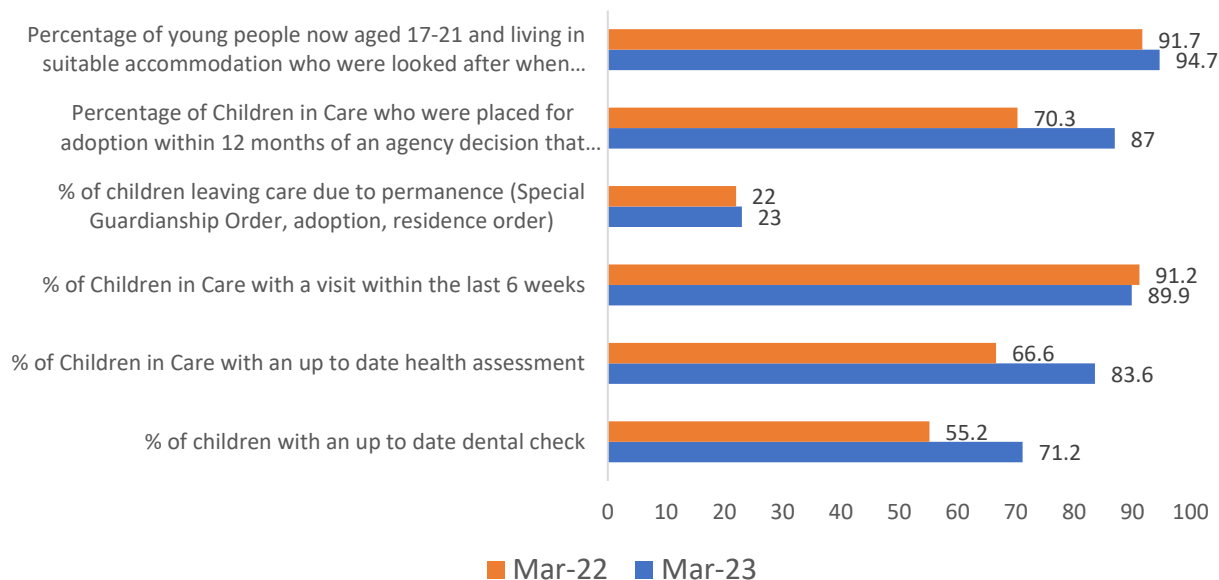
The Board reviews a performance scorecard at each meeting, providing an opportunity for dialogue, scrutiny and challenge between officers, partner agencies and elected members. Measures include some of the national metrics required by the DfE and the scorecard relates closely to the Trust's Improvement Plan. Measures are grouped under the following headings:

- General measures (such as population data, timeliness of statutory visits).
- Placements (proportion of children living out of county, placement stability measures).
- Adoption (timeliness of placements, number of orders granted).
- Care Leavers (accommodation, employment and training measures).
- Education (education plan timeliness and quality, exclusions).

Discussions focussed heavily on health assessment performance, with a specific agenda item on this topic coming to Board in January. However, the scorecard has been used throughout the year as a starting point for scrutiny of the Trust's and its partners' performance in many areas.

Often, this scrutiny has furthered members’ understanding of a child’s journey through care. For example, while scorecard averages may suggest that children wait too long to be adopted after an adoption order is made by the courts, this may disguise a very positive journey for individual children towards being adopted by a family that is perfect for them.

Performance Scorecard: Selected Mar 2022/Mar 2023 comparison data.



Thematic and ad-hoc reports

At every meeting, the Board focusses on a particular topic of relevance to care-experienced children and young people, informed by the NCT’s priorities and Improvement Plan, and feedback from young people themselves. Young people, NCT officers and partner agencies are often invited to contribute. Items may also be added to future agendas as a result of discussions held in Board.

The following provides a summary of the topics discussed at Board during the year.

Sufficiency update.

In recent years the population of children in care has risen markedly, placing a strain on the sufficiency of foster care placements across the country. The needs of children have also become increasingly complex, requiring carers with the specialist skills needed to meet such children’s needs. While they have reduced consistently over the last five years, the number of crisis and emergency placement requests remains a challenge.

In Northamptonshire, a high proportion of residential and fostering placements are provided by third party agencies such as Independent Fostering Agencies, which are Ofsted regulated. For older young people, Independent Supported Accommodation providers are often a very beneficial step on the

journey to independence. These providers are not regulated by Ofsted, but are required to abide by the Trust's framework agreement and will soon be required to abide by a national set of standards.

The Trust undertakes a range of activity to ensure that third party providers are meeting the needs of children in their care. This includes block-purchasing agreements, quality assurance visits and provider events. Around a quarter of our children in care live in placements outside the county.

While this can be due to a lack of an available placement in-county, it is often the most appropriate solution for the child's needs.

The Sufficiency Action Plan is geared to improving our sufficiency of homes for children in care. The plan includes commissioning two new emergency children's homes, a review of the leaving care accommodation offer, exploring new block placement contracts and working closely with partners to overcome challenges in the sufficiency market. An external review of our placement service found that we have a good understanding of our challenges, but there is much work to do.

The Placement Management Service receives many same-day placement requests, coming in peaks and troughs. Sometimes these cannot be fulfilled in-house, so the young person may move to an unregulated setting, which are subject to close managerial scrutiny. Such requests may be due to placement breakdowns and so encouraging placement stability has been a strong area of focus. Wrap-around support within the community can promote placement stability, an area for which elected councillors are in a unique position to help.

Board was also challenged to consider and drive the means of reducing the need for a such a high level of placement sufficiency in the first place. This would effectively mean reducing the number of children who are in care unnecessarily. This will be achieved through strengthened early help for families, high quality social work and edge of care services.

Services for Young People Leaving Care.

The Leaving Care Team, with the help of some enthusiastic (and somewhat raucous) care-experienced young people, shared with the Board activities in four areas: the Local Offer to Care Leavers, council tax exemptions, the new Accommodation Panel and the Independent Living Programme.

The Local Offer is a publication which sets out the services available to children moving from care to independence, including services available from partner agencies. The offer includes the provisions required by statute, such as a £2000 setting up home allowance. Northamptonshire young people also have access to a mental health professional within the Leaving Care Service, free halls of residence accommodation through the University of Northampton, council tax exemptions, and drop-in clinics with partner organisations such as housing services.

Consulting with young people themselves is a vital part of developing the offer, and young people have told us what they would like to see, such as improved access to leisure services and travel discounts. Young people spoke very positively about the support they receive from their personal adviser. At the time of Board an event was being planned to bring together national and local businesses, to challenge them to offer employment and other opportunities for our young people. The Leaving Care Team is now working to exploit the wide range of opportunities resulting from the successful event.

The Trust employs two care-experienced Apprentice Champions in the Leaving Care Service. They spoke powerfully about council tax exemptions for care leavers, and how the exemptions currently offered by the west and north councils vary, creating something of a 'postcode lottery.' Elected members themselves were challenged to take the issue up with their respective councils.

A new multi-agency panel has been set up which considers, on an individual basis, the accommodation and other needs of young people transitioning to independence. Housing services, adult social services and Prospects (a service which helps young people into work and training) are regular members, and the panel considers around twenty cases a month. This can include young people referred to the panel due to specific concerns. Typical actions resulting from the panel include helping remove barriers to housing applications being made, expediting referrals to adult services, and offering practical advice to personal advisers and social workers.

The Independent Living Programme runs over four days and helps young people gain the skills they need for moving on to independence. Board held a live question and answer session with a group of young people who had attended the programme. They had learnt a lot about topics such as budgeting, cooking, substance misuse and sexual health. While they feared the programme would rather drag, it was in the event very enjoyable, with some participants overcoming their shyness and making new friends. One young person was excited because the course had facilitated and prepared her for moving into a training flat. When asked what advice they would give other young people thinking of doing the course, they said 'Just do it, it's fun!'

National Safeguarding Review: Children with Disabilities.

In October 2022 the DfE's Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel published a review into very serious abuse to a number of children with disabilities and complex needs at three residential special schools in Doncaster. The panel chair wrote to all Directors of Children's Services in England requesting that reviews were undertaken in respect of disabled children living in residential settings. The Trust completed the review and reported its findings to Board.

The Trust identified five such children and undertook extensive work to look at their arrangements and needs. This entailed liaising with parents, social workers and commissioners, and understanding the voice of the children themselves. The report to Board confirmed that in each case, arrangements

were as they should be, although capturing data around Educational and Health Care plans and using it effectively was identified as an area for development. The process also involved looking at each of the establishments and ensuring there were no concerns or required actions; again, the outcome was satisfactory.

As well as the Corporate Parenting Board and the Local Safeguarding Partnership, the results of the process were submitted to the national panel overseeing the review, and to the regional DfE. The Trust has chosen to repeat the exercise every six months.

Care-experienced people and youth justice.

Colleagues from Northamptonshire's Youth Offending Service (YOS) presented a detailed report to Board about care-experienced young people's involvement in the youth justice system, prompting lively debate among members.

Between June 2022 and January 2023, the proportion of YOS cases who were care-experienced rose from 15% to 16.3%. The proportion of first-time offenders who were care-experienced had fallen, due in part to the relatively new multi-agency Protocol for Reducing the Criminalisation of Children in Care and Care Leavers. However, the dip seen in reoffending rates for older teenagers was unfortunately not reflected among care-experienced young people.

There was no strong correlation between living in a residential setting and offending; young people who offend come from a variety of placement types, but notably, repeat offenders who are care-experienced have often undergone multiple changes of placement. A late entry to care is also a factor. Unsurprisingly, offending rates were closely aligned with deprived areas.

The YOS liaises closely with the courts, social workers and residential homes, to give guidance on how to communicate with young people. This involves understanding behavioural triggers and levels of risk, and management plans for dealing with incidents. Many offending young people from residential homes have been the victim of some form of exploitation; they are often faced with weighing the perceived risks from both the law, and criminal gangs. Often, they are more concerned with the wellbeing of their family than their own. A multi-agency approach is vital if these risks are to be mitigated.

A new multi-agency Out of Court Disposal Panel has been created. This means that for every young person who comes to YOS with some form of criminal outcome, a decision is made as to whether an out of court disposal is feasible. The new Turnaround project is also in place and helping to share responsibility for these young people more evenly across agencies. As a result, there are more Outcomes 22s, which is when the police decide to defer prosecution to allow an opportunity for the accused to engage with intervention activity.

3. Young People's Participation and Successes

Officers and elected members try hard to include young people in the Board's functioning, whether by inviting them to attend in person or provide materials such as videos or artwork. Materials prepared for the Board are written in a young person-friendly format wherever possible. The Board liaises closely with the participation groups: the Children in Care Council, the Care Leavers' Council, and the Shooting Stars group for young people with special educational needs or disabilities. Children and Young people's contribution is evidenced in many of the reports and presentations which come to Board, the IRO Annual Report for example, which includes feedback from young people and a special version of the report written directly to them.

While there is work to do, young people contributed significantly to the Board during 2022-23. One particularly welcome development was the recruitment of a care-experienced young person as a full member. As detailed above, young people presented their views to the Board about the benefits of the Independent Living Programme, issues around council tax exemptions, and their hopes for the Local Offer to Care Leavers.

Celebrating children and young people

Like any good parent, the Corporate Parenting Board celebrates the achievements of children. Every meeting includes a slot in which anonymised stories of children and young people's successes are shared, and all receive a certificate and shopping voucher in recognition. These achievements have included high-level accomplishments such as having written work published or securing first class degrees. But the Board also celebrates those ostensibly small steps, which add up to significant progress. This has included achievements as simple as being able to attend school regularly or engage with a social worker.

After a pandemic-induced hiatus, the Awards and Celebration Event for Children in Care returned in a big way in July 2022 and was a roaring success.



Over 400 nominations were received for children in four categories: Determined to Learn, Making a Difference, Aspirational Star, and Super Skills. Every nominee received a letter and certificate, personally signed by the Trust CEO Colin Foster. The event was held at Fernie Fields Sports Field in Moulton, Northampton, and was well-attended by children, foster carers and family members. Ample support was provided by a small army of volunteers, including members of our fantastic young people's participation groups who created a fantastic balloon arch. Both lead members from Board attended and were delighted to meet so many of our amazing children and young people. As well as the awards ceremony itself, events included a climbing wall, animal experience, live DJ, archery, football and a chill-out tent.



4. Corporate Parenting Board Diagnostic

A Local Government Association (LGA) team carried out a diagnostic exercise between 14th and 16th of March 2023, and fed its findings back to the Board in the same month. The LGA took the role of ‘critical friend’ and met with many of the members and officers who attend Board. The diagnostic considered the following themes:

- Governance and Board effectiveness.
- Appreciation of impact, including data and performance.
- The voice and influence of care-experienced children and young people.
- Ownership by the councils and the Trust.
- Health and wellbeing of children in care and care leavers.
- Aspiration and achievement.
- Quality, planning stability and permanence (sufficiency).

Additionally, the team considered the effectiveness of the current Board arrangements in improving outcomes for children and young people, and how best to deliver the Board’s functions in the future. The Trust’s Young Inspectors team was heavily involved, and interviewed the lead members and service managers in the corporate parenting service. In their feedback, they said they would like more young people on the Board, and a stronger method by which the Board hears and understands the voices of young children. Members should be more experienced at working with children, the Young Inspectors said, and the celebration of young people’s achievements should be expanded. They also felt that documents for Board should be more accessible.

What follows are highlights from the LGA team’s feedback to the board.

Strengths

Trust officers demonstrated a strong commitment to an effective Board, and aspirations for children and young people. Both lead members were similarly committed, and other members had shown a desire to challenge the Trust for the benefit of children and young people. There existed a strong partnership with health colleagues and a commitment to make improvements in that area, and as a general point, the Virtual School was highlighted as a strength. Documents presented to the Board were of good quality and the Terms of Reference were clear. The team welcomed the celebration of young people’s successes at every Board meeting, although this could include more of the ‘small steps’ type of progress that are very important to children.

Areas for consideration and opportunities

The diagnostic concluded that the diverging ambitions of the west and north councils was an issue to be resolved. The team also could not firmly evidence that all members of the board had a sound understanding of the meaning of being an effective corporate parent. Mirroring the view of the

Young Inspectors, the team noted room for much greater participation and engagement with children and young people themselves, as well as foster carers and third-party organisations. Opportunities to learn from organisations such as the LGA should be taken. Similarly, there was the opportunity for closer links with other board structures, such as the Joint Commissioning Board.

Risks

A desire for structural changes could, the team concluded, take energy away from focussing on children's outcomes; while bringing benefits, separate boards could increase the resource burden on Trust officers and other partner members. As young people themselves have noted, the two councils have increasingly divergent offers for care-experienced young people, for example in housing and council tax. Some members have demonstrated a lack of commitment to the Board through their poor attendance of meetings.

What next?

The LGA team suggested that the Board would benefit from its members being united in terms of their understanding of corporate parenting. LGA workshops could help in this regard, as could an understanding of how to use data effectively. The overall governance of the Board needed to be strengthened; regional groups and other authorities' boards could prove instructive. Notably, the LGA suggested that members should actively engage with children and young people outside of the meeting arena, to better understand their journey and experiences.

The Board welcomed the findings of the diagnostic, and agreed it was a valuable exercise. As noted earlier, both councils have since agreed to set up their own individual boards, to be facilitated by their respective democratic services teams.

5. NCT's Improvement Plan: Progress

Northamptonshire Children's Services had its standard Ofsted ILACS inspection in September and October 2022 and are now rated as 'Requires Improvement to be Good'. The journey to improve outcomes for children, young people and families in Northamptonshire is captured in the ongoing Improvement Plan. The following highlights some developments, as of May 2023, most relevant to children in care, under the headings of the Plan's six overarching priorities. Details of 'what good looks like' is listed under each priority.

1. Excellent leadership

Children's experiences and outcomes are improved as a result of consistently good quality management oversight and supervision. Sufficient resources are allocated and managed to enable effective delivery of NCT services.

Performance clinics within the corporate parenting service now have a much greater focus on quality assurance, supervision and oversight. In the last quarter of 2022-23, IROs noted improvements in the management oversight within care plans, case recording and assessments. A new model of performance clinics and quality assurance for Independent Fostering Agencies is now in place. Unregistered foster placements for children in care are now reviewed on a weekly basis by senior managers. Budget forecasts for placements have been reviewed, to reflect local and national pressures. The Trust has also contributed to the DfE consultation around the social care workforce.

2. Recruit, retain and develop an awesome workforce

Children are supported by consistent practitioners who have the capacity and skills to develop effective relationships and undertake good quality work with them. Children and families receive an appropriate response in an emergency out of hours.

Social worker vacancies across the Trust have reduced from 17.1% in 2022 to 16.4% in March 2023. 12 Newly Qualified Social Workers started with the Trust in May 2023, with 13 due to start in September. A case management system for the Trust's fostering service is in the procurement stage. Through the annual social work health check, practitioners have reported that their workload is manageable and that they are well supported.

3. Strong relationship-based practice

Children and families receive the right specialist and timely response that meets their needs and improves their outcomes. Children are well cared for in a permanent and safe home at the earliest opportunity. Care leavers have access to support that meets their needs and improves their outcomes.

With a number of other authorities, the Trust joined the Valuing Care project, supported by Impower. This commenced in February 2023, and seeks to help the Trust get the right resources to children in care who need them. This will promote the Trust's ability to show how we are improving children's life chances, particularly in terms of making sure they have a permanent home and avoid entering care where alternative options are viable. As of May 2023, 78% of Valuing Care assessments had been completed for the identified cohort of children.

As detailed elsewhere in this report, processes around health assessments have been strengthened, with a resulting increase in the number of children receiving a timely assessment. The quality of assessments remains high according to quality assurance checks. Pathways around Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) are being reviewed and strengthened.

Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings have now been embedded in Leaving Care, Children in Care and Disabled Children's Teams, leading to better collaborative working between professionals.

Across the Trust, good and outstanding practice is more routinely seen, shared and celebrated.

The Trust aims to reduce the number of children entering care unnecessarily. To this end, weekly review meetings are taking place with the police regarding children being police-protected, with alternative options being explored. A new Strategic Manager now oversees case progression for children at risk of entering care, and family network meetings are being undertaken more routinely. The average length of court proceedings for children reduced from 67 weeks in June 2022, to 47 in January 2023 and the Valuing Care project identified 27 children who could potentially return to their families' care.

The Trust's Permanence Tracking Panel takes place twice a month (once for each council). On a case-by-case basis, it considers how best to remove barriers to children achieving permanence, whether that means returning to their family, a long-term foster placement or other arrangement. Children in care often need help understanding their past and present, in order to thrive in the future. Their wishes and feelings are expected to be integral to all assessments and ongoing work, and a dynamic model for life story work is being embedded.

As mentioned earlier, exciting developments to the Local Offer to Care Leavers are underway, with increased apprenticeship opportunities, social activities and mentoring. The new Accommodation and Transitions panel operates in close partnership with housing services in each council, adult social services, and Prospects. It considers how best to help young people make a successful transition to independence, while also achieving best value for the Trust. Russell House in Northampton remains a valuable drop-in service for care leavers, and hosts clinics with partner organisations, such as Prospects. There is a need for a similar resource in the north of the county.

4. Insightful quality assurance and learning

Children's outcomes and experiences are improved as a result of improving practice.

IROs are using a thematic approach to escalating concerns around practice. By the latest measure, 50% of their escalations are resolved within one working day, 70% within five working days. Ten children in care teams had no escalations raised in the last quarter of 2022-23. 72% of children who had a statutory looked after child review in March 2023 had a care plan completed within 3 working days prior to the review taking place. This compares to 62% completed when a similar exercise was undertaken in June 2022.

5. Healthy Partnerships that improve outcomes for children

Risks for children who are experiencing contextual vulnerabilities are effectively managed and the impact on them is minimised. Children and Families in need of additional help receive the right support at the right time which makes a difference to their lives. Children with additional and complex needs receive the right support at the right time which makes a difference to their lives. Children in care and care leavers reach their potential in terms of educational attainment.

Better early help for families means better outcomes for children, and a reduced likelihood of entering the care system. A new Early Help Strategy is in development, with a focus on partnerships and practice. North Northamptonshire is in the process of commissioning the Early Parenting Pilot, through localised family hubs.

A number of developments are underway to help children in care and care leavers achieve their educational potential. The Virtual School continues to quality assure every Personal Education Plan, and meets quarterly with strategic leads in education and social care. A new tracking system to monitor children's educational progress has been developed.

As of May, 64.4% of Northamptonshire care leavers are in some form of educational, employment or training. While the Trust aims to drive this figure further upward, it is already consistently above the national care leaver average. Two paid work experience positions have been secured through the Valuing Care project, and a host of similar opportunities have opened up through the engagement event with local businesses, hosted by the Trust. Care-experience is not a 'protected characteristic'

under UK equality law (there is an argument that it should be), but regardless, the Trust and the two councils now have a ring-fenced interview process in place for care leavers applying for jobs.

6. Effective use of resources

NCT commissioning and performance management has the best possible impact on outcomes for children. Children in care are cared for in a home which meets their needs and improves their outcomes. Older teenagers receive the right support and accommodation to meet their needs and help transition into adulthood.

Recommendations from an external review of the Trust's commissioning, quality assurance, performance management and assurance arrangements are being considered. This will be critical in improving outcomes for children and young people, as well as value for money for the Trust.

The Sufficiency Strategy and Action Plan is helping to improve short term placement stability, measured by determining the proportion of children three or more placement moves in a rolling twelve-month period; this figure decreased from 11.9% in October 2022, to 11% in January 2023. Unregistered placements are closely monitored and have reduced from 27 in September 2022 to 22 in April 2023.

New processes are in place to promote the retention of our foster carers, with retention meetings taking place at the earliest opportunity when foster carers raise concerns, and the continued promotion of the resilience carer scheme. Through the Circle to Success project, engagement work is taking place with external Independent Foster Agencies and providers of Independent Supported Accommodation and residential provision. This remains in its early stages but has led to new recruitment initiatives for foster places for children with disabilities.

A new residential home for children with complex needs has partially opened, with another due to open soon. Similarly to our provision at Belinda Ferrison House in Northampton, a new YMCA-run suite of training flats is due to open in summer 2023.

As detailed elsewhere in this report, the new Accommodation and Transitions Panel is helping professionals to coordinate support for young people moving towards independence. An action plan for 16 and 17-year-olds at risk of homelessness is now in place.

Appendix 1: Four Priorities

The NCT Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-25 sets out four key priorities. This appendix sets out progress against the specific criteria under each priority.

Priority 1: Live safe, be safe

Key service areas and strategies : Sufficiency Strategy, Fostering and Adoption Recruitment Strategy, Commissioning Strategy

How we achieve this	Key Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with communities, businesses and partner agencies to recruit more foster placements to meet the needs of the looked after children cohort and increase placement choices. • If a child or young person has to move from where they are living, we will involve them in the decision making as much as possible and give them an information profile of the placement they are moving to. • If possible, we will keep our children who are looked after with their brother and sisters when they come into care. • Families and friends are always considered in the planning process and our children are placed with family and friends in instances where it is safe to do so. • We will improve choice and quality of accommodation and support for older young people in care and care leavers. • We will offer support to care leavers moving to independence to maintain tenancies. • We will continue to develop clear service pathways for children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) supported by a multi-agency process. • We will continue to ensure that all children and young people who go missing receive return interviews, a completed risk assessment and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase sufficiency of local placements to increase choice for children in care. • Increase in the number of children in foster placements who turn 18 and stay put in their placement. • Reduction in the number of children in care with 3+ placement moves. • Reduction in the number of children returning to care within one year of previous period of care. • Increase in the number of children in care in longterm placements (fostering). • Percentage of children in care during the year who were placed within 12m of the decision (adoption). • Reduction in number of missing episodes for looked after children and increase in number of independent return home interviews. • Reduction in number of looked after children who are first time entrants to criminal justice system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term placement stability improved from 11.9% (Oct 2022) to 11% (March 2023). • New emergency / complex needs children’s home partially opened, another due to open June 2023. • 32 young people live in Staying Put arrangements as of June 2023; a new, clearer staying put agreement has been launched. • Between March 2022 and March 2023, the percentage of children with 3 or more placement moves in 12 months dropped from 12.7% to 11%. It dropped further to 10.6% in June 2023. • The proportion of children who enter care within 12 months of a previous care episode dropped from 10% to 6% between March 2022 and March 2023. • For 2022-23, 70.3% of children for whom the agency decision was adoption, were placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision. This is a slight decrease from 72% the previous year, however the latest quarterly figure for this metric is 77.8%. • For children who go missing, 99% of return interviews were completed, although children’s participation in these has reduced from 71% to 62% over the year. • Between January 2021 and June 2022 15% of first entrants to the criminal justice system were children in care. For the period 1st

<p>timely management of identified risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will further develop a multiagency response to serious youth violence enabling early identification of young people. 		<p>April to 15th November 2022, this proportion fell to 11.3%.</p>
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Priority 2: Fulfil potential

Key service areas and strategies: Virtual School, SEND Strategy and Transformation Programme, Care Leavers Strategy.

How we achieve this	Key Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational needs or requirements of the child will be considered at the outset of any placement. • We will support our children with education, training and employment options to help them achieve the best they can. • Children who need to change schools will be allocated a new school place without delay. • Children with additional needs will be supported to have appropriate provision so they can achieve their potential. • All children will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP). • Young people leaving care will be encouraged and supported with accessing further and higher education and training opportunities including apprenticeships. • We will increase apprenticeships, work experience and training opportunities across the councils, partners and the private sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All looked after children will have an up-to-date PEP supported by daily monitoring calls to each school where a child attends to ensure attendance. • Improvement in educational attainment of children. • Increase in proportion of care leavers in education, employment and training. • Reduction in number of children without a school place. • Increase in care leavers undertaking apprenticeships and other opportunities in the Trust and councils. • EHC Plans for children are reviewed annually and quality assurance demonstrates plans are of good quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every PEP is quality assured by the Virtual School, with a compliance figure of around 97% to 98% for the two council areas. 79% were rated Good for the secondary school cohort for 2021-22. • At Key Stage 1 in academic year 2021/22, 23% of NNC children care achieved the expected levels in reading, writing and maths. This figure was 10% for WNC children in care. • The Progress 8 score for Key Stage 4 for NNC was -1.41 (-0.11 difference to national figure). For WNC, the figure was -0.78 (+0.52 difference with national figure). • Meaningful year-on-year comparative data around educational attainment are unavailable due to the pandemic. • Around a quarter of the school age children in care have an EHC Plan, and all their PEPs are quality assured by the Virtual School. • Virtual School continues to work closely with schools to reduce exclusions. • Any children not on school roll are supported by the VS to access the right provision for them, including tutoring. • There have been 6 apprenticeships in the Trust over the last 2 years, including our Care-Experienced Apprentice Champions. • The proportion of care leavers in

		<p>education, employment or training remains stable at around 62%, and above national averages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospects NEET service holds weekly drop-in sessions for care leavers. • Local Offer event with businesses and partners has led to increased opportunities for care leavers in terms of education, employment and training, including apprenticeships
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Priority 3: Develop resilience

Key service areas and strategies: Reunification Policy, Workforce Development Strategy, Joint Housing Protocol, Participation Strategy.

How we achieve this	Key Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will help our children to learn about who they are as well as the important events in their lives. • We will make sure all necessary information and paperwork is obtained in a timely way such as passport, birth certificate and national insurance number. • We will promote family time between children, young people and their families in a way that enables them to have positive relationships with the people who are important to them where this is safe. • We will support children to reconnect with family and other trusted adults in a safe and to learn about their family history. • We will work with children and families to ensure there is effective support in place to support and maintain a return home. • We will continue to build positive relationships with our children and never give up on them. • We will ensure children have a variety of means to express any concerns they may have and that these are acted on promptly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in children moving out of care and number of children returning home. • Proportion of visits to children in timescale. • Increase in percentage of permanent social workers in the corporate parenting service. • Increased number of children engaging in Children in Care Council and participation events. • Feedback from children and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between March 22 and March 23, the proportion of children leaving care due to permanence fell slightly from 22% to 19%. However, the permanence tracking panel is now driving permanence for children at the earliest possible stage. Also note that for some children residential care is the best option until adulthood, and these are not reflected in permanence figures. • Around 84% of children receive a visit within 6 weeks, a dip from 91% the previous year. • Between March and May 2023, social work vacancy figures in the service fell from 16.7% to 15%. • Several hundred children received nominations and awards at large scale celebration events in 2022 and 2023. Feedback from 2022 was used to inform the 2023 event. • 139 children took part in Virtual School holiday activities. • Participation number for the Children in Care Council has remained stable at around 16; the group contributed a great deal to the celebration events. • New feedback mechanisms for children are in place and being developed, including the Mind of My Own app, development of the Trust's websites, a child-friendly complaints process, and the Young Inspectors group. • The Voice of the Child working group regularly feeds back to senior managers and boards.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will aim to keep changes for our children to a minimum. • We will make certain that we have a robust and active Children in Care Council who are able to influence and shape services. • We will offer support to care leavers moving to independence to maintain tenancies. 	<p>young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of June 2023, the Mind of My Own app is being relaunched with new features, including the ability for workers to respond to children directly through the app. • Care leavers continue to receive support in maintaining tenancies via the joint protocol with housing services, which includes regular meetings with housing services, and the Accommodation and Transitions Panel.
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Priority 4: Enjoy good health and wellbeing

Key service areas and strategies: Integrated Care System, CCG Health of Looked After Children

Strategy

How we achieve this	Key Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children receive appropriate, dedicated services within agreed timescales including access to health assessments, dental appointments and emotional health and wellbeing services. • We will give access to appropriate emotional and mental health support for looked after children when they need it. • We will support care leavers to achieve positive mental wellbeing and emotional resilience. • Children with complex needs and disabilities will have access to integrated services. • We will make sure our children who are looked after can access their health records and history. • We will develop support offers to foster carers including access to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). • We will help our children do the things that are important to them in terms of culture and religion. • Children will enjoy a smooth transition between children's services and adult social care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people identify themselves as health and happy. • % of children in care with Strengths and Difficulties (SDQ) scores. • Proportion of care leavers provided with a health passport. • Reduction of care-experienced young people who are street homeless or involved in offending behaviour. • Increased placement stability performance. • Number of children referred to MIAP aged 16. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level oversight and scrutiny continues in respect of Health Assessments. Figures for initial assessments continue to fluctuate; 87% in December 2022, falling to 43% in March 2023. Review assessment figures remain stable around 67%, a rise from the 2021/22 average of 62%. • There have been challenges with the SDQ pathway in Northamptonshire and work has been undertaken with key partners to develop a new pathway and improve the SDQ process. • All children are provided a health passport at their final statutory review. They are also directed to the NHS mobile app. • Between June 2022 and January 2023, the proportion of YOS cases who were care-experienced rose from 15% to 16.3%. The proportion of first-time offenders who were care-experienced had fallen, due in part to the relatively new multi-agency Protocol for Reducing the Criminalisation of Children in Care and Care Leavers. • All young people at risk of homelessness are closely scrutinised at senior manager level. For a snapshot of June 29th 2023, there was one young person classified as No Fixed Abode, with 10 sofa surfing. • Between March 2022 and March 2023, the percentage of children with 3 or more placement moves in 12 months dropped from 12.7% to 11%. It dropped further to 10.6% in June 2023. • The Leaving Care Service now has a dedicated mental health specialist working in the team.

