



# Council

**A meeting of the Council will be held at the One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED on Thursday 23 September 2021 at 6.00 pm**

## Agenda

<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Minutes of Council (Pages 11 - 30)</b> To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2021.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Chairman's Announcements</b> To receive communications from the Chairman of the Council.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Public Participation</b> (1) Receipt of Petitions (if any) from Local Government Electors for the District (2) Questions (if any) from the Public
<b>6.</b>	<b>Written Questions</b> To receive any written questions and answers which have been submitted with advance notice in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.2.  Questions of which prior notice have been given may be asked of the Chair, Leader, Portfolio Holder or the Chair of a Committee.

7.	<p><b>Announcements by the Leader of the Council</b></p> <p>To receive communications from the Leader of the Council</p>
8.	<p><b>Cabinet Member Reports and Record of Decisions Taken by the Cabinet (Pages 31 - 80)</b></p>
<p><b>Items of Business</b></p>	
9.	<p><b>Youth Justice Plan (Pages 81 - 126)</b></p>
10.	<p><b>Planning policy, conservation areas, local lists and Article 4 Directions - suggested approach for decision making (Pages 127 - 132)</b></p>
11.	<p><b>Changes to Committee Places (Pages 133 - 136)</b></p>
12.	<p><b>Afghan Refugee Update (Pages 137 - 144)</b></p>
13.	<p><b>Motions</b></p> <p>To debate any motions which have been submitted with advance notice, in accordance with the Council's Procedure Rules.</p> <p><u>Motion 1</u></p> <p>Proposed by Cllr. Rufia Ashraf Seconded by Cllr. Bob Purser</p> <p>This Council notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That analysis of the 2019 Local Election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 35% of councillors in England are women, up 1% since 2018. Of the seats that were up for election in 2018, 38% went to women, up just 3 percentage points on 2014 when these seats were last contested;</li> <li>• As of October 2020, 27 councils have passed the LGA Labour Group's Parental Leave policy, and an additional 9 councils have their own parental leave policy in place;</li> <li>• That the role of a councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background, and that introducing a parental leave policy is a step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become councillors, and is also a step to encourage existing councillors who may want to start a family to remain as councillors;</li> <li>• That parental leave must apply to parents regardless of their gender, and that it should also cover adoption leave to support those parents who choose to adopt.</li> </ul> <p>This Council resolves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To adopt the parental leave policy drafted by the LGA Labour Group's Women's Taskforce to give all councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth</li> </ul>

or adopting;

- To ensure that councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate;
- To notify the LGA that this council has passed a motion at full council to adopt the parental leave policy.

#### Motion 2

Proposed by: Cllr Julie Davenport  
Seconded by: Cllr Dennis Meredith

This council understands the huge negative impact that the coronavirus pandemic has had on local businesses and in particular the Town Centre retail and hospitality sectors.

West Northamptonshire Council aims to support its local businesses. Our residents and council ask the executive to investigate the options, including free car parking, for car parking in all council owned car parks and to continue looking at other initiatives to improve and stimulate our town centres.”

#### Motion 3

Proposer: Cllr. Stone  
Secunder: Cllr. Alwahabi

The Authority recognises the many challenges faced by care leavers. We have shown our commitment to them by taking away the burden of council tax for all care leavers until they reach the age of 25 years. We now commit to the provision of one year's free broadband for all young people leaving care, for the first 12 months.

#### Motion 4

Proposer: Cllr. Alwahabi  
Secunder: Cllr. Haque

WNC is a new authority and committed to change and transformation where it will benefit our most vulnerable residents. The Pandemic has highlighted the need for more IT resources for children living in disadvantaged circumstances. WNC commits to recycling all unwanted IT devices and handing them over to a local charity for refurbishment and redistribution for West Northants children, young people, and care leavers.

#### Motion 5

Proposed by: Cllr Gareth Eales  
Seconded by: Cllr Janice Duffy

West Northants Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning application.

### Motion 6

Proposed by: Cllr Bob Purser  
Seconded by: Cllr Cathrine Russell

In the light of continuing concern by local residents on the growth of HiMOs, and their impact on local communities, West Northants Council will set up a review of the criteria for approval and report back by April 2022.

### Motion 7

Proposed by: Cllr Jonathan Harris  
Seconded by: Cllr Sally Beardsworth

The White Ribbon campaign is at the forefront of campaigning to both end domestic violence and change attitudes to ensure that not only the act but any and all attitudes that condone domestic violence are eradicated.

