

Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Service Delivery, Performance and Customers

At 9.30 am on Thursday 2nd September, 2021 in the Lahnstein Room, Municipal Offices, Bowling Green Road, Kettering, NN15 7QX

Present:-

Members

Councillor Lloyd Bunday (Chair)
Councillor Jean Addison

Councillor Bert Jackson
Councillor Ian Jelley

Officers

Lisa Hyde – Director of Transformation
Janice Gotts – Executive Director of Finance
Adele Wylie – Director of Legal and Democratic
Geoff Kent – Assistant Director Customer Services
David Pope – Senior Committee Administrator
Fiona Hubbard – Senior Committee Administrator

20 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Kirk Harrison and Cllr Richard Levell.

21 Members' Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received.

22 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 26th July 2021

RESOLVED that: The Service Delivery, Performance and Customers Executive Advisory Panel agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2021 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

23 Notification of requests to address the meeting

None.

24 The Corporate Plan - Consultation on Service Delivery, Performance and Customers

Members received a report that presented for consideration relevant sections of the Council's draft Corporate Plan relating to Service Delivery, Performance and

Customers and were provided with the opportunity to comment and offer feedback to the Executive on the subject. The ultimate aim for this element of the Corporate Plan would be to provide efficient, effective and affordable services that would make a real difference to all local communities.

The panel was asked to consider what modern public services should look like. Members commented that services should be accessible to all members of the community with the option of face-to-face assistance available to those requiring it. It was noted that the ability to contact the Council without facing long waiting times was crucial, as was the setting of customer expectations at the initial point of contact.

It was noted that efficient digital service delivery would free up alternative methods of contact such as telephone and face-to-face appointments for those customers who required them. It was important that customers could have their queries resolved, or be signposted to the relevant organisation for resolution, at the initial contact.

Provide good quality and efficient services valued by our customers

Members were asked to consider draft ideas (set out below) that would evidence the Council's commitment to providing good quality and efficient services valued by customers:

1. Own responsibility for every contact received anywhere in the organisation and if we cannot help, connect you to other organisations that can
2. Work with our customers to develop quality services that are accessible to all and to make every contact count
3. Understand and care about your concerns; demonstrating through our actions that your issues matter to us
4. Be helpful, polite, friendly and treat you fairly and with respect
5. Be honest, only making promises we can deliver, and do what we say we will
6. Meet our customer service standards when we respond to you and regularly monitor and publish how well we are doing this
7. Provide clear and up to date information about our services
8. Explain our decisions and the reasons for them
9. If things go wrong, say sorry, do our best to put them right and learn from our mistakes
10. Enable customers to access more information and services online

Members provided comments as follows:

- Commitment 5 should be of increased importance
- The length of time for customers to establish initial telephone contact with a member of staff was vital, current timescales were too long
- Queries should be correctly dealt with at the initial contact

- The Council should understand that the costs of failure to provide exceptional service were not only financial but reputational
- Timescales for the resolution of customer queries had to be accurate
- Contact across the local authority needed to be joined up

Enhance the services provided at our community hubs

Members then considered how services provided at community hubs operated by the Council could be enhanced.

It was considered that community hubs should not offer a standard package or capacity of service, but rather relate directly to the needs and requirements of the community in which it was located and designed as a response to those needs. Additionally, facilities should allow communities to drive themselves by playing host to a variety of support groups and external community organisations. A mobile community hub could be beneficial to smaller or more isolated communities. Partnership working with other voluntary and public sector agencies at hubs would allow relevant queries to be handled correctly at the initial contact.

Members commented that community hubs should be able to assist in dealing with any query that would be answerable by customer services at one of the main office locations.

Value our staff and become an employer of choice

It was noted that in the post-COVID era employers including the Council had a duty to examine future working practices, with data analysis currently being undertaken in regard to equipment requirements, job types and workload for staff. It was of vital importance that service provision was not negatively impacted as a result of any changes made to working practices going forward.

Learning and development would play a key role in future working, and tools for line managers needed to be provided in order to effectively manage and support staff remotely. In addition, future accommodation requirements for the authority needed to be considered alongside flexible working arrangements.

It was noted that there were benefits and disadvantages to remote working, with positive environmental impacts from reduced journeys to work balanced against the reduced opportunity for information sharing and relationship and team building with colleagues.