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Funding
Report Author	Graeme Kane, Executive Director for Place and Economy (Interim)
Lead Member	Councillor Matthew Binley, Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed Business Case Approach

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline details of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) capital funding which has been provisionally awarded by Government to North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) and agree the way forward. This funding is for the installation of publicly accessible Electric Vehicle Chargepoints (EVCPs) and supporting residents that do not have access to off-street parking. NNC has been identified in LEVI Tranche 1 which means it must submit its business case to Government on or before 30th November 2023 to proceed.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. In support of Government targets to reduce greenhouse gasses, improve air quality, and in response to climate change, the UK is transitioning to electric vehicle (EV) transport, with the sale of new combustion engine vehicles (cars) proposed to be banned from 2035. Local authorities are at the forefront of a

national programme to manage the local delivery of the necessary electric vehicle chargepoint infrastructure to enable this transition, particularly for those residents without access to off-street parking.

- 2.2. NNC declared its own climate and environmental emergency back in 2021. In response to this and government policy, NNC has developed and consulted on its own North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (NNEVI) and has secured Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure grant (LEVI) in Tranche 1 of the Government's funding programme to ensure that North Northants is well positioned to extend the local electric charging network.
- 2.3. The primary objective of the strategy is to create a blueprint that enables NNC and various stakeholders to develop an electric vehicle infrastructure network which serves the needs of North Northamptonshire residents between now and 2030. It sets out a number of targets including the availability of 250 public EV chargepoints across North Northamptonshire by March 2025. This report seeks delegations for the approval of a final strategy following a consultation which closed on 11th October 2023.
- 2.4. The LEVI funding, which will support the delivery of the strategy, requires NNC to submit a business case to Government for approval before funds can be released. The business case proposals are set out in this report along with the proposed procurement approach to secure a supplier to deliver and maintain the necessary EV chargepoint infrastructure. The aim is to stay ahead of demand to help encourage and give confidence to residents and businesses to switch to EV. Delegations are sought for the approval and submission of the business case and to enter into a supplier delivery contract following a procurement process.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive
 - i) Welcome the award for LEVI Capital Funding and identification of North Northamptonshire as a Tranche 1 area
 - ii) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Executive Directors for Place & Economy and Finance, to agree the submission of a LEVI Business case to Government following the approach set out in this report and the principles outlined in **Appendix A**
 - iii) Subject to Government approval of the LEVI Business Case, delegate authority to Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Executive Director for Place and Economy and Executive Director for Finance and Performance, to procure a provider to supply, install, operate and maintain a network of publicly available electric vehicle charging points across North Northamptonshire

- iv) Following Government review of the tender process and contract documents, delegate authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Executive Director for Place and Economy and Executive Director for Finance and Performance, to agree appointment of a preferred supplier and signing of related contracts and agreements
 - v) Note the recent public consultation on the Council's draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy which closed on 11th October 2023
 - vi) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change & the Green Environment and the Executive Director for Place & Economy to consider the responses to the recent consultation on the draft strategy and approve the final version for publication
- 3.2. Reason for Recommendations: The recommendations will enable the Council to submit a business case to Government which will secure the provisional LEVI Capital allocation, undertake a procurement process using the capital funding to secure private sector investment to install, operate and manage a publicly accessible EV chargepoint (EVCP) network across North Northamptonshire, and appoint a successful supplier. The recommendations will also enable the council's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy to be approved following consideration of responses to the recent public consultation.
- 3.3. Alternative Options Considered: There are two main alternatives to the recommended approach. Firstly, the Council could decide to delay submitting a business case beyond 30th November 2023. This would mean that it would be submitted at a later date and NNC would be moved to Tranche 2 rather than Tranche 1. A delayed procurement could place NNC in a more difficult procurement environment as the capacity of Charge Point Operators could be more limited by local authority contracts already awarded elsewhere. Secondly, the Council could decide not to submit a business case. It is likely that this approach would result in the funding allocation being directed to other local authority areas. This would mean that there would be very little opportunity for the Council to attract additional investment to expand the provision of publicly accessible EVCPs beyond areas which are commercially attractive.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 In July 2021, the Council declared a Climate and Environment Emergency. As part of this NNC committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This includes reducing emissions in the local area.
- 4.2 Road traffic currently accounts for a considerable proportion of North Northamptonshire's overall greenhouse gas emissions. By accelerating the switch away from fossil fuelled vehicles, there is an exciting opportunity to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and make a major (and measurable)

contribution towards meeting decarbonisation priorities and targets. However, the transition to battery-powered electric vehicles (EVs) demands a sound infrastructure base to support the charging of vehicles. This means the following:

- Everyone can find and access reliable public chargepoints wherever they live
- Effortless on and off-street charging for private and commercial drivers
- A reliable network of high-powered chargepoints along major roads
- Fairly priced and inclusively designed public charging trusted by consumers
- Market-led roll out for the majority of chargepoints, backed by competition
- Infrastructure seamlessly into the smart energy system
- Continued innovation to meet drivers' needs

4.3 It is estimated that the number of public electric vehicle chargepoints (EVCPs) in the UK needs to increase from about 37,000 currently to up to 720,000 by 2030. This represents a massive step-change and this will vary from place to place.

4.4 Estimates produced by CENEX (an independent centre of excellence for low carbon) indicate that about 2,800 new public chargers need to be installed in North Northamptonshire by 2030. This is over and above those forecast to be installed in homes, workplaces, supermarkets and other private commercial destinations. There are currently 139¹ publicly available devices in North Northamptonshire (note: each device may have more than one connector at different speeds). This corresponds to 38.6 devices per 100,000 population and is lower than the average of 59.9 per 100,000 for the UK.

4.5 Through the Virgin Park and Charge (VPACH) project NNC has been working with Believ (formerly Liberty Charge) to install EVCPs in on-street locations across the area. Sites are secured under licence to Believ for a period of ten years. To date, 56 EVCPs (each with dual-sockets) have been installed at 29 locations across the area including Corby, Desborough, Higham Ferrers, Kettering, Rushden, Thrapston and Wellingborough. Each location serves residents without access to off-street parking. Work is underway which will likely see these numbers increase further. Details of all the locations which are being progressed through the VPACH project are available at the following link: [Electric car chargers | North Northamptonshire Council \(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/electric-car-chargers)

4.6 Before installing on-street chargepoints, the Council undertakes consultation on the suitability of the proposed sites. This involves both an initial engagement survey with residents and consultation on any associated parking restrictions through the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process. As a result, it is possible that some of these may not see EVCPs installed.

¹ Department for Transport figures at end Quarter 1, 2023

4.7 The installation of EVCPs through the VPACH project is expected to be complete by summer 2024.

5. Issues and Choices

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund

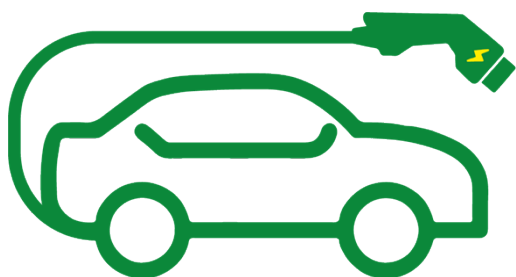
5.1 In March 2023, the Government announced details of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund. The LEVI fund has two objectives:

- Delivering a step-change in the scale of deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street charging infrastructure across England
- Accelerating commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector

5.2 The announcement involves a combination of LEVI Capital Funding to support deployment of infrastructure ahead of need, and LEVI Capability Funding to increase local authority resourcing for the planning and delivery of EV infrastructure. There is also a LEVI Support Body to work with local authorities. This includes support from the Energy Saving Trust, and both PA Consulting and CENEX who have been appointed to work with local authorities.

5.3 The Council has been allocated £2,895,000 LEVI Capital Funding for the North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NNEVI) project. The primary focus of this funding is to provide solutions for residents without off-street parking. Government expects local authorities to engage the private sector to ensure that the impact of public funding is maximised, private investment is unlocked, and scale in local roll-out achieved.

5.4 All upper tier local authorities were asked whether they would like to be in Tranche 1 (FY 2023/24) or Tranche 2 (FY 2024/25) for the LEVI Capital Fund. Following discussion with the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, The Council expressed an interest to be in Tranche 1. Acceptance in Tranche 1 is dependent on the local authority being able to demonstrate that it has the capability and capacity to manage the LEVI Capital Fund in its area. Also, that it has plans on how the funding could be targeted to meet the intended objectives. Government has confirmed that NNC is in Tranche 1. This means that an application (submission of a Business Case) must be submitted to Government by 30th November 2023.



**NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
ELECTRIC VEHICLE
INFRASTRUCTURE**

LEVI Business Case

- 5.5. Submission of the business case to Government enables it to assess whether NNC has a good plan for utilising the LEVI Capital Fund. A good case must include the following:
- Strong rationale for chargepoint locations
 - Scaled deployment
 - Value for money
 - Commercial proposition to the market
 - Competitive tender
 - Clear approach to risk management
 - Distribution Network Operator (DNO – electricity operator) and market engagement
- 5.6 During July and August 2023, the Council undertook a period of ‘soft market’ testing. The purpose of this was two-fold. Firstly, it was to alert the market to NNC’s ambitions to increase the availability of EVCPs in the area and intention to be part of LEVI Tranche 1. Secondly, it was to help inform the invitation to tender (ITT), and ensure that NNC is able to offer an attractive proposition to the market. This exercise was also helpful to inform the business case which needs to be submitted in November. Contact has also been made with the DNO (National Grid) to alert them to the upcoming NNEVI project and understand any constraints which could impact on delivery and would need to be considered.
- 5.7 It is proposed that the Council’s business case will be underpinned by the requirements detailed in **Appendix A**. These set out details on funding, procurement route, contract length, infrastructure location focus, accessibility, technical requirements and risk, as well as asset ownership and exit strategy.
- 5.8 These requirements are consistent with the approach proposed by the Government’s LEVI advisory team.

Draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy

- 5.9 In August 2023², the Council produced a draft North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. This followed presentations to the Council’s Sustainable Communities Executive Advisory Panel on 24th April 2023 and the Town and Parish Forum meetings on 16th May and 18th May 2023.
- 5.10 The primary objective of the strategy is to create a blueprint that enables the Council and various stakeholders to develop an electric vehicle infrastructure network which serves the needs of North Northamptonshire residents between now and 2030. This includes proposals to:

² <https://northnorthants.citizenspace.com/place-and-economy/nn-draft-ev-infrastructure-strategy/>

- Ensure there is enough provision to provide residents with the confidence that they can switch to an electric vehicle.
- Deliver an extensive charging network in a variety of sites including on-street and in public car parks.
- Look into opportunities to create charging superhubs where large numbers of vehicles can be charged quickly.
- Ensure we are at the forefront of EV charging technology by utilising smart charging technologies.
- Ensure that all new development proposals that generate travel demand will include provision for EV Infrastructure.
- Explore opportunities to deploy electric car clubs and other forms of shared electric transport.
- Deploy EV charging at NNC sites
- Leverage investment from the private sector to ensure that there is sufficient volume of EV charging infrastructure to meet future needs.

5.11 The strategy also identifies key targets. These are:

- 250 publicly available EV Chargepoints (EVCP) available by March 2025
- Deployment of publicly available EVCPs in all twelve North Northamptonshire towns by the end of 2025
- EVCPs available in all suitable NNC car parks by the end of 2026
- 500 publicly available EVCPs by the end of 2027
- NNC's fleet will transition to EVs for all vehicles below 7.5t by the end of 2028³
- At least 80% of residents without off-street parking will be within 250m of a publicly available EVCP by the end of 2029.
- All EVCPs delivered using public funding will have an uptime of at least 95%

5.12 A consultation on the draft strategy was launched on 23rd August and comments were invited up to 11th October 2023. The questions were structured around the policies laid out in the draft strategy. Details of the consultation were shared with the Residents' Panel and Consultation Register databases, all NNC Councillors, town and parish councils, and local MPs. Responses have also been sought from the market, including EV infrastructure businesses, and key local stakeholders.

5.13 While the strategy serves as valuable context for the LEVI Capital Fund's business case, its scope is broader. It outlines an action plan not only for deploying electric vehicle infrastructure, but also for assisting the Council to facilitate a path towards net-zero transport for its residents and businesses.

³ The Heavy Goods Vehicle fleet will be transitioned to other sustainable fuels where EV technology is not suitable or too costly

- 5.14 Comments on the draft Strategy will be reviewed, and a summary report produced. This will be shared with the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets and Executive Member for Climate Change & the Green Environment to enable any amendments to be agreed, and the strategy to be approved.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The LEVI Capital Fund application process involves three stages, or 'gateways':
- Expression of Interest
 - Tender Document, Criteria Compliance and Business Case
 - Contract review.
- 6.2 The Council previously submitted an Expression of Interest to be in Tranche 1 and this has now been confirmed. This requires a business case to be submitted to Government by 30th November 2023. Following submission of the Business Case, NNC will be informed by Government if it has been approved, or if further work is required, or clarifications need answering.
- 6.3 Once approval has been secured for the business case, NNC will be able to progress to the procurement stage. Business case approval will also trigger payment of 90% of the capital funding to the Council.
- 6.4 Work is being undertaken to determine the best procurement framework to use. Options being considered include from Crown Commercial Services and also a custom-built framework that has been designed by Oxford City Council. An extensive mapping exercise is underway which pinpoints the locations of residential properties without off-street parking within the area. This will help to ensure the EVCPs are deployed in the most effective manner to bring the greatest benefit to the people who need it most.
- 6.5 It is anticipated that a procurement exercise will be launched in Q1 of 2024/25. Evaluation criteria are currently being drawn up and will take into account a variety of measures including:
- Volume of EVCPs proposed
 - Coverage across the area targeting properties without off-street parking
 - Private / Public investment ratio
- 6.6 Once the procurement process is complete, the contract between the Council and the EVCP operator needs to be ratified by Government. This will enable the final 10% of capital funding to be released to the council.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources, Financial and Transformation

7.1.1. The Council has been allocated £2,895,000 via the LEVI Capital Fund. This will be paid in two stages. Approval of the business case will release 90% of the funding. This is expected by March 2024. The remaining 10% of the allocation will be paid following the procurement process and a review of tender and contract documents. Request for this budget, subject to a successful business case and formal award of the grant, has been included within the Capital Update Report elsewhere on this agenda.

7.1.2. Capital funding will help support the provision and installation of EVCPs alongside funding from the supplier. The supplier will be responsible for providing electricity and all ongoing maintenance, repairs and costs associated with the running of the EVCPs, including replacements if required, for the period of the contract. Any additional costs incurred, including at the purchase and installation stages, will be the responsibility of the supplier.

7.1.3. The Council has been allocated revenue funding through the LEVI Capability Fund. This helps provide the resource to manage the NNEVI project. The key aims of the LEVI Capability Fund are:

- To increase the capacity and capability of every Tier 1 local authority to plan and deliver EVCP infrastructure.
- To enable every Tier 1 local authority to have a published EV strategy
- To enable every Tier 1 local authority to take advantage of the LEVI Capital Fund

7.1.4. The Capability Fund cannot be used for a consultant-led approach, or for consultants unless on an exceptional basis where the local authority has insufficient resource and consultants would lead to a step-change. The Capability Fund is also not eligible for sub-contracting work to Charge Point Operators (CPOs), DNO (power) quotes, or the use of resource funding on any transport or decarbonisation activity that is not related to EV infrastructure.

7.1.5. In summary, the guidance from the Local Support Body is very clear. The Capability Fund is for up-resourcing local authorities, establishing a team, and creating a legacy of knowledge and experience in EV infrastructure. It is expected that any ongoing resourcing beyond the award of Capability Fund will be the responsibility of local authorities. This includes contract management, monitoring and reporting, and other related EV activities.

7.1.6. Similar to the Capital Fund, the Capability Fund involves a three-stage process:

- Allocation offer
- Proposal submission

- Funding award (NNC has received £77,220 to date through the Capability Fund, with a further payment of £175,890 expected in 2023/24, and a final payment of £175,890 in 2024/25)

7.1.7. The Council must report to Government how the Capability Fund is being used to support the NNEVI project and the funds objectives.

7.2 Legal and Governance

7.2.1. The Council has received a formal offer letter from Government confirming the allocations through the LEVI Capital Fund and LEVI Capability Fund. A Memorandum of Understanding is in place between the Government and the Council relating to the LEVI Capability Fund allocation for 2022/23. This sets out the objectives of the funding and requirements on the Council.

7.2.2. NNC will use the LEVI Capital Funding to run a procurement process through an existing framework to select and appoint a supplier to install, operate and manage a network of EVCPs across the area. The framework will have template documents which NNC can use and tailor to its requirements. The NNEVI project team are working closely with NNC procurement and legal officers to help select the framework which best suits its requirements. This work will continue to include drafting the ITT documents, including technical specifications, contract documents and any service level agreements.

7.2.3. Signing the contract will enable NNC to agree sites with the supplier for EVCPs. The supplier will lease the sites where the EVCPs are located covering the contract period.

7.2.4 Works to install the EVCPs will require specific permissions from the highway authority.

7.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1. The report and specifically installation of EVCPs supports various Council policies. These specifically include the commitments to 'Safe and Thriving Places' and a 'Green, Sustainable Environment' in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 and the following priorities:

- Help town centres and villages respond to changing trends
- Enable people to travel across North Northamptonshire and beyond
- Demonstrate clear leadership on tackling environmental sustainability
- Work with communities and businesses to tackle climate change and improve air quality
- Promote sustainable, active travel
- Embed low carbon technology, sustained and improved green infrastructure, and sustainable forms of transport fit for the future

7.3.2. The installation of EVCPs also supports the Council’s Carbon Management Plan which was adopted in December 2022 and has the aim for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030. A key theme of the plan is to encourage the transition to electric vehicles.

7.4 Risk

7.4.1 The principle risks associated with the NNEVI project are highlighted below, together with activities to mitigate their likelihood of occurring and impact.

Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk (RAG)
Government rejects NNC proposals and funding not secured for the NNEVI project	NNC in regular contact with officials. Expression of Interest has been agreed.	Green
Lack of interest from the market meaning a supplier cannot be appointed	Soft market testing and regular dialogue with the market. Tranche 1 position more favourable market capacity. Attractive ITT	Green
Inability to identify suitable sites to enable residents without off-street parking to access EVCPs close to where they live	Mapping underway to identify properties without access to off-street parking and potential locations for EVCPs. Collaboration with Highways to facilitate provision	Green
Opposition to specific EVCP sites	Consultation process for the installation of on-street EVCPs will enable local residents and businesses to comment on proposals. Communications will ensure clarity on the rationale for site selection and any decisions.	Amber
Insufficient capacity or capability to manage NNEVI project	Dedicated post created in NNEVI team supported through LEVI Capability Fund	Green
Risk that the cost of the scheme exceeds grant funding available	Terms of the contract will make clear that the grant funding is the maximum public funding available for the	Green

	specified outputs and any additional costs must be met by the supplier	
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7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 It is important that the public and stakeholders are fully engaged in the transition to EVs. This requires supplying clear information, communicating effectively, and consulting on proposals.

7.5.2 Consultation will primarily take place at two levels. The strategic level involves widespread consultation on the Council’s draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy which was published in August 2023. Details of the consultation have been shared with local town and parish councils and other important stakeholders, and promoted through a press release, social media and other communication channels. There is also a commitment to consult at the local level before sites are confirmed and the installation of EVCPs commences. This includes consultation on any proposed parking restrictions allied to the installation of EVCPs. The aim is to align these local consultations so that residents, businesses and other interested parties have the full picture when commenting on proposals. NNC has also created a portal where residents and businesses can suggest suitable locations for EVCPs.

7.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1 Proposals for the Council’s approach to the LEVI Capital Fund and the draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy were presented to, and considered by, the Sustainable Communities Executive Advisory Panel on 24th April 2023. Comments included the potential for EVCPs in town centres to support the local economy by attracting visitors and residents.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 The draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy is scheduled for consideration at the Place and Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting on 31st October 2023.

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 An Equality Screening Assessment has been completed for the draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy which considered the impact of the proposals on the identified equality groups. This identified no negative impacts.

7.9 **Climate and Environment Impact**

7.9.1 The Council, having declared a climate change emergency in June 2021, is committed to reducing its climate impact both within its own Council buildings and in working with businesses and the wider community to achieve net zero energy emissions. Road traffic currently accounts for a considerable proportion of North Northamptonshire's overall greenhouse gas emissions, so making the switch to battery EVs is going to be an essential part of the journey towards net-zero.

7.10 **Community Impact**

7.10.1 The provision of EVCPs, including dedicated parking for EV charging, will help to ensure that communities and residents without access to off-street parking are not left behind in the transition to electric vehicles.

7.11 **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1 There are no specific Crime and Disorder impacts associated with the proposals.

8 Background Papers

8.1 Draft North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy 2023-30: August 2023

8.2 [North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy 2023-2030 \(citizenspace.com\)](https://citizenspace.com)

APPENDIX A: PROPOSED BUSINESS CASE APPROACH

- Primary focus – The main target for LEVI Capital Funding will be delivering charging solutions for residents without access to off-street parking, including a combination of public car park and on-street locations.
- Chargepoint Speed - The majority of the EVCPs installed will be either standard or fast, however, the deployment of rapid chargers will be considered for some sites.
- EVCP locations – The ITT documents will include a list of minimum required public car park sites and information for each of these, with a list of target areas/zones for additional sites and charging outcomes. The ITT documents will also include a change protocol for new sites to be suggested and agreed.
- Funding and procurement value – Subject to final government approvals, £2,985,000 LEVI capital grant will be available for the initial contract award and related phases. However, the procurement value (public funds) will be up to £5,000,000, including £2,015,000 potential additional funding. This provides headroom to enable the council to secure and invest further funds should these become available and without the need to re-procure. This is mindful of the scale of the challenge and the need to expand geographical coverage across the area. The commitment of further public funds to deliver additional phases (beyond the initial value) would be subject to a separate decision through NNC governance processes. Public funds would be used to contribute to the overall capital investment alongside investment by the supplier. Investment committed by the supplier will be an important part of the ITT scoring and evaluation. The intention is that returns generated through the deployment and take-up will be shared between the supplier and NNC. This will be reflective of the public and private investment ratio (capital funds). Revenues generated to NNC would be reinvested in EVCPs or related activities.
- Contract length – The contract length will be 15 years from signature. This is informed by soft market testing and lessons learned by other local authorities. This reflects the need to provide a sufficient term to enable the supplier to recoup their investment and make a return. However, there will be scope to shorten the contract if performance is poor. The contract will include provision for termination if any required improvements are not met. The contract will include the possibility of a short extension of one year to allow for any administrative constraints.
- Procurement route – An existing framework will be used to secure a supplier. Advantages of this approach is that it is familiar to the market, less resource intensive and quicker, whilst still ensuring an open, competitive process.
- Technical specifications for capital works and operations – The supplier will take on all regulatory and technology obsolescence risk.

- Installation programme – Target dates and a longstop date will be set for the EVCP installation programme, and specific phases, to ensure delivery on time. The activation of passive provision by installing charging assets after the programme will be allowed.
- Accessibility and reliability – The contract will include supplier requirements covering accessibility and reliability standards.
- Asset ownership – The supplier will own, maintain and operate the charging assets for the duration of the contract term. At the end of the term the (above ground) charging assets will either be transferred to the council or decommissioned at nil cost to the council. This will be a decision for the council. Local connection assets will be transferred to the council at nil-cost at the end of the contract.
- Renewable energy – the supplier will be required to use renewable sources of energy.
- Tariff administration – The supplier will have full control of the tariffs under an agreed ceiling. This is important to ensure commercial sustainability. A ceiling will be agreed at the beginning of the contract with reference to the total cost of energy. If the supplier exceeds the ceiling in a given period, clawback clauses would apply to that period.
- Wider 'Net-Zero' and sustainability considerations – The ITT will encourage the supplier to support measures which deliver additional benefits including consideration of solar panels and batteries to generate and store electricity, smart charging technologies, promotion, and demand stimulation through EV car clubs, and other activities.
- Exit Strategy – The contract will include a backstop position whereby all sites should be decommissioned and left in an orderly and safe state, unless otherwise agreed.

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	NNC Development Services and Regulatory Services Case Management Systems (CMS) Replacement
Report Author	Rob Harbour (Assistant Director Growth & Regeneration) Rob.harbour@northnorthants.gov.uk Iain Smith (Assistant Director Regulatory Services) iain.smith@northnorthants.gov.uk
Lead Member(s)	Cllr David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration

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

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Executive as to the options available to procure and implement a new single Case Management System (CMS), to replace the Council's seven legacy Case Management Systems due to the current contracts expiring, without further opportunity to extend, on 31st March 2024.
- 1.2 The report also seeks, via recommendation to Full Council, that the funding for the one-off implementation costs of the project be made available through reserves and the inclusion of the ongoing annual revenue costs be included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) from 2023/24 onwards. This is a variation to the budget agreed by Council in February 2023.

- 1.3 Finally, the report seeks delegated authority to the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Director of Place & Economy and the Chief Information Officer to take any further decisions and/or actions required to procure, a new single Idox CMS for the Council and award and enter into a five (5) year contract, with an option to extend for a further one (1) year.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report outlines the current position, the scope, timeline and costs of the project, and the anticipated benefits that will be achieved through the delivery of the project.
- 2.2. Development Services (within Growth and Regeneration) and Regulatory Services within NNC operate on multiple case management systems to hold case details in relation to their directorates varied services.
- 2.3. The current case management systems have been in place for several years and have become out of contract with limiting options to extend further. The infrastructure supporting these systems is failing and does not meet our required ICT standards. The current arrangement of the applications means that there are limitations to their use due to access to legacy sites, loss of some functionality and increased support requirements.
- 2.4. It is now necessary for the services to procure and implement a single case management system using an existing framework as the procurement route and working closely with the procurement and legal teams to ensure a compliant process is followed.
- 2.5. The proposed contract duration is up to five (5) years, with an option to extend for a further one (1) year. The cost of the proposed contract is estimated at £1.140m over five (5) years (annual contract costs), or £1.368m if the optional one-year extension is utilised. There is a total one-off cost of up to £600k to be requested from reserves which includes supplier implementation, parallel running costs and internal resources. The ongoing annual revenue costs are to be included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) from 2024/25 onwards, resulting in annual savings of £40.4k, which over the 5-year life of the contract will generate savings of £202k.
- 2.6. The proposal is to procure a single cloud hosted Idox solution and have the contract in place by 31st March 2024. The implementation will then commence in a phased approach over the following 18 to 24 months.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Executive:
 - a) Approve the commencement of the procurement process via the Crown Commercial Services Vertical Application (VAS) Framework, reference

RM6259, using a Direct Award to purchase and implement a single cloud hosted Idox Case Management System for North Northamptonshire Council.

- b) Recommend to Full Council:
- i) The approval of the use of the Transformation Reserve to fund the one-off implementation costs of up to £600,000
 - ii) The approval of the inclusion of the ongoing annual revenue savings of £40,400 resulting from the implementation of the new Case Management System in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
- c) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Growth & Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Director of Place and Economy and the Chief Information Officer to take any further decisions and/or actions required to conclude this procurement process. This will include, but not be limited to:
- Approving award of the contract to the preferred supplier
 - Finalising the Terms and Conditions of the service
 - Enter into a contract with the preferred supplier for the provision of the service

3.2 Reasons for Recommendations:

- Expiry of the incumbent contracts – the current system contracts expire 31st March 2024.
- NNC will gain significant benefits from having a single CMS. Levels of service will be improved, and process efficiencies implemented.

3.3 Alternative Options Considered:

- Do Nothing
- Do Minimal - Replacement Solution for Kettering
- New supplier single solution

All the alternative options shown above have been discounted as they do not provide an effective solution, for reasons set out in section 5 of this report.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. Following Local Government Reorganisation across Northamptonshire and the creation of a single North Northamptonshire Council on 1st April 2021, seventeen services functions in the Place and Economy Directorate have continued to operate using the separate case management systems inherited from the County Council and the four former District and Borough Councils. There is a variance in how teams access these systems and data that is recorded within each.