This Council Meeting notes that

- ONS figures show that almost one in three women aged 16-59 will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime; that two women a week in England and Wales are killed by a current or former partner; that over half a million women are raped or sexually assaulted each year and that a YouGov poll shows that a third of girls have experienced sexual harassment in schools.
- the global pandemic has led to more women and girls being vulnerable to domestic abuse and, according to a BBC news report last July, the initial three months of the first national lockdown saw an 80% increase in calls to the National Domestic Abuse Hotline.
- that, according to crime-survey and other government data, victims disproportionately come from those groups which already experience inequality and additional challenges in our society, including those who are mixed-race, have disabilities, or are transgender.
- and, as we reflect on the end of the delayed UEFA Euro 2020 tournament, previous research by Lancaster University showed that reported domestic abuse incidents increase whenever any of the home nations play in a major tournament, and the effect is particularly large on the days when those teams lose.

This Council Meeting further notes that

- White Ribbon UK is the leading charity with a mission to end male violence against women and part of the global White Ribbon movement which arose from a campaign started by men in Canada in 2004
- White Ribbon Day is marked annually on 25th November, the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women, by encouraging men and boys to pledge never to take part in, condone or stay silent about violence against women and to make this public by wearing a white ribbon on the day and a week or two afterwards
- White Ribbon UK operate a system of female Champions, male Ambassadors and Youth Advocates, as well as having specific materials to support primary and secondary schools, all with the aim of encouraging men to take the pledge and help to eradicate male violence against women.

This Council Meeting believes male violence against women can never be condoned and West Northamptonshire Council should do everything in its power to ensure

women are safe. As part of this, the council should facilitate and encourage participation by councillors, staff and schools in the White Ribbon Campaign.

This West Northamptonshire Council therefore resolves to

- encourage all male Councillors to take the White Ribbon pledge, never to take part in, condone or stay silent about violence against women.
- undertake as soon as practicable the steps necessary to achieve White Ribbon accreditation, joining the large number of public sector bodies which have already done so and as part of this, appoint a male Councillor as an Ambassador;
- mark White Ribbon Day on 25th November each year with a fundraising event; and encourage participation among council staff and local primary and secondary schools.
- liaise with the Police and Crime Commissioners office to understand better the issues that exist in West Northamptonshire and if necessary, establish a cross-party working group to develop a strategy to build awareness of the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women.

### Motion 8

Proposed by: Cllr Dennis Meredith

Seconded by: Cllr Sally Beardsworth

Fraser Park is an area that is cherished by local residents who say it is one of the few safe outdoor spaces they have. This area has also recently been identified as one of the five 'left behind' areas in Northamptonshire. According to these findings, these communities are likely to experience a range of adverse outcomes, according to evidence presented to the APPG. This includes lower levels of educational attainment, reduced employment opportunities and a higher rate of ill health.

'Left behind' neighbourhoods are also noted as having lower levels of community spaces, cultural, educational, leisure and green assets than other deprived areas. It would seem entirely illogical to even consider allowing development on such an open space given these factors.

The proposal to build 125 affordable homes on the site put forward by Northamptonshire Partnership Homes (NPH) comes at a time when the importance of such open spaces for residents, especially those in urban areas, has grown in its relevance and significance as a result of our experience during the COVID pandemic. Whilst this proposal was included as part of the Northampton Borough Council local plan, which was supported Pre-COVID, circumstances have changed and the significance of maintaining these types of spaces for both leisure and environmental reasons has grown significantly.

The Conservative manifesto for the West Northants election clearly states "Parks and other green spaces are much valued by residents as a vitally important amenity. We will continue to maintain them to a high standard....." and the West Northants Corporate plan states that the council will "Maintain our parks and green spaces to a high standard and make them an amenity for all". Building on this green space breaks these promises.

This council notes that, whilst there is no doubt a need for additional social housing, it is equally important to protect and preserve green spaces for residents especially in urban settings.

West Northamptonshire council therefore resolves to:

- Review the decision to build on Fraser Park.
- Actively explore alternative brown field locations for the 125 proposed homes.
- Form a task and finish group to include all elected West Northamptonshire council members representing the area, local community groups, members of Northampton Town Council, actively supported by council officers to develop a local business plan with the community to identify and implement an action plan.
- Develop a four-year investment plan for the area.

Motion 9

Proposed by: Cllr Emma Roberts  
Seconded by: Cllr Wendy Randall

This Council is committed to an anti-poverty strategy by understanding impacts and taking real action to lift people out of poverty. It also believes that the Government should stop the planned cut in Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit. Over 19,000 people receive Universal Credit in Northampton alone - in nearly 24% of all families in the area. This is the eighth highest number in the whole of the East Midlands.

