

# Public Document Pack



**Meeting:** EAP Climate Change, Environment & Growth

**Date:** Wednesday 20th October, 2021


**Time:** 9.30 am

**Venue:** Remote Meeting via Zoom (this meeting is not the subject of public meeting requirements)

The meeting will be available for the public to view live at the 'Democratic Services North Northants' YouTube channel.

To members of the EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth

Councillors: Councillor Harriet Pentland (Chair), Councillor Tim Allebone, Councillor Jennie Bone, Councillor Dez Dell, Councillor Anne Lee, Councillor Jan O'Hara and Councillor Elliot Prentice

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05	Bus Strategy - update on consultation and Improvement Plan	Graeme Kane/James Loader	21 - 22
06	Air Quality Update (to follow)	Iain Smith	
07	Close of Meeting		
<p>Adele Wylie, Monitoring Officer North Northamptonshire Council</p>  <p><b>Proper Officer</b> <b>12<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b></p>			

This agenda has been published by Democratic Services.

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## **Meetings at the Council Offices**

This meeting will be held using the Zoom platform.

## **Members' Declarations of Interest**

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

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

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** your own financial interest (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or **relates to** a financial interest of a relative, friend or close associate, you must disclose the interest and not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

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

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

## **Press & Media Enquiries**

Any press or media enquiries should be directed through the Council's Communications Team to [NNU-Comms-Team@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:NNU-Comms-Team@northnorthants.gov.uk)

## **Public Enquiries**

Public enquiries regarding the Authority's meetings can be made to [democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk)



## **Executive Advisory Panel: Climate Change, Environment & Growth**

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 – 09:30am – Remote Meeting Via Zoom

### MINUTES

Attendees: Councillor Harriet Pentland (Chair), Ian Achurch, Councillor Tim Allebone, Councillor Jennie Bone, Councillor Dez Dell, Councillor Anne Lee, George Candler, Councillor Graham Lawman, Carol Mundy, Councillor Elliot Prentice, Raj Sohal

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

- Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor Jan O'Hara.

#### **2. Members' Declarations of Interests**

- None received.

#### **3. Minutes from Meeting held on 18 August 2021**

RESOLVED THAT: The EAP agreed the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

#### **4. Draft Corporate Plan**

- The Chair invited George Candler (Executive Director, Place & Economy) to introduce the report, outlining the draft corporate plan.

The EAP considered the draft plan and made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The wording of the authority's priorities was interpreted as too vague at times and could therefore be amended for clarity.
- The implementation of percentage values in objectives would be valuable in order to allow for measurable targets as 'smart goals'
- Regarding the objective to embed low carbon technology, the wording should read 'ensure' rather than 'seek to ensure', for clarity.
- The title of the plan should include protecting open spaces - to include all green spaces, not just countryside.

- It would be valuable for the plan to emphasise and include more references to the benefits of green spaces on mental health; as well as general health.
- The objective title to demonstrate clear leadership in ‘tackling sustainability’ should be rephrased to ‘embracing sustainability’.
- The Executive Director of Place & Economy assured the EAP that he would reflect on its comments and feedback raised.
- The draft plan would be updated again, along with a covering note, to demonstrate the changes made. It was agreed the draft plan would be recirculated reflecting the changes after the meeting.

RESOLVED THAT: The EAP noted the report.

## **5. Electric Vehicle Charging Points**

- The Chair invited Ian Achurch (Head of Development, Infrastructure and Funding) to introduce the report, outlining the planned development and implementation of electric vehicle charging points across North Northamptonshire.

The EAP raised several lines of enquiry into the report concerning:

- Whether two charging points, which had previously been deactivated in Corby, would become operational again.
- Whether usage statistics for charging points in Kettering would be made available.
- What the likelihood would be of new charging points being implemented before December 2021.
- The significance of considering the demand for charging points across North Northamptonshire from visitors and tourists, as the authority would need to establish an adequate number of charging points.
- The possibility of encouraging property developers to implement public communal charging points in new housing projects – potentially utilising solar power to combat issues of grid capacity.