- 4.2. The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Peer Review, undertaken in October 2024, recognised the challenges that the multiple legacy IT systems were causing in terms of being able to create a single, flexible planning service.
- 4.3. The development of a comprehensive service transformation plan was recommended including a review of IT system structures. The report further acknowledged the challenging timescales, as some of the associated IT contractual agreements will not be able to be renewed beyond March 2024.
- 4.4. The services now need to harmonise, moving from seven separate case management systems to the procurement of a single case management system. This will enable the services to gain productivity efficiencies, improve the quality of analysis and consistency of reporting of relevant performance data. The procurement of a single system is a complex project that will require extensive discovery work, contractual alignment and the development of a technical design specification.
- 4.5. The present application systems offer a varied suite of software, with Idox being the main supplier across the current provision. The software is used by multiple services and managed largely in house through six contracts, with varying contract end dates.
- 4.6. The process of aggregating and aligning the systems will involve converting the databases, applications, parameters & peripherals, then merging & migrating to a single system. There will be a need to align processes and procedures on a best practice basis as part of the harmonisation.
- 4.7. The current annual contract costs (£268,393) are held centrally within the existing ICT budget. The recommendation to move to a single cloud hosted solution offers benefits of lower annual ongoing costs (£228,000), increased flexibility and improved security, plus cost avoidance for the hardware related to the in-house systems in Kettering and Corby. However, there will be a one-off revenue migration/ implementation cost of up to £600,000.
- 4.8. Development and Regulatory Services will work closely with colleagues within Legal Services, Procurement, Finance and ICT to support the effective delivery of any new system.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. The following options were considered for the way forward:
- 5.2. **Do Nothing** - This option would require NNC to continue to use the existing systems, infrastructure and support mechanisms. This option can only extend in time to the point at which existing solutions are viable (31st March 2024) beyond this point this option is not possible as the current systems are no longer supported, putting NNC at considerable risk of not being safe and legal. In addition, there would be an increased financial risk for NNC as the supplier/s may increase the costs significantly to remain in contract. Retaining existing

systems as is, would also have a further negative impact on the outdated legacy infrastructure. The Do-Nothing option is not viable and has been discounted.

- 5.3. **Do Minimal (Replacement Solution for Kettering)** - This option would only replace SX3 and Civica Flare systems in Kettering, as they are no longer under support or offered by the suppliers, with a hosted solution. This option would still require re-procurement of all five contracts with the same suppliers to mitigate the contractual risk and would retain a siloed suite of systems. There would also be unavoidable migration costs from SX3 to a replacement system. Therefore, this is not a feasible option and has been discounted.
- 5.4. **A case management system from a new supplier** - This option could see the implementation of a new supplier/system not currently in use by NNC. It would replace the five existing Idox systems and both SX3 and Civica Flare in Kettering. The procurement and implementation of a fully functioning new system including all migrated data, processes and users is not feasible by March 2024. As such, this option would require:
- Multiple procurement exercises to be undertaken with current suppliers to extend the use of existing systems to maintain a safe & legal contractual position. These new contracts would need to run in parallel for a period (approx. 18 months - 2 years), until migration to the new system has been completed and imbedded.
 - Increased contract costs due to the need to run existing contracts in parallel with the newly procured contract for the period of migration
 - Additional significant service training needs
 - A high probability of increased migration costs which have not been budgeted.

Given the restrictions of the current contract end dates, the associated implausibility of appointing an unknown supplier via a compliant procurement approach within this period, higher parallel running costs, the high probability of increased migration costs and additional impact on staff and service delivery this option, at the present time, is not deemed feasible.

- 5.5. **An amalgamated Idox case management system** – This is the recommended option and would see an amalgamation of the existing contracts into a single Idox Case Management solution. Five of the seven systems already in scope of this project are provided by Idox, 153 of the 210 users currently use its products. Business functions in Corby, East Northants and Wellingborough have used its document management system to associate hundreds of thousands of documents with their individual case records. Colleagues across the impacted directorates have existing organisational knowledge of the Idox System, processes and policies and can assist in informing a best practice approach to system design and use. The migration and alignment of the vast majority of in scope data would be an Idox-to-Idox process, providing advantage over a non Idox solution. If an Idox solution is used, only the contract needs to be in place by 31/03/2024 rather than the migration of data and implementation of the new system and processes. Idox would run the existing contracts alongside the new with no additional cost and

as the various functions and services are migrated, so would the associated contract costs. This would limit parallel running costs to only SX3 and Civica Flare.

- 5.6. **The preferred route to market** is the option outlined in 5.5 of this report. This would be a procurement using Lot 2 Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Vertical Application Solution (VAS) Framework (RM62589) using direct award process

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Subject to approval of the way forward by Executive, these are the key milestones to procure a single CMS by April 2024

Milestone	Date
Business case approved by Executive	12 th October 2023
Budget Variation agreed by Full Council	26 th October 2023
Publish/ issue procurement documents to potential supplier	27 th October 2023
Preferred supplier identified and approved	30 th November 2023
Contract award date	January/ February 2024
Contract start date	31 st March 2024
Phased implementation commences	1 st April 2024

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. There will be resource implications with regards to procuring and implementing a CMS. Early engagement has already taken place with Legal, Procurement, ICT, Finance and representatives of both Growth and Regeneration and Regulatory Services. In addition, part of the procurement process will require the supplier to provide a project plan which will include details of the resources required from the staff within Council teams.
- 7.1.2. Our research has established a single Idox case management solution annual revenue cost for maintenance and licences of £228.0k. This is approximately £40.4k less than the current cost of the of the existing case management systems.
- 7.1.3. In consultation and agreement with colleagues, a resource requirement and cost for our internal services including Transformation and ICT has been completed, this includes support in configuring, implementing and the migration of data migration.

- 7.1.4. The proposed term of the contract is initially five (5) years, with the option of a one (1) year extension, this is to allow for the system to be fully implemented and used by the service before a further procurement exercise needs to be carried out. The extension periods are not obligatory but allow flexibility for the service and support the principle of obtaining best value.
- 7.1.5. It is proposed that the costs of up to £600k for implementing a system, will be met from a one-off contribution from the Transformation Reserve.
- 7.1.6. The ongoing annual revenue savings of £40.4k resulting from the implementation of the new Case Management System will be included in the MTFP from 2024/25 onwards.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. The Localism Act 2011 gives local authorities a 'general power of competence' that allows them to do anything that an individual can do provided that the proposed action is not specifically prohibited by other legislation and the power is exercised in accordance with the limitations specified in the Act which enables NNC to procure and enter into the proposed new contract.
- 7.2.2. The procurement proposed in this report, namely direct award under Lot 2, Crown Commercial Services VAS Framework (RM6259), must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the framework agreement, NNC's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Reg.33).
- 7.2.3. Where the proposed CMS involves processing personal data, NNC shall have regard to the requirements of the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 and ensure any call-off contract under the framework agreement (RM6259) contains appropriate data protection clauses.
- 7.2.4. Legal services, where instructed, will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. NNC Corporate Plan 2021-2025 - The system will support the commitment to Modern Public Services and Better, Brighter Futures by supporting the reliability of data to base decisions on, help staff to improve efficiency, increasing the ability to engage with customers, and providing the potential to integrate with other appropriate IT systems.
- 7.3.2. The Technology, Digital and Data 2021-2026 Strategy Support - The project will support the aims of to deliver a cloud hosted system, improved access to information, improved customer experience, use of digital technologies and use of data.

7.4 Risk

7.4.1. NNC are undertaking several case management system aggregations and as such we can benefit from lessons learned to date. The full project risks and mitigations identified to date are captured in the project risk register.

The key risks relevant to this stage of the project are capacity, expertise, contractual and impact on business as usual.

Risk Assessment	Mitigating Actions
Contractual risk due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non- alignment of existing Idox contracts. • The Northgate SX3 and Civica Flare contracts, associated with the services in Kettering in scope of this project, have been rolling since November 2019 and March 2020 respectively (prior to vesting day). 	Engagement with procurement / legal and agreement with Idox for alignment/extensions to be put in place in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Reg 72). Having a single Idox solution in place will mitigate the current risk associated with the current Kettering CMS.
The Service's capacity may be limited in terms of supporting the delivery of the project.	Service SME's identified; workshops developed to ensure focus is on value adding activity assigned appropriately which minimises impact on BAU staff. External supplier consultant/ work packages included in financial proposal to add value /support gaps in knowledge/ expertise.
ICT capacity may be stretched as they will need to support several projects, including this implementation.	Engagement with IT teams to ensure that capacity and resources are identified for the CMS project. Use previous knowledge around technical requirements when producing the specification. Additional resources to be bought in during implementation will be supporting the implementation with configuration, data migration, and training. This is costed into the finance proposal.
The procurement process and implementation could take longer than planned.	Careful planning and monitoring of the project. Agreement with current supplier/s around exit strategy and mitigation.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. Consultation has and will continue to take place with service area stakeholders, as a part of the procurement process.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This report has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. The procurement process and/or any part of the requirement may be selected for consideration by Scrutiny.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. The Council is committed to treating people fairly. The procurement and implementation of an CMS encompasses staff within the Development and Regulatory Service. An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been conducted and potential implications for protected characteristics have been considered and the system requirements reflect these considerations.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. The Council, having declared a climate change emergency in June 2021, is committed to reducing its climate impact both within its own Council buildings and in working with businesses and the wider community to achieve net zero energy emissions.

7.9.2. The CMS will deliver improved flexible working and digital access to staff, reducing the need for paperwork, and unnecessary travel.

7.9.3. Improved digital communication will reduce the need for printing and posting of letters and documentation to parents and carers, impacting on energy usage by the Council.

7.9.4. A Cloud based system produces less Greenhouse Gas Emissions from data centres compared to traditional servers hosted by the Council.

7.9.5. The preferred suppliers will be assessed as to their climate impact and commitment now and in the future as part of the procurement process.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1 Residents of North Northamptonshire will be presented with a uniform, modern interactive portal allowing them to access services offered by the Council.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1. There are no implications arising from any recommendations that are being proposed that have a crime and disorder impact.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None

EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Procurement of a Heating Contractor for Housing Stock
Report Author	David Watts, Executive Director of Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing (DASS) Daniel Hannam, Interim Strategic Lead for Housing Property Services
Lead Member	Councillor Mark Rowley, Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To seek approval from the Executive for the procurement of a Contractor for the delivery of the Servicing, Repairs and Maintenance of Council Housing Heating Systems for Housing Property Services.
- 1.2. To seek delegation of authority from the Executive to the Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up, in consultation with the Executive Director for Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to appoint an appropriate contractor, and to enter into respective contracts.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. North Northamptonshire Council owns and manages 8,084 council homes, across the Corby and Kettering areas. The Council is responsible for the repairs, maintenance, and refurbishment of these properties via its in-house Direct Labour Organisations and procured contractors in order to fulfil its landlord repairs and maintenance obligations.
- 2.2. Although some works are maintained by in-house resources, external contractors are also used to maintain the Council's housing stock. This is currently the case with heating systems servicing, repairs and maintenance, whereby in the Kettering area this is undertaken in house and in the Corby area this is contracted out.
- 2.3. With the current heating contract covering the Corby area expiring next year, a full review of the options available to the Council to deliver a fully joined up heating service across the Council's housing stock has been undertaken. This has established that the most suitable option for how to proceed with this service at the current time is to procure a contractor for servicing, repairs and maintenance (to include an out of hours provision) for the Council's entire housing stock. The installation of new boilers and void heating works will continue to be delivered in house.
- 2.4. Following receipt of procurement advice, it has been established that call-off for a specific contract under a Framework Agreement, via direct award or mini competition as may be available and/or appropriate, would provide compliant, robust and resilient service delivery. A number of Framework Agreements have been identified as capable of providing this procurement option.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive delegates authority to the Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up in consultation with the Executive Director for Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing, to procure, negotiate, award, and enter into a contract for the servicing, repairs and maintenance of the Council's Housing Heating Systems, to ensure that the Council's housing stock is maintained and that the legal obligation to annually service gas and oil appliances is met.
- 3.2. Reasons for Recommendation: By approving this recommendation, Council officers will be able to:
 - Closely align services with Government legislation, regulation and initiatives, through the use of a procured contractor across the two Housing Property Services team areas.
 - Ensure a fully compliant procurement process is conducted in the most efficient and timely manner and a new contract is in place for the delivery of the services.

- Provide better value for money to the Council.
- Ensure tenants benefit from the delivery of this statutory service in the housing stock across North Northamptonshire.

3.3 Alternative Options Considered:

- Continue with existing separate systems for both Corby and Kettering teams. This option is not recommended as it would not result in a joined-up team working across North Northamptonshire.
- Set up an in-house Gas team covering all NNC Council Homes. This option is not recommended due to the current difficulties in recruiting to vacant posts within the in-house Kettering team. Operating an in-house service with an even higher number of agency staff than at present would come with significant risks to delivery.
- Procure a contractor to provide a service to all NNC Council Homes for all of the different parts of the Gas service. This option is not recommended as there were a number of benefits identified to retaining the installation of new boilers and void gas works in-house. Mainly, that there was no identified financial benefit from new boiler installations being contracted out as opposed to being completed in-house and the loss of direct control of void works, that could lead to an impact on voids performance.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. The Council has a legal obligation to annually service gas and oil boilers found within its housing stock. In addition, the Council has to repair and maintain the boilers to ensure tenants have heating and hot water available to them when they require it. This includes providing an out of hours service for evenings, weekends and public holidays.
- 4.2. Prior to unitary, Kettering and Corby delivered the annual servicing, repairs and maintenance via their respective in-house Direct Labour Organisation and a procured contractor. This approach has continued since vesting day.
- 4.3. Following an assessment of the options available for the continued delivery of this service across the Council's housing stock, there is an intention to align service delivery across both areas to ensure a consistent approach.
- 4.4. The installation of new boilers via the capital programme and the undertaking of void property gas checks, is not included as part of this procurement. The options appraisal identified this function as one that would remain as being undertaken in house.

- 4.5. At present, the Council is reliant on a large number of agency workers to deliver the in-house service in Kettering, due to problems with attracting permanent staff. This is not a viable long-term situation, with a more robust and resilient approach to service delivery required.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 Following the creation of North Northamptonshire Council, there is a need to harmonise the delivery of the servicing, repairs and maintenance of heating systems across Corby and Kettering areas to ensure the same level of service is received by the Council's housing tenants.

- 5.2 Four options considered were:

1. Do nothing - Continue with existing separate systems for both Corby and Kettering teams. This option is **not recommended** as it would not result in a joined-up team working across North Northamptonshire.
2. To procure, negotiate, award, and enter into a contract for the servicing, repairs and maintenance of the Council's Housing Heating Systems (**recommended**).
3. Set up an in-house Gas team covering all NNC Council Homes. This option is **not recommended** due to the current difficulties in recruiting to vacant posts within the in-house Kettering team. Operating an in-house service with an even higher number of agency staff than at present would come with significant risks to delivery.
4. Procure a contractor to provide a service to all NNC Council Homes for all of the different parts of the Gas service. This option is **not recommended** as there were a number of benefits identified to retaining the installation of new boilers and void gas works in-house. Mainly, that there was no identified financial benefit from new boiler installations being contracted out as opposed to being completed in-house and the loss of direct control of void works, that could lead to an impact on voids performance.

- 5.3 The following procurement routes have been considered for the procurement of a contractor to address these requirements:

- a) **Open tender** - Open tendering is a transparent procurement process which is open to the whole market and allows equal opportunity for competing suppliers. It enables the Council to identify the contractor offering a mixture of the highest quality at the most competitive price, resulting in a more economically, advantageous tender. It is a fully compliant route to market and often provides the most competitive results. The disadvantages of this process (as they relate to this project) are the timescales to run a procurement in this way, which would likely take upwards of six (6) months to award a contract.

- b) **Framework (using mini competition and/or compliant direct award options)** - A framework process typically reduces the procurement timeframe, as the pre-evaluation of multiple contractors has already been undertaken, allowing the Council to approach a smaller pool of contractors and in some cases, award a contract directly to a contractor (based on the terms of the framework). Frameworks can therefore provide a shorter timeframe for awarding a compliant contract. The disadvantages to using a framework are that they can provide restrictions to new contractors, who may offer a reduction in prices or service. Estimates for implementation suggested by the framework providers is within 3 months. Procurement would advise the likely period of time required to award a contract would be six (6) months.
- c) **Award without Competition (Negotiated Procedure without Prior Publication)** - Making an award to a contractor without any form of competition contravenes the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (The legislation which implements the Public Sector Procurement Directive and governs public sector procurement above the UK Regulations Threshold) and the principals of good and ethical procurement (namely non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, and proportionality), unless one of the general grounds for use of this procedure is satisfied. Therefore, this hasn't been explored as an option.

5.4 Due to the short timeframe within which to procure a new contract and the number of Framework Agreements, whose legal notices are in order and processes meet the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, a suitable Framework Agreement is deemed the fastest, most robust and compliant option available for the Council to procure a new contract. The contract is intended to be procured for four (4) years.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. If the Executive approves the recommendations of this report, the next stage will be to implement the Council's Procurement Process for the contract. The key activities for this are outlined below along with an anticipated timeline for delivery:

Key Procurement Activity	Timeframe
Create Tender Documents	November 2023
Advertise the Procurement Opportunity	December 2023
Evaluate the tenders received	January 2024
Post tender evaluation works	February 2024
Contracts drafted and signed	March 2024
Prestart meetings with the contractors	April 2024

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

7.1.1. The Council has a ring-fenced capital Housing Revenue Account within which budgets are identified for the delivery of its services, and the Medium-term Financial Plan was approved by Full Council on 23/02/2023.

7.1.2. The table below shows the proposed funding within the two Neighbourhood Housing Revenue Accounts for 2023/24 for Heating Servicing, Repairs and Maintenance:

Corby Neighbourhood Account		
Cost Centre	Title	2023/24 Budget
20HD1178	Central Heating Maintenance	£493,500
N/A	Deletion of three obsolete posts	£115,296
	Total	£608,796
Kettering Neighbourhood Account		
Cost Centre	Title	2023/24 Budget
20HD4058	Kettering Gas Repairs	£502,080
	Minus salary costs to be retained	-£120,600
20HD4059	Kettering Gas Services	£64,740
	Total	£446,220
	Combined Housing Revenue Account Total	£1,055,016

7.1.3. The estimated spend for this contract is shown below. This is based on the current spend per property rates of the existing contract covering the Corby area. Until this service is procured the exact four year spend will not be known.

Project	Length of Contract	Estimated Contract Sum
Heating Servicing, Repairs and Maintenance	2+1+1 years	£3,894,332

7.1.4. The anticipated spend outlined above assumes that the budgets for the years following the current three (3) year approved Medium Term Financial plan remain proportionate. The ratios of spend to budget are consistent with anticipated budgets for years 2026/27 and 2027/28 being the same as in the current three (3) year Medium Term Financial plan.

7.1.5. The four (4) year contract is outside the current Medium-Term Financial Plan by two (2) years but has a two (2) year break clause to protect the Council should there be any budgetary restrictions in the future. A shorter contract length is not deemed viable, due to the anticipated set up costs to a contractor of mobilising to deliver this contract.

7.1.6. Following on from approval by the Executive, Officers will seek to procure and then award a contract.

7.2. Legal and Governance

7.2.1. The Localism Act 2011 gives local authorities a 'general power of competence' that allows them to do anything that an individual can do provided that the proposed action is not specifically prohibited by other legislation and the power is exercised in accordance with the limitations specified in the Act which enables the Council to procure and enter into the proposed new contract.

7.2.2. The Council has an obligation as a best value authority under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard for a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness'.

7.2.3. The procurement process proposed in this report, namely call-off from an appropriate and compliant Framework Agreement via direct award or mini-competition as may be applicable, must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Framework Agreement, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Regulation 33) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

7.2.4. Legal services, where instructed, will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1. When reviewing the current service specifications, account will be taken of two key thematic priorities laid out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Thriving places – Housing and Communities

- Improve the standard of new homes and ensure housing supply meets demand.

Greener, sustainable environment – Housing and Communities

- Work with businesses and communities to tackle climate change.
- Set an example to other organisations on tackling sustainability.

7.4. Risk

7.4.1. There is a risk of delay to the procurement conclusion if any further decisions need to be referred to the Executive and not delegated as proposed.

7.4.2. There is currently a contract in place for the Corby area which expires on 2nd March 2024. A short extension to this contract is likely to be required, to ensure continuation of the service until such time as the new contract is in place.

7.4.3. If the Council does not enter into a new contract, then there is a risk to being able to deliver statutory compliance, maintenance and repairs obligations to tenants, which could result in negligence, disrepair and subsequent claims.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. There has been no consultation outside of the Council.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This paper has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. The procurement process and/or any part of the requirement may be selected for call-in and for consideration by Scrutiny.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. Equality Screening Assessments were carried out for this contract and no negative impact was identified. The overall impact was positive for all tenants, particularly the elderly, long-term sick, disabled and children.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. The Council aims to procure a contractor who is local, or who has local resources within North Northamptonshire, thus reducing travel distances to the Council's properties within Corby and Kettering, with the aim of reducing the Council's carbon footprint.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1. This contract will contribute to the integrity and serviceability of the Council's housing stock. In addition, it will improve the quality of living for tenants and potentially incentivise them to maintain their properties to a good standard, which will have a positive impact on the community.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1. This contract will contribute to the integrity and serviceability of the Council's housing stock. It is therefore expected that this will improve the quality of living for tenants, and potentially incentivise them to support the prevention of crime and disorder in their respective communities.

8. Background Papers

8.1. None

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Home to School Transport Dynamic Purchasing System
Report Author	Graeme Kane, Executive Director for Place & Economy
Lead Member	Cllr Matt Binley, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Home to School Transport is delivered by external commercial contractors commissioned by council officers through a dynamic purchasing system (DPS) supplied by Access Group and known as “adam”. The current contractual arrangement under the DPS is a joint system shared with West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) who manage the contract on behalf of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC).
- 1.2 The current contractual arrangement facilitated by WNC comes to an end on 31st March 2024.
- 1.3 This report is to seek authorisation to make a Direct Award under the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Commissioning Solutions Framework ref. 1017 (the ‘YPO Framework’) to procure a standalone contract for NNC with Access Group for the DPS known as “adam” so that with effect from 1st April 2024 NNC operates its own contract(s).

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 North Northamptonshire Council is required to arrange free, suitable, home to school transport for children of compulsory school age who are eligible, to their nearest suitable qualifying school, in line with section 508B of the Education Act 1996 and the Government's statutory guidelines which were revised in 2023.
- 2.2 The Council also provide transport for Northamptonshire Children's Trust, the costs for which are recharged back to the Trust.
- 2.3 The current procurement system for Home to School and Social Care Transport is via a DPS known as "adam", which is shared with West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) who manage the specific contract(s) under the DPS for and on behalf of the Council. This contractual arrangement is due to expire on 31st March 2024, although there is the option to extend for two further one-year periods should WNC so desire. As NNC are not a party to or the client for the purposes of specific contract(s) under the DPS there is not an option for NNC to extend the contract in isolation.
- 2.4 The system is generally operated independently by both authorities who utilise the system to procure services within each of their respective areas. NNC currently spends approximately £17m per year through this portal.
- 2.5 The shared system does however have some drawbacks that prevent the Council fully realising the efficiency of the service. These include a shared procurement database that is suited to the whole of the former county area of Northamptonshire. As the two authorities have diverged, so have the needs and requirements of each respective authority which makes it more difficult for common procurement requirements to be achieved. The system also aggregates invoicing from respective suppliers to reduce the number of invoices that each council must process each month. Within the current system however, there is no way to automatically split this aggregated invoice between the two authorities and as such there is a monthly need to manually disaggregate the invoices between the two councils so that each authority is paying the cost of its own services, utilising officer time that could be spent more proactively in ensuring quality of service provision by providers.
- 2.6 The adam package is used by many Councils and other commissioning bodies across the country and has proved very effective at providing an auditable record of procurement and commissioning for a variety of services. If configured appropriately, adam can provide useful management data to support forecasting and effective contract management.
- 2.7 Staff are already familiar with the adam DPS package and the way in which it works and are comfortable that it suits the Council's needs. Alternatives would need extensive development and data migration to similarly meet the Council's needs which would have a potential risk to service delivery. It is therefore proposed that the Council should remain with Access Group as our system supplier. To implement this, it is recommended that the council procure its own contract under a Direct Award through the YPO Framework. As client for the

contract, it would increase the scope to work with the supplier to further optimize the system to meet the specific needs of NNC.

- 2.8 YPO are a purchasing organisation owned and run for the benefit of the public sector. They operate a procurement framework which enables authorities to draw down from contracts for commonly used products and services, which they procure with a standard contract, schedule of rates and tender qualifications requirements. This allows public sector partners to benefit from the economies of scale of a larger procurement and achieve saving on procurement costs.
- 2.9 There are no other packages on the YPO framework that meet the council's needs of providing a DPS with invoicing aggregation and supplier engagement facilities. A mini tendering competition within the framework is therefore not an option and the council is able to direct award to the supplier.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Executive is recommended to:

- i) Authorise a Direct Award of a contract with the Access Group under the YPO Framework for the Dynamic Purchasing System known as “adam”, to facilitate ongoing procurement of home to school transport and related services.
- ii) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets in consultation with Executive Director of Place and Environment to take any further decisions and/or actions required to conclude the procurement process, appoint the preferred supplier and enter into respective contracts for the delivery of Home to School transport and related services.

3.2 Reasons for Recommendations –

- a. This proposal will facilitate the disaggregation of the financial processes from WNC, giving the Council better monitoring of forecasting and spend and is a key part of the Transformation of the service to meet the needs and requirements of the Council.
- b. Taking its own contract under a Direct Award from the YPO Framework would allow the Council to work with the DPS provider to further optimize the system to meet the specific needs of North Northamptonshire as a standalone Council, rather than compromise to meet needs of the two councils together.
- c. Taking this decision at this time allows sufficient time to prepare and develop the market and ensures that there is an ongoing process and

platform for procurement after the expiry of the current term of the DPS contract. This gives a degree of certainty to both the Council and the service providers contracting with it and helps to ensure that the Council can continue to meet its statutory obligations after April 2024.

- d. Alternative procurement provisions would need extensive development and potentially data migration to similarly meet the Council's needs. There is no guarantee that the current service providers would be prepared to sign up to a different platform, or that the potential new platform can replicate the levels of operational service provided within the current DPS platform.
- e. Transitioning to a new system without sufficient lead in time to support providers is likely to lead to procurement and service issues. Providers will need to be supported in changing their processes to support the new ways of working which could lead to greater engagement from officers to ensure effective service delivery and contract management. The launch of a new system without adequate support may deter providers from bidding for routes in the future.
- f. The increased cost of the proposal is minimal against the overall budget for Home to School Transport and can be absorbed within it. There is potential for savings from utilising more local service providers to off-set the additional costs.
- g. Re-development of the current service to include more local service providers and resolve current finance issues would incur additional costs which need to be considered against the time remaining in the current contract.

3.3 Alternative Options Considered –

- a) Do nothing: The current contractual arrangement under the DPS will expire at the end of March 2024, subject to any extensions undertaken by WNC. If the contract is allowed to expire without any action being taken, the Council will have no process for procuring Home to School and social care transport. This will leave the Council unable to meet its statutory responsibilities in this area.
- b) Undertake a full procurement exercise to identify an alternative system that may meet the Council's needs. Soft market testing has not identified a system that would be able to immediately meet the Council's needs without further development of both the system and Council's processes and internal systems within the timescales required.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 Home to School Transport is provided by commercial service providers procured through a DPS known as “adam.”
- 4.2 The current contract with adam:
- i) Was entered into by the former Northamptonshire County Council in 2019 and subsequently adopted by West Northamptonshire Council on behalf of both WNC and NNC,
 - ii) Is due to expire at the end of March 2024
 - iii) Has an option to extend for two more periods of one year each
 - iv) Is managed by WNC.
 - v) It is not certain whether WNC will exercise the option to extend the current contract.
- 4.3 North Northamptonshire Council transports over 6000 students and pupils, some of whom are extremely vulnerable or have special educational needs or disabilities, to and from school each day by using a combination of taxis, private hire vehicles and buses, which are procured through the adam DPS. Each year it spends in the region of £17m through the DPS portal.
- 4.4 The Council also provides:
- i) Transport for vulnerable adults to day-centres and other places of support.
 - ii) Transport to a wide range of Social Care and Health services and appointments for vulnerable children
- 4.5 The combined councils (WNC and NNC) currently have around 200 service providers signed up on the portal, although only 90 regularly make bids or currently hold contracts with the Council.
- 4.6 The adam system simplifies much of the procurement and contract management function for the service.
- 4.7 Adam was primarily adopted to provide an easy and fully auditable tendering portal. Potential providers can join the DPS at any point during its operation, subject to them meeting the pre-qualification checks and assessments which are part of the enrolment process.
- 4.8 The system provides an end-to-end procurement process for selecting transport providers to deliver journeys for pupils and children to access education. The process includes: accreditation of providers; pre-qualification checks; publication of the Council’s transport requirements; bidding; contract award and management; invoicing and payments; ad-hoc notifications to suppliers.
- 4.9 The adam package is used by many councils and other commissioning bodies across the country and has proved very effective at providing an auditable record of procurement and commissioning for a variety of services. If configured

appropriately, adam can provide useful management data to support forecasting and effective contract management.

5. Issues and Choices

Issues with current system provision

- 5.1 The current finance processes are very complex and extremely difficult to separate – adam is currently unable to bill NNC and WNC routes separately as the system amalgamates invoices for suppliers across both councils. This requires a manual process to allocate the costs to the relevant authority.
- 5.2 The current supplier pool was established by Northamptonshire County Council and includes a higher proportion of providers in the Northampton area. NNC specific system would allow a supply chain to be established which is better suited to the NNC area. This may deliver better value for money for NNC.
- 5.3 Transportation of children and vulnerable adults is an area of high reputational and financial risk to the Council, and it is essential that systems are in place to reduce the likelihood of failure or unforeseen budgetary risk. Having recently transferred the transport operation from WNC, the NNC Home to School Transport team is a newly forming team that are still developing processes and systems best suited to the unitary authority. It is operationally advantageous, and reduces risk, to remain with a system with which the team are already familiar. This will enable them to build on their current work and to further optimize and tailor the system to the needs of the Council.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 If it is decided to take out our own contract with Access Group we will make a Direct Award through the YPO Framework.
- 6.2 Once approved, the Direct Award will be made, and Access Group will be able to start the supplier engagement process and mobilisation of a product to meet NNC bespoke needs for launch in April 2024. This will give staff sufficient time to become familiar with any changes to the product ahead of the next school year.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1 There is a start-up fee of £23,900 and an annual licence and support fee of £43,165, thus the cost across a three-year contract would be £153,395, with potential for two one-year extensions adding a further £86,330 to the overall cost. These costs can be covered from existing budgets.