This Council notes figures from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which show that 6.2 million families across the UK will feel a £1,040 hit to their yearly incomes almost overnight and 500,000 people – among whom 200,000 are children – are at real risk of falling into poverty and deprivation.

This Council therefore RESOLVES to join charities, local support groups and residents in writing to the Government expressing its deep concern and calling for Government to make the £20 uplift to Universal Credit permanent and extend it to legacy benefits, in light of the overwhelming evidence of the negative impact this will otherwise have on many within the authority's area

**14. Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman)**

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

**15. Exclusion of Press and Public**

Should Members decide not to make a decision in public, they are recommended to resolve as follows:

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraph(s) XXXXX would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

Catherine Whitehead  
Proper Officer  
15 September 2021

**Council Members:**

Councillor Ann Addison (Chair)

Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Rufia Ashraf

Councillor Jamal Alwahabi

Councillor Azizur Rahman

Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb

Councillor Fiona Baker

Councillor Dermot Bambridge

Councillor Harry Barrett

Councillor William Barter

Councillor Sally Beardsworth

Councillor Phil Bignell

Councillor Lizzy Bowen

Councillor Rebecca Breese

Councillor Adam Brown

Councillor Michael Brown

Councillor Muna Cali

Councillor Alan Chantler

Councillor Pinder Chauhan

Councillor Nazim Choudary

Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM

Councillor Paul Clark

Councillor Stephen Clarke

Councillor Maggie Clubley

Councillor Fiona Cole

Councillor Raymond Connolly

Councillor Karen Cooper

Councillor Daniel Cribbin

Councillor Julie Davenport

Councillor Janice Duffy

Councillor Paul Dyball

Councillor Gareth Eales

Councillor Terrie Eales

Councillor Alison Eastwood

Councillor Penelope Flavell

Councillor Louisa Fowler

Councillor Rupert Frost

Councillor Jo Gilford

Councillor Terry Gilford

Councillor Matt Golby

Councillor Andrew Grant

Councillor Mike Hallam

Councillor Enam Haque

Councillor Lauryn Harrington-Carter

Councillor Jonathan Harris

Councillor Cheryl Hawes

Councillor Rosie Herring

Councillor Stephen Hibbert

Councillor James Hill

Councillor Nigel Hinch

Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere

Councillor Mark Hughes

Councillor Rosie Humphreys

Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift

Councillor David James

Councillor Koulla Jolley

Councillor Paul Joyce

Councillor Andrew Kilbride

Councillor Anna King

Councillor Jamie Lane

Councillor Phil Larratt

Councillor Daniel Lister

Councillor Malcolm Longley

Councillor Greg Lunn

Councillor Charles Manners

Councillor Peter Matten

Councillor Ian McCord	Councillor Dennis Meredith
Councillor Colin Morgan	Councillor Charles Morton
Councillor Jonathan Nunn	Councillor Kevin Parker
Councillor Suresh Patel	Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Bob Purser	Councillor Wendy Randall
Councillor Emma Roberts	Councillor Jake Roberts
Councillor Sam Rumens	Councillor Cathrine Russell
Councillor Lisa Samiotis	Councillor Brian Sargeant
Councillor Sue Sharps	Councillor John Shephard
Councillor David Smith	Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms	Councillor Laura Stevenson
Councillor Danielle Stone	Councillor Winston Strachan
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex	Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz
Councillor Mike Warren	

## **Information about this Agenda**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk) prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

### **Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates**

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

### **Evacuation Procedure**

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**Queries Regarding this Agenda**

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Email: [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk)

Or by writing to:

West Northamptonshire Council  
One Angel Square  
Angel Street  
Northampton  
NN1 1ED

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Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED on Thursday 15 July 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present

- Councillor Ann Addison (Chair)
- Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Vice-Chair)
- Councillor Rufia Ashraf
- Councillor Jamal Alwahabi
- Councillor Mohammed Azizur Rahman (Aziz)
- Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb
- Councillor Fiona Baker
- Councillor Dermot Bambridge
- Councillor Harry Barrett
- Councillor William Barter
- Councillor Sally Beardsworth
- Councillor Phil Bignell
- Councillor Lizzy Bowen
- Councillor Adam Brown
- Councillor Michael Brown
- Councillor Muna Cali
- Councillor Alan Chantler
- Councillor Pinder Chauhan
- Councillor Nazim Choudary
- Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM
- Councillor Paul Clark
- Councillor Stephen Clarke
- Councillor Fiona Cole
- Councillor Raymond Connolly
- Councillor Karen Cooper
- Councillor Julie Davenport
- Councillor Janice Duffy
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- Councillor Alison Eastwood
- Councillor Penelope Flavell
- Councillor Louisa Fowler
- Councillor Matt Golby
- Councillor Andrew Grant
- Councillor Mike Hallam
- Councillor Enam Haque
- Councillor Jonathan Harris
- Councillor Cheryl Hawes
- Councillor Rosie Herring
- Councillor Stephen Hibbert
- Councillor James Hill