Members noted that the Council should strive to become an employer of choice for the local community and further afield by offering stability and flexibility as well as the opportunity for career development and to learn new skills, including increased use of apprenticeships. Not only would such an offer assist in attracting an engaged and efficient workforce but could also offer external reputational benefits.

Use our assets, skills, knowledge and technology to make a real difference

The panel heard that making North Northamptonshire an attractive place for businesses to operate would assist in stimulating the local economy as well as furthering the growth and regeneration agenda. Promotion of assets such as local connectivity with larger urban centres, local attractions such as Wicksteed Park, listed architecture and national sporting facilities would be a positive way to promote the local area, not only to businesses but potential new residents.

It was noted that this aspect of the Corporate Plan would link in with the Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel.

It was requested that an additional bullet point be added to the draft document stating:

- Capture and use data to positively improve outcomes

It was further requested that reference to the “county” be removed from bullet point 3(iv).

Robust Finance and Performance Management

The panel stated that it was of paramount importance that services residents paid for offered exceptional value for money. Positive, proactive communication with residents was key to providing a greater understanding that the Council used available resources for the greater good of local communities.

There was a need for increased publicising of capital investments to evidence that the authority was using its finances to achieve the most positive outcomes possible. In addition, a much greater emphasis on local service procurement was required, with increased weighting of localism, added social value and environmental benefits to be given in the assessment of contracts to be awarded.

Ongoing financial monitoring by the Executive and Scrutiny Committees showed that the Council was committed to achieving positive financial performance.

Key Tasks

Key tasks required to achieve and deliver the Corporate Plan elements outlined above were provided to the panel alongside Key Measures of Success.

Members stated that a Customer Experience Strategy co-produced with customers was of paramount importance and requested that partner organisations also be involved in the process. Additionally, it was requested that the “People/Workforce Development Strategy” be expanded to include member development.

The panel requested that “good decision making” be removed from the Key Measure of Success as this was considered to be subjective. Members also requested that “low staff turnover” be removed as it was not considered that this was relevant.

The panel wished to understand how customer satisfaction levels would be benchmarked and noted that externally focussed measures of success such as a sense of local pride among staff and residents were of importance.

It was heard that the feedback as set out above would be collated and fed into the draft Corporate Plan, with an intention to bring the draft document back to a future meeting of the panel.

25 Executive Forward Plan and Panel Work Programme

Members received the Executive Forward Plan and the work programme for the panel and noted upcoming items for both.

It was requested that the Council's internal draft forward plan be circulated with the agenda pack for future meetings of the panel.

26 Close of Meeting

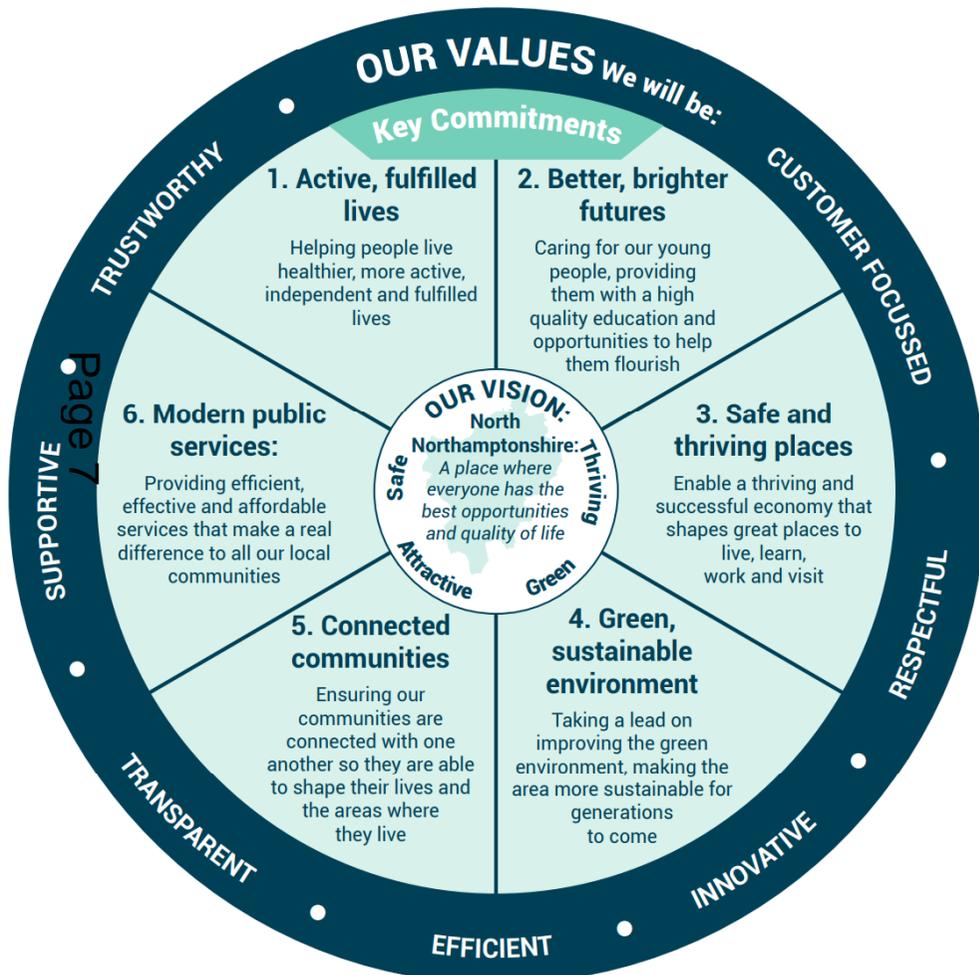
The meeting closed at 11.35am.