7.1.2 Currently the annual licence costs are shared with WNC. If the Council becomes fully independent, the cost of the entire contract will fall to it together with the start-up costs. This represents an increase in costs in the region of £42,065 in the first year and £18,165 in subsequent years.

7.1.3 Any savings from these proposals will be minimal when compared to the overall budget for Home to School Transport, however:

- Increased use of local service providers should help to keep costs lower (reduced dead mileage reducing the overheads of the service providers, enabling them to reduce charges to the Council).
- Increased use of local service providers will help to reduce the carbon footprint of the service and reduce the environmental impact of providing the service.
- New contracts and increased competition often trigger short-term cost reductions.

It is therefore anticipated that the additional costs can be recovered from savings across the contract term.

7.1.4 **Resources:** no resource implications from this proposal. Staff are already familiar with the package and no staffing changes are anticipated because of the changes. Any additional training required will be included as part of the implementation of the package.

7.1.5 **Transformation:** This proposal is part of the ongoing improvement plan for Home to School Transport Services with a view to providing better financial forecasting and management and more localised services.

7.2 Legal and Governance

7.2.1 The procurement process proposed in this report, namely accessing a compliant single supplier framework agreement via direct award, must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the relevant framework agreement, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Regulation 33) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Where a framework agreement is single supplier, and is concluded with a single economic operator, mini competition is naturally not available as an award process and a contracting authority can award specific contracts to that supplier during the term of the framework agreement.

7.2.2 Specific contracts, or 'Call-Off Contracts', entered into under a framework agreement or a dynamic purchasing system (DPS), must comply with the requirements of the relevant framework agreement or DPS, the Public Contracts Regulations (Regulation 33 and Regulation 34 respectively) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

7.2.3 Officers advise that existing contractual arrangements for the delivery of Home to School Transport and related services are in place from September to July annually, and there may be a transition period which means overlap between the expiry of existing contractual arrangements for delivery of services and the commissioning of new services under the YPO Framework. Existing contractual arrangements will need to be reviewed by officers and, as appropriate and subject to the provisions of those contracts, managed to ensure continuity of service.

7.2.4 Legal services, where instructed, will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement processes together with the resulting contractual arrangements, and where required management of existing contractual arrangements during the transition period.

7.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1 This entire service is bounded by and developed upon the Education Act and other supporting legislation, and the statutory guidance notes issued by the Department for Education together with the Home to School Transport Policy and the Post 16 Travel Policy, both of which are published on the Council website.

7.3.2 The proposals enable to Council to have a clear and auditable platform for procurement of home to school transport, in accordance with the procurement regulations.

7.3.3 The Billing and Invoicing functions of the system comply with local authority Finance Regulations.

7.4 Risk

7.4.1 The key risks relevant to this stage of the project are capacity, relevant expertise, and impact on business as usual. There is a risk that the council would not have a system in place beyond April 2024 which would have a severe impact on the Council's ability to deliver its statutory duty.

Risk Assessment	Mitigating Actions
There is a risk of procurement challenge when procuring any new system or provider	Engagement with procurement / legal advisors to ensure a compliant route to procurement.
The service's capacity may be limited in terms of supporting the delivery of the project.	The transition will be overseen by the manager of the service and supported by the wider team. The transition is occurring during the Winter and Spring period which is one of the less busy times of year for the service.

ICT capacity may be stretched as they will need to support several projects, including this implementation.	Engagement with ICT teams to ensure that capacity and resources are identified for project. By procuring a system that is cloud-based and known to the authority, the procurement and establishment of the system is simplified.
The procurement process and implementation could take longer than planned.	Careful planning and monitoring of the project. Early engagement with the provider to develop a project plan, allocate resources and manage risks.

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 No consultation is required.

7.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1 Whilst the EAP have previously received presentations relating to home to school transport, they have not been consulted on the procurement of a new dynamic purchasing system.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 Whilst the Place and Environment Scrutiny Committee have previously received presentations relating to home to school transport, they have not been consulted on the procurement of a new dynamic purchasing system.

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 This proposal does not directly impact any individual or any group of individuals with or without the protected characteristics.

7.8.2 The users of the portal will be the Council and any commercial contractors who wish to sign up to the DPS. As part of the enrolment process contractors are required to demonstrate their commitment and adherence to Equalities legislation.

7.8.3 An Equalities Impact screening assessment has been completed and is attached with this report. No impact, either positive or negative, has been identified because of these proposals.

7.8.4 The screening form has been signed off by the equalities team.

7.9 Climate and Environment Impact

- 7.9.1 The recruitment of more local service providers should enable the council to potentially reduce the travel times between their depots and pick-up and drop off start and finish points. The shorter length of mileage travelled would be a significant contribution to the reduction of emissions and the carbon impact of providing the service.
- 7.9.2 The ability for the council to operate its own contracts also provides the scope for the council to set its own requirements for tenders which could include maximum emission targets for vehicles. This could not be achieved with the current common arrangement where a shared set of requirements is needed for tendering.
- 7.9.3 There are no climate change or environmental implications to this proposal.

7.10 Community Impact

- 7.10.1 There is no direct impact on any community or distinct localities within the Council area.

7.11 Crime and Disorder Impact

- 7.11.1 Subject to adherence to the usual terms and conditions of procurement and Local Government spending, there are no crime and disorder implications arising from this proposal.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 None

EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report 2022-23
Report Author	Geoff Kent, Assistant Director of Customer Services, geoff.kent@northnorthants.gov.uk
Lead Member	Councillor Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council

Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) provides the final stage for complaints about councils and social care after the council's own complaints procedure has been exhausted. Each year the LGSCO issues an annual letter to all councils individually that covers complaints that have been received relating to their own Council and their outcome.
- 1.2 This report to Executive sets shows the LGSCO's findings in respect of the North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) for the year 2022-23. As many of the LGSCO's investigations take much time, this report also includes cases emanating from sovereign authorities.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The LGSCO received 64 complaints in respect of NNC in 2022-23, compared to 55 the previous year.
- 2.2. Overall, the following numbers of complaints received by the LGSCO had were broken down by service area as below:-

Service area	2021-22	2022-23
Adult Care Services	6	8
Benefits & Tax	8	3
Corporate & Other Services	N/a	8
Education & Childrens Services	16	22
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	5	9
Highways & Transport	3	2
Housing	8	6
Planning & Development	9	6
Total	55	64

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive notes the content and recommendations of the LGSCO's annual review letter, and the outcomes of its investigations completed in 2022-23 that relate to the Council.
- 3.2. Reason for Recommendation: To appraise the Executive of the annual review letter and relevant information. Receipt of regular complaints data demonstrates good governance.
- 3.3. Alternative Options Considered: It would not be considered good practice to not provide the annual Ombudsman report to the Executive and as such there are no alternative options to be considered.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. Every year the LGSO produces an annual letter and a summary of the complaints received in respect of the Council.
- 4.2. The Housing Ombudsman does not provide a similar letter but the information for these complaints has also been provided in this report.
- 4.3. The report provides the number of complaints and enquiries recorded and what decisions the Ombudsman has made for the period 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- 4.4. Section 5 of this report examines the cases determined by the LGSCO in more detail.

5. Issues and Choices

5.1. In reviewing complaints for last year nationally, the LGSCO made several observations about the national picture:

- The annual complaints statistics once again back up the harsh realities many people face in key areas of their lives – how their children are educated, how elderly relatives are cared for, and the houses they call home.
- In the Ombudsman’s first report in 2014, Education and Children’s Services complaints made up just 17% of the complaints the Ombudsman received. This ever-growing area now makes up nearly a quarter (24%) of the organisation’s workload, and sees the average uphold rate of complaints investigated tipping 84%.

5.2. Paul Najsarek, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman said that

“We all want decent education services for our children, quality care for our loved ones when they are in need, and the reassurance of a safety net if we fall on hard times but all too often the complaints we receive show this isn’t what people experience.

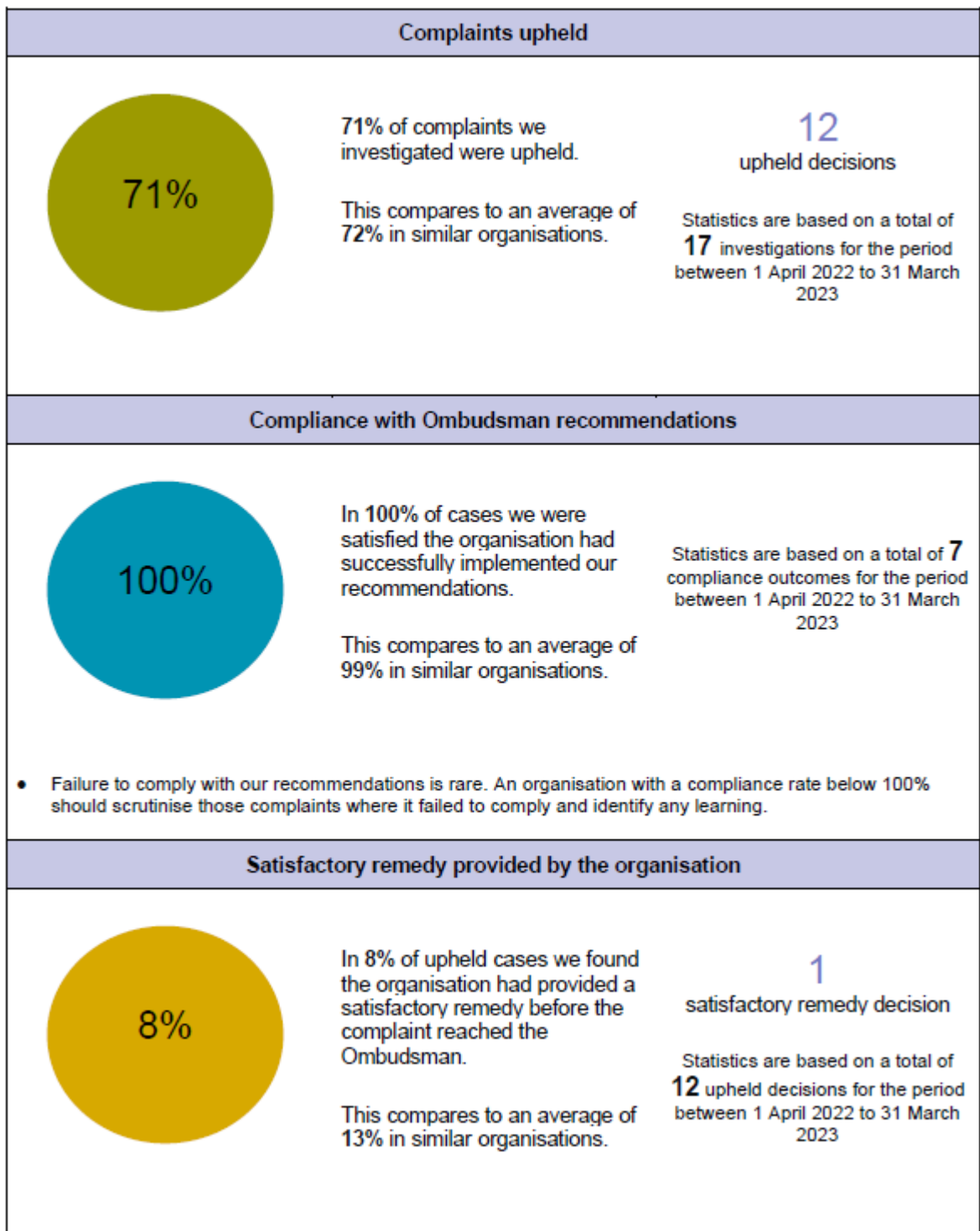
We know councils face huge challenges, so it is more important than ever for them to focus on the getting the basics right in services for residents and handling complaints effectively. Although local authorities often get things right, we frequently find councils repeating the same mistakes, ploughing ahead and not taking a step back to see the bigger picture.

Our latest statistics shed light on the harsh realities people across the country face in crucial aspects of their lives. Council leaders now need to focus on learning from common faults and injustices so they can make a significant difference to the people our local authorities serve.”

5.3. The LGSCO noted that it welcomed the Council’s agreement for and implementation of seven cases in 2022-23. However, it was disappointed that the Council had not completed four of them within the agreed timescales. It also noted that some information requested from the Council was provided late. It is extremely important that the Council improves on this as a key measure of good governance.

5.4. Officers are implementing revised procedures to ensure that all LGSCO queries are responded to on time, and also are ensuring that where action is agreed, it is taken within the agreed timescales. It is therefore expected that these improvements will be noted in the LGSCO’s annual report next year.

5.5. These are the three key annual LGSCO annual statistics for the Council. They also show how the Council compares against similar authorities.



5.6. The following tables summarise the 12 upheld decisions made by the LGSCO in respect of the Council in 2022-23. It should be noted that where payments have been made to reflect errors made, the amounts of these are generally stipulated by the LGSCO:-

Cases for North Northamptonshire Council		
LGSCO ref	Summary	Outcome
21007254	<p>Education & Childrens Services</p> <p>Mrs F complained that the Council delayed issuing an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for her daughter, J, causing a delay in starting secondary school and distress to Mrs F.</p> <p>The LGSCO found there were delays in issuing the EHCP and the Council's failure to consult with the school.</p> <p>The LGSO found that these faults caused injustice and the loss of education for one month.</p>	<p>Apology and financial redress</p> <p>The Council apologised to Mrs F and paid £500 reflecting loss of education and a further £500 acknowledging distress caused. It also reminded staff of the statutory deadlines and the distressing impact on young people and parents of them being missed.</p>
21014663	<p>Education & Childrens Services</p> <p>Mrs K complained that the Council did not provide adequate support with respect to her daughter, B, who has special educational needs and an education, health, and care (EHC) plan. She said that the Council did not make adequate arrangements for alternative provision for B during a period where she was not attending school.</p> <p>The LGSCO found that the Council could have done more to ensure alternative provision when out of school however it noted the child had then moved away and although the Council could not then remedy the loss of education, a financial remedy was appropriate to reflect missed education.</p>	<p>Agreement with action the Council took</p> <p>The Council offered financial redress to Mrs K without the LGSCO needing to order it. The Council paid £1800 reflecting loss of education and a further £300 acknowledging distress caused.</p>
21014849	<p>Housing</p> <p>Miss X complained that the Council has not done enough to re-house her to more suitable accommodation in the light of her medical conditions. In particular Miss X complained the Council is being too inflexible and unfairly refusing to consider her for properties which are not already adapted to meet her needs. As a</p>	<p>Apology and financial redress</p> <p>The Council apologised to Miss X and paid £100 acknowledging distress caused by removing her priority for a certain type of property.</p>

	<p>result she has lived in unsuitable accommodation for longer than necessary.</p> <p>The LGSCO found that Miss X did not miss out on successfully bidding for a property but she was caused some distress which the Council has agreed to remedy.</p>	
21015927	<p>Housing</p> <p>Miss D complained about how the Council handled her housing situation. She says it treated her unfairly and unreasonably told her she would have no choice but to accept its offer of privately rented accommodation. She also says the Council delayed dealing with the property disrepair issues.</p> <p>The LGSCO found the Council was at fault for failing to properly explain the property disrepair process and for its delays in dealing with Miss D's complaint.</p>	<p>Apology and financial redress</p> <p>The Council apologised to Miss D and paid £200 reflecting the injustice.</p> <p>It also reminded staff to ensure customers are properly informed about the process when they have a complaint about private rented property in disrepair.</p>
22001133	<p>Education & Childrens Services</p> <p>Mrs X complained on behalf of her sister, Mrs Y. Mrs X complained the Council had not reviewed Mrs Y's son, Z's, Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) since it was issued in 2019 and Z had no school place. Mrs X also complained about the poor communication from the Council and dealing with this has caused Z and his family significant anxiety and distress.</p> <p>The LGSCO decided that the Council was at fault. The Council did not review the EHCP and did not ensure Z received a suitable education.</p>	<p>Apology and financial redress</p> <p>The Council apologised to Mrs Y and Z and paid £300 to reflect time and trouble the complainants went through and a further £4250 for not ensuring suitable education for several months.</p> <p>It also reviewed procedures and provided staff guidance to ensure EHCP reviews are completed on time.</p>
22009038	<p>Corporate & Other Services</p> <p>Mr X said the Council failed to respond quickly and positively when he reported damp in his property caused by works on its land.</p> <p>The LGSO ended its investigation</p>	<p>Provide services to person affected</p> <p>The Council removed an offending tree and pipe attached to Mr X's property as well as paying his fees of £270.</p>

	as the Council had taken steps to remove the works being complained about.	
22011811	<p>Education & Childrens Services</p> <p>Miss B complained about the Council's refusal of school transport for their son C. The LGSO decided that the Council was at fault for how it considered Miss B's school transport appeal and that the agreed actions remedied their injustice.</p>	<p>New appeal/review or reconsidered decision</p> <p>The Council agreed to arrange for an independent panel to consider its decision, to send Miss B the relevant paperwork to submit it to the panel, and evidence to the LGSCO that these actions had taken place.</p>
21007254	<p>Education & Childrens Services</p> <p>Mrs F complained that the Council delayed issuing an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for her daughter, J, causing a delay in starting secondary school and distress to Mrs F. The LGSCO found there were delays in issuing the EHCP and the Council's failure to consult with the school. The LGSO found that these faults caused injustice and the loss of education for one month.</p>	<p>Apology and financial redress</p> <p>The Council apologised to Mrs F and paid £500 reflecting loss of education and a further £500 acknowledging distress caused. It also reminded staff of the statutory deadlines and the distressing impact on young people and parents of them being missed.</p>

Corporate Complaints

- 5.7 To ensure strategic oversight by the Executive, corporate complaints should be reported quarterly to the Executive and Scrutiny as part of the Council's standard reporting arrangements. This arrangement is due to be put in place to ensure better oversight of complaints and that there is an adequate link between this data and performance data.
- 5.8 In addition, specific, individual cases where there has been a significant finding of maladministration (usually by way of a formal Report) will be reported to Executive members on an individual basis. The Monitoring Officer has a duty with regard to maladministration.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Ombudsman reports are shared with the services they directly affect, to ensure that the appropriate action is taken as agreed with the LGSCO and that services learn from the issues highlighted.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. Although there are no direct implications from this report, it should be noted that where LGSCO upholds complaints this can cause the authority Officer time, resource, and financial costs to resolve as well as there being damage to the authority's reputation.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. LGSCO decisions impact upon all Council policies and plans and this can result in changes in policy and process being made.

7.4. Risk

- 7.4.1. There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.5. Consultation

- 7.5.1. No consultation is applicable in respect of this report.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

- 7.6.1. This matter has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

- 7.7.1. This report was considered by the Scrutiny Commission on 10th October 2023. A verbal update of comments made at that meeting will be given when this report is presented to Executive at its meeting on 12th October 2023.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. The Council is committed to treating people fairly. The LGSCO is an independent body that investigates complaints that have exhausted the Council's own two-stage complaints process, and it ensures that all equalities considerations are taken into account so that it ensures that cases it investigates meet all equalities obligations.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. The Council, having declared a climate change emergency in June 2021, is committed to reducing its climate impact both within its own Council buildings and in working with businesses and the wider community to achieve net zero energy emissions. There are no climate and environmental impacts from this report.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1. There are no distinct community impacts from this report.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1. There are no crime and disorder impacts from this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1. [The LGSCO published information about Council performance on its website](#)

8.2. [The LGSCO published the annual review letter relating to North Northants Council on its website](#)

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Oakley Vale Infrastructure Works
Report Author	Graeme Kane, Executive Director for Place and Economy
Lead Member	Cllr Matthew Binley, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Oakley Vale Phase 5 – Highways Plan

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the obligations on North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) to progress the adoption of roads and infrastructure on Oakley Vale Phase 5, explains the extent of works, how the works are to be funded and highlights any potential risks to the Council.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. To support the sustainable urban extension housing development at Oakley Vale in Corby, Corby Borough Council (CBC) entered into an Infrastructure Stakeholder Agreement with developers, landowners, and a contractor. As a result of the contractor going into administration, CBC entered into supplemental agreements to fulfil the contractor's obligations to ensure the development did not stall. The original contractor paid a work deposit which is held by a third-party solicitor to act as a guarantee of works being completed.

- 2.2. The majority of infrastructure works have been completed as the development has progressed over the last decade. Phase 5 is one of the remaining areas where the infrastructure that the Council is responsible for remains to be adopted as public highway.
- 2.3. North Northamptonshire Council, having taken on the obligation from CBC, and following the completion of the majority of the Phase 5 housing development, the Council now needs to complete infrastructure works to the highway to enable the roads to be adopted as public highway.
- 2.4. In accordance with the legal agreements, the Council intends to recover the cost of these works by drawing down against the work deposit account held, the current value held by the third-party solicitor being £971,350.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Executive:
 - a) Note the obligations on NNC to progress the adoption of roads and infrastructure on the Oakley Vale development.
 - b) Approve that the budget of £971,350, as per the value of the external works deposit held, be added to the Capital Programme to allow works to road adoptions at Oakley Vale Phase 5.
 - c) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director for Place & Economy to procure the necessary remedial works to the road and infrastructure at Oakley Vale Phase 5 and recover these costs from the external works deposit.
- 3.2 Reason for Recommendations
 - To fulfil the obligations entered into by CBC, completing the works and spending the external monies in accordance with the Infrastructure Works Agreement and supplemental agreements to progress the adoption of roads and infrastructure.
 - To procure and undertake the required works in line with the Council's constitution and financial regulations in relation to governance.
- 3.3 Alternative Options Considered: The only other option available is to do nothing, however given the legal obligations on the Council, as the works deposit covers the budget cost of the works and because of the negative public perception if adoption was not progressed, this option is not recommended.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 As a joint landowner to the Oakley Vale development, CBC entered into an Infrastructure Works Agreement in 2007 with the other landowner, contractor and developers to provide infrastructure at Phase 5 of the Oakley Vale development. As part of the Agreement the contractor, Cofton, deposited a works deposit with solicitors which was to be released back to Cofton as elements of work were completed and signed off. The current value of the Works Deposit held by third party solicitor is £971,350.
- 4.2 Cofton, as contractor went into administration in 2009 and CBC, through a deed of variation to the Infrastructure Works Agreement became responsible for fulfilling Cofton's obligations. At the same time as completing the deed of variation, CBC entered into a supplemental agreement which set out the terms under which the works deposit would be paid to CBC as works were completed and signed off.
- 4.3 In addition, Barratt David Wilson (BDW), as developer of other land parcels, and CBC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) relating to Phase 5 of the development. This placed obligations on BDW to maintain and repair the road damaged by their construction activities. It also confirmed that CBC and BDW would collaborate to get the roads adopted.
- 4.4 At the completion of construction works on the development and having received several enquiries from residents of the new properties about the completion of the roads, the Asset and Environment team commenced investigations and survey works to progress the road adoption.
- 4.5 Following a Highway inspection visit a list of remedials was prepared and issued to both North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) and BDW identifying the responsibilities for each element. NNC works included conducting a CCTV survey of the highway drains and also commissioning a redesign for the existing roundabout at the junction of Aintree Road and Rochester Road.
- 4.6 The Council has undertaken a CCTV survey of the drainage which confirmed that several repairs are required, and this will involve excavation and needs to be undertaken at the same time as the roundabout redesign is completed. A further inspection will be required to confirm any other outstanding remedial works to be undertaken by NNC or BDW prior to the final resurfacing of the roads.
- 4.7 Based on budget costs from Kier Highways the cost of progressing adoption is less than the Works Deposit. Once works are completed it is proposed that the roads are adopted by the Highways Team via a Certificate of Appropriation which will formally transfer responsibility from Assets & Environment to the Highway Register. As part of the transfer a commuted sum is to be paid for the future maintenance of the streetlighting and verges.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. The Council are under a legal obligation to progress the road adoption at Oakley Vale.
- 5.2. In addition to the obligations contained in the agreements, residents are becoming increasingly frustrated that they are living in houses with unadopted roads and this negative view of NNC will only increase if the recommendations of this report are not implemented. If the roads are left as they are, the condition of the road exposes the Council to a risk for claims for loss and injury.
- 5.3. Residents are complaining about perceived lack of progress in the adoption and as these roads are not adopted other developers whose roads connect to these are unable to get their roads adopted.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Following approval of this report, the next steps will be to finalise the remedial works and detailed drawings. Then to work with BDW to consider the best procurement method and if the Council's existing highways contract would be a suitable option to undertake the repairs. Once the work is complete the final stage will be the completion of the adoption of the roads and infrastructure.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. The proposals in this report have been discussed at the Strategic Capital Board and relate to approval of £971,350 to be included in the Capital Programme and approval to procure a contractor to undertake this work. A formal request for this budget has been included within the Capital Update Report elsewhere on this agenda.
- 7.1.2. Works will be managed by the Capital Projects Team in Asset & Environment and will utilise contractors to complete the work.
- 7.1.3. Kier Highways budget costs confirm that the cost of the remedial works are estimated to be less than the works deposit, and therefore there should be no financial impact on NNC to progress the adoption. Officers are currently waiting on a budget cost from BDW's contractor to provide a comparable cost indication.
- 7.1.4. There is a commuted sum which is also covered by the works deposit which contributes to the maintenance of the street lighting and verges. Ongoing maintenance of the highway once adopted will be by the Highways team from the existing highway maintenance budget.

7.1.5. If any of the £971,350 works deposit is not spent this will be returned to the Council by the third-party solicitor once the obligations of the agreement are met.

7.2. Legal and Governance

7.2.1. The Council must utilise funding and deliver this work in line with the restrictions and requirements set out in the agreement.

7.2.2. The Council will work with BDW to consider the best procurement method and if the Council's existing highways contract would be a suitable option. Procurement of the contractors to undertake these works will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements as set out in the Council's Constitution and the financial regulations.

7.2.3. Once the works are complete the road will then become adopted highway through a Certificate of Appropriation to transfer responsibility from Assets & Environment.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1. These works will support the Council's commitment to create safe and thriving places and connected communities by providing residents with a safe and accessible road, whilst freeing up developers to do the same for other communities on Oakley Vale Phase 5.

7.4. Risk

There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report. There is a risk that as works are procured, costs may increase and or additional works are identified. However, having identified a budget cost, undertaken a survey and visited site with the highways team the likelihood of this risk occurring is minimised.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. There is no requirement for any formal consultation, however officers have engaged with a number of residents and met Councillors on site and this communication will continue as works proceed.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This work has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel as this is an obligation on the Council.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. This proposal has not been considered by the Place & Environment Scrutiny Committee.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. There are no significant equality implications arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1 The works will have limited ability to reduce carbon but as part of the procurement process tenderers will be asked to demonstrate what they can do to reduce carbon during the works.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1 There are no significant community impact implications arising from the proposed recommendations in this report. Those communities affected by the works will be notified of the works through contractor signage.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1 There are no significant crime and disorder implications arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None

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rev.	date	description	chkd.
B	02.11.07	ADDITIONAL GULLIES AND LIGHTING COLUMN ADDED FOLLOWING NCC	387
A	11.08.07	ADDITIONAL BOUNDARIES REVISED AT INTERFACES WITH PHASES 2 AND 4. RE-ISSUED FOR S38 APPROVAL	DCT

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cofton
 101571 028 000
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job title:
OAKLEY VALE CORBY PHASE 5
PROPOSED S38 WORKS

drawing title:

S38 COLOUR PLAN

scale:	1:500	date:	MAR '07	drawn by:	DCT	checked by:	DCT
job number:	06-0285	drawing number:	105	revision:			B

- KEY:**
- ADOPTABLE CARRIAGEWAY
 - ADOPTABLE FOOTWAYS
 - ADOPTABLE VERGES
 - S104 DRAINAGE
 - ROAD
 - GULLY
 - FOOTWAY
 - ADOPTABLE HIGHWAY DRAINAGE GULLY AND CONNECTIONS
 - TITLE TO LAND (OPTION)
 - AREA TO BE ADOPTED
 - STREET LIGHTS TO BE ADOPTED UNDER S38 AGREEMENT

ssslack
 HEAD OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

RETIREMENT HOMES
 2.45 ACRES

PLOT 'C' 7.18 ACRES
 70 DWELLINGS - MAX

PLOT 'A' 8.83 ACRES
 90 DWELLINGS - MAX

PLOT 'B' 5.69 ACRES
 60 DWELLINGS - MAX

HIGHWAY ADOPTION COVERED BY PHASE 4 S38 - SEE THDA DRG 03-0088/150

HIGHWAY ADOPTION COVERED BY PHASE 4 S38 - SEE CTB DRG 01-0894/1004

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Partnership Governance Framework and Register of Significant Partnerships
Report Author	Janice Gotts, Executive Director of Finance and Performance
Lead Member	Cllr Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Partnership Governance Framework

Appendix B – Draft Register of Significant Partnerships

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to ask the Executive to approve the Partnership Governance Framework, and to update on the progress of creating the Register of Significant Partnerships.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Council has drafted a Partnership Governance Framework to support the assurance of the governance and effectiveness of significant partnerships that the Council is a member of.

- 2.2. Using the criteria set out in the Partnership Governance Framework, an initial Register of Significant Partnerships has been created, which contains 16 significant partnerships.
- 2.3. The work on the Register will continue, with a view to the self-assessment being completed in November 2023 including a presentation of the Register to the Corporate Leadership Team, followed by a report to Audit and Governance Committee.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Executive:
 - (a) approve the adoption of the Partnership Governance Framework as a policy that forms part of the assurance framework for the Council; and
 - (b) approve the proposed next steps with regard to progressing the work on the Register and ensuring an annual cycle of self-assessment.
- 3.2 Reason for Recommendations: These recommendations are made to support improved assurance around partnerships as part of the Council's assurance framework.
- 3.3 Alternative Options Considered: The alternative option of not introducing the Partnership Governance Framework has been rejected as it will not improve assurance or support risk management in areas where the Council has significant risks because partnership services are delivering statutory obligations/key objectives and/or overseeing the expenditure of significant resources.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 North Northamptonshire Council is a key member of a number of partnerships with other public sector bodies, as well as with the private and voluntary sectors. Partnerships support the delivery of the Council's corporate strategy. The structure of partnerships can take many different forms depending on the motivation and need for working in partnership, and the different circumstances in the large range and variety of services and legal obligations that the Council is responsible for.
- 4.2 A partnership might take the form of a limited company, or a statutory partnership might be formed without a separate legal entity. This means that the Council needs to manage a complex set of risks associated with the partnerships it is involved with. In order to maintain an overview of the effectiveness, efficiency and governance of partnerships, a Partnership Governance Framework has been drafted, and a Register of Significant

Partnerships has been created. This paper sets out the framework and the Register and follow up actions.