In response, the Head of Development clarified that:

- The authority was seeking to re-implement charging points in Corby.
- Usage statistics would be brought to future meetings of the EAP, regarding the usage of charging points.
- The first phase of consultation for charging points had identified thirty potential host sites, of which only seven were currently progressing. As a result, the authority was seeking to continue to identify other potential sites, which could progress at a faster rate, before the end of the year.
- NNC would continue to investigate figures further, to determine the amount of charging points required to sufficiently meet demand from visitors, as well as local residents.

- There was no guidance on the Council’s website concerning charging point cable protection however, officers would explore developing a strategy in this area to increase online awareness.
- While property developers would certainly be encouraged to erect charging points in new housing projects, the authority would participate in further liaison with power providers to plan for anticipated power requirements across the area.

While overwhelmingly expressing its support for increased charging points, the EAP also raised concern regarding: the potential logistical problems of charging points facing the authority if 70% of local residents were anticipated to purchase electric vehicles in the next five years, the risks attached to the probable use of hydrogen to fuel larger vehicles and machinery and how charging points would be made available for residents of terraced houses.

Nevertheless, the EAP was supportive and maintained that it should be exemplary to other organisations and authorities in leading the way in promoting the increased implementation of electric vehicle charging points, in anticipation of the future.

To conclude, Councillor Graham Lawman posited that NNC would have to observe procurement rules and carry out a thorough consultation of the framework of the plan for charging points. The councillor assured the EAP that the executive was fully committed to this issue.

RESOLVED THAT: The EAP noted the report.

#### **6. Next meeting date**

- The next meeting of the Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel would be held virtually, via Zoom, on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November at 09:30am.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT & GROWTH EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANEL 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2021

Report Title	Destination Nene Valley – Board representation
Lead Member	Councillor Helen Howell, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism

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 – Destination Nene Valley Strategic Board: Terms of Reference

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1 The report identifies the need to agree representation from North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) on the Destination Nene Valley (DNV) Board. The report also outlines the importance of the visitor sector in the local economy, and it details some of the current initiatives being delivered either by NNC, or via DNV, to support the sector.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 Destination Nene Valley (DNV) is an important partnership-based initiative aimed at increasing the profile and offer of the Nene Valley to enhance its economic potential and increase the cultural, social and environmental offer of the area.
- 2.2 Following on from local government re-organisation, the creation of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC), and the local government elections that took place in May this year, there is a need to agree revised Board membership to take account of these changes.
- 2.3 The report proposes new representation from NNC on the DNV Strategic Board to reflect new Executive roles and the need for senior level officer involvement to lead the secretariat function.

### 3. Report Background

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- 3.1 Based on figures prior to Covid-19, the tourism and hospitality sector was worth £1 billion<sup>1</sup> to the Northamptonshire economy and supported almost 14,000 jobs. Whilst the pandemic has had a major impact, it remains a key sector of the local economy.
- 3.2 The impact of the pandemic has meant more than 750 businesses in North Northamptonshire in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector had to close temporarily during the lockdowns and more than 50% of people employed in that sector were furloughed. (Office for National Statistics Covid19 Business Survey).
- 3.3 There are a range of initiatives being delivered in North Northamptonshire to provide support to this important sector both in the short-term to help the economic recovery, and longer term to enable the visitor economy to grow and local businesses to flourish. Destination Nene Valley (DNV) [Welcome - Nene Valley](#) is an important part of this work, along with activities being delivered through Love Corby<sup>2</sup> and This is Kettering<sup>3</sup>.

#### Destination Nene Valley

- 3.4 Destination Nene Valley (DNV) was established in 2011 and has a range of active partners, including the local authorities, the Environment Agency, Rockingham Forest Trust, River Nene Regional Park, the Wildlife Trust and private sector representatives. The initiative extends beyond North Northamptonshire and includes parts of Peterborough and West Northamptonshire. Work is overseen by a Strategic Board (see Appendix A for the Terms of Reference).