Councillor Nigel Hinch  
Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere  
Councillor Mark Hughes  
Councillor Rosie Humphreys  
Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift  
Councillor David James  
Councillor Koulla Jolley  
Councillor Paul Joyce  
Councillor Andrew Kilbride  
Councillor Anna King  
Councillor Jamie Lane  
Councillor Phil Larratt  
Councillor Daniel Lister  
Councillor Malcolm Longley  
Councillor Greg Lunn  
Councillor Charles Manners  
Councillor Peter Matten  
Councillor Ian McCord  
Councillor Dennis Meredith  
Councillor Colin Morgan  
Councillor Charles Morton  
Councillor Jonathan Nunn  
Councillor Kevin Parker  
Councillor Suresh Patel  
Councillor Ken Pritchard  
Councillor Bob Purser  
Councillor Wendy Randall  
Councillor Emma Roberts  
Councillor Jake Roberts  
Councillor Sam Rumens  
Councillor Cathrine Russell  
Councillor Lisa Samiotis  
Councillor Sue Sharps  
Councillor John Shephard  
Councillor David Smith  
Councillor Zoe Smith  
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms  
Councillor Laura Stevenson  
Councillor Danielle Stone  
Councillor Winston Strachan  
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex  
Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz  
Councillor Mike Warren

13. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Breese, Clubley, Cribbin, J Gilford, T Gilford, Frost, Sargeant, and Jolley.

14. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Aziz stated that his son was addressing Council on Motion 2.

15. **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

16. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman offered her condolences to Councillor Baker for the loss of her son. Members were informed that flowers had been sent on behalf of the Council.

Since the previous meeting, the Chairman attended Oak Apple Day celebrations, and the Armed Forces flag raising ceremony in Towcester.

Members were reminded that if their mobile phones rang, they would be fined £10 for her chosen charity, the Cynthia Spencer Hospice.

In light of the pandemic and to ensure that all could be heard, the Chairman asked that Members remain seated whilst speaking.

17. **Public Participation**

(1) The Chairman advised of 2 requests to present petitions.

Sally Pagano, on behalf of herself and Abington residents, addressed the Council in relation to a petition calling for more regulation for HMO properties.

Katie Moore, Northampton resident, presented a petition with 754 signatures, relating to the junction of Billing Road and Rushmere Road in Northampton.

Councillor Stone presented a hard copy of an e-petition with 596 signatures which called for more regulation for HMO properties.

(2) The Chairman advised of several requests to address the Council.

Daniel Soan of Northampton Town Council addressed the Council in relation to Item 16, Motion 3 (Junction of Billing Road and Rushmere Road in Northampton). He was pleased that the motion provided an opportunity for this important issue to be discussed but stated that it did not compel the Council to commit to any meaningful action.

Jane Wood of Climate Action West Northamptonshire addressed the Council and spoke in favour of the Council supporting Motion 1 (Re: Climate Emergency) as detailed on the agenda.

Goff Smith addressed the Council in relation to a petition calling for more regulation for HMO properties.

Arif Rahman, on behalf of the Northampton Islamic Association, addressed the Council and spoke in favour of the Council supporting Motion 2.

There were 4 written questions from members of the public. Written responses were circulated at the meeting.

No supplementary questions were asked.

**18. Written Questions**

23 questions had been received from Councillors and the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions and answers were given as tabled unless where stated, supplementary questions were asked as detailed below.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 1, Councillor Nunn stated that he would be happy to engage in further discussions with Councillor Beardsworth on the subject of libraries.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 5, Councillor Baker advised that Pupil Premium funding would come through, albeit late; the Council was looking to support affected schools in the meantime.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 11, Councillor Larratt advised that opening times for recycling centres were being monitored and its impact; unfortunately, funding to keep extended hours was running out.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 16, Councillor Nunn advised that he was happy to discuss the topic further with Councillor Randall outside of the meeting.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 18, Councillor Hallam stated that the Council would do everything possible to increase voter turnout at elections.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 19, Councillor Larratt advised that it was too early to give accurate costs with regard to a new highways contract; negotiations were currently ongoing, however, continual updates would be brought to Cabinet.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 21, Councillor Golby explained that an anti-poverty strategy was currently being worked on and encouraged Councillor Meredith to involve himself in its creation.