4.3 The draft Partnership Governance Framework (see **Appendix A**) outlines the approach to partnership working and should be used as an aid to officers and elected members who are involved in these arrangements. Its purpose is to ensure that the Council's interests are protected, by identifying who our significant partners are, understand the purpose of partnerships with them, how they are operated and governed, and have procedures in place to influence these arrangements when necessary.

4.4 The Framework identifies the following benefits and risks around partnerships:

BENEFITS

- Working together can produce better results, flexibility and innovation
- Better communication and engagement with residents
- More efficient and effective use of resources to deliver value for money
- Greater capacity to plan and develop solutions, including pooling expertise and resources

RISKS

- Merging cultures can lead to distrust and both parties not being as open and transparent as they could be
- Inadequate governance and scrutiny over, decision-making, management of resources, risk or performance to deliver value for money.
- Lack of public transparency and/or perceived lack of democratic accountability.
- Mixed or confusing messaging to audiences

4.5 The Framework proposes a mechanism for gaining the benefits and managing the risks around partnerships by introducing a set of roles and responsibilities for officers and Members involved in partnerships, particularly the 'Lead Officer', who is the main point of contact between the Council and the partnership. The Framework also introduces an approval process for entering new partnerships, and an annual self-assessment process to be completed by the Lead Officer.

4.6 The Framework uses the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) definition of partnerships, 'An agreement between two or more independent bodies to work collectively to achieve an objective' and distinguishes between 'significant' and 'non-significant' partnerships for the purposes of governance. 'Significant' partnerships are when there is strategic importance, defined as:

- The partnership is critical to the delivery of the Council's key objectives or statutory obligations; or
- The partnership is a fundamental component of Council priorities and functions; and the Council's reputation could be damaged by the partnership's failure to deliver.

Or, where there is financial importance, defined as a threshold for the Council's annual contribution, or directing Council funding, of £100,000 (excluding staffing costs).

4.7 This broad definition of partnerships captures many arrangements which are already governed in a different way. For example, an agreement between the Council and a supplier to purchase services may be described as working 'in partnership' but would involve a specific contractual monitoring arrangement of the agreement between the parties. A partnership such as this could be important from a service delivery perspective, but risks and transparency issues will be adequately managed through the Council's contract procedure regulations. This is an example of a 'non-significant' partnership from the perspective of the Partnership Governance Framework. Non-significant partnerships, which are excluded from the Register, are defined as those where:

- The Council has direct and sole control over budgets and decision-making
- A subscription or membership is made for a service
- A grant is being made to another body for a specific purpose
- The Council have procured goods or services from a supplier under a contract

4.8 Finally, the Partnership Governance Framework contains details on what good governance and good practice looks like in practical terms, as a guide for officers and Members. This is based on a set of principles, and includes areas such as clarity on purpose, structure and membership; decisions are made in an appropriate open and transparent way; meetings are efficient and well-run; and there is regular review of performance, finances and risks.

4.9 It is recommended that this Framework is adopted as a policy that forms part of the Council's broader assurance framework.

4.10 The Framework recommends that an annual self-assessment is conducted for all partnerships on the Register. To prepare for this self-assessment, and to provide initial assurance over the Council's significant partnerships, the Performance, Intelligence and Partnerships service has engaged with Directors and Assistant Directors to compile a first draft of the Register and overview documentation. The summary draft Register is included at **Appendix B**. It lists 16 significant partnerships which meet the criteria set out in the Framework. Information was collected by means of a standard form, and includes:

- General information about the partnership (name, Lead Officer, service area, others involved)
- Overview of the partnership
- Aims and objectives
- Formal reporting line and scrutiny arrangements
- Roles and responsibilities of the members of the partnership
- Make-up of the Board

- Affiliations and / or subsidiaries
- Employee policies
- Complaints / GDPR / whistle-blowing / conduct / interests / gifts policies
- Financial regulations
- Assurance of financial processes
- Risk, performance, finance reporting

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 It is good practice in governance and risk management to ensure adequate assurance procedures to manage risks across all areas of the Council's business. The draft Partnerships Governance Framework seeks to fill a gap in assurance arrangements surrounding partnerships which are described as 'significant' but which are not governed in another way currently.
- 5.2 The methodology of ensuring a Lead Officer for every partnership, an annual self-assessment, and support from the Performance, Intelligence and Partnerships service seeks to balance the need for assurance against additional workload burden. The alternative option of doing this work only within corporate services has been rejected because the Lead Officers know the detail of the work of the partnerships. A further alternative option of requiring Lead Officers to do this without any support from the centre has been rejected because there will not be enough co-ordination to ensure systematic and co-ordinated oversight.
- 5.3 The Partnerships Governance Framework will be part of the Council's broader assurance arrangements. It may need to be amended from time to time to ensure alignment with other policies, e.g. specific governance around Council-owned companies. This aligns with the work of the Audit and Governance Committee, so one of the proposed next steps is to include the assessment of governance and performance of significant partnerships within the terms of reference of the Audit and Governance Committee.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Subject to the approval of the Framework by Executive, the proposal is that going forward the assessment of the governance and performance of significant partnerships will be included within the terms of reference of the Audit and Governance Committee, to ensure that the Council has the assurance needed for such arrangements.
- 6.2. To take this work forward, the Performance, Intelligence and Partnerships service will:
- Provide feedback to Lead Officers from this initial review,
 - Complete the first self-assessment
 - Present the Register to the Corporate Leadership Team in November 2023

- Provide a report to Audit and Governance Committee for consideration.
- 6.3. Assurance will be further supported by an Internal Audit review of partnerships to be undertaken as part of the future audit work programme.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposals.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. This report recommends that actions in the draft Partnership Governance Framework be undertaken to support assurance over the governance of the significant partnerships the Council is a member of.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1. This report recommends the adoption of the Partnership Governance Framework as part of the Council's framework of assurance policies.

7.4. Risk

- 7.4.1. The recommendation in this report will support the mitigation or avoidance of risks relating to working in partnership, as identified in the Partnership Governance Framework. Specific risks which the new Framework relates to include Risk 1 'Children's Trust fails to deliver to the agreed standards / failure of the Council's Intelligent Client Function (ICF)', and Risk 2 'Failure of corporate governance/meeting statutory requirements/ poor decision making.'

7.5. Consultation

- 7.5.1. No consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

- 7.6.1 This report has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 This report has not been considered by the Council's Scrutiny function.

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 There are no equality implications associated with this report, as it recommends the adoption of an assurance framework for all significant partnerships rather than relating to a specific partnership.

7.9 Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1 There are no climate implications arising from this report.

7.10 Community Impact

7.10.1 Some of the Council's significant partnerships relate to specific locality areas. The recommendations in this report are aimed at providing assurance that those partnerships and others are well governed, are achieving their objectives and providing value for money.

7.11 Crime and Disorder Impact

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

8 Background Papers

8.1 There are no background papers relating to this report.

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North
Northamptonshire
Council



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Appendix A

PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE

www.northnorthants.gov.uk



OVERVIEW

The Council wants to be as open and transparent as possible about the partnerships that we have and how they are managed. This Framework outlines our approach to partnership working and should be used as an aid to officers and elected members who are involved in these arrangements.

It may also be useful to partners who are already in or are considering entering a partnership arrangement with the Council.

The guidance will assist Lead Officers when completing partnership registration and self-assessment forms and includes guidance on supporting processes, procedures, and documentation.

To ensure that we protect the interests of the Council we must be able to identify who our significant partners are, understand their purpose, how they are operated and governed, and have procedures in place to influence these arrangements when necessary.

WHERE TO GO FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For general queries about the Framework, including the register of significant partnerships and the registration and self-assessment processes, contact:

tom.barden@northnorthants.gov.uk



BENEFITS AND RISKS OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Council recognises the wide range of benefits which flow from working in partnership with organisations in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, but also acknowledge that these relationships may produce particular risk and governance issues.

It is therefore important that we consider both the benefits and the risks when deciding whether they are the most effective way of achieving the overall objectives of the Council.



BENEFITS

- Working together can produce better results, flexibility and innovation
- Better communication and engagement with residents
- More efficient and effective use of resources to deliver value for money
- Greater capacity to plan and develop solutions, including pooling expertise and resources



RISKS

- Merging cultures can lead to distrust and both parties not being as open and transparent as they could be
- Inadequate governance and scrutiny over, decision-making, management of resources, risk or performance to deliver value for money.
- Lack of public transparency and/or perceived lack of democratic accountability.
- Mixed or confusing messaging to audiences

MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ROLES

WHEN WORKING WITH PARTNERSHIPS

ELECTED MEMBERS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS. THEY MAY BE APPOINTED TO PARTNERSHIP BOARDS, OR THEY MAY MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THE CREATION OF PARTNERSHIPS. THEY WILL ALSO SCRUTINISE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THE COUNCIL GET THE BEST VALUE FOR NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Officers will have an integral role in establishing, managing and reviewing partnerships. More detail on this is set out below.

When working with partnerships, members and officers must comply with their responsibilities under the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors and Employees, and should ensure that governance as set out in this Framework is agreed and adopted by the partnerships, they are involved in.

Members and officers must also understand that acceptance of a role as either a charity trustee or company director carries additional personal responsibilities. The duty to act in the best interests of the charity or company must be balanced with the duty to the Council as an elected member or employee.

If a Member or Officer has any concerns about any of the following they must immediately report this to the Section 151 Officer, Janice Gotts, Janice.gotts@northnorthants.gov.uk

Senior Officer Responsibility

The Section 151 Officer has overall responsibility for the Council's partnership governance arrangements. They will maintain the Significant Partnership Register and report it annually to the Corporate Leadership Team.

Nominations to include a partnership in the Significant Partnership Register should be made through the relevant Executive Director/ Director who has corporate responsibility for the partnership. They will ensure that proposed partnerships are in line with the Council's Corporate Plan.

Lead Officers

These officers are the key point of contact between the Council and a partnership and contribute corporately to the Council's knowledge of partnerships.

They are also responsible for:

- completing and submitting the Partnership Registration Form
- completing the annual self-assessment of governance arrangements
- ensuring that corporately the Council is informed of partnership activity and progress.
- ensuring that the partnership is appropriately advised regarding its governance arrangements.
- ensuring that the partnership is subject to appropriate governance and effective management
- ensuring that appropriate entry on the Register of Strategic Partnerships is kept up to date.

UNDERSTANDING PARTNERSHIPS

What is a Partnership?

The Council have adopted the following broad definition of partnerships used by the Audit Commission and CIPFA:

'An agreement between two or more independent bodies to work collectively to achieve an objective, normally excluding the familiar relationships between client and contractor or employer and staff.'



What is a Significant Partnership?

Some of our partnerships are more significant than others, this framework governs the Council's relationship with 'significant partners'. To be considered 'significant', partnerships should have either:

strategic importance – the partnership is:

- critical to the delivery of the Council's key objectives or statutory obligations; or
- is a fundamental component of Council priorities and functions; and the Council's reputation could be damaged by the partnership's failure to deliver.

financial importance – the partnership is:

- based on a threshold for the Council's annual contribution, or for directing Council funding or £100,000 (excluding staffing costs).

The Council's significant partnerships may:

- be required by law or to secure funding;
- co-operate to achieve a common goal, shared objectives or contribute to the achievement of priorities in the Corporate Plan;
- plan and implement a jointly agreed programme, possibly with time limited outcomes; or
- make joint investments and share risks and rewards.

What is Non-Significant Partnership?

A partnership is not considered to be significant if:

- the Council has direct and sole control over budgets and decision-making
- a subscription or membership is made for a service (eg the Local Government Association)
- a grant is being made to another body for a specific purpose
- the Council have procured goods or services from a supplier under a contract

DETERMINING IF A PARTNERSHIP IS NEEDED

As a Council, we want to be outcome focussed; this means that we will always consider the desired outcome for the service user/North Northamptonshire first and then consider the best way to achieve it.

The first question should therefore be “what do I want to achieve?”. Consideration should then be given to all the options to ensure that a partnership is the best way to achieve it. There may alternative options which would allow the outcomes to be achieved and these should be actively considered.

Another key consideration is whether the establishment of the partnership is mandatory (statutory) or discretionary. Mandatory partnerships may be regulated but it is still important to provide assurance about the management of these types of partnerships.

Where the partnership is discretionary, it is important to assess whether it is necessary or if it could be achieved more effectively by the Council working alone.

Creating an Options Appraisal/ Business Case

The following questions may be used to assess the options available to reach the desired outcome:

- > Does the outcome link to the Council's Corporate Plan?
.....
- > Will the benefits outweigh the cost, does this option deliver value for money?
.....
- > Will there be any impact on Council resources? (not just budgets but officer time, buildings, equipment, etc)
.....
- > Who will strategically and operationally manage the partnership, and do we have the resources for that?
.....
- > What are the alternatives and why are they not the preferred option?
.....
- > Will the partner have the same shared outcomes and focus as the Council?
.....
- > If the outcome is a statutory function, how will you get assurance for the Council about compliance?
.....
- > Is the partnership required because of legislation (in which case, you do not need to give further consideration to the alternatives)

It is important that the legal and financial consequences of entering a partnership are understood before any decisions are made.

Appropriate financial controls must be in place to safeguard public resources in partnership arrangements. Colleagues in legal and finance may be consulted, and their comments included in the options appraisal/ business case.

A template business case is available in the Governance section of the Council's intranet.

The appraisal/ business case should be presented to the Executive Director/ Director who has corporate responsibility for the partnership. They will consider if it also needs to be presented to the Executive Member and the correct decision making process.

A PARTNERSHIP IS THE BEST OPTION **WHAT NEXT?**

PREPARE THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Once approval has been granted to progress with a partnership, Lead Officers must ensure that any partnering arrangement is incorporated into a legally binding agreement. Lead Officers should contact Legal Services for assistance with preparing the necessary documents to put this in place. You should attach the Business Case and authority to agree the partnership as this will help Legal Services to advise on the most appropriate agreement.

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ADD TO THE SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIP REGISTER IF RELEVANT

Once the Partnership Agreement has been agreed, the Lead Officer must complete a Partnership Registration Form which is available in the Governance section of the Council's intranet. This will ensure that the partnership is added to the Significant Partnership Register which is an essential part of the Council's governance framework..

ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT IS IN PLACE

Lead Officers should ensure that they continue to monitor and evaluate the partnership in accordance with the Governance Framework Principles and will be required to complete an Annual Self-Assessment Form in the first quarter of the financial year each year. The Form is available in the Governance section of the Intranet.

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK PRINCIPLES

- Proportionality and Accountability

There isn't a 'one size fits all' approach and consideration should be given to what is proportionate in the circumstances. As with any relationship, constant management is imperative to ensure that everyone is accountable for their actions.

Ensuring a shared understanding of the objectives of the partnership

The partnership agreement should clearly specify how the partnership will operate. This should include information on structure, purpose and aims, activities, roles and responsibilities, membership, regulatory framework and exit strategy.

- Monitoring the Partnership

Consideration should be given as to how the Council will ensure that the partnership remains accountable. It should include targets, milestones and agreed outcomes. These should be monitored regularly to ensure that the arrangement is delivering against the agreed objectives. This may be achieved through regular reports or meetings, to consider performance and regulatory compliance, operate a system of openness and engagement, and have in place complaints and redress procedures. Risks should be identified, managed and mitigated regularly.

- Decision-making

It should be clear who is responsible for making decisions about the partnership and the actions that they may take. There should be clearly defined roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and open and transparent processes, such as records of delegated authority.

- Ensuring value for money

There must be a clear criterion to evaluate costs and benefits. This must be understood to ensure the partnership will deliver value for money over alternative arrangements. There must be provisions to enable the Council to continually review the partnership arrangement to ensure that it continues to deliver best value for the Council.

- Ensuring high standards of conduct and leadership

It must detail how the partnership will be governed, to ensure the needs of all partners are met, to identify conflicts of interest and to resolve disputes. High standards are imperative as any partnership to which the Council is a party may impact on its reputation.

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

The following table can be used to help evaluate arrangements. A checklist is available in the Governance section of the Council's intranet to help you ensure that proper governance arrangements are in place.

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CRITERIA	GOOD GOVERNANCE	GOOD PRACTICE
Purpose, structure and membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims, objectives, outputs and outcomes are agreed and communicated • Membership is aligned to objectives to provide relevant interests experience and expertise • There is an appropriate board and committee structure with clearly defined remits • Personal interests of members do not impact on decisions • Equalities and Inclusion Policy in place 	<p>Establish a partnership agreement which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key messages and an agreed description of what the partnership is trying to achieve (purpose and deliverables) • Roles and responsibilities • Structure chart • Partnership board and committee criteria • Declaration of personal and pecuniary interest and requirement to withdraw from meetings/decisions • Exit strategy for partners and the partnership • Partnerships should operate on principles that actively value the benefits of diversity and which ensure fair treatment in service delivery in terms of equal access to, and equal outcomes from, local service delivery to meet identified local needs.

CRITERIA	GOOD GOVERNANCE	GOOD PRACTICE
Accountability and decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good leadership promotes supportive culture and behaviour • Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are understood • Decision-making is open and transparent • Reporting to officers and/or members supports scrutiny of decisions and activity • Means of redress when things go wrong • Data Sharing Protocols in Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities for decisions are agreed and recorded • Minutes of meetings record decisions, agreed action and relevant related discussion. • There is regular reporting within existing democratic structures • A communication strategy sets out internal and external communication processes, including how external stakeholders may engage with the partnership, spokesperson designation and process for approval of press statements • Ensure there is a complaints process in place for when things go wrong • The Information Commissioner can levy large fines on organisations that breach Data Protection legislation, and partnerships need to consider compliance through protocols covering issues such as confidentiality in meetings, data-sharing and handling. Data protection and confidentiality obligations apply equally to individual partners. • Professional advice should be sought and adhered to where relevant.
Monitoring and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is regular review and evaluation of membership, policies, performance, and risk • Awareness is maintained of what is working and what is not, and action is taken to address issues • There are strategies for change and exit • Disputes between partners are addressed effectively • Performance management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and aligned to council objectives and priorities • There are clearly defined indicators of performance to monitor delivery of the partnership objectives • Performance and risk are actively monitored, managed, and reported • Processes are in place to resolve disputes, for partners to exit (or join) the partnership, and for its termination • Consideration is given to internal and external audit requirements • Processes are in place for dealing with external complaints and compliments

CRITERIA	GOOD GOVERNANCE	GOOD PRACTICE
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partnership is resourced to deliver its aims and objectives Responsibility for financial decisions is clear The partnership can show that it manages funding appropriately to add value efficiently and effectively Partnership responsibilities and minimum standards for financial management should be clearly defined and recorded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The accountable body for funding is identified Financial and business plans show clearly how funding and resources will be used to deliver objectives Financial accounting budgeting and reporting arrangements are in place and subject to appropriate external scrutiny Processes are in place by which financial, legal, and other technical advice may be provided to the partnership Arrangements should be proportionate to size, complexity and function and should reflect regulatory and operating environments. Clarity on where funding comes from and who the accountable body for the funding is Sufficient human and financial resources to operate effectively Agreement on the most VAT-efficient way of structuring the partnership Appropriate accounting, budget management and audit arrangements are in place. A financial plan has been developed and

CRITERIA	GOOD GOVERNANCE	GOOD PRACTICE
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings operate efficiently and are of sufficient frequency to facilitate business The chair ensures meetings address the agenda, promotes contributions from all and ensures decisions are open and transparent Attendees bring expertise, knowledge, and experience relevant to the objectives of the partnership and have the necessary authority to make decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership terms of reference specify arrangements for meetings to include quorum, voting, representation and deputising, declarations of interest and arrangements for extraordinary meetings or other procedures for decision-making Agendas and minutes are produced to specified times, and arrangements for wider access (transparency) are clear Decisions, action points and accountable leads are clearly identified within the minutes Arrangements for a secretariat and resources to support it are in place if required Frequency of meetings of boards, groups and other bodies should be set according to their roles and responsibilities and should be reviewed to ensure they continue to meet partnership needs.
Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate, proportionate arrangements in place to identify and manage risks to deliver its objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Register in place as an output from the risk assessment process. It should record key risks to achieving objectives, as well as risk ratings, mitigating actions and ownership of each risk. It should be periodically reviewed to ensure the list of risks remains relevant and up to date and to check progress with agreed action on specific risks.

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

THE SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIP REGISTER

The Council will maintain a Significant Partnership Register detailing new and existing significant partnerships.

The Significant Partnership Register can be found here (add link).

ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

In the first quarter of the financial year,, the Lead Officers will be required to complete a Self-Assessment Form to;

- Confirm partnership details or notify any changes;
- Provide assurance over the nature and effectiveness of the partnership governance arrangements;
- Identify the level of risk to the Council and mitigations in place.
- Form part of the assurance framework supporting the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Section 151 Officer will present the Significant Partnerships Register to the Corporate Leadership Team in the second quarter of each financial year and will highlight any significant risks or changes to the self-assessment from previous years for due consideration.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Audit Committee will also consider the Significant Partnership Register annually. This will contribute to the Council seeking assurance of its governance arrangements as part of the approval of the Annual Governance Statement.

APPENDIX B

North Northamptonshire Council – Register of Significant Partnerships July 2023

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
Corby Cube Theatre Trust	Communities and Leisure	Incorporated body	A charitable company, incorporated in 2010 and its objects are to promote art and education for the benefit of the public. It runs The Core at Corby Cube (the theatre and other arts spaces) and associated arts projects. A Local Authority Trustee is required by the Articles of Association. Critical to the delivery of arts provision in Corby and across North Northamptonshire.	www.thecorecorby.com
Northamptonshire Children's Trust	Children's Services	Incorporated body	NCT is an independent, not-for-profit organisation established in November 2020. Its responsibility is to deliver children's social care and targeted early help services on behalf of North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. It is a company with a strong ambition to improve the lives of children and their families, with a focus on ensuring a positive impact on those children most in need of protection and care. Northamptonshire Children's Trust is owned by North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council, but managed by an independent board of Executive and Non-Executive Directors, to ensure operational independence.	www.nctrust.co.uk

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
Groundwork Northamptonshire	Economic Development	Incorporated body	Groundwork Northamptonshire is a charity and a limited company. Groundwork charities are about creating a future where every neighbourhood is vibrant and green, every community is strong and able to shape its own destiny and no-one is held back by their background or circumstances. Initially incorporated January 2006, with five founder members: The Federation of Groundwork Trusts, Northamptonshire County Council, East Northamptonshire District Council, Corby Borough Council and Kettering Borough Council; North Northamptonshire Council has now taken over from these.	www.groundwork.org.uk/northamptonshire
OPUS Solutions Ltd	Human Resources	Incorporated body	Opus People Solutions (East) is a joint venture between Cambridgeshire County Council, Milton Keynes Council, West Northamptonshire Council, North Northamptonshire Council, and Opus People Solutions Limited to provide employment business services (most often temporary staff) to the councils. It is a company set up with 48/52 share split between the councils and Opus People Solutions (in the favour of Opus People Solutions). It provides services to the councils under a service agreement.	www.opuspeoplesolutions.co.uk
Northamptonshire Sport	Communities and Leisure	Incorporated body	Established in 2003, Northamptonshire Sport is a physical activity, health and wellbeing charity. As one of 43 Active Partnerships across England, the charity collaborates with local partners to create the conditions for a more active county, using the power of sport and physical activity to change lives in Northamptonshire. Northamptonshire Sport is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission. The Council has two representatives as Trustees. The Council makes a grant to the partnership. Successful operation is essential to Council objectives around wellbeing and health.	www.northamptonshiresport.org

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
Wellingborough Norse	Highways and Waste	Incorporated body	Set up by Borough Council of Wellingborough as a joint venture with Norse Ltd (owned by Norfolk County Council) to run waste, grounds maintenance and street cleaning services. The contract has ended with all services transferring in-house in April 2022. The company still exists but is in the process of being wound up; it no longer operates beyond being a legal entity.	Not applicable
Pathfinder Legal Services	Democratic and Legal Services	Incorporated body	Pathfinder Legal Services provides legal advice tailored to the public and not-for-profit sectors. The company is owned by four local authorities. As previously reported and agreed by the Executive, North Northamptonshire Council is due to cease being a shareholder in the company.	https://www.pathfinderlegal.co.uk/
Shared Services Joint Committee	Corporate	Non-statutory	To oversee the management of those services which continue to be provided on a Northamptonshire wide basis following Local Government Reorganisation, on behalf of North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Councils, to ensure effective delivery of such services and to provide strategic direction. It is a Joint Committee which was established by the Executive.	Committee details - Shared Services Joint Committee - North Northamptonshire Council (moderngov.co.uk)
Lead Authority Board	Corporate	Non-statutory	To oversee the management of support services which continue to be provided by one lead authority on behalf of others following the dissolution of LGSS. Includes finance transactional services of accounts payable and receivable (sundry debt), payroll, insurance services and the ERP Gold enterprise resource management system. The Councils involved are Cambridgeshire County Council, Milton Keynes Council, North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council.	Not applicable

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
Strategic Transport Leadership Board for England's Economic Heartland	Transport	Non-statutory	England's Economic Heartland is the sub-national transport body for the region stretching from Swindon across to Cambridgeshire and from Northamptonshire down to Hertfordshire. It advises the government on the transport infrastructure, services and policy framework which will realise our region's economic potential while supporting the journey to net zero. Work is informed by a comprehensive and growing evidence base, and overseen by the Strategic Transport Leadership Board, containing the elected leaders and portfolio holders of our local authority partners. As one of seven sub-national transport bodies, it is jointly funded by the Department for Transport and local authority partners, and enables the Council to achieve strategic objectives for planning and delivering effective transport for the area.	www.englandseconomicheartland.com
Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board	Adult Social Care	Statutory	Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) is a statutory function under the Care Act 2014. The purpose of Safeguarding Adult Boards is to help and protect adults in its area and ensure that multi-agency safeguarding arrangements work effectively so that adults are able to live their lives free from abuse or neglect. Safeguarding Boards bring together statutory partners, the Local Authority (or authorities as is the case in Northamptonshire), the Integrated Care Board, and the Police, and other key agencies to oversee the prevention of harm for adults with care and support needs (whether the local authority is meeting those needs or not), for example adults who have a physical and/or learning disability, those with mental ill health or older adults who may not have capacity to make decisions for themselves.	www.northamptonshiresab.org.uk

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership	Children's Services	Statutory	Local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. Specifically, the police, the Integrated Care Board and local authority are under a duty to make arrangements to work together, and with other partners locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. Guidance for this is set out in Working Together (2018). The framework for the four local safeguarding partners (North Northants Council, West Northants Council, Integrated Care Board and Northamptonshire Police), along with Northamptonshire Children's Trust, will set out arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children including identifying and responding to their needs.	www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk
Schools Forum	Children's Services	Statutory	Representatives from schools and academies make up the schools forum. There is also some representation from non-school organisations, such as nursery and 16-19 education providers. It is statutorily required. The forum acts as a consultative body on some issues and a decision making body on others. It consults on issues such as changes to the local funding formula or contracts held locally, and decides on issues such as how much funding may be retained by the local authority from the Dedicated Schools Grant.	Committee details - Schools Forum - North Northamptonshire Council (modern.gov.co.uk)

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
Corporate Parenting Board	Children's Services	Statutory	<p>The Corporate Parenting Board is responsible for monitoring the services local authorities and their partners deliver to children looked after and care leavers. It is responsible for the continual improvement of outcomes. Executive agreed to establish a North Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting board in June 2023, previously the Board was joint across the whole area covered by the Northamptonshire Children's Trust. North Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board will be chaired by the Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills, and membership will include other members, officers, partners, and young people's representatives. Meetings will held bi-monthly thereafter to coincide with partner requirements. It is considered essential for the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations as a corporate parent to have this partnership.</p>	See papers to Executive
Youth Offending Management Board	Children's Services	Statutory	<p>There are statutory duties on local authorities and other local partners to co-operate to provide youth justice services in an area (most importantly the Crime and Disorder Act 1998). The National Youth Justice Board expects local management boards (such as NYOMB) to take responsibility for all aspects of youth justice services governance; to lead strategically across relevant partners and to ensure a high-quality service is provided to all children. This partnership is essential to delivering statutory requirements around youth justice services and also directs and determines LA funding (c£1.5m between NNC and WNC) as part of a pooled budget including other agencies' contributions and central Government grant.</p>	www.n-yos.org.uk

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
North Northants Community Safety Partnership	Community Safety	Statutory	Community safety partnerships are statutory partnerships to support the formulation and implementation of strategies to tackle local crime and disorder in the area. North Northamptonshire CSP was formed in 2018 from a merger of each of the district CSPs. It is included on the register because it is statutory and also is essential to delivering Council objectives around safe and prosperous places and community wellbeing.	Community Safety Partnership North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)
Northamptonshire Integrated Care Partnership	Health Partnerships	Statutory	Organisations across Northamptonshire who deliver mental health, social care and physical health care are working together as Northamptonshire Integrated Care Partnership (NICP). This is a new way of working, bringing together local councils, health and social care organisations, local charities, and community groups to look after the people of Northamptonshire. Teams from different organisations will come together to plan and deliver joined-up health and care services to help people live well and stay well. The focus is on supporting people to stay healthy, keep their independence for longer and be able to manage their own care. This is a statutory partnership which forms part of the overall integrated care system reforms introduced in 2022.	www.icnorthamptonshire.org.uk/icp
Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board	Health Partnerships	Statutory	The Integrated Care Board (ICB) is a statutory body responsible for local NHS services, functions, performance and budgets. It is directly accountable to the national NHS management and leadership, and is made up of local NHS trusts, primary care providers, and local authorities. It is a statutory partnership which forms part of the overall integrated care system reforms introduced in 2022.	www.icnorthamptonshire.org.uk/icb

Partnership Name	Service Area	Type of partnership	Description of partnership	Website
Health and Wellbeing Board	Health Partnerships	Statutory	North Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board is a formal committee of North Northamptonshire Council, consisting of senior leaders and stakeholders from across North Northamptonshire who provide a strategic lead for the health, care and wellbeing system. It is a statutory partnership that was introduced in 2012, but also sits within the 2022 reforms that formalised the integrated care system and ICP / ICB structures.	Health and Wellbeing Board North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)

EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	National Non-Domestic Rates and Housing Benefit Overpayment Write-Offs
Report Author	Janice Gotts, Executive Director of Finance and Performance (Section 151 Officer) Lucy Hogston, Assistant Director of Revenues and Benefits
Lead Member	Cllr Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation

Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	1 & 3

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed Write-Offs (Exempt Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To provide Members with a summary of the accounts proposed for write-off and to request approval for the write-offs.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The report details eight accounts that are proposed for write-off. Due to the outstanding balance of each account being in excess of £25,000, committee approval is required in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive review and approve the proposed write-off of outstanding debts as summarised in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2. Reason for Recommendation –The Council’s Constitution (Financial Procedure Rules) requires the approval of Executive to write off debt in excess of £25,000. It is considered that this debt cannot be recovered.
- 3.3. Alternative Option Considered – The alternative option would be to periodically review and pursue the debt. However, following the action already undertaken and the status of the organisations, it is considered irrecoverable at this time and would not be economical to continue to pursue.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. The Authority has a duty to maximise revenue collection. However, circumstances may arise in which amounts due must, for all practical or legal purposes, be deemed uncollectable.
- 4.2. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that, in such circumstances, a decision to write-off an amount must be taken with the authority of the Chief Finance Officer, whether exercised personally or properly delegated to a member of staff. The amounts involved, and approval granted, should be recorded in the accounting records.
- 4.3. The Executive is responsible for approving debt write-off in excess of £25,000. The delegated debt write-off limits for officers are set out in within section 17 of the Financial Procedure Rules as part of the Council’s Constitution.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. **Appendix A** details eight accounts (six Business Rates accounts and two Housing Benefit Overpayment accounts) totalling £405,702.76 that are being recommended for write-off.
- 5.2. This debt is considered to be irrecoverable despite numerous attempts.
- 5.3. The Council could choose to not write off the debt however, these old and/or irrecoverable debts will require administration on the team as periodically, it is required to be reviewed and pursued.
- 5.4. The Council does hold a provision for bad debt and the debt write off will be charged against this account.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. The Executive are requested to decide on the proposed write offs detailed in **Appendix A**.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

7.1.1 The financial implications are set out in the report and detailed in **Appendix A**. Provisions are created and reviewed each year to ensure resource has been set aside for debts that are deemed to be no longer collectable. This bad debt provision will be released to cover the cost of these debt write-offs.