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<sup>1</sup> Northamptonshire Surprise

<sup>2</sup> [Love Corby - Your One Stop Shop for all that is happening in and around Corby](#)

<sup>3</sup> [This is Kettering | The official visitor site for Kettering & surrounding area.](#)



3.5 The Nene Valley Strategy<sup>4</sup> contains the vision that the Nene Valley will be recognised as a destination of choice for world class wildlife, it has a connected green corridor for walking and cycling and a flourishing tourism economy that creates opportunities for visitors and residents to enjoy outdoor recreational activities whilst protecting the environment and wildlife. It contains a number of priority strands:

- Create an enterprising approach to the rural economy;
- Improve access to the Nene Valley by identifying and developing solutions to existing barriers;
- Attract visitors and spend from local, national and international markets; and
- Encourage local communities to lead healthier outdoor lifestyles and promote green transport



3.6 The strategy also identifies a number of opportunities. Projects highlighted in the strategy include Chester House and the Greenway.

3.7 The Greenway aims to provide a network of safe and accessible routes for walking and cycling. The plan is to link open spaces, visitor attractions and the larger towns. Although the initial focus of the Greenway initiative has been the former East Northamptonshire area and Wellingborough, there is tremendous scope to extend the Greenway to link with Kettering and Corby, then through to Oundle, thereby providing an orbital route and wider network connecting much of North Northamptonshire.

3.8 This wider aspiration for the Greenway is the focus of the 'Greenway and River Ise: Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study' bid, for which NNC is seeking £120,000 via the UK Government Community Renewal Fund (UK CRF). If supported, this will deliver two feasibility studies identifying Green Infrastructure connections linking Wellingborough to Rushden and Corby (via Kettering) and will facilitate the development of green corridors, and a wider network, for active travel, enhanced travel to work choices and educational opportunities, and increase tourism and leisure trips. The bid was submitted in June and an announcement is expected in the Autumn.

3.9 The partnership has also produced a Destination Management Plan 2019-2025. This makes the case for establishing a Destination Management Organisation for the area.

3.10 The DNV initiative is supported by a comprehensive website, promoting local events and attractions, and an active social media presence.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://nenevalley.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Nene-Valley-Final-low-res-web-version-030513.pdf#:~:text=Destination%20Nene%20Valley%20%28DNV%29%20is%20a%20new%20pathfinding,a%20mixture%20of%20local%2C%20national%20and%20international%20audiences>

- 3.11 During the Summer, a social media focussed campaign was run by NNC on its Twitter and Facebook pages linking to [www.northnorthants.gov.uk/tourism](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/tourism) which connects to the three main tourism offers in North Northamptonshire i.e. DNV, Love Corby and This is Kettering. **#NNStay** was used on any posts that related to promoting tourism offers during the summer school holidays.

Statistics for the social media elements of the #NNStay campaign

Number of Tweets using #NNStay - 45

Number of Facebook posts using #NNStay - 55

Total impressions Twitter - 66,143

Total reach Facebook - 98,577

Total clicks on links to website - 1,859 (Twitter 169, Facebook 1,690)

Total retweets/shares - 323 (Twitter 133, Facebook 190)

Top 3 posts for Twitter

- 1 July (7am) - No plans for the summer? Well North Northants has lots to offer. With rich heritage, diverse culture and the finest food and drink, staying at home is the new going away #NNStay
- 22 August (7.30am) - Northamptonshire has witnessed the birth of Richard III, the death of Mary Queen of Scots, the Battle of Naseby and the hatching of the Gunpowder Plot full of landmarks and historic sites for family days out <https://t.co/PU4mWW3Tap> #RediscoverSummer #NNStay
- 20 August (7.30am) - From Kirby Hall to Rockingham Castle, North Northants is home to amazing buildings and unique heritage. #RediscoverSummer this weekend and take a step back in time. #NNStay

Nene Valley Festival 2021

- 3.12 A key flagship activity delivered by DNV is an annual festival. After a break in 2020 due to the pandemic, the Nene Valley Festival returned in September. Some 102 events were held, including the launch at Stanwick Lakes and a family fun day at Rushden Lakes. This was a high profile opportunity for the local sector to showcase their offer and attract visitors and spend to the area. DNV awarded 20 funding grants to local businesses and organisations to deliver some of these events.