Chair

Date

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Our vision, values and key commitments



Our priorities for North Northamptonshire:

DRAFT

1. Active, fulfilled lives

- Greater access to better quality adult social care
- Value and support our carers and volunteers
- Improve the accessibility and use of leisure, culture and sport
- Provide enhanced support to improve mental health and wellbeing
- Tackle the causes of complex problems such as homelessness

2. Better, brighter futures:

- Ensure every child has equal access to a high standard of education
- Assist the Children's Trust to provide higher standards of support
- Promote better training, further education and employment opportunities for young people

3. Safe and thriving places:

- Strengthen the cultural identity of towns, villages and rural communities
- Help town centres and villages respond to changing trends
- Attract tourism, visitors and inward investment
- Support the creation of high-quality, better-skilled jobs
- Improve the standard of new and existing homes and ensure housing supply meets demand
- Tackle the causes of difficult issues leading to nuisance, crime and anti-social behaviour
- Promote sustainable, active travel
- Maintain our highways infrastructure to keep people moving safely around North Northamptonshire
- Enable people to travel across North Northamptonshire, and beyond
- Ensure everyone has access to high-speed internet connectivity

4. Greener, sustainable environment:

- Work with communities and businesses to tackle climate change and improve air quality
- As an exemplar to other organisations, demonstrate clear leadership on tackling sustainability
- Embed low carbon technology, sustained and improved green infrastructure, and sustainable forms of transport fit for the future
- Protect and further enhance the natural environment and ecology
- Ensure we all throw away less, reuse more, and recycle as much as we can
- Protect the countryside and ensure it is accessible for everyone to enjoy

5. Connected communities:

- Inform and listen to our communities, giving them a greater say in their future
- Respect and engage our local communities
- Empower a thriving voluntary and community sector

6. Modern public services:

- Provide good quality and efficient services valued by our customers
- Enhance the services provided at our community hubs
- Value our staff and become an employer of choice
- Use our assets, skills, knowledge and technology to make a real difference
- Robust financial and performance management

6. Modern public services:

will provide efficient, positive and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities

Key Tasks

Customer Experience Strategy co-produced with our customers

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Provide good quality and efficient services valued by our customers

We will:

1. Be honest, only making promises we can deliver, and do what we say we will.
2. Establish processes and practices that ensure that queries are correctly dealt with at the initial contact.
3. Work to provide a faster response to customers when they contact us via the telephone.
4. Take responsibility for every contact received anywhere in the organisation. If we cannot help, we will connect customers to other organisations that can.
5. Work with our customers to develop quality, joined-up services that are accessible to all and to make every contact count.
6. Understand and care about customer's concerns, demonstrating through our actions that customer's issues matter to us.
7. Ensure that our staff are helpful, polite, friendly and treat people fairly and with respect.
8. Meet our customer service standards when we respond to people and regularly monitor and publish how well we are doing this.
9. Provide clear and up to date information about our services.
10. Explain our decisions and the reasons for them.
11. If things go wrong, we will say sorry and do our best to put things right. We will learn from our mistakes and adapt our approach, processes and systems.
12. Enable customers to access more information and services online.