7.2. Legal and Governance

7.2.1. **Appendix A** details each debt. Even if the debt is written off it does not preclude the Council from seeking recovery should it become feasible in the future, subject to the period of limitation which is generally six years.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1. The review of debt owed to the Council is a part of the arrangements for ensuring robust financial management and as such aligns with the Council's priorities as set out within the Corporate Plan as part of the delivery of modern public services.

7.4. Risk

7.4.1. The write-offs are being considered in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules therefore there are no significant risks arising from this report.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. No consultation has taken place.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This report has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. This report has not been considered by Scrutiny.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. There are no climate and environment impacts arising from this report.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1. No community impacts have been identified.

7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1. No crime and disorder impacts have been identified.

8. Background Papers

8.1. North Northamptonshire Council's Financial Procedure Rules

<https://northnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17554/09.%20Part%207%20-%20Financial%20Procedure%20Rules.pdf>

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Capital Programme Update 2023/24
Report Author	Janice Gotts, Executive Director of Finance Janice.gotts@northnorthants.gov.uk
Lead Member	Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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 for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1974	

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request approval for capital schemes that have come forward for inclusion in within the Council's approved Capital Programme. Approval of the schemes and associated funding will allow these schemes to move forward to procurement and delivery.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report contains details of projects which have been submitted by officers to the Council's Strategic Capital Board as part of the Council's Capital Approval Process. Each scheme must complete a business case setting out the changes requested to the Capital Programme, including the purpose of the spend, the expected outcomes and the financial implications together with funding routes.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Executive:

i) Approve the following changes into the capital programme:

- a. Oakley Vale, Corby Highway Adoption - £971k – budget approval for £971k, £495k in 2023/24, £476k in 2024/25 which is to be funded from external funds as part of the initial Infrastructure Agreement.
- b. North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project (NNEVI) £2.90m - £285k in 2024/25, £810k in 2025/26 and £1.8m in 2026/27 which is to be funded from an external grant.
- c. Integrated Transport Block 2023/24 – reduction to existing capital scheme of £184k to align the scale of the programme with the confirmed grant funding from the Department of Transport.

3.2 Reasons for Recommendations: These are set out in greater detail within section 5 of the report, but can be summarised as:

- To support the statutory delivery of school places and SEND school places across North Northamptonshire.
- To meet corporate plan objectives, for instance in leading in improving the local environment

3.3 Alternative Options Considered:

- As all the schemes in this report are grant funded/S106 funded, the use of the funding is in line with the agreements, so there are no alternative option proposed in this report.
- Where individual schemes are over £500k, individual reports are presented elsewhere on the agenda that set out the wider options that were considered before reaching the proposed schemes identified for grant funding.

4. Report Background

4.1 The Capital Programme is the Council's plan for investing in assets to efficiently deliver its statutory services, and to improve the local infrastructure of North Northamptonshire, with the benefits lasting over a number of years. The Council is required to set a balanced revenue budget and therefore must ensure that where borrowing is proposed to fund the cost of capital that the cost of servicing the debt is affordable within the Council's revenue budget.

- 4.2 Resources come from several sources including Government grants, capital receipts from surplus land and buildings, revenue contributions, other external contributions and borrowing. The Council captures its projected capital expenditure within the Capital Programme to monitor the same, help to control costs and ensure transparency. Given that the Capital Programme is approved by Executive, changes to it are also approved by Executive unless authority has been delegated in accordance with the Council's constitution.
- 4.3 This report provides an update to the Capital Programme 2023/24 as adopted by the Council in February 2023 and requests that the proposed changes are approved and reflected within the programme.

5. Issues and Choices – Further Detail on the Recommendations and Updates to the Capital Programme

- 5.1 **Oakley Vale, Corby Highway Adoption - £971k – budget approval for £971k, £495k in 2023/24, £476k in 2024/25 which is to be funded from external funds, held by an independent solicitor, as part of the initial Infrastructure Agreement:** One of the Council's legacy councils, Corby Borough Council, entered into an Infrastructure Works Agreement with the landowner, contractor and developer to provide infrastructure at Phase 5 of the Oakley Vale development in Corby. Following the contractor going into administration, Corby Borough Council, through a deed of variation, became responsible for fulfilling their obligations. This included the adoption of the roads. The cost of works will be reimbursed through funds representing the works deposit provided as part of the initial Infrastructure Works Agreement and currently held by an independent solicitor, the balance of which is £971k.
- 5.2 The Council is required to complete the infrastructure in Phase 5 of the Oakley Vale development to comply with the obligations of the various legal agreements and deeds entered into by Corby Borough Council. Following a meeting with the Highways inspector there is a list of remedial works required, including camera survey, roundabout redesign, streetlighting and final surfacing. Once works are completed it is proposed that the roads are adopted by the Highways Team via a Certificate of Appropriation which will formally transfer responsibility from Assets and Environment team to the Highway Register.
- 5.3 The remedial works have initially been costed at £495k, which are expected to be completed in 2023/24. However, as there is potential for other costs associated with this project (although currently assessed as low risk), it is proposed that the full amount of the deposit for this Oakley Vale scheme should be added to the capital programme budget to enable swift drawdown of any further resource that may be necessary for the scheme. Such requirements will be reported through the Strategic Capital Board in line with current governance arrangements, and to retain an appropriate audit trail. In the event of any unspent deposit out of the balance of £971k, this will be returned to the Council once the scheme is complete as per the terms of the agreement.

- 5.4 As this request is over £500k, please see the individual report elsewhere on this agenda.
- 5.5 **North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project (NNEVI) £2.9m - £285k in 2024/25, £810k in 2025/26 and £1.8m in 2026/27 which is to be funded from an external grant:** Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) capital funding was announced early in 2023. All tier one authorities have been provided with an allocation and are required to submit a business case to the Energy Savings Trust in November 2023. This will release 90% of the funding. The remaining value will be released once a contract has been agreed with a charge point operator. The total amount assigned to the Council, subject to business case approval, is £2.9m.
- 5.6 The proposal is to utilise LEVI funding to leverage private sector investment to deliver a step change in EVCP infrastructure. This will involve an open procurement, utilising an existing framework, to secure a charge point operator (CPO) to purchase, install, manage, and maintain the EVCPs. A requirement of LEVI funding is that solutions are sought which primarily benefit households without access to off-street parking.
- 5.7 Approval for this budget is requested to allow the full business case to be developed and submitted, however the go-ahead of the project would be subject to successful grant approval.
- 5.8 As this scheme is over £500k, please see the individual report elsewhere on this agenda.
- 5.9 **Integrated Transport Block 2023/24 – reduction to existing capital scheme of £184k - budget reduction of £184k in 2023/24 required, to align the capital scheme with the confirmed grant funding from the Department of Transport (DfT):** the original grant allocation from DfT for 2023/24 was £1.6m which was built into the Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2023, however the grant allocation was subsequently revised down to £1.4m, therefore the capital scheme budget needs to be reduced by £184k to match the grant funding available.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 A full business case will be developed for the North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project and submitted to the Energy Saving Trust.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources, Finance and Transformation

- 7.1.1 The additional budget requirements in this report are funded from the use of external grants/ externally held funds. The funding source for each scheme is

set out in the recommendations in section 3 and within the scheme details as set out within section 5.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 The Council must utilise funding and deliver schemes in line with the restrictions and requirements as set out in the agreements linked to that funding and the requirements as set out in the Council's Constitution, in particular the budget setting and policy framework and the financial regulations. In this regard any new borrowing must be approved by Council (no new borrowing identified in this report).

7.3 Risk

7.3.1 The deliverability of the 2023/24 Capital Programme is monitored by each accountable project manager and senior officer. There is further review throughout the financial year reported through the Executive.

7.3.2 If any overspends or emerging pressures are identified during the year, then mitigating actions will be sought and management interventions undertaken.

7.3.3 With most capital projects there is a risk that delays, and cost increases may arise as a result of the impact of inflation. Generally, this relates to the supply and price of materials with projects requiring increased lead in times. Whilst every attempt is made to cost these implications into the project, the risks remain. However, it must be recognised that the current "Cost of Living Crisis" has driven up the level of inflation, which is much higher than in previous periods and indeed when funding bids were originally submitted. This therefore poses a risk to the deliverability of the projects as originally envisaged, where reductions to the scope of projects may be required to ensure budgets are not overspent.

7.3.4 There is a risk in relation to funding, particularly where it is from third parties including grants. Appropriate agreements must be entered into to ensure that the funding is secured and spend is in accordance with any criteria stipulated by the funder, this includes both the nature of the spend and the timing (where a deadline applies).

7.3.5 The current uncertain economic context is also increasing interest rates associated with borrowing that is used to fund elements of the capital programme. This treasury risk impacts the overall affordability of the programme, which will be closely monitored and managed, but may lead to a reduced capital programme in the future.

7.4 Relevant Policies and Plans

7.4.1 The schemes provide a strategic fit with the Council's priorities as set out within the corporate plan.

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 The 2023/24 Capital Strategy and Capital Programme were subject to consultation prior to approval by the North Northamptonshire Authority in February 2023. The programme was approved by Council at its meeting on 23rd February 2023 and was subject to consultation from 22nd December 2022 to 27th January 2023. These changes are in addition to the approved programme.

7.6 Consideration by the Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1 Not applicable.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 The schemes recommended in this report have not been considered by Scrutiny. However, monitoring against the programme is subject to Scrutiny.

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 Nothing specific within this report.

7.9 Climate and Environmental Impact

7.9.1 The climate and environmental impact of each capital project will be considered and managed within the relevant scheme.

7.10 Community Impact

7.10.1 These proposals can be considered to have a positive impact on the community as the Capital Programme delivers a range of schemes to support and connect communities.

7.11 Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1 Nothing specific within this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1 The following background papers can be considered in relation to this report.

Capital Programme Budget 2023/24 – Full Council, 23rd February 2023 - [Capital Programme Report 2023-26 - Feb Council.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

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EXECUTIVE 12th October 2023

Report Title	Budget Forecast 2023-24 at Period 5
Report Authors	Janice Gotts, Executive Director of Finance and Performance Janice.gotts@northnorthants.gov.uk
Lead Member	Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation

Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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 for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1974	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Savings Schedule

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The revenue budgets (2023/24) and Medium-Term Financial Plans for North Northamptonshire Council for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account were approved by Council at its meeting on 23rd February 2023. The purpose of this report is to set out the forecast outturn position for the Council for 2023/24 for the General Fund the Housing Revenue Account and the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- 1.2. This monitoring report sets out the material financial issues identified since the 2023/24 budget was set, based on the income and expenditure as at the end of August 2023 (Period 5) and reflects the views of the Assistant Directors and budget managers within the Directorates.
- 1.3. As part of the ongoing monitoring process, work will continue to examine income and expenditure and activity data, against the available budgets to support the position presented and help to shape the medium-term financial plan.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides commentary on the Council's forecast for the revenue outturn position 2023/24. This is an early indication based on information available as at Period 5 (August 2023) – the forecast position for each of the funds is as follows:
- General Fund - overspend of £7.821m - (Period 4 - £7.354m).
 - Housing Revenue Account – overspend of £15k – (Period 4 – £16k overspend).
 - Dedicated Schools Grant is forecasting a pressure of £4.995m (Period 4- £4m).
- 2.2 The forecast is based on the emerging data for 2023/24 and the Council will continue to assess and refine the position on a regular basis using the latest intelligence available. The forecast presented in this report is based on the best available data and information of the operations of the Council and represents the view of the Budget Holders and Directors.
- 2.3 In order to help safeguard the financial position of the Council, officers will continue to seek efficiencies in year to offset the forecast overspend. The Council has a contingency budget and reserves available to call on to help fund in-year pressures, however, it will look to achieve alternative mitigations in the first instance before these are applied.
- 2.4 National factors continue to be challenging and the Council, like its residents and businesses are facing inflationary pressures which impacts on the cost of services with CPI in August 2023 at 6.7%. UK interest rates have been left unchanged at 5.25% after the Bank of England said price rises were slowing faster than expected. Interest rates were already at their highest for 15 years. The Bank of England had previously raised rates for the past 14 times in a row.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Executive:
- a) Note the Council's forecast outturn position for 2023/24 as summarised in Section 4, alongside the further analysis, risks and other considerations as set out in Section 5 to Section 7 of the report.
 - b) Note the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2023/24 savings proposals in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2023/24 as at Period 4 and consider the impact on this year and future years budgets.
- 3.3 Alternative Options Considered: The report focuses on the forecast revenue outturn against budget for 2023/24 and makes recommendations for the Executive to note the current budgetary position as such there are no specific choices within the report.

4. Report Background

General Fund

- 4.1 The Council's Revenue Budget for 2023/24 was set at the Council meeting on 23rd February 2023. The overall outturn forecast for the General Fund for 2023/24, as at Period 5 is a forecast overspend of £7.821m (Period 4 - £7.354m) against a budget of £337.072m. This is summarised in the Table below.

General Fund Forecast Outturn 2023/24				
Description	Net Budget	Forecast Position 31/03/24	Forecast Variance 31/03/24	Forecast Variance 31/03/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Net Available Resources	337,072	337,072	0	0.00
Total Corporate Budgets	29,603	25,874	(4,793)	(16.19)
Children & Education	69,692	80,310	10,618	15.24
Adults, Health, Partnerships and Housing	124,535	127,555	3,020	2.43
Public Health & Communities	8,449	8,189	(260)	(3.08)
Place & Economy	68,957	67,833	(1,124)	(1.63)
Enabling & Support Services	35,836	36,196	360	1.00
Total Directorate Budgets	307,469	320,083	12,614	4.10
Total Budget	337,072	345,957	7,821	2.32

Note – Favourable variances are shown in brackets.

- 4.2 The forecast position at Period 5 is an overspend of £7.821m (Period 4 - £7.354m). The following table summarises the overspend.

	Report Ref	Net Budget	P4 Forecast	Movement in Forecast	P5 Forecast	
		£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Children & Education		69,692	10,336	282	10,618	15.24
Assistant Director of Education	5.15	5,400	318	219	537	9.94
Commissioning & Partnerships	5.17	1,012	(118)	3	(115)	(11.36)
Northamptonshire Childrens Trust - NNC Only	5.20	63,280	10,136	60	10,196	16.11
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing		124,535	1,720	1,300	3,020	2.43
Adult Services	5.34	98,115	950	1,300	2,250	2.29
Safeguarding and Wellbeing	5.37	9,136	0	0	0	0.00
Commissioning & Performance	5.39	14,379	770	0	770	5.36
Strategic Housing, Development and Property Services	5.41	2,905	0	0	0	0.00
Public Health & Communities		8,449	100	(360)	(260)	0.00
Public Health	5.44	0	0	0	0	0.00
Communities & Leisure	5.47	8,449	100	(360)	(260)	0.00
Place & Economy		68,957	(951)	(173)	(1,124)	0.00
Assets & Environment	5.50	4,243	(805)	(40)	(845)	0.00
Growth and Regeneration	5.52	4,345	286	(18)	268	6.17
Highways & Waste	5.54	57,297	(319)	(11)	(330)	0.00
Regulatory Services	5.56	2,420	(113)	(104)	(217)	0.00
Directorate Management	5.58	652	0	0	0	0.00
Enabling & Support Services		35,836	478	(118)	360	1.00
Finance & Performance	5.59	15,410	242	(122)	120	0.78
Chief Executive's Office	5.61	1,320	34	4	38	2.88
Chief Information Officer	5.63	8,355	268	0	268	3.21
Human Resources	5.65	3,665	31	0	31	0.85
Legal & Democratic Services	5.67	5,040	(81)	0	(81)	0.00
Customer Services	5.69	2,046	(16)	0	(16)	0.00
Corporate Costs	5.2	29,603	(4,329)	(464)	(4,793)	0.00
Total		337,072	7,354	467	7,821	2.32

Note – Favourable variances are shown in brackets.

- 4.3 The net budget was increased by £482k from £336.590m in Period 2 to £337.072m in Period 3. This reflects the use of the Climate Change reserve to support the development and operation of climate change projects and initiatives which was approved by the Executive at the meeting on 12th July 2023.

Housing Revenue Account

- 4.4 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a separate ring-fenced account within the Council for the income and expenditure associated with its housing stock. The HRA does not directly impact on the Council's wider General Fund budget or on the level of council tax. Income to the HRA is primarily received through the rents and other charges paid by tenants and leaseholders.
- 4.5 Within North Northamptonshire prior to 1st April 2021 there were two HRA accounts, covering the sovereign Councils of Kettering and Corby respectively. As part of the move to a single unitary council for North Northamptonshire, there was a statutory requirement to create a single HRA for the area. Whilst North Northamptonshire Council must only operate one HRA it will, for a period of time, operate two separate Neighbourhood Accounts, these being:
- the Corby Neighbourhood Account - responsible for the stock that was managed by Corby Borough Council and
 - the Kettering Neighbourhood Account - responsible for the stock that was managed by Kettering Borough Council.
- 4.6 The Council's overall outturn forecast for the Housing Revenue Account as at Period 5, is a forecast overspend of £15k (Period 4 - £16k overspend) against the approved budget of £38.752m. This is summarised in the table below and further details are set out in Section 6. It is important to note that this is subject to continual review.

Housing Revenue Account Forecast Outturn 2023/24				
	Budget			
Directorate	Expenditure	Income	Net	P5 Forecast Variance at 31/03/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corby Neighbourhood Account	21,481	(21,481)	0	4
Kettering Neighbourhood Account	17,271	(17,271)	0	11
Net Position 2022/23 (under)/over	38,752	(38,752)	0	15

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 4.7 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ringfenced grant allocated to Local Authorities by the government to support a range of education related services.
- 4.8 The Council's overall outturn forecast for the DSG as at Period 5, is a forecast pressure of £4.995m (Period 4 - £4m) the Net Spend is forecast to be £125.658m against the approved budget of £120.663m. This is summarised in the table below and further details are set out in Section 7. It is important to note that this is subject to continual review.

Dedicated Schools Grants Forecast Outturn 2023/24							
Block	Gross Budget	July DSG Allocation Adjustment	Revised Budget	Recoupment	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools Block	270,284	0	270,284	222,910	47,374	47,374	0
Central Schools Block	3,287	0	3,287	0	3,287	3,287	0
High Needs Block	57,851	74	57,925	11,082	46,843	51,838	4,995
Early Year Block	23,541	(382)	23,159	0	23,159	23,159	0
Total	354,963	(308)	354,655	233,992	120,663	125,658	4,995

National Context

- 4.9 The national, and indeed the global, economy continues to see significant inflationary pressures, with energy prices pushed to record levels, which in turn has contributed to high inflation. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Bank of England has taken action to get inflation under control; this in part has resulted in higher interest rates.
- 4.10 The Bank of England kept the Base Rate unchanged at 5.25% on the 21st September 2023. There had previously been fourteen consecutive increases since December 2021 and the rate is at its highest level for 15 years (February 2008 – 5.25%).
- 4.11 The 12-month CPI figure for August 2023 is 6.7% which is lower than in July 2023 where the CPI figure was 6.8%. There has been a slight increase in the 12-month RPI figure in August 2023 where the figure was 9.1% compared to 9% in July 2023.
- 4.12 Councils like most organisations have experienced the impact of significant price rises, particularly around fuel and energy costs (for example, the street lighting PFI). A number of services are provided under contract, and the Authority is experiencing some pressure from suppliers regarding current arrangements and any new contracts entered in to. As part of the budget setting for 2023/24, the Council included growth to address forecast inflationary increases in light of the position known at the time.
- 4.13 Further risk to Local Government funding comes from the high street as individuals have less disposable income and businesses face higher energy and supply costs. This poses a risk for the Council's future income generation from business rates should businesses cease to trade. It may also see more people seeking to access Council Tax Support and other financial support which could reduce the overall Council Tax yield. The continued increases in interest rates also have an impact on the number of new homes that are being occupied which can also have an adverse impact on the Council Tax yield.
- 4.14 Alongside this there is a recognition that the demand for services may increase which will need to be taken into account as part of financial and service planning.
- 4.15 The context of the national and global economy along with potential changes to the local government financial landscape in the future through reforms are key considerations for the Council as it continues to deliver its services for 2023/24

and will be key considerations in developing the 2024/25 draft budget proposals and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

5. Overview of Forecast Position 2023/24

Available Resources and Corporate Costs

- 5.1 The Council is responsible for the collection of local taxes (Council Tax and Business Rates). At the end of August 47.82% of Council Tax had been collected (August 2022 –48.55%). Business Rates collection was 47.38% at the end of August 2023 (August 2022 – 46.36%).

Corporate Resources

- 5.2 The total net budget for Corporate Resources is £29.603m. The composition of the budget together with the forecast variances are shown in the following Table.

Description	Net Budget	P5 Forecast Variance	
		£'000	%
	£'000	£'000	
Corporate Contingency	3,746	0	0.00
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	7,970	0	0.00
Pay Contingency	5,708	0	0.00
Pay and Grading Review	2,479	0	0.00
Treasury	8,830	(4,793)	(54.28)
Bad Debts Provision	870	0	0.00
Total	29,603	(4,793)	(16.19)

- 5.3 The Council's Corporate Contingency Budget for 2023/24 is £3.746m, which represents around 1% of the net budget. The contingency budget is held to meet unknown or unplanned / unbudgeted costs. At this stage the Contingency Budget is currently assumed to be used in full during the year. This will include inflationary and demand pressures as well as helping to offset the potential additional cost of the pay award, as the offer by the employers already exceeds the pay inflation allowed.
- 5.4 The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) reflects the minimum amount a Council must charge to the revenue budget each year to set aside a provision for repaying borrowing. This has been calculated as £7.970m which was an increase of £1.538m from 2022/23 and ensures that the provision is aligned to the MRP policy moving into the medium term.
- 5.5 The Council has set aside £5.708m in 2023-24 as a Pay Contingency to allow for annual increments and potential pay changes of 4%, with the final requirement determined by the outcome of pay negotiations, and the cost of increments. This budget will be allocated in 2023-24 once these have been agreed. The Pay award will exceed the budget as the offer by the employers

already exceeds the pay inflation allowed. The forecast outturn will be updated following the conclusion of the national pay negotiations.

- 5.6 Additionally, a pressure of £2.479m was included in the 2023-24 budget, which reflected the initial costings for the implementation of the Pay and Grading review for staff recruited to interim contracts with North Northamptonshire Council, which is predominantly staff that have been appointed since 1st April 2021. Other staff transferred across to the new unitary authority on their existing terms and conditions through TUPE arrangements. The proposals for the new pay and grading structure are yet to be agreed. At this stage the forecast costs are expected to be delivered within budget.
- 5.7 The net Treasury Management Budget for 2023/24 is £8.830m. The composition of the budget and the forecast outturn is as follows:

Description	Net Budget	P5 Forecast Variance
£'000	£'000	£'000
Investment Income	(3,173)	(5,447)
Borrowing Costs	11,273	0
Other Treasury Management costs	730	654
Total	8,830	(4,793)

- 5.8 The movement for investment income reflects the increase in the Bank of England base rate on future investments and is based on an average cash balance of £175.6m at a weighted average rate of 4.91% for a full year. This offsets the additional pressure of £654k; relating to increased bank charges of £232k, unrealised internal interest income of £267k and recovery of debt management expenses of £155k.
- 5.9 If interest rates remain high over the longer term this will also create risk in relation to acquiring new loans to finance future capital programmes. The current PWLB rate for borrowing over a 30-year period is around 5.50%, for every £1m borrowed this would be an additional interest payable of £55,000.
- 5.10 There continues to be risks around the overall cash and loan position for North Northamptonshire, not only from a volatile marketplace, but also due to the outstanding legacy audits for 2020/21 and the disaggregation of the opening position from Northamptonshire County Council. Any changes in these risks and balances will be reflected in future forecasts.
- 5.11 The bad debt provision for 2023/24 amounts to £870k – the bad debts position is based on the age of the debt which reflects the risks associated with the collection of the debt. The increase in budget is forecast to be delivered on budget.

Directorate Budgets

- 5.12 This section of the report provides an analysis of the forecast variations against the 2023/24 General Fund for each of the Directorates as set out in the table at paragraph 4.2.

Children's Services Directorate

- 5.13 The budget for Children's and Education Services includes the Commissioning and Partnerships including Northamptonshire Children's Trust and Education Services not funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

Assistant Director of Education

- 5.14 The **Assistant Director of Education** is responsible for all learning, pupil attainment and achievement and school improvement functions. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Education** is set out in the following table (Period 4 - £318k).

Assistant Director of Education	£'000
Expenditure	9,763
Income	(4,363)
Net Budget	5,400
Forecast	5,937
Variance	537

- 5.15 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director of Education** is set out in the following Table and explanations for the variances are provided in the table below.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
		£'000	£'000	
1	Employees	8,176	813	9.94
2	Supplies and Services	1,259	(78)	(6.20)
3	Income	(4,363)	(327)	7.49
4	Other budgets	328	129	39.33
	Total	5,400	537	9.94

- 1) The budget pressure within Education Services predominantly relates to staffing costs. The Education Health and Care (EHC) service is continuing to rely heavily on interim workers to fulfil its statutory obligations. This is due to increasing level of need, a high number of vacancies, and backlog of historic assessments. The service has planned to gradually phase out the existing agency staff from July 2023. This will require recruiting and taking the initiative to actively upskill the existing staff to ensure the future needs of children, young people and their families can be met. Whilst there are service areas with substantial amount of savings on salaries, particularly Educational Entitlement (£317k), Governance (£178k), Specialist Support (£303k), the

salary budget forecast pressure in EHC (£1.54m), and other service areas (£71k) results in a net pressure of £813k.

- 2) The forecast underspend for supplies and services of £78k relates to the reduced forecast spend on professional fees and hired services in Strategic Planning service area (£103k) and other net minor pressures of £25k. The Strategic Planning is one of the service areas contributing to the significant forecast overspend of £813k on salaries. As such, the forecast underspend of £103k will be used to partly mitigate the service's salary budget pressure.
- 3) Income has a forecast net benefit of £327k of which £338k relates to Teachers' Pension. The budget was set at £468k, while the forecast DSG contribution is £806k. Also, the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering grant has now ceased, leaving the service with a pressure of £227k. Additionally, the EHC team is benefiting from the use of the residual Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) of £220k. The funding will partly mitigate the staffing pressure associated with support to the most vulnerable Children and Young People. There are other net minor pressures of £4k across the services.
- 4) In respect of the other budget areas, there is a pressure of £129k. There has been an increase in the spend against Educational Psychologist Trainees and the service is anticipating an increased bursaries payment to the respective cohort, resulting in a pressure of £48k. There are other net pressures of £81k, of which £84k relates to internal contributions and recharges that are not practically chargeable since the disaggregation of the budget between the North and the West.