3.13 NNC is also seeking £215k via the UK CRF for DNV the 'Here for Tourism – A Partnership approach to kick-starting the visitor economy in North Northamptonshire' bid. If this receives funding, it will help to deliver a wide programme of projects, including toolkit, way-markers, film, marketing and a green credentials grant scheme.

#### DNV Strategic Board

3.14 The DNV Strategic Board aims to provide strategic direction for tourism initiatives that promote economic development and enhance the quality of life in the Nene Valley, drive success through working in partnership with all relevant sectors, provide direction to the project boards to ensure that communication, fundraising and partnership activity are co-ordinated appropriately and monitor performance of the project boards against an agreed DNV business plan. Members of the Strategic Board act to champion DNV at all opportunities. The Board also has an important role in taking advantage of new funding opportunities, building on the Community Renewal Fund bids and looking ahead to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other possibilities to secure investment in the area.

3.15 The current DNV Board membership is as follows:

- Private sector business
- East Northamptonshire Council
- Northampton Borough Council
- Northamptonshire County Council
- Borough Council of Wellingborough
- Peterborough City Council
- Environment Agency
- Rockingham Forest Trust
- Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire
- River Nene Regional Park
- Nenescape Landscape Partnership

3.16 The Board has a private sector chair. The chair is elected every two years. The secretariat of the Board is provided by NNC (and formerly East Northamptonshire Council).

- 3.17 The next meeting of the DNV Board will take place later in the year. The Board will need to consider and agree revised terms of reference following local government re-organisation in Northamptonshire and the creation of the two new unitary councils'. It is proposed that the representatives from the former East Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire County Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough are replaced by the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism from North Northamptonshire Council and the Assistant Director for Growth and Regeneration. The latter proposal is to reflect the accountable body and secretariat role performed by the Council to support DNV.

#### Widening the reach of Destination Nene Valley

- 3.18 DNV is also working closely with other bodies including the River Nene Regional Park, the River Ise Partnership and the Rockingham Forest Group to develop a coordinated approach with a particular focus on improving access, tackling climate change, protecting important natural habitats and reducing carbon emissions. A project example includes the work currently being done by partners to promote the Special Protection Area of the Nene Wetlands area, which has international recognition for the birds that come and stay with us over the winter. There is great potential to cause harm through development and visitor disturbance, so partners are delivering a range of activities to mitigate this risk, including producing leaflets for new households coming to the area, visitor interpretation at key gateways and a marketing campaign to educate residents. Through this close collective working there is real potential to support the wider visitor economy, improve the environment and promote community participation.

#### Helping the Visitor Economy

- 3.19 NNC is continuing to provide direct support to the visitor economy sector through the recently launched Discretionary Hospitality and Tourism (HoTi) Grant. This offers a one-off payment aimed at businesses (with and without rated business premises) who continue to be most impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, including those whose recovery is limited due to the seasonal nature of their business.<sup>5</sup> The HoTi scheme is inviting applications from eligible businesses before 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and offers up to £12,000.
- 3.20 NNC is also supporting the sector through the Welcome Back Fund and is working with town councils to deliver activities and support to businesses in the town centres.

#### Countywide activity – Northamptonshire Surprise

- 3.21 Other activity relevant to the visitor economy and DNV includes NNC and West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) jointly commissioning Northamptonshire Surprise to develop a countywide visitor strategy and update the Northamptonshire Destination Plan. This work will be complete by March 2022 and will help to inform future activity by NNC and how it works with others. It is essential that this is an inclusive process which is co-

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<sup>5</sup> [Apply for a discretionary hospitality and tourism grant - NNC - Introduction - Online form \(achieveservice.com\)](#)

designed with the local sector and other key stakeholders, including DNV and its Board.