**19. Announcements by the Leader of the Council**

There were no announcements by the Leader on this occasion.

20. **Cabinet Member Reports and Record of Decisions Taken by the Cabinet**

Councillor Nunn presented his report as Leader of the Council and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, he advised that the 2pm start for the Strategic Planning Committee was a decision made by that committee; the Constitution allowed for times to change if necessary. He further advised that the Council were keen to push ahead with the Park and Ride scheme.

Councillor Brown presented his report as Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Leisure and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, he explained that housing strategy was a priority for the Council; he had recently met with Andrew Lewer MP who was undertaking a piece of work to assess the market position and economic needs of West Northamptonshire and ensure that it would be built into an interim housing strategy at the earliest opportunity. He advised that work was ongoing to ensure that all meetings were accessible to those that were unable to attend in person.

Councillor Baker presented her report as Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, she stated that she would give details of the SEND Board membership and its scope in her next report to Council. She further stated that Ofsted would be in the building the following week for a fortnight; this was a monitoring visit and should give an indication of how the Trust was performing. A recruitment campaign was ongoing, and Councillor Baker was very happy with its trajectory, agency staff numbers were down and in some areas there were no agency staff being used at all.

Councillor Nunn presented a report on behalf of Councillor Breese, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Built Environment & Rural Affairs, and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, he advised that the Call-In procedure would be as strong as it had been at predecessor authorities.

Councillor Golby presented his report as Cabinet Member Adult Social Care and Public Health and highlighted the salient points. He noted an error within the report; a briefing on Covid-19 for Members would take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> July, not the 19<sup>th</sup> as stated, and he urged Members to attend. In response to questions, Councillor Golby advised that a roadmap with dates relating to the Anti-Poverty Strategy would be provided to Councillor Roberts. Further ways in which to assist those suffering with long Covid would be looked into. The Council's whistleblowing policy would be circulated amongst Members following a request.

In relation to a question around vaccine hesitancy in the BAME community, Councillor Hill advised that this had been the subject of extensive discussion at the Diverse Communities Forum and encouraged Members to attend.

Councillor Hallam presented his report as Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services and highlighted the salient points.

At this point the Chairman advised that the 45 minutes allocated for this item had expired.

**21. Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2020/2021**

The Chairman advised that Professor Nick Petford, former Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board would be presenting this report to Council.

Professor Petford presented the report which provided a summary of the work overseen by the Board during April 2020/March 2021, including information on how the Board had met its statutory duties, such as approval of the Northamptonshire Better Care Fund 2020/2021, publication of the Director of Public Health Annual Report, overseeing work on the refreshed pharmaceutical Needs Assessment, as well as additions to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment made throughout the year.

Councillor Golby proposed the item and thanked Professor Petford for his Chairmanship over the past several years.

Councillor Nunn seconded the proposition.

Councillor Roberts welcomed the report but questioned why the Disabled Facilities grant seemed to be under-utilized in Northampton compared to other areas within West Northamptonshire. She hoped that the Better Care fund would retain the underspend into the Disabled Facilities grant and that residents that could not be reached due to Covid-19 would be seen to as soon as possible.

Councillor Golby confirmed that any grant underspend could, and would be, rolled over to the next financial year, and those not yet reached regarding the Disabled Facilities grant were being contacted. Councillor Golby further advised that he would be contacting the Labour Group in due course with details of Board meetings.

Councillor Beardsworth welcomed the report and commented that it was important that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had sight of it. She questioned whether there was sufficient support for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS).

Councillor Golby agreed that it was important for Overview & Scrutiny to have sight of the report and assured Members that next year's report would be seen by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Professor Petford confirmed that the data behind the report was extensive (in relation to CAHMS) and that the data would be available for Members' perusal.

Councillor Davenport stated that information regarding grants should be made more widely available. She stated her concern regarding a drop in the Disabled Facilities grant in the Medium-Term Budget for the following year by approximately 50%.

Councillor Golby advised that he would raise this issue with the Director for Housing.

In relation to Councillor Beardsworth's comments around CAHMS, the Chief Executive stated that NHFT had seen a 130% increase in child referrals in the last year; they had done great work with additional funding.

**RESOLVED:**

Council noted the report.

**22. Appointments to Outside Bodies**

Councillor Hallam presented a report which sought the endorsement of Cabinet (for bodies with executive functions) and Council (for bodies with non-executive functions) for the appointment of Members to the outside bodies listed in Appendix A of the report.