Assistant Director Commissioning and Partnerships

5.16 The **Assistant Director of Commissioning and Partnerships** leads the commissioning functions for Children's Services across North Northamptonshire and the contract management of the Northamptonshire Children's Trust and the commissioning of education services. The Children's and Education Services remaining with the Council includes the Intelligent Client Function (ICF) for the Northamptonshire Children's Trust and the Local Authority statutory education functions as follows:

- Education Inclusion
- Education Psychology
- Support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- School Improvement
- Virtual Schools (lead in the North Northamptonshire Unitary Authority)
- School admissions and school place planning
- Early Education and Child Care

5.17 The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Commissioning and Partnerships** (excluding the Children's Trust) is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £118k)

Assistant Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	£'000
Expenditure	1,157
Income	(145)
Net Budget	1,012
Forecast	897
Variance	(115)

5.18 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director Commissioning and Partnerships** (excluding the Children's Trust) is set out in following Table and explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
1	Employees	1,120	(147)	(13.13)
2	Income	(145)	0	0.00
3	Other budgets	37	32	86.49
	Total	1,012	(115)	(11.36)

- 1) The Commissioning and Partnerships is forecasting an underspend of £147k on staffing. The directorate is currently undertaking a staffing restructure which will include a realignment of budgets across Children's Services. Whilst the directorate is striving to spend within the approved budget provision, the outcome of the restructure will determine the subsequent forecast spend for the service.
- 2) The service is expecting to receive the budgeted income of £145k in full. The income predominantly relates to DSG funding allocation and partner contributions to Information Advice and Support Service (IASS) and Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) services.
- 3) The service will be responsible for external legal fees to support the contract management of Northamptonshire Children's Trust. This was not initially budgeted, therefore resulting in a pressure of £30k. There are other minor pressures of £2k.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust

5.19 The forecast outturn position for the **Northamptonshire Children's Trust** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £10.136m)

Northamptonshire Children's Trust	£'000
Expenditure	67,645
Income	(4,365)
Net Budget	63,280
Forecast	73,476
Variance	10,196

5.20 The forecast variance relating to the **Northamptonshire Children’s Trust** is set out in following Table and explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
		£'000	£'000	%
1	Third Party Payments	67,645	10,196	15.07
2	Income	(4,365)	0	0.00
	Total	63,280	10,196	16.11

5.21 The Northamptonshire Children’s Trust delivers children’s social care and targeted early help on behalf of North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. The Councils set the strategic outcomes and priorities and the Trust is responsible for delivering those outcomes. Services provided by the Trust include:

- Targeted early help services to children and families.
- Front door and safeguarding services
- Support and placements for Children in Care
- Support and placements for Disabled Children
- In house fostering and residential provision
- Commissioning of external placements and contracts
- Commissioned legal services and transport for children in care.

5.22 The total contract value for the Childrens Trust is £150.938m. The Councils share of this is £66.654m this reflects how the contract sum is split between North Northamptonshire Council (44.16%) and West Northamptonshire Council (55.84%).

5.23 The Children’s Trust are forecasting an overspend of £23.089m – this is an increase of £0.135m to that previously reported to the Executive where the forecast pressure was £22.954m. The cost to the Council based on an overspend of £23.089m is £10.196m. If these pressures are not mitigated this will pose a significant financial risk to the Council. The Trust are looking at potential mitigations, however there is a risk that this position could worsen before year end. A key risk is the delivery of the efficiency savings of £7.632m which formed part of the contract sum. At present, the Trust is forecasting that £4.159m of these savings are at risk of non-delivery, this could increase the overall pressure from £23.089m to £27.248m. The following table summarises the contract sum and the forecast variances (excluding the risk on savings).

Description	Contract Sum	Forecast Variance Period 4	Movement	Forecast Variance Period 5	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Staffing	49,732	2,299	(7)	2,292	4.61
Other non staffing costs	358	0	0	0	0.00
Placements	65,376	20,199	0	20,199	30.90
Contracts	5,001	0	0	0	0.00
Children's Homes	3,767	48	81	129	3.42
Legal	4,788	511	0	511	10.67
Adoption	7,776	(133)	0	(133)	(1.71)
Transport	2,870	173	0	173	6.03
Other care	6,799	(143)	61	(82)	(1.21)
NCT Central - Other budget	(762)	0	0	0	0.00
Support Services / SLA	5,233	0	0	0	0.00
Total	150,938	22,954	135	23,089	15.30

5.24 The main pressure within the Children's Trust relates to placements for children in care – this amounts to £20.199m and is unchanged to that reported in Period 4, however there has been movement across the type of placement. The market and availability of placements remains challenging. The placements budget will continue to remain under pressure as it remains extremely volatile both locally and nationally. The Trust is working on how these pressures can be mitigated this year and how this can be reduced in future years. The following table provides further detail around the pressures from placements.

Description	Contract Sum	Forecast Variance Period 4	Movement	Forecast Variance Period 5	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
In House Fostering	8,532	99	(32)	67	0.79
Agecny Fostering	16,895	2,425	(644)	1,781	10.54
Independent Residential	31,087	7,034	400	7,434	23.91
Supported Accommodation	3,400	8,689	1,735	10,424	306.59
18+ Agency Placements	4,400	1,581	(694)	887	20.16
Welfare Secure	339	114	(326)	(212)	(62.54)
UASC	3,812	0	0	0	0.00
Remand Secure	300	234	27	261	87.00
Income	(3,389)	23	(466)	(443)	13.07
Total	65,376	20,199	0	20,199	30.90

- 5.25 The contract sum included a pay provision of 4%, this was in line with the provision that both North and West Northamptonshire Council included in their budgets. NCT are not aligned to national pay negotiations and a proposed offer aligned to West Northamptonshire Council would require additional funding of £1.007m a formal offer has been accepted by the Unions and this is reflected in the outturn. The forecast outturn also reflects a pressure of £1.087m for managed teams. A change control request to increase the contract sum by £2.094m has been made. In addition there are further staff related pressures of £198k.
- 5.26 The legal services budget remains a challenge with increasing demand and additional inflationary costs in this area. The budget forecast is a projected overspend of £511k this is unchanged to Period 4.
- 5.27 There are also pressures on transport costs of £173k, this is unchanged from Period 4 and is as a result of inflationary pressures above the net contract sum of £2.870m. There is a risk that the inflation on transport costs could be above current levels. There are further minor savings which amount to £86k.
- 5.28 As part of the contract negotiations, it was agreed an amount of £2.243m was included for one off investments – the Council’s share of this was £991k – whilst this is subject to detailed Business Cases being provided from the Trust it is currently forecast that this will be delivered within budget.
- 5.29 The Children’s Trust Budget is monitored in year through regular meetings between officers of both North and West Northamptonshire Councils and the Trust.

Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing

- 5.30 The revenue budget within this section covers Adult Social Services, Health Partnerships and Housing (excluding the HRA).
- 5.31 Under the 2014 Care Act, local authority Adults Services have a responsibility to make sure that people aged over 18 years who live in their areas are provided with personal day to day care (helping people get dressed, washed, going to the bathroom, eating etc) where they cannot do things for themselves or access family support. The service also provides other physical or psychological support to people with disabilities in order to help them live a full life. The overriding responsibility is to keep people safe and protect them from harm or neglect.
- 5.32 Care can take many forms and can be provided directly by the Council, through contracted organisations or families can receive a personal budget to buy suitable care for themselves. Although receiving formal or long-term care is subject to people meeting the Council’s eligibility criteria, the service also has a key responsibility for helping people to stay independent and preventing or delaying the need for care.

Assistant Director of Adult Services

- 5.33 The **Assistant Director of Adult Services** is responsible for the strategic planning, engagement, operational and statutory delivery of Adult Social Care

This includes the independent care budgets for all people aged over 18 and the social care and reablement teams. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Adult Services** is set out in the following table (Period 4 £0.970m overspend)

Assistant Director of Adult Services	£'000
Expenditure	117,852
Income	(19,437)
Net Budget	98,115
Forecast	100,365
Variance	2,250

5.34 The forecast outturn relating to the **Assistant Director of Adult Services** is set out in the following table. The overspend assumes most savings detailed in Appendix A are achieved in year. However, £0.617m of the savings for the increase of the utilisation of Shaw PPP beds for Discharge to Assess is assumed to be at risk of delivery. These savings will continue to be tracked, and any further impact of the achievability will form part of future reports.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
		£'000	£'000	
1	Employees	8,459	0	0.00
2	Third Party payments	94,231	2,250	2.39
3	Transfer Payments	14,258	0	0.00
4	Income	(19,437)	0	0.00
5	Other budgets	604	0	0.00
	Total	98,115	2,250	2.29

- 1) The employee related costs are currently forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 2) The main areas of spend in relation to Third Party Payments are in respect of independent care spend including Residential and nursing care for both 65+ year old and the 18-64 years old clients.

The service is seeing a significant increase in service demand. Client numbers have increased since April 2022 by 25% in the 65+ cohort and 15% in the 18-64 cohort with similar costs to existing cohorts. Previously there had been 14 years of stable demand in the 65+ cohort so this level of increase is unprecedented.

During 2022-23 the council received an additional £6m of one-off funding which mitigated the pressures of this increased demand, however there are currently no indications that there will be further grant funding that will offset this growth.

Thackley Green transferred on 1st July 2023 and is still in the transition stage and not yet a full capacity. This will result in additional independent care costs in the short term but will generate savings in future years.

As of August 2023, increased spend controls are being introduced within adult social care to aim to mitigate the increased demand, however it is prudent to highlight a negative movement in the forecast as a result of this demand. It is important to note that whilst an additional £1.3m risk is being forecast at Period 5, the financial risk is higher, however this is after mitigations have been applied across the directorate these mitigations and interventions will be closely monitored.

- 3) The transfer payments relate to direct payments these costs are currently forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 4) The main areas of income include client contributions to care costs. This is forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 5) The main area of spend shown as Other include client transport and other support costs this is forecasted to be delivered on budget.

5.35 Due to the volatile nature of the Adults Social Care budget, there may be further emerging risks whilst we progress through the financial year. This may include an unexpected increase in demand during the winter period, e.g., an increase in flu and other respiratory diseases, unexpected provider failures, additional pressures from acute hospitals, changes in caselaw and adverse weather. Mitigations would be sought to manage these pressures including, in exceptional circumstances, the use of reserves. This is an area the Council will continue to monitor closely.

Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Wellbeing

5.36 The **Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Wellbeing** is responsible for the strategic planning, engagement, operational and statutory delivery of key services for Adult Social Care. This includes ensuring services, practice and standards meet statutory requirements and that all professionals work together to deliver Making Safeguarding Personal to promote and secure the safety of local residents. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Wellbeing** is set out in the following table (Period 4 - £0k).

Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Wellbeing	£'000
Expenditure	10,130
Income	(994)
Net Budget	9,136
Forecast	9,136
Variance	0

5.38 The forecast outturn relating to the **Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Wellbeing** is set out in the following table. The forecast at Period 5 assumes that this will be delivered on budget and that the savings detailed in **Appendix A** are achieved in year. These savings will continue to be tracked, and any impact of the achievability will form part of future reports.

Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
		£'000	%
Employees	8,884	0	0.00
Premise	396	0	0.00
Transport	324	0	0.00
Supplies and Services	526	0	0.00
Income	(994)	0	0.00
Total	9,136	0	0.00

Assistant Director of Commissioning and Performance

- 5.39 The **Assistant Director of Commissioning and Performance** is responsible for ensuring services, practice and standards meet statutory requirements and includes the commissioning and monitoring of Adults Social Care external contract. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Commissioning and Performance** is set out in the following table (Period 4-£770k overspend).

Assistant Director of Commissioning and Performance	£'000
Expenditure	24,945
Income	(10,565)
Net Budget	14,380
Forecast	15,150
Variance	770

- 5.40 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director Commissioning and Performance** is set out in following table and explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
1	Employees	4,065	0	0.00
2	Third party Payments	19,564	770	3.94
3	Income	(10,565)	0	0.00
4	Other	1,316	0	0.00
	Total	14,380	770	5.35

- 1) The employee related costs are currently forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 2) The main areas of spend in relation to Third Party Payments are in respect of Better Care fund expenditure and the PPP Shaw contract.

The annual budget for the PPP Shaw contract which is for the provision of six residential care homes across North Northamptonshire for the over 65s is £9.8m. There is a forecast pressure of £970k (9.8%) in relation to this

contract. At the time the budget was set it was assumed that the inflationary increase would be £234k this was based on previous trends. The actual increase was based on average weekly earnings up to March 2023. This has been partly mitigated by £200k by delivering other contractual efficiencies.

- 3) The main income sources are the Improved Better Care Fund (£6.8m) and Client Contributions from PPP and Block purchased care provision (£1.4m). Other income sources assistive technology pool contribution of £747k, this is forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 4) Other costs amount to £1.316m and is primarily made up of Community Equipment spend, this is forecast to be delivered on budget.

Assistant Director Strategic Housing, Development and Property Services

- 5.41 The **Assistant Director Strategic Housing, Development and Property Services** provides strategic direction and leadership for the delivery of the Housing Service and housing management, this includes support for homeless people. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director Strategic Housing, Development and Property Services** set out in the following table (Period 4 - £0k).

Assistant Director Strategic Housing, Development and Property Services	£'000
Expenditure	6,745
Income	(3,840)
Net Budget	2,905
Forecast	2,905
Variance	0

- 5.42 The forecast outturn relating to the Assistant Director **Strategic Housing, Development and Property Services** is set out in the following table. The forecast at Period 2 assumes that the service will be delivered on budget and that any savings detailed in **Appendix A** are achieved in year. Savings will continue to be tracked and changes to the deliverability will form part of future reports.

Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
		£'000	%
	£'000	£'000	
Employees	2,735	0	0.00
Premises	203	0	0.00
Supplies and Services	3,473	0	0.00
Income	(3,840)	0	0.00
Other	334	0	0.00
Total	2,905	0	0.00

- 5.43 All services across Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing undertake regular budget monitoring, track fluctuations in spend, and work to identify additional

efficiencies and savings to either mitigate forecasted overspends within the directorate or to contribute to the overall corporate position in year of the Council. Ongoing work continues to identify any further efficiencies, savings or income that can be identified to improve the overall position in-year, to set budgets for the following year, and in contributing to the medium-term financial strategy.

Public Health and Communities

5.44 The **Director of Public Health and Wellbeing** is a statutory officer and the principal adviser on all health matters to elected members, officers, and partners, with a leadership role spanning health improvement, health protection and healthcare public health. This includes delivering core public health services in line with grant funding and statutory requirements.

5.45 The grant is ringfenced and any variances will result in a movement to or from reserves ensuring that all grant conditions are met.

Director of Public Health and Wellbeing	£'000
Expenditure	26,312
Income	(26,312)
Net Budget	0
Forecast	0
Variance	0

5.46 The forecast outturn relating to the **Director of Public Health and Wellbeing** is set out in following Table.

Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
		£'000	%
	£'000	£'000	
Employees	4,753	0	0.00
Supplies & Services	3,709	0	0.00
Support Costs	1,240	0	0.00
Third Party Payments	16,492	0	0.00
Income	(26,312)	0	0.00
Other	118	0	0.00
Total	0	0	0.00

Assistant Director Communities and Leisure

5.47 The **Assistant Director Communities and Leisure** includes libraries, cultural facilities (such as museums, theatres, art galleries and heritage sites), sports and leisure facilities (such as swimming pools, tennis courts, golf, playing pitches, indoor courts/sports halls etc), archaeological archiving and activities and access to parks and open spaces for play and recreation. The Service is also responsible for community grants as well as providing education and outreach services and advice and support, encouraging physical and mental wellbeing of residents through sport and leisure-based activities The forecast

outturn position for the **Assistant Director Communities and Leisure** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £100k)

Assistant Director Communities and Leisure	£'000
Expenditure	17,343
Income	(8,894)
Net Budget	8,449
Forecast	8,189
Variance	(260)

5.48 The forecast outturn relating to the **Assistant Director of Communities and Leisure** is set out in following table and explanations for the variances are provided in the paragraphs that follow.

Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
		£'000	%
	£'000	£'000	
Employees	7,018	0	0.00
Premises	3,056	0	0.00
Supplies & Services	4,122	140	3.40
Third Party Payments	3,698	0	0.00
Income	(8,894)	(400)	4.50
Internal income	(680)	0	0.00
Other costs	129		
Total	8,449	(260)	(3.08)

- 1) The employee related costs are currently forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 2) The premises related costs are currently forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 3) The supplies and services costs are currently forecasting a pressure of £140k this is due to contractual increases. The service is continuing to look at how these costs can be mitigated.
- 4) The third-party payments are mainly made up of £2.893m for payments for the Ukraine resettlement programme these are currently forecasted to delivered on budget.
- 5) The main areas of income include £4.982m of grant income and £2.66m relating to fees and charges. The income is forecast to be £400k greater than budget and is a result of changes in VAT.
- 6) Other costs are forecast to be delivered on budget.

Place and Economy Directorate

5.49 The Place and Economy budget covers the following four functional areas plus Management Costs:

- Assets and Environment

- Growth and Regeneration
- Highways and Waste
- Regulatory Services

Assistant Director Assets and Environment

5.50 The **Assistant Director Assets and Environment**, includes Facilities Management, Property Estate Management, Energy and Fleet Management, Grounds Maintenance, Parks and Open Spaces and On and Off-street parking enforcement. It also includes Asset and Capital Management of the Council's corporate assets and capital programmes, together with the effective management of the Council's strategic assets and landholdings. Key income and cost drivers include parking income, number of visitors to country parks and open space, demand for commercial rental spaces, use of corporate workspaces and use of energy. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Assets and Environment** is set out in the following table (Period 4 - £805k).

Assistant Director Assets and Environment	£'000
Expenditure	25,233
Income	(20,990)
Net Budget	4,243
Forecast	3,398
Variance	(845)

5.51 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director Assets and Environment** is set out in following Table and explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
		£'000	£'000	
1	Employees	9,826	(292)	(2.97)
2	Premises	9,275	(244)	(2.63)
3	Transport	4,956	(246)	(4.97)
4	Supplies and Services	1,660	84	5.04
5	Third Party Payments	1,024	103	10.06
6	Income	(20,990)	(291)	1.39
7	Other	(1,508)	41	(2.74)
	Total	4,243	(845)	(19.92)

- 1) The underspend of £292k (3%) against Employees relates to staff underspends from vacant posts due to ongoing work on restructures. Work is underway to recruit to posts through the restructure during 2023/24.
- 2) The main areas of spend within Premises are Business Rates (£1.565m), Utilities (£3.426m), Building Repairs and Maintenance (£1.522m), Rents and Services Charges (£985k), Building cleaning (£607k) and other premises costs of £1.177m.

The underspend of £244k relates to a saving of £340k which on utility costs across the service, the utility contracts are currently under review to ensure the best tariffs are utilised. This is partially offset by a pressure of £52k which relates to the increased repairs and maintenance work required across the asset portfolio and other minor pressures which amount to £44k.

- 3) The main areas of spend within Transport relates to Vehicle leasing (£2.918m), Fuel (£1.373m) and other transport costs of £676k.

There is a saving of £246k (17.9%) based on the current cost of fuel being lower than anticipated and reflects the reduction in the cost of fuel.

- 4) There is a pressure of £132k (49% of the £265k Equipment and Tools Budget) within Supplies and Services which relates to the maintenance of play equipment (£57k) and carbon reduction initiatives for electric vehicle charge points (£75k). This is offset by a saving within professional fees of £48k.

- 5) There is a pressure of £103k which predominately relates to a management fee for a business centre which will be occupied for a longer period than initially anticipated.

- 6) The main income sources are Rent and Leases (£17.217m), Parking Income (£1.680m) and various other forms of income amounting to £2.967m.

There is a pressure of £86k relating to external income that the Council had budgeted to receive to fund posts for projects such as Corby Town Funds. This pressure is offset by additional grant funding received for tree maintenance within Environment Services of £116k (51% of £226k Grants budget) and additional income from rent reviews of £216k. Other minor savings amount to £45k.

- 7) Other minor net pressures amount to £41k.

Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration

- 5.52 The **Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration** includes Planning Services, Economic Development, Growth and infrastructure, Regeneration, Digital Infrastructure, Climate Change and Flood and Water Management. Key income/costs drivers include local demand and volume of Planning services, including major development fees, availability of Planning resources e.g., Surveyors and demand for economic activities. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Growth and Regeneration** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £286k).

Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration	£'000
Expenditure	9,563
Income	(5,218)
Net Budget	4,345
Forecast	4,613
Variance	268

5.53 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director Growth & Regeneration** is set out in following Table. Explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
		£'000	£'000	%
1	Employees	6,068	165	2.72
2	Supplies and Services	3,348	312	9.33
3	Income	(5,218)	(183)	3.51
4	Other	149	(26)	(17.65)
	Total	4,347	268	6.16

- 1) There is a pressure of £165k (3%) within Employees which relates to agency costs to cover vacant posts, which are predominantly covering vacancies due to the restructure of the service and challenges with recruiting hard to fill posts, particularly in the Planning Management and Flood & Water Management Teams. Work is underway to recruit to these posts following the restructure in 2023/24.
- 2) There is a pressure of £312k within Supplies and Services. This variance relates to professional and legal fees associated with appeals and judicial reviews within Planning Management and Enforcement. The budget amounts to £152k and results in a pressure of around 205%.
- 3) The main income sources are Planning Income (£2.773m) and other income which amounts to £616k. There is currently additional income of £183k (6.5%) forecast for planning income based on received and forecasted income for the financial year. The additional income relates to a couple of major applications received in Period 4.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities responded to its consultation on increasing planning fees and performance which will result in an increase to Fees and Charges relating to Planning applications. An exact date is dependent on the regulations being debated and approved in Parliament; initial indications are that this could be in place from January 2024. It should be noted that the forecast for the remaining year is influenced by the result of the current economy, with both inflationary cost increases and an increased cost of borrowing detrimentally affecting investment in development.

- 4) There are minor savings amounting to £26k.

Assistant Director Highways and Waste

5.54 The **Assistant Director for Highways and Waste** includes street cleaning, waste and recycling collections and disposals, including the household waste and recycling centres and Transport Management. The highways services maintain the extensive network of public roads, footpaths, and rights of way, including highway related infrastructure such as streetlights, traffic signals, bridges, gullies, and highway trees. Services also include School Transport and Concessionary fares. Key cost drivers include the tonnes of waste materials

collected from households, businesses, and litter bins for recycling and disposal, variations to costs per tonnage, investment on various highway assets, as well as the impact of extreme weather conditions, school age population for school transport and the agility of the older population for concessionary fares. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Highways and Waste** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £319k).

Assistant Director Highways and Waste	£'000
Expenditure	67,095
Income	(9,798)
Net Budget	57,297
Forecast	56,967
Variance	(330)

5.55 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director for Highways and Waste** is set out in following Table. Explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
			£'000	%
1	Employees	9,787	65	0.66
2	Supplies and Services	7,767	48	0.62
3	Transport	19,341	(377)	(1.95)
4	Third Party Payments	31,030	87	0.28
5	Income	(9,798)	(177)	1.81
6	Other	(830)	24	(2.89)
	Total	57,297	(330)	(0.58)

- 1) There is a pressure on Employees of £65k relating to agency costs within Highways services for interim cover whilst work is carried out to recruit to posts and complete the Waste procurement project.
- 2) There is a minor pressure of £48k within Supplies and Services.
- 3) The main areas of spend within Transport relate to contract payments for Home to School Transport, Social Care Transport and Concessionary payments to transport operators.

The Department for Transport had requested that authorities continue to reimburse bus operators based on the average number of journeys in the winter months prior to the COVID-19 outbreak (December 2019 to February 2020).

The alternative is that the Council reverts to paying bus operators on the actual number of journeys. Reimbursing bus operators based on the average rather than the actual usage is estimated to be between £500k and £700k higher. The Council's support to the bus industry helps safeguard local bus services for residents throughout the pandemic and during the

recovery period. The forecast underspend is £377k (13% of £2.868m Concessions budget).

The DfT are rebasing the reimbursement methodology for 2024/25 and announcements around this will be made later this year.

- 4) The main areas of spend relate to Waste Disposal (£17.470m), Street Lighting (£6.638m) and Highways Maintenance (£4.157m) and other third-party payments of £1.757m. These are currently forecast to come in on budget. There are budgetary challenges with regard to Highways Maintenance and the increased requirement for repairs due to the deterioration of the highway network, together with the effect of inflation on the cost of services. Work is ongoing to identify how the service can be delivered differently in order to remain within the allocated budget; this may require a change in approach to maintaining the highways network.

There is a £87k pressure relating to the Waste disposal due to increased tonnage levels.

- 5) There is a favourable variance of £20k within income which relates to the Garden Waste subscription service performing better than initially predicted. It is worth noting that whilst subscriptions have gone up the associated costs to deliver the service have also increased.

There is also additional income of £137k (44% of £307k Highways income budget) for Highways regulations and investigation searches arising because of higher-than-expected residential developments coming forwards, house sales and utility works. Other minor savings amount to £20k.

- 6) Other minor pressures amount to £24k.

Assistant Director Regulatory Services

- 5.56 The **Assistant Director Regulatory Services** includes Bereavement Services, Building Control, Emergency Planning, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, and the Travellers Unit. The main income and cost drivers include the local economy and market for Building Control income, age/morbidity demographic rate for bereavement services (burials and cremations), public health demand for Environmental Health services, and legal/statutory obligations for building regulations and licensing. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Regulatory Services** is set out in the following table (Period 4 - £113k).

Assistant Director Regulatory Services	£'000
Expenditure	6,595
Income	(4,175)
Net Budget	2,420
Forecast	2,203
Variance	(217)

- 5.57 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director Regulatory Services** is set out in following Table. Explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
		£'000	£'000	%
1	Employees	5,187	(341)	(6.58)
2	Premises	690	36	5.28
3	Income	(4,175)	86	(2.07)
4	Other	717	2	0.22
	Total	2,420	(217)	(8.96)

- 1) There is an underspend of £341k (6.5%) within Employees relating to salary savings which is offsetting the pressure on agency costs to support service delivery across Regulatory Services pending the restructuring of the service during 2023/24. An MTFP saving for 2023/24 of £185k for the restructure within Regulatory Services was approved of which £155k has been identified, leaving a pressure of £30k which will be covered by vacancies across the service. Work is currently being undertaken within the service area to deliver the saving.
- 2) The main areas of spend relate to Grounds Maintenance (£266k), Business Rates (£135k), Utilities (£213k) and other premises costs of £76k.

There are minor pressures of £36k within premises relating to increased business rates and utility pressures in Bereavement Services.

- 3) The main income sources are Bereavement Services (£2.226m), Building Control Income (£1m), Licensing Income (£936k), other minor income sources which amount to £266k.

The overall income forecast is a pressure of £86k. The forecast outturn for income from Bereavement Services is £111k higher than budget this is reflective of the 2022/23 outturn and activity levels remain similar in 2023/24. This is offset by a pressure on Building Control income where income levels are forecast to be £197k lower than budget with the forecast being based on 2022/23 activity levels. Other forms of income are forecast to be delivered on budget.

- 4) There is a minor pressure amounting to £2k.

Place and Economy Management

- 5.58 This area includes the management costs for the Place and Economy Directorate and is forecast to be on budget (Period 4 - £0k).

Directorate Management	£'000
Expenditure	652
Income	0
Net Budget	652
Forecast	652
Variance	0

Enabling & Support Services

Finance, Performance, Procurement and Revenues and Benefits Service

5.59 The **Finance, Performance and Procurement Service** is responsible for leading the management, development, performance and continuous improvement of all Finance, Audit and Risk services and leading on, all aspects of procurement delivery, category management, commissioning and contract management within the Council. The **Revenue and Benefits Service** is responsible for the collection of both Council Tax and Business Rates and in assessing, awarding and payments of benefits. The forecast outturn position for **Finance, Performance, Procurement and Revenues and Benefits Service** for is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £242k).

Finance, Performance, Procurement and Revenue and Benefits Service	£'000
Expenditure	84,520
Income	(69,110)
Net Budget	15,410
Forecast	15,530
Variance	120

5.60 The forecast variance for the **Finance, Performance, Procurement and Revenues and Benefits Service** is set out below. Explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
		£'000	£'000	
1	Employees	16,932	(212)	(1.25)
2	Supplies & Services	2,976	465	15.63
3	Transfer Payments	64,711	0	0.00
4	Other	(99)	(46)	46.46
5	Income	(69,110)	(87)	0.13
	Total	15,410	120	0.78

- 1) A saving of £212k is forecast for Employees (Period 4 - £112k). This is due to forecast staff savings within the procurement team (£112k) and the Internal Audit team (£224k), partially offset by pressures from the use of agency staff within the Revenues & Benefits team (£124k).

- 2) Within Supplies and Services, the main areas of spend are Audit fees (£848k) and Insurance premiums (£1.140m) and there are forecast pressure of £465k (Period 4 - £300k). This pressure is a combination of an increase in Insurance premiums £300k (Period 4 - £300k) and a net pressure of £165k which mainly relates to a legal requirement to write to all direct debit customers which is a one-off cost following the implementation of a new revenues system.
- 3) (Period 4 – no variance). These pressures are partially offset by other minor savings totalling £64k.
- 4) Transfer Payments relate to Housing Benefit payments, which are forecast to be delivered on budget.
- 5) Amounts shown within Other costs are largely payments to the Lead Authority Board for shared services provided to the Council (£619k). There is a forecast net saving of £31k (Period 4 - £31k). This is due to a pressure in the Account Payable and Accounts Receivable functions (£85k) being offset by savings on payments to other authorities and historic LGSS inter-authority charge budgets (£116k) and other minor items (£15k).
- 6) The main areas of income are Housing Benefit Subsidy and income received from government to cover the costs of collecting NNDR & Council Tax. There is a forecast saving of £87k (Period 4 - £85k pressure), arising from new grant funding of £172k received within the Revenues & Benefits service, which reflects the additional work being undertaken during the cost-of-living crisis. This additional income is partially offset by unachievable legacy income targets of £85k.

Chief Executive's Office

- 5.61 The functions managed through the **Chief Executive's Office** include the Chief Executive, the Assistant Chief Executive, Executive Support, Communications, Consultation, Engagement and Corporate Equalities, Print Room and the Web Team. The service supports teams across the authority, providing leadership and strategic direction to secure a cohesive and coordinated approach to the delivery of improved organisation-wide service provision, resource allocation and prioritisation. The forecast outturn position for the **Chief Executive's Office** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £34k).