3.22 NNC and WNC have also commissioned Northamptonshire Surprise to lead on a high-profile marketing campaign, Go Northamptonshire!<sup>6</sup>, which is targeting neighbouring counties, to raise the profile of ‘things to do on your doorstep’, targeting a much more local audience. It aims to create the desire for day and overnight visits from a target audience of families with younger children and supports local businesses and attractions. A particular focus is promoting the half-term break. To date, it has resulted in an increase of 50% in the number of web views and an article in the Sunday Mirror (see below) promoting two key attractions in the area, Wicksteed Park and West Lodge Farm near Desborough.



## De Bois Review

3.23 The work undertaken by Northamptonshire Surprise countywide review will also consider the findings of the recent de Bois Review<sup>7</sup>. This was commissioned by the UK Government to look at Destination Management Organisations in England. The report and the Government’s response will also have implications for DNV moving forward. There are a series of recommendations contained within the report. These include a proposal to split the national portfolio of Destination Management Offices into two tiers – a top tier of accredited Tourist Boards acting as ‘Destination Development Partnerships’ or as leaders of them, (‘hubs’) and a second tier of accredited Tourist Boards acting as members of these Partnerships (‘spokes’). The review recommends that the Government should then provide core funding to each Destination Development Partnership for them to focus on activities that ensure their destination remains sustainable, competitive and responsive to high level strategic challenges identified by the Government such as those

<sup>6</sup> Go Northamptonshire! campaign launched to showcase county as major tourism destination | North Northamptonshire Council ([northnorthants.gov.uk](http://northnorthants.gov.uk))

<sup>7</sup> The de Bois Review: an independent review of Destination Management The de Bois Review ([publishing.service.gov.uk](http://publishing.service.gov.uk))

around sustainability, skills, inclusive tourism and levelling up. It indicates that the Destination Development Partnership would be expected to pass down a degree of funding to accredited Tourist Boards amongst its coalition and work collaboratively with them to deliver a shared vision.

- 3.24 A further report will be brought to Executive once the Government has considered the Review and next steps, and following the work by Northamptonshire Surprise on a Visitor Economy Strategy.

#### **4. Issues and Choices**

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- 4.1 It is an important time for the sector as it recovers from the pandemic and works with Public Health to minimise risk of further outbreaks. It is also essential that the sector is supported to take full advantage of the economic recovery, especially with exciting projects such as Chester House and the Gallery Library and Museum (GLAM) project in Kettering adding to the offer already available in the area.
- 4.2 The main focus of this report is to agree NNC representation on the DNV Strategic Board. As noted above, the terms of reference were agreed by the DNV Board when it was established, but following the creation of NNC, it is proposed that these are reviewed to ensure that they reflect the new Council and the Executive roles.
- 4.3 Looking further ahead, decisions will be needed on the role of DNV, Northamptonshire Surprise and other partnerships. These decisions will be wider than NNC, they will also involve WNC and other partner organisations, including funders, and be influenced by the Government's response to the de Bois Review.
- 4.4 The work which is outlined on this report on a visitor economy strategy and Destination Management Plan will help to inform these decisions. It will enable NNC to consider the added value of any strategic initiatives, respective roles and responsibilities, and how best it can support the visitor economy moving forward including through initiatives such as DNV. Potential funding sources will also be an important consideration to ensure that future arrangements are based on a sustainable business model.

#### **5. Implications (including financial implications)**

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##### **5.1 Resources and Financial**

- 5.1.1 DNV is a partnership initiative which has successfully attracted funding from a range of its partners. The former East Northamptonshire Council supported the Strategic Board with both officer time and investment in a number of specific projects, such as the Greenway. Other partners have also contributed financially to specific projects depending on their priorities at the time. This included the former County Council funding and progressing the Chester House project. NNC currently provides officer support to DNV, but there is no direct, or ongoing, financial commitment to the running of DNV.

**5.2 Legal**

5.2.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from the proposals.