Councillor Hinch seconded the report.

Councillor Randall requested an end-of-year report to give Council a better understanding of the relevant outside bodies, specifically Future Housing.

Councillor Hallam commented that he would look into Councillor Randall's request but recommended that in the first instance to get in touch with Members listed as appointees.

Councillor Meredith asked for an update on the Corporate Parenting Board.

Councillor Hallam advised that this was not an outside body or an area that fell under his remit and suggested that Councillor Meredith contact the relevant Cabinet Member who would be happy to advise.

In relation to Councillor Randall's question around Future Housing, Councillor Brown advised that she may also wish to contact him, as the relevant Cabinet Member, as well as Councillor Cribbin who was the appointee to the body.

Regarding Councillor Meredith's question in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board, Councillor Baker stated that the Board served both West and North Northamptonshire Councils made up of 5 Members from the West and 5 from the North. Members had their first training session this week.

Councillor Meredith expressed disappointment that the Liberal Democrat group had not been included in the Board's membership.

**RESOLVED:**

Cabinet and Council:

- a) Noted and endorsed the appointments to outside bodies set out at Appendix A of the report

- b) Noted that further work would be required in relation to a small number of outside bodies and agreed that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader(s) of any group to whom a place on an outside body has been allocated, to make such appointments in due course.

23. **Appointment of Political Assistants**

Councillor Nunn presented a report which sought the views of members on the appointment of political assistants for the Leading Groups of the Council in accordance with the opportunity afforded by the provisions in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 set out at Appendix A of the report.

Councillor Harris stated that he could not support the report; Political Assistants had not been budgeted for, according to the report, however in response to a question earlier on the agenda, it was stated that they had been. Councillor Harris asked for clarification around this. He suggested that there were other things to spend the money on that would be of bigger benefit to residents.

Councillor Nunn stated that Political Assistant support was necessary and whilst it was a shame that it would not be a benefit to all parties, he urged Council to approve the recommendations within the report.

Councillor Harris stated that the Liberal Democrat group were not against Political Assistants, however the timing was not right, and a question remained around budgeting.

Councillor Meredith reiterated that he was not against Political Assistants, but that they should not be employed full-time. He also disagreed with the requirement that a group had a minimum of 10% membership to qualify for one.

Councillor Nunn advised that the 10% rule was a legal requirement and not set by the Council.

Councillor G Eales seconded the report.

**RESOLVED:**

Council:

- a) Agrees to the appointment of political assistants under the terms of the Local Government Act 1989 with effect from this Annual Council until to be reviewed at the next Annual Council meeting and subject to a maximum renewal to the Annual Council following the elections in 2025.
- b) Agrees that in accordance with the qualifying criteria posts are allocated to the Conservative and Labour Groups.

- c) Requests that the Leaders of the Conservative and Labour Groups advise the Director of Legal and Democratic Services of the wishes of their Groups on the filling of those posts.

**24. Changes to Polling Places**

Councillor Patel presented a report which sought Council's approval for a change to polling stations for the byelection in Talavera Ward of Northampton Town Council which was due to take place on 2 September 2021. It also sought approval for the Democracy and Standards Committee which has responsibility for the conduct of polling station reviews to make changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations as required for operational purposes and to recommend a statutory polling station review to Council and finally to grant the Electoral Registration Officer delegated power, when not practicable to seek Member Approval, to make changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations as required for operational purposes.

Councillor Hibbert seconded the report and advised that he was a Member of Northampton Town Council.

**RESOLVED:**

Council:

1. Agreed the change to the polling place that will be used in the Talavera Ward – Polling District NSTV6 for the by-election on 2nd September 2021.
2. Delegated to the Democracy and Standards Committee the ability to make changes to polling places outside a review.
3. Delegated to the Electoral Registration Officer the ability to make changes where it would not be practicable to seek Committee approval for a change in a polling place in time for an election in consultation with Ward Members and Group Leaders.

**25. Changes to Political Balance and Committee Places**

Councillor Hallam presented a report which sought invites Council to review the changes to the political balance of the Council and approve changes to membership of the Committees.

Councillor Bowen seconded the report.

**RESOLVED:**

Council:

- a) Reviewed the representation of different political groups on the Council;

- b) Determined the allocation of seats on committees to the different political groups as listed in Section 4.4 of the report
- c) Appointed members to the committees listed in Section 4.5 of the report to give effect to the wishes expressed by the political groups to which the seats were allocated.