Chief Executive's Office	£'000
Expenditure	1,347
Income	(27)
Net Budget	1,320
Forecast	1,358
Variance	38

- 5.62 The forecast variance for the Chief Executives Office is set out in following Table. Explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
		£'000	£'000	%
1	Employees	1,772	0	0.00
2	Supplies & Services	438	38	8.68
3	Other	(863)	0	0.00
4	Income	(27)	0	0.00
	Total	1,320	38	0.03

- 1) Employee related costs are expected to be delivered on budget.
- 2) The main areas of spend within Supplies and Services are printing and postage costs for the corporate print and post rooms. The pressure is, due to inflationary increases in corporate subscriptions £18k (Period 4 - £18k) and other minor pressures £20k (Period 4 - £16k).
- 3) 'Other' spend relates to internal recharges, this is forecast to come in on budget.
- 4) The income budget relates to printing on behalf of third-party organisations and is forecast to be delivered on budget.

Chief Information Officer

- 5.63 The **Chief Information Officer** is responsible for the delivery of efficient and effective management of all aspects of IT operations, Digital, IT programmes of work, IT commercial contracts and supplier relationships, IT Service delivery teams and for transforming the IT and Digital Services team. This includes managing IT services provided by West Northamptonshire Council. The forecast outturn position for the **Chief Information Officer** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £268k).

Chief Information Officer	£'000
Expenditure	8,357
Income	(2)
Net Budget	8,355
Forecast	8,623
Variance	268

- 5.64 The forecast variance relating to the **Chief Information Officer** is set out in following Table and explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
		£'000	%
Employees	1,855	177	9.54
Supplies & Services	3,090	0	0.00
Third Party Payments	3,682	91	2.47
Other	(610)	0	0.00
Total	8,017	268	3.34

- 1) Employee costs are forecast as a pressure of £177k (Period 4 - £177k). This includes a pressure of £91k which relates to costs that were previously capitalised. These costs can no longer be treated as capital where the system is Cloud based, as this is a revenue cost. A further £169k relates to agency costs and these are partially offset by forecast savings from vacant posts of £83k.
- 2) The main areas of spend in Supplies and Services are software license costs, data line rental and telephone costs. These are expected to be delivered on budget.
- 3) Third Party Payments relate to the shared IT service with WNC. The pressure reflects estimated inflationary increases from the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with WNC which amounts to £91k (Period 4 £91k). Detailed work is ongoing to identify and evaluate other pressures within the WNC IT SLA.
- 4) 'Other' relates to internal income recharges and these are forecast to be delivered on budget.

Customer and Governance

Assistant Director of Human Resources

- 5.65 The **Assistant Director of Human Resources** is responsible for the leadership, development and implementation of relevant strategies for the area and council, enabling the delivery of corporate HR priorities, including HR Advisory, Workforce Planning & Development, Learning & Development and Health & Safety. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Human Resources** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 - £31k).

Assistant Director of Human Resources	£'000
Expenditure	5,202
Income	(1,537)
Net Budget	3,665
Forecast	3,696
Variance	31

- 5.66 The forecast outturn relating to the **Assistant Director of Human Resources** is set out in following Table:

Ref	Description	Budget £'000	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
1	Employees	4,934	0	0.00
3	Supplies & Services	503	31	6.16
4	Third Party Payments	418	0	0.00
4	Other	(653)	0	0.00
5	Income	(1,537)	0	0.00
	Total	3,665	31	0.85

- 1) Employee related costs are expected to be delivered on budget.
- 2) The main areas of spend in Supplies and Services arise from work on the Pay & Grading project (£100k) and I-learn licences (£91k). While these are forecast to be delivered on budget, there is a forecast pressure of £31k (Period 4 - £31k) from an increased demand for learning and development within the Adults Directorate.
- 3) The main area of spend in Third Party payments is the recharge from WNC for the shared Payroll function.
- 4) 'Other' relates to support service recharges. These are expected to be delivered on budget.
- 5) The main areas of income relate to the Inter Authority Agreements (IAA) with WNC and NCT. These are expected to be delivered on budget.

Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services

5.67 The **Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services** is responsible for developing and delivering a strong governance and ethical framework and is responsible for contract management of the legal services provided through Pathfinder Law and the management of the internal Legal Services Team, Democratic & Election Services, FOI & Data Governance and Registration and the & Coroners Services. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 – (£81k)).

Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic	£'000
Expenditure	5,936
Income	(896)
Net Budget	5,040
Forecast	4,959
Variance	(81)

5.68 The forecast variance relating to the **Assistant Director of Legal Services** is set out in the following Table and explanations for the variances are provided below the Table.

Ref	Description	Budget £'000	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
1	Employees	3,702	(185)	(5.00)
3	Supplies & Services	1,963	(12)	(0.61)
3	Third Party Payments	762	100	13.12
4	Other	(491)	16	(3.26)
5	Income	(896)	0	0.00
	Total	5,040	(81)	(1.61)

- 1) The forecast underspend on the Employees budget (£185k) is due to vacancies (£943k), partially offset by the use of agency staff (£758k).
- 2) The main areas of expenditure within Supplies and Services are members allowances, ward initiative funds and external legal fees. There are minor forecast savings of £12k (Period 4 - £12k).
- 3) The main area of spend within Third Party Payments is the shared coroners service with WNC, where there is a forecast pressure of £100k (Period 4 - £100k). This is as a result of a change in supplier for lab work due to performance issues, which has resulted in higher contract costs.
- 4) 'Other' relates mainly to support service recharges, members travel expenses and staff mileage. There is a forecast pressure of £16k (Period 4 - £16k) relating to a series of minor items.
- 5) The main areas of income are Legal fees (£200k) and Registration fees (£630k). There are also other minor income sources within the service amounting to £66k. All are forecast to be delivered on budget.

Assistant Director of Customer Services

- 5.69 The **Assistant Director of Customer Services** is responsible for leading and implementing the transformation and aggregation of all the Customer Service and Complaints teams and for setting the key priorities and direction for Customer Services and Complaints in line with the corporate plan. The role is also responsible for the leadership, development and implementation of customer and digital strategies for the council, to deliver an improved customer experience and the administration of the 'Blue Badges' parking scheme. The forecast outturn position for the **Assistant Director of Customer Services** is set out in the following Table (Period 4 – (£16k).

Assistant Director Customer Services	£'000
Expenditure	2,154
Income	(108)
Net Budget	2,046
Forecast	2,030
Variance	(16)

5.70 The forecast outturn relating to the **Assistant Director of Customer Services** is set out in the following Table.

Ref	Description	Budget	Forecast Variance	
			£'000	%
		£'000	£'000	
1	Employees	2,862	0	0.00
2	Supplies & Services	159	(16)	(10.06)
3	Other	(867)	0	0.00
4	Income	(108)	0	0.00
	Total	2,046	(16)	(0.78)

- 1) Employees costs are expected to be delivered on budget.
- 2) The main area of spend within Supplies and Services relates to the issuing of Blue badges (£70k). There is a saving of £16k (Period 4 - £16k) arising from a series of minor budgets across Supplies & Services.
- 3) 'Other' budgets are internal recharges and are expected to be delivered on budget.
- 4) The income budget relates to the issuing of blue badges (£80k) and rent from the NHS Phlebotomy unit in the Kettering Offices (£28k). These are anticipated to be delivered on budget.

6 Housing Revenue Account

6.1 Whilst North Northamptonshire Council must only operate one HRA it will, for a period of time, operate two separate Neighbourhood Accounts (Corby Neighbourhood Account and the Kettering Neighbourhood Account).

Corby Neighbourhood Account

6.2 The forecast position for the Corby Neighbourhood Account at the end of Period 5 shows an overspend of £4k (Period 4 - £2k underspend). This is summarised in the following Table:

Corby Neighbourhood Account			
	Current Budget 2023/24	Projection P5 2023/24	Forecast Variance
	£000	£000	£000
INCOME			
Rents - Dwellings Only	20,692	20,677	15
Service Charges	641	608	33
HRA Investment Income	148	148	0
Total Income	21,481	21,433	48
EXPENDITURE			
Repairs and Maintenance	6,440	6,440	0
General Management	5,438	5,438	0
HRA Self Financing	2,125	2,125	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	4,875	4,875	0
Transfer To / (From) Reserves	807	807	0
Special Services	1,014	1,014	0
Other	782	738	(44)
Total Expenditure	21,481	21,437	(44)
Net Operating Expenditure	0	4	4

- 6.3 The forecast position for rental income from dwellings at Period 5 is £15k lower than budget – a rent gain of £68k is a result of the Right to Buy Sales being 15 less than the budgeted amount of 50 in 2022/23, resulting in a higher number of dwellings on 1st April 2023 resulting in a higher rental yield. RTB sales were budgeted at 50 the current forecast is 45 which results in a rent gain of £11k being the part year effect from RTB sales. The reduction is in part from the current economic climate and the increased costs in borrowing, however, this is reduced by a shortfall of £94k due to lost income from a higher void rate. The number of sales and void rates are areas that will be closely monitored during the course of the year.
- 6.4 The pressure on income from Service Charges is £33k this is a result of a £19k increase in the budget not being realised and £14k of optional emergency alarm charges not being taken up in the sheltered schemes.
- 6.5 The forecast position for Period 5 includes a reduction in expenditure of £44k (Period 4 - £44k) - this is as a result of the contribution to the Bad Debts provision being lower than budget - owing to improved collection rates resulting in a lower level of rent arrears.
- 6.6 The Council made provision for a 4% pay award in 2023-24 the Pay award will exceed the budget as the offer by the employers already exceeds the pay inflation allowed. The forecast outturn will be updated following the conclusion of the national pay negotiations and any additional pressures up to £66k would initially be funded from the contingency budget.

Kettering Neighbourhood Account

- 6.7 The forecast position for the Kettering Neighbourhood Account at the end of Period 5 shows an overspend of £11k (Period 4 - £18k overspend). This is summarised in the following Table:

Kettering Neighbourhood Account			
	Current Budget 2023/24	Projection P5 2023/24	Forecast Variance
	£000	£000	£000
INCOME			
Rents - Dwellings Only	16,763	16,749	14
Service Charges	487	446	41
HRA Investment Income	21	21	0
Total Income	17,271	17,216	55
EXPENDITURE			
Repairs and Maintenance	4,632	4,638	6
General Management	2,988	2,988	0
HRA Self Financing	4,986	4,986	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	3,268	3,268	0
Transfer To / (From) Reserves	(565)	(565)	0
Special Services	1,257	1,257	0
Other	705	655	(50)
Total Expenditure	17,271	17,227	(44)
Net Operating Expenditure	0	11	11

- 6.8 The forecast position for rental income from dwellings at Period 5 is £14k lower than budget – a rent gain of £67k is a result of the Right to Buy Sales being 14 less than the budgeted amount of 30 in 2022/23, resulting in a higher number of dwellings on 1st April 2023 resulting in a higher rental yield. RTB sales were budgeted at 30 the current forecast is 20 which results in a rent gain of £24k being the part year effect from RTB sales. The reduction is in part from the current economic climate and the increased costs in borrowing, however, this is reduced by a shortfall of £105k due to lost income from a higher void rate. The number of sales and void rates are areas that will be closely monitored during the course of the year.
- 6.9 There are pressures of £41k as a result of income from service charges being lower than budget.
- 6.10 The forecast position for Period 5 is a reduction in expenditure of £44k - this is as a result of the contribution to the Bad Debts provision being lower than budget - owing to higher collection on arrears (Period 4 - £50k). There are other minor adverse variances of £6k.
- 6.11 The Council made provision for a 4% pay award in 2023-24 the Pay award will exceed the budget as the offer by the employers already exceeds the pay inflation allowed. The forecast outturn will be updated following the conclusion of the national pay negotiations and any additional pressures up to £176k would initially be funded from the contingency budget.
- 6.12 There could be further pressures to the two Neighbourhood Accounts as the HRA holds a depreciation charge that recognises the cost of managing and maintaining the Council stock at the current level. This funding represents a

revenue cost to the HRA that is then used to support the capital programme to deliver the required enhancements to the stock to keep it fit for purpose. The revenue contribution to capital expenditure as a minimum must equal the depreciation charge and the value of the housing stock has increased resulting in a higher Revenue Contribution to Capital, the actual valuations will be confirmed as part of the final accounts process. These pressures would be mitigated by utilising the attributable debt from Right to Buy Sales.

7 Dedicated Schools Grant

- 7.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring-fenced specific grant allocated to the Council by the Government to support a range of education related services.
- 7.2 The Department for Education (DfE) currently operate a four-block funding model for funding schools and pre-16 education including early years as set out in the following table:

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)			
Schools Block	Central Schools Services Block	High Needs Block	Early Years Block
The School's Block is the largest element of the DSG and is allocated to Schools and Academies for day-to-day spending in their individual budgets.	The Central Schools Block provides funding for local authorities to carry out central functions on behalf of maintained schools and academies.	The High Needs funding system supports provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) from their early years to age 25.	The Early Years Block provides funding for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds.

- 7.3 The original DSG Budget for 2023/24 amounts to £354.963m. After allowing for recoupment, which is where a local authority's DSG allocation is adjusted to reflect the grant that has been paid direct to academies. In July, the DSG allocation was revised to reflect a reduction of £537k, there was a reduction of £382k in the Early Years Block due to lower participation numbers, this was partially offset by a slight increase in the High Needs Block of £74k resulting from additional funding for special free schools. The remaining reduction of £229k relates to the recoupment amount for the High Needs Block being adjusted from £10.853m to £11.082m this is due to an adjustment to the High Needs places. The revised net DSG budget for the Council is £120.663m. The forecast outturn is a pressure of £4.995m, this is summarised in the following Table:

Dedicated Schools Grants Forecast Outturn 2023/24							
Block	Gross Budget	July DSG Allocation Adjustment	Revised Budget	Recoupment	Net Budget	Forecast Net Spend	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Schools Block	270,284	0	270,284	222,910	47,374	47,374	0
Central Schools Block	3,287	0	3,287	0	3,287	3,287	0
High Needs Block	57,851	74	57,925	11,082	46,843	51,838	4,995
Early Year Block	23,541	(382)	23,159	0	23,159	23,159	0
Total	354,963	(308)	354,655	233,992	120,663	125,658	4,995

7.4 The national pressure on services to support the education of children with additional needs is well documented. This has been exacerbated by the ongoing impacts of COVID on children and young people's health and wellbeing. Many Councils are struggling to contain expenditure within the budget available to meet needs. The mitigation actions that are available often have front loaded costs and benefits are felt over the course of many years. Whilst funding has been increased, this has not reflected the full increase in needs that are being identified.

7.5 In the financial year 2022/23 NNC reported an overspend of £1.8m on the HNB. This was offset against the historic surplus of £2.5m that had been brought forward from 2021/22, leaving a reserves balance of £700k. For 2023/24, pressures have continued to increase, and it is now forecast that the HNB overspend will be overspent by £5.695m. The remaining reserves of £700k have been used to mitigate this, leaving a forecast overspend of £4.995m. The composition of these pressures prior to the use of reserves is as follows:

- The ongoing increase in the number of requests for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), at Early Years and statutory school age, has exceeded the rate that was used in setting the budget, this pressure is forecast to be around £1.6m.
- A greater proportion of EHCP identifying high level needs and requiring higher levels of funding to be fully met, this pressure is forecast to be around £500k. (SENDIF)
- Sufficiency issues in local SEND placements meaning greater use of Independent Providers at significantly higher cost, this pressure is forecast to be around £2.7m.
- The identification of historic commitments that remain outstanding and must now be paid is a one-off pressure and amount to around £500k.
- Pressures in Mainstream Top Ups are related to an ongoing increase in the number of requests for statutory assessment over and above the level budgeted for. By supporting mainstream schools to meet higher levels of need, pressure is reduced on the specialist placement budgets, this pressure is forecasted to around £462k. In addition, there are minor net favourable variances which amount to £67k.

- 7.6 Significant work has already been undertaken to put in place actions to mitigate pressures, these include:
- Collaborative work with two local special schools to create outreach service to support inclusion in mainstream settings and identify needs, and strategies to meet these, at the earliest opportunity.
 - The creation of additional SEND places in Special Schools and Special School satellite provision on mainstream school sites.
 - The creation of new SEND units in mainstream schools.
 - Development of an early Years SEND provision.
 - Partnership working with an outstanding Alternative Provision (AP) Academy Trust to create new capacity in NNC.
 - Improved commissioning arrangements with independent providers to control costs and provide greater consistency of delivery.
 - Joint commissioning work with health services to improve and widen provision of Speech and Language services.
 - Greater focus on the Annual Review process to identify where needs have reduced or an EHCP is no longer required.
 - Investment in the EHCP team to ensure needs are assessed in as accurate and timely manner as possible.
 - Improved decision-making processes that ensure thresholds and funding decisions are robust and consistent.
- 7.7 This work is ongoing, and a key focus will be the identification of opportunities to create further capacity. NNC was not successful in a bid to DfE for a new Special Free School in the area, as such other routes to creating this capacity are being investigated. A separate bid for a Free AP provision is with DfE and an outcome is expected shortly.
- 7.8 Further opportunities to create SEND places are being developed in partnership with local Special and Mainstream schools. The impact of the outreach services is being assessed with a view to extending these and targeting resources as effectively as possible as part of a wider focus on inclusion. A simplification of EHCP funding through the adoption of a banded system will reduce pressure on the EHCP team and give schools and providers greater clarity and stability. The Education Case Management System will offer significantly improved financial functionality and rigour, improve parental access to information about the progress of an EHCP and create efficiencies in the EHCP process.
- 7.9 Where a local authority has an overall deficit on its DSG account at the end of the financial year, or where a surplus has substantially reduced during the year, they must provide information to the DfE about pressures and savings on the

High Needs Budget as part of a DSG Deficit Management Plan. In addition, where there is a deficit, this will have an adverse impact on the Council's cashflow position and will impact on the resources available for investment – which will result in the investment income being lower.

- 7.10 Looking to 2024/25, it seems unlikely that any increase in government funding will meet the impact of the ongoing pressures identified, however the mitigation actions taken will continue to contribute to minimise these, but further actions will be required. The Council will be looking to work with the Schools Forum to consider a transfer of funding from the Schools Block (SB) of the DSG to HNB. This was not requested this year due to the pressure on schools' budget and the DSG surplus the Council was holding at the time. If agreed, this would generate circa £1.7m additional funding for the HNB. Forum will also be asked to look at measures that will support inclusion in mainstream settings and provide challenge where any school may not be meeting this standard.
- 7.11 Identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND at the earliest opportunity and putting in place appropriate actions to meet these needs, remains the central focus of all of this work. Ensuring that the whole system works in an inclusive and joined up way is key to meeting this aspiration and to ensuring the efficient use of available resources to manage costs effectively.
- 7.12 At Spring Budget, the Chancellor announced additional funding for the existing early years entitlements worth £204m in 2023-24 (from September 2023) and £288m in 2024-25. This is for local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to childcare providers for the government's existing entitlement offers.
- 7.13 In July the Government announced that for 2023-24, that this will be distributed to LAs through a new standalone top-up grant called the Early Years Supplementary Grant (EYSG) and that the individual authority allocations would be announced in September. Details of the allocations will be provided in a future report.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The forecast for 2023/24 is an overspend of £7.821m (Period 4 - £7.354m) based on the position as at the end of Period 5. The Council's contingency budget of £3.746m has not, as yet been used to mitigate these pressures recognising the risks that remain within the forecast, most notably pay and price inflation. Service Directors will be working to mitigate these pressures in-year, including those of the Children's Trust. The Council also holds earmarked reserves which may be utilised if mitigations are not identified to fund the current pressures.
- 8.2 The key risks which are set out in the report will continue to be monitored and actions sought as required throughout 2023/24. The achievement of the approved savings targets is also integral to this process and will continue to be monitored and reported.

9 Implications (including financial implications)

9.1 Resources, Financial and Transformation

9.1.1 The financial implications are set out in this report. The current forecast position for the General Fund is an overspend of £7.821m (Period 4 - £7.354m) and the Housing Revenue Account is forecasting an overspend of £15k (Period 4 - £16k underspend), the Dedicated Schools Grant is forecasting a pressure of £4.995m (Period 4 - £4m).

8.2 Legal and Governance

9.2.1 The provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 set out requirements for the Council to set a balanced budget with regard to the advice of its Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer).

8.2.2 The robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the proposed reserves were considered under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 prior to the Council agreeing its 2023/24 budget.

8.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

9.3.1 The budget provides the financial resources to enable the Council to deliver on its plans and meet corporate priorities as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

8.4 Risk

8.4.1 The deliverability of the 2023/24 Revenue Budget is monitored by Budget Managers and Assistant Directors. Where any variances or emerging pressures are identified during the year then mitigating actions will be sought and management interventions undertaken.

8.4.2 Details of pressures, risks and mitigating actions implemented will be provided as part of the finance monitoring reports as the year progresses. The main risks identified include demand led services such as Adult Social Care, children's services and home to school transport together with the impact of high levels of inflation.

8.4.3 Whilst services will work hard to offset pressures, the Council holds a number of reserves to help safeguard against the risks inherent within the budget for 2023/24.

8.5 Consultation

8.5.1 The 2023/24 budget was subject to consultation prior to approval by Council in February 2023.

8.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

8.6.1 Not applicable.

8.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

8.7.1 The budget monitoring reports are presented to the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee for review after they have been presented to the Executive Committee.

8.8 Equality Implications

8.8.1 There are no specific issues as a result of this report.

8.9 Climate and Environment Impact

8.9.1 Among the new Council's priorities will be putting in place plans to improve the local environment and tackle the ongoing climate emergency. Where these have a financial impact then it will be reflected in the budget.

8.10 Community Impact

9.10.1 No distinct community impacts have been identified because of the proposals included in this report.

8.11 Crime and Disorder Impact

8.11.1 There are no specific issues arising from this report.

9 Issues and Choices

9.1 The report focuses on the forecast revenue outturn against budget for 2023/24 and makes recommendations for the Executive to note the current budgetary position and as such there are no specific choices within the report.

10 Background Papers

11.1 The following background papers can be considered in relation to this report.

Final Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Plans, including the Council Tax Resolution, North Northamptonshire Council, 23rd February 2023.

Monthly Budget Forecast Reports to the Executive.

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Appendix A							
Directorate	Assistant Director	Proposal Title	Proposal Description	2023/24 £000	Red	Amber	Green
Children & Education	Assistant Director Education	DFE SEND Review/Multi Agency SEND Self Assessment and Action Plan	Additional resources to meet the increase and clear the back log relating to Education and Health Care Plans. An additional amount of £700k was included in the 22/23 Budget.	(175)	(175)		
Children & Education	Assistant Director Education	Teachers Pensions	Budget Realignment for historical contribution for the Teachers Pensions Fund	(275)			(275)
Children & Education	Assistant Director Education	DSG Funding	Budget Realignment of the DSG contribution towards the historical contribution for the Teachers Pensions Fund	(462)			(462)
Children & Education	Commissioning & Partnerships	Additional Demand - Payments to other Establishments	Disaggregated Additional Demand - Payments to other Establishments Budget for Children, Families and Education, budget not utilised	(691)			(691)
Children & Education	Commissioning & Partnerships	Disaggregated Budget not required	Disaggregated Budget - budget not utilised	(412)			(412)
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Adult Services	CCG Discharge Packages Covid 19	Reversal of one off Covid Pressure relating to 2021/22	(513)			(513)
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Adult Services	Strengths based working	Transformation of adult social care pathways and processes to ensure focus on client outcomes, independence, better decision making and best practice approaches to reduce delays and spend.	(587)		(587)	
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Adult Services	Demographic and prevalence pressures adult social care	Reduction in demand due to Provider transformation Phase 1 - Specialist Care Centre	(1,189)		(1,189)	
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Adult Services	Staffing	Savings from review of wider staffing budget to fund Social Worker Market Forces	(100)			(100)
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Safeguarding and Wellbeing	Staffing	Disaggregation of Shared Lives to be managed within the wider provider services staffing	(23)			(23)
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Commissioning & Performance	Shaw PPP	Reduction in number of residential placements made in the independent sector owing to increase utilisation beds in PPP properties.	(1,192)		(1,192)	
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Commissioning & Performance	Shaw PPP	Increase utilisation of capacity within Discharge to Access	(1,058)	(617)	(441)	
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Commissioning & Performance	Contract Rationalisation	Increasing utilisation of framework providers for homecare and reduction of more expensive spot contracts	(67)			(67)
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Commissioning & Performance	Staffing	Saving of wider staffing budget to fund PBSS	(125)		(125)	
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Housing	Homelessness Policy Changes	Harmonisation of Homelessness Policies	(200)			(200)
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Housing	Maximisation of Grant	Capitalisation of posts for work relating to Disabled Facility Grants	(127)			(127)
Adults, Health, Partnerships & Housing	Director of Public Health	Realignment of Grant	Realignment of grant following disaggregation	(138)			(138)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Income generation	Fees and Charges - Leisure	(195)			(195)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Efficiencies	Legacy budgets no longer required	(42)			(42)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Efficiencies	Review of Strategic Grants	(7)			(7)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Staffing	Service Transformation	(360)			(360)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Income Generation	External Funding for Events	(30)			(30)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Efficiencies	Review of Neighbourhood Centres	(45)			(45)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Income Generation	Introduce an E-Gym offer	(63)			(63)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Income Generation	Repurposing of Public Health grant to fund wellbeing posts	(93)			(93)
Public Health & Communities	Communities	Public Health Grant	Grant funding to support services in addressing Public Health needs	(500)			(500)

Appendix A

Directorate	Assistant Director	Proposal Title	Proposal Description	2023/24 £000	Red	Amber	Green
Place & Economy	Growth & Regeneration	Increase in Fees & Charges	Increase in Fees & Charges	(10)			(10)
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Additional income	Garage Income	(10)		(10)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Assets & Environment redesign	Assets & Environment Service Improvement and Redesign	(95)		(95)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Operational changes to grounds maintenance costs & services	(57)		(57)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Purchase of equipment resulting in reduction in equipment hire charges	(15)		(15)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Purchase of equipment resulting in reduction in equipment hire charges	(30)		(30)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Pay/Salaries	Operational changes to cleaning services	(14)		(14)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Pay/Salaries	Operational changes to Council Buildings.	(31)		(31)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Rental Income	Additional income from rent reviews across the commercial portfolio.	(80)		(80)	
Place & Economy	Assets and Environment	Enterprise Centre Business Case - Full year effects of previous decisions	Increase in income based on appointed operators business case.	(64)		(64)	
Place & Economy	Growth & Regeneration	Climate Change	Delivery of a range of climate change initiatives to reduce NNC's carbon footprint towards net zero	(250)			(250)
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Highways Contract	Demobilisation costs for existing highways contract - reverses one-off pressure which was reflected in the 22/23 Budget	(201)		(201)	
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Waste Management	Disposal tonnage - HWRC Residual Waste	(79)		(79)	
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Waste Management	Disposal tonnage - HWRC Wood Waste	(27)		(27)	
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Green Waste	Harmonisation of Green Waste Charges	(1,358)			(1,358)
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Promote food waste	Benefit of promoting the food waste service in the Corby and East Northants area	(50)		(50)	
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Refuse fees & charges	Increase refuse & recycling fees & charges	(135)		(135)	
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Highways fees & charges	Increase highways & transport fees and charges	(44)		(44)	
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	Review Litter bin network	Reduction in street cleaning costs	(5)		(5)	
Place & Economy	Highways & Waste	HWRC Income	Increase income from HWRCs	(153)		(153)	
Place & Economy	Regulatory Services	Restructure	Rationalisation of service provision	(185)		(95)	(90)
Place & Economy	Regulatory Services	Specialist Equipment For Service Delivery	Base budget allocation for incident response released	(280)			(280)
Place & Economy	Regulatory Services	Increase in Fees & Charges	Increase in Fees & Charges	(227)		(227)	
Enabling Services	Finance & Performance	Pensions	Pension - Historical Pension Fund Deficit	(232)			(232)
Enabling Services	Finance & Performance	Pensions	Reduction in Employer's Pension Contribution Rate	(1,890)		(1,890)	
Enabling Services	Finance & Performance	Pensions	Disaggregation of Legacy Pensions	(450)			(450)
Enabling Services	Finance & Performance	Housing Benefit Subsidy	Additional income relating to Housing Benefit Subsidy	(5)		(5)	
Enabling Services	Chief Executive's Office	Staffing	Staff Savings	(7)			(7)

Appendix A

Directorate	Assistant Director	Proposal Title	Proposal Description	2023/24 £000	Red	Amber	Green
Enabling Services	Chief Executive's Office	Communications	Communications - Savings on professional services not utilised.	(3)			(3)
Enabling Services	Chief Information Officer	ICT Disaggregation	Upfront work needed for ICT disaggregation - one-off, reversal of 2022/23 pressure	(100)			(100)
Enabling Services	Chief Information Officer	ICT Contract Rationalisation	Rationalisation of service contracts - largely mobile telephone contracts	(50)			(50)
Enabling Services	Chief Information Officer	ICT application rationalisation	Rationalisation of service usage - largely Microsoft contract	(50)			(50)
Enabling Services	Human Resources	Pay and Grading Review	Delivery of Pay and Grading Review	(120)			(120)
Enabling Services	Legal Services	Fleet	Changes to the operational arrangements for the mayor	(19)			(19)
Enabling Services	Legal Services	Legal Income	Increase in Legal Income target	(150)			(150)
Enabling Services	Legal Services	Upper Tier Legal Services	Anticipated saving from bringing upper tier legal services in house	(100)			(100)
Enabling Services	Customer Services	Customer Services Replacement of Case Management System & Telephone System	Case management system and telephony replacement	(106)		(106)	
Enabling Services	Customer Services	Uniforms	Reduction in Staff Uniforms	(8)			(8)
Enabling Services	Customer Services	Staffing	Transformation Staff Savings	(106)			(106)
Corporate	Corporate	Treasury Management	Reversal of Covid Pressure from 2021/22 for £342k - based on interest recovery by 2023/24	(342)			(342)
Corporate	Corporate	Treasury Management	Additional Income generated from higher than anticipated interest rates	(500)			(500)
Corporate	Corporate	Treasury Management	Reduced costs following the repayment of loans	(109)			(109)
			Total	(16,416)	(792)	(6,947)	(8,677)

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