**5.3 Risk**

Risk	Impact / Mitigation	RAG
The Council is not adequately represented on the Board of DNV	(I)-Not able to influence the work of the partnership and maximise the advantages for the sector and local community (M)-Strong representation by the Executive member on the Board will help to ensure that the benefits are realised	
Lack of public support for the visitor economy	(I)-An already struggling sector will not be supported to recover from Covid-19 and will not take advantage of the opportunities to flourish (M)-Direct Covid-19 funding support to help the sector in the short-term. Work with key stakeholders to develop a strategy and activities to support the sector based on a sustainable funding model	

**5.4 Consultation**

5.4.1 The DNV Strategic Board has representation from a range of organisations. The work on the Visitor Economy strategy will be shaped by the sector, including the DNV partners. It is also anticipated that there will be a wider consultation on a draft strategy to ensure that it is an inclusive process and benefits from broader engagement.

**5.5 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel**

5.5.1 The Executive Advisory Panel is requested to consider the work of DNV and wider visitor economy and how NNC can support this key sector. This is not a Key Decision and is not subject to the ‘call-in’ process.

**5.6 Climate Impact**

5.6.1 Several of the strands in the DNV strategy support positive initiatives to support net-zero carbon ambitions, including support of the Greenway and active travel, and support for wildlife. The Environment Agency and Wildlife Trust are two key strategic partners. The work of DNV, allied with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy aims, creates synergy with the concept of a ‘Green Arc’ between Cambridge and Oxford and a key unique-selling-point for our future positioning as a council keen to develop the green environment.

**5.7 Community Impact**

5.7.1 Destination Nene Valley supports the tourism and hospitality sector which has been particularly badly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. It employs a large

number of people and benefits many local communities, both urban and rural. The support offered through DNV contributes to outcomes which add social, community and economic value, including education, heritage, volunteering, employment or health and wellbeing opportunities.

## **6. Background Papers**

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Destination Nene Valley Strategy: <https://nenevalley.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Nene-Valley-Final-low-res-web-version-030513.pdf#:~:text=Destination%20Nene%20Valley%20%28DNV%29%20is%20a%20new%20pathfinding,a%20mixture%20of%20local%2C%20national%20and%20international%20audiences>

Nene Valley Destination Management Plan 2019-2025: <https://nenevalley.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Destination-Management-Plan.pdf>





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## Destination Nene Valley Strategic Board Terms of Reference

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### 1 Name

1.1 The name of the Board is **Destination Nene Valley Strategic Board (DNV)**.

### 2 Purpose

2.1 The Board will:

- provide strategic direction for tourism initiatives that promote economic development and enhance the quality of life in the Nene Valley
- drive success through working in partnership with all relevant sectors
- provide direction to the project boards to ensure that communication, fundraising and partnership activity are co-ordinated appropriately
- monitor performance of the project boards against the agreed DNV business plan
- champion DNV at all opportunities

### 3 Membership

3.1 The Board will include senior representation from the following organisations:

- Private sector business
- East Northamptonshire Council
- Northampton Borough Council
- Northamptonshire County Council
- Borough Council of Wellingborough
- Peterborough City Council
- Environment Agency
- Rockingham Forest Trust

- Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire
- River Nene Regional Park
- Nenescape Landscape Partnership

3.2 The Board will be administered by an East Northamptonshire Council admin support officer.

3.3 The Board will invite individuals or representatives of other organisations to attend a particular meeting when an item of relevance to them is to be discussed or where particular specialist input is needed.

3.4 The Chairmanship of the Board will be appointed by election at the Annual General Meeting and both the Chair / Vice Chair will serve a minimum of 2 years.

#### **4 Meetings**

4.1 Board meetings will take place every 3 months. The business of the meeting shall be set out in an agenda and notified to members of the Board five days in advance of the date of the meeting. A quorum of 5 members will need to be present for a meeting to take place. The Board will be chaired by the Chair or Vice Chair.

4.2 Items suggested for inclusion in the agenda may be submitted to the Chair by any member of the Board at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.