26. **Integrated Care Across Northamptonshire (ICAN)**

Councillor Golby presented a report which sought Council's consideration on the report considered by Cabinet on Integrated Care Across Northamptonshire that was considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2021. He advised that the report would also go before the Overview & Scrutiny Committee next week.

Councillor Cooper seconded the report.

Councillor Randall welcomed the report and looked forward to it being presented at Overview & Scrutiny.

Councillor Roberts stated that a roadmap for the report through Scrutiny should be agreed for all funds detailed within the report.

Responding to a query from Councillor Davenport, Councillor Golby confirmed that savings in health would come from growth and reduced demand rather than cuts to services.

**RESOLVED:**

Council:

- a) Approved one-off revenue funding of up to £1m to be agreed from general fund balances to contribute to the iCAN programme, subject to satisfactory evidence of a likelihood of a positive return on the investment.
- b) Delegated to the Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with his Portfolio Holder, the Executive Director of Finance (S151 officer), and the Portfolio holder for Finance the power to determine whether there is satisfactory evidence of a likelihood of a return on the investment.

27. **MHCLG's Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme Funding**

Councillor Brown presented a report which sought Council's consideration on the report on the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme that was considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2021.

Councillor Hughes seconded the report.

Councillor Roberts questioned whether the Council had a "Plan B" if funding was not forthcoming and asked for a detailed update following the 4<sup>th</sup> August deadline. She

asked if the Council were working with partners in Daventry and Towcester regarding homeless provision.

Councillor Brown advised that the Council were working to a wider strategy in relation to rough sleepers and that it was looking to expand that strategy. He was confident that the funding bid would be successful. Work with partners outside of Northampton was going well; data showed that there was only 1 rough sleeper in the Daventry/Towcester areas, but this was no reason for complacency.

Councillor Beardsworth welcomed the report and queried whether the flats would all be located in one block, and if the work undertaken was a replication of work done by Homes First.

Councillor Brown advised that the report built on the principles behind Homes First but went further in terms of additional support provided to service users. He confirmed that the flats would be located as close to each other as possible; he was aware of the challenges that came with housing residents with additional needs, however the benefits in terms of provision of care and oversight were numerous.

**RESOLVED:**

Council:

- a) Agreed the increase in the HRA Capital programme of £1.32m to purchase and refurbish ten 1- bedroom properties through the HRA, in order to accommodate and support people who have been sleeping rough or are threatened with sleeping rough, funded by MHCLG/Homes England RSAP grant and HRA borrowing.

**28. Motions**

- 1) Councillor Nunn proposed and Councillor Hallam seconded:

"This Council notes that both Daventry District Council and Northampton Borough Council, along with over 2/3 of local Councils across the country have now declared a climate emergency. This Council re-affirms its commitment to tackling the climate emergency and agrees to hold a wide-ranging climate conference to listen to views of residents, businesses and community groups to contribute to plans already in place to achieve a carbon neutral West Northamptonshire by 2030".

Councillor Harris proposed and Councillor Humphreys seconded an amendment.

Amended motion to read:

"This Council notes that both Daventry District Council, and Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council, along with over 2/3 of local Councils across the country have now declared a climate emergency. It notes that South Northants District Council implemented a Climate Action Plan.

This Council will build on their examples by declaring a climate emergency and reaffirming its commitment to achieve Net Zero Carbon for the council's operations and estate by 2030.

By the end of 2021 this Council will hold a wide-ranging climate conference to listen to views of residents, businesses and community groups, and will regularly and openly engage with these groups going forward. This Council will also set and publicly report on key performance indicators to measure delivery of actions to tackle the climate emergency. Immediate actions will include:

- In Q3 2021 - publish its detailed actions to address causes and impacts of climate change; actions to be baselined by the end of Q4 2021
- In Q4 2021 set key performance indicators to measure delivery of actions to tackle the climate emergency, to be reported on monthly
- In Q1 2022 set up a quarterly climate forum including representation from residents, businesses and community groups

Furthermore, this council recognises that it cannot achieve this on its own and will therefore sign the UK100 Net Zero Pledge (see appendix 1)"

Council debated the amendment.

Upon a vote, the amendment fell.

Council debated the original motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

II) Councillor Hallam proposed and Councillor Morgan seconded:

"Council agrees that planting trees has a significant benefit to health, well-being, the environment and to helping tackle climate change. This Council agrees to fully embrace "The Queen's Green Canopy Scheme" launched to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Council agrees to develop an action plan to work with Schools, Colleges and Community Groups alongside the Woodland Trust to co-ordinate a campaign across West Northamptonshire to apply for the free saplings available as part of the Scheme and to encourage tree planting between Oct 2021 to the end of 2022."