Enhance services provided at our community hubs

We will:

1. Develop Community Hubs that are responsive to the needs of the community they serve.
2. Ensure Community Hubs empower local communities, playing host to a variety of support groups and external community organisations.
3. Develop a partnership approach to service delivery and provision of advice at Community Hubs to ensure a joined-up approach to solving community needs.
4. Ensure a common standard of council service is provided by each Community Hub, with the range of queries answerable on par with services provided in the Council's customer service centres.
5. Explore the feasibility of a mobile Community Hub that is responsive to the needs of smaller and more isolated communities.

6. Modern public services:

will provide efficient, positive and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities

Key Tasks

Capital Delivery Plan
Workforce Development Strategy
Customer Development Strategy

Value our staff and become an employer of choice

We will:

1. Strive to become an employer of choice for the local community and further afield. We will offer stability and flexibility as well as the opportunities for career development and to learn new skills.
2. Increase the use of apprenticeships, providing employment and training opportunities for young people locally and helping to develop the skills of tomorrow's workforce today.
3. Deliver a strategy that helps embed and develop future working practices, building on the learning of the remote working of the COVID-19 pandemic. This strategy will build on the findings and analysis of what works well and will ensure that services, efficiency and staff-wellbeing is positively impacted by the approach.
4. Invest in the development of our workforce. We will ensure our managers have the behaviours, skills and tools necessary to effectively manage and support staff, working, locally, remotely and flexibly.
5. Develop fit for purpose approach to operational premises. These will complement our new ways of working strategy and focus on ensuring we get the maximum benefit from the Council's operational premises.
6. Ensure that our working practices and use of operational premises minimise the negative impact on the environment.

Use our assets, skills, knowledge and technology to make a real difference

We will:

1. Capture information that we need to improve outcomes
2. Increase knowledge and the digital skills of the local community.
3. Reduce our environmental footprint through the use of new technology. Technology can help reduce the need for travel for work-based meetings. We will also reduce our footprint as an organisation as we move our technology to a greener state i.e. from old desktop PCs to new, more energy efficient devices.
4. Digital services will allow us to add value to services for our residents. Digital technology will allow us to create services for residents based on need, allowing us to be highly responsive to what is most in demand.
5. Create a more attractive area for businesses as we create an area with good technology and asset infrastructure.
6. Support our most vulnerable residents with more knowledge and quicker services

6. Modern public services:

will provide efficient, effective and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities

Key Tasks

Development of a Balanced Budget

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Robust financial and performance management

Finance - We will:

1. Ensure the cost of services represent good value for money for local people. We will provide good quality information to local residents and businesses about the resources available and how they are used for the benefit of the local community.
2. Ensure we effectively communicate the capital investments that are being made in the local community.
3. Place greater emphasis on the important of procuring through local supply chains in order to better support the local economy.
4. Ensure continued financial monitoring by the Executive and Scrutiny Committees, demonstrating that the Council is committed to open and transparent financial performance.
5. Ensure our governance processes are robust and support effective decision making, and that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy reflects the significant challenges being faced and remains responsive to the uncertainties in the economy by continuing to deliver against savings targets.
6. Review our Medium-Term Financial Plan as a live document and as a key tool in assessing the financial viability of the Council.
7. Ensure our savings plans are clearly communicated and linked to specific policy decisions, with the impact on service provision clearly articulated.
8. Ensure we have the appropriate levels of reserves and that we closely monitor liquidity to underpin financial resilience.
9. Provide support to members and officers responsible for managing budgets.
10. Prepare the annual statement of accounts in an accurate and timely manner.