4.3 The minutes of the previous meeting shall be submitted for agreement at the start of every meeting.

4.4 The Chair / Vice Chair of each Project Board will be responsible for reporting on the delivery of their projects to the Destination Nene Valley Strategic Board

#### **5 Members' Responsibilities**

5.1 Members must declare at the start of any meeting an interest in any matter for discussion in which they have a personal / prejudicial interest or involvement

5.2 Members will take every opportunity to advocate DNV activity at local and national levels in order to generate support, financial and resource, so that the project can continue to grow.

#### **6 Voting**

6.1 The Board will work towards securing mutual agreement on all aspects of the project, but should a vote be necessary each member will have a single vote and decisions will be made on the show of hands. In the event of a tie in the number of votes, the Chair or whoever deputies for them has a second vote or casting vote.

6.2 Individuals or group representatives invited to the meeting for particular items will not have voting rights.

## **7 Variation of the Terms of Reference**

7.1 These Terms of Reference may be altered by a majority vote of the Board.

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## **NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN BRIEFING NOTE**

The majority of bus services in Britain (outside London) are operated commercially. This means that like any commercial business, the bus operator decides when and where to run their services and the fares to be charged. However, North Northamptonshire Council still plays an important role in ensuring communities can access bus services, for example by using section 106 money to help new bus services for developing communities, providing infrastructure for bus services and by administering the concessionary travel scheme.

The Government published Bus Back Better, the National Bus Strategy for England (outside London) in March 2021. Backed with transformational funding of £3bn during the current Parliament, the strategy sets out a vision to make buses more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better co-ordinated and cheaper so that increased passenger numbers lead to reduced congestion, carbon and pollution, and encourages motorists to use a bus rather than their cars.

In order to receive this funding, local authorities were required to commit by the end of June 2021 to forming either an Enhanced Partnership or introducing bus franchising across the whole of their area. The Executive agreed in June 2021 to form an Enhanced Partnership, which is a statutory arrangement under the Bus Services Act 2017. The Enhanced Partnership can specify, for example, timetables and multi-operating ticketing, and allows the Council as Local Transport Authority to take over the role of registering bus services from the Traffic Commissioners, the government body responsible for licensing bus and heavy goods vehicle operators.

Having committed to form an Enhanced Partnership, the Council had to publish a local Bus Service Improvement Plan, detailing how we propose to use our powers to improve services, by 31 October 2021, and now has to develop an Enhanced Partnership by April 2022. From that date, the new discretionary forms of bus funding from Government will only be available to services operated, or measures taken, under an Enhanced Partnership or where a franchising scheme has been made.

The Government has set a timescale of June 2021 for Local Transport Authorities to commit to establishing an Enhanced Partnership across their entire area under the Bus Services Act 2017 and all bus operators to cooperate throughout the process. From 1 July 2021 only Local Transport Authorities and operators who meet these requirements will continue to receive Covid Bus Services Support Grant or any new sources of bus funding from the Government's £3bn budget.

Discussions have been held with bus operators who serve North Northamptonshire to understand their current issues and future aspirations, and this has been fed into the preparation of the BSIP. A stakeholder consultation was also undertaken to highlight potential areas for bus service improvement, and this has fed into the BSIP and will also feed into the Enhanced Partnership and hopefully future work once funding has been obtained. A public consultation has been held to gather input from residents about the specific interests they have in bus services and routes.

Key themes in the emerging BSIP include:

- The need to return patronage to pre-COVID levels before considering expansion.
- Patronage growth will mainly come from enhancing existing commercial services
- Filling gaps in evening and Sundays on the most frequent services
- Reinstating withdrawn services in rural areas, and the need to consider reinstating a bus subsidy budget
- The need for improved bus priority to improve journey times and reliability
- The need for better roadworks liaison to improve journey time reliability
- Introducing zero-emission buses to tackle air quality and decarbonisation issues
- Improved information for bus passengers
- Publish a Bus Passenger Charter.

The public consultation has now closed (as of 10<sup>th</sup> October). At the time of writing, the team were reviewing the consultation responses and will be able to update the Panel verbally with the emerging themes.