Performance - We will:

1. Be open and transparent with performance information.
2. Use data intelligently to understand, improve and transform services. We will capture and use data to positively improve outcomes for our local residents and employers.
3. Develop a strong outcome-focussed culture within the organisation that values and develops the Council's staff and drives improvement in services.
4. Develop and embed performance management arrangements that provide timely, accurate and relevant performance information to inform operational and political decision-making and scrutiny.
5. Develop effective measures for understanding customer and staff satisfaction and pride in the area and services provided.
6. Use performance information to develop high quality, high performing, award-winning services.

Key Measures of Success for Modern Public Services

- High Levels of customer satisfaction
- Customer response times (face-to-face, digital, telephone)
- High levels of customer confidence in North Northamptonshire Council
- High levels of service accessibility
- High levels of employee satisfaction
- Good financial sustainability

Agenda Item 6

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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North Northamptonshire Council

1 SEPTEMBER 2021 TO 31 DECEMBER 2021

Published by: Democratic Services

Leader of North Northamptonshire Council: Councillor Jason Smithers

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please email: democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk

September

Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Date of Decision:	Anticipated Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Budget Forecast Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Finance	
Capital Programme Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Finance	
Community Funding Policy	Executive	Yes	No		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Adults, Communities and Wellbeing	
Development at Arkwright Road and Baird Road	Executive	Yes	No Part exempt		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Place and Economy	
Development at Stanton Cross - Farm Tenancy	Executive	Yes	No		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Place and Economy	
Cannock Road Housing Development	Executive	Yes	No		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Adults, Communities and Wellbeing	
Cheltenham Road Housing Development	Executive	Yes	No		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Adults, Communities and Wellbeing	
Council Housing Development - Former Grange Methodist Church Site, Kettering	Executive	Yes	No Part exempt		30 Sep 2021	Executive Director - Adults, Communities and Wellbeing	

October

Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Date of Decision:	Anticipated Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Budget Forecast Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		28 Oct 2021	Executive Director - Finance	
Capital Programme Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		28 Oct 2021	Executive Director - Finance	
Review of Dry Waste Recycling Contract	Executive	Yes	No		28 Oct 2021	Executive Director - Place and Economy	
Future provision of the services currently delivered by Wellingborough Norse	Executive	Yes	No		28 Oct 2021	Executive Director - Place and Economy	

November

Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Date of Decision:	Anticipated Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Budget Forecast Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		25 Nov 2021	Executive Director - Finance	

Capital Programme Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		25 Nov 2021	Executive Director - Finance	
December							
Subject of the Decision:	Decision Maker	Is it a key decision?	Will it contain exempt information? Reasons for exemption, if any	Consultation undertaken	Date of Decision:	Anticipated Report Author	Support documents (if any)
Budget Forecast Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		16 Dec 2021	Executive Director - Finance	
Capital Programme Update 2021/22	Executive	Yes	No		16 Dec 2021	Executive Director - Finance	

EAP Service Delivery, Performance and Customers

Chair: Councillor Lloyd Bunday

Committee Officer: David Pope

Decision/Item	Summary of Item	Report Author	Department	Exempt Item	27 Sept 2021	01 Nov 2021	22 Nov 2021	17 Jan 2022	28 Feb 2022	21 Mar 2022	12 May 2022
North Northamptonshire Council – Corporate Plan	To present the relevant sections of the draft Corporate Plan to the Executive Advisory Panel for consideration that relate to service delivery, performance and customers and to ensure the opportunity to provide advice and feedback to the Executive.	Lisa Hyde	Transformation	N							
Future of Wellingborough Norse – Options Appraisal	To provide an overview of the options for the future delivery of services currently delivered by Wellingborough Norse.	Graeme Kane	Place & Economy	Y							

Decision/Item	Summary of Item	Report Author	Department	Exempt Item	27 Sept 2021	01 Nov 2021	22 Nov 2021	17 Jan 2022	28 Feb 2022	21 Mar 2022	12 May 2022
Forward Plan for Executive	To receive the Forward Plan for Executive	Lisa Hyde	Transformation	N							
Levelling-up of Garden Waste Collections	To consider and make recommendations to the Executive in respect of garden waste collections	George Candler	Place & Economy	N							
Parking Enforcement/Strategy	To receive information on the current situation regarding parking enforcement and future parking strategy in North Northamptonshire	George Candler	Place & Economy	N							
Dumped Vehicle Strategy	To receive an update on the current strategy for the removal of dumped vehicles	George Candler	Place & Economy	N							