Councillor Roberts proposed and Councillor Joyce seconded an amendment.

Amended motion to read:

"Council agrees that planting trees has a significant benefit to health, well-being, the environment and to helping tackle climate change.

"There is a negative bias that over-emphasises the challenges and conflicts without enough content about the benefits or solutions that would lead to improvement of our urban forests and community engagement around them.

We call on this Council to:

1. Note the significant role trees play in enhancing accessible green spaces, improving air quality, restoring and protecting soil health, creating wildlife habitat, mitigating flood risk and benefiting public health;
2. Recognise the contribution trees make to the environment in our towns including shading and cooling pollution and noise mitigation, as well speeding up floodwater drainage and improving the quality of our street scene.
3. Call for a review of current policies on, and attitude towards, the planting of trees in our urban area with a view to introducing a more proactive policy, which looks to increase the number and regularity of trees planted in our town and residential streets and parks and other open spaces;
4. Call for a new strategy to include providing opportunities to educate children in understanding the benefits of trees and to get involved in tree planting;
5. Recommends closer partnership working with the, and landowners seeking sites for new tree planting
6. Recommends a Tree Summit bringing together the Local Councils, Park Rangers, Landowners and partners responsible for land maintenance, the Woodland Trust and members of the public to work out how to plant more trees in our town, residential streets and in our parks and other open spaces.
7. To fully embrace “The Queen’s Green Canopy Scheme” launched to mark Her Majesty the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.
8. To work with Schools, Colleges and Community Groups alongside the Woodland Trust to co-ordinate a campaign across West Northamptonshire to apply for the free saplings available as part of the Scheme and to encourage tree planting
9. this action into a working Tree Policy that includes but is not exhaustive of the following;
  - To allow for ‘replacement in situ’ of valuable urban trees.
  - For a regular maintenance plan to be outlined.
  - There should be a mapping exercise. This is not just for existing trees, but for planting opportunities.
  - Stronger tree policies that informs infrastructure design and prevents conflicts.
  - Arboricultural Officer (s) at the heart of plans
  - Parameters agreed on what residents can and can’t do to trees.
  - A clear inclusion of the responsibilities for Trees on Council owned/NPH run land, taking account of the tree size and maintenance requirements
  - More information on tree benefits.”

Council debated the amendment.

Upon a vote, the amendment fell.

Council debated the original motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

III) Councillor Davenport proposed and Councillor Sharps seconded:

“As a Public Authority we have a duty to ensure our residents’ safety, and this includes on our roads. Hundreds of students and vulnerable residents have had no

choice but to cross the very busy, unsafe junction of the Billing Road and Rushmere Road in Northampton. The junction does not have any safe pedestrian crossing points. This Council assures residents that this Council will explore ways of making the Rushmere Road and Billing Road traffic light junction a safe place for our children, adults and vulnerable residents to cross.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

IV) Councillor Beardsworth proposed and Councillor G Eales seconded:

““The Structural Change Order that led to the creation of West Northamptonshire Council dictated that the Shadow Authority and the council elected this May should operate under the Leader and Cabinet Model.

We believe that it is now time for the Councillors and local people to determine themselves on ways of working and democratic oversight that will better serve the interests of the different communities we represent. We should also consider the potential devolution of services to localities.

To this aim we call for the council to enable the Democracy & Standards Committee to set up a cross party working group, based on the scrutiny model with officer support, to evaluate the potential replacement of the Leader and Cabinet system by a new Committee System of governance. There should also be a full and open piece of public consultation.

This process should be thorough and well thought out. Therefore, the target commencement of any new governance model to come into operation would be May 2023.

The first step will be the Democracy & Standards Committee working group establish a term of reference based on the above at its first meeting, which should be no later than September 2021.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion Fell.

V) Councillor G Eales proposed and Councillor Brown seconded:

“This council recognises:

The importance of motions passed within the previous four authorities in the West Northants catchment area.

That it is crucial to ensure any democratic decisions are retained and flow through into the present day thinking of WNC.

That adopting an exercise to preserve the above will not only efficiently capture all approved motions into one report, it also will reaffirm the importance of local democratic decision making.

This council resolves:

- To instruct the Democracy & Standards Committee to collate any motions passed in the last six years within the previous authorities.
- That once collated, these motions will be forwarded to the relevant Scrutiny Committee to pass comment on.
- That once this process is completed, a report containing all legacy matters will be brought to the earliest possible full council, with the target of December 2021's meeting. The report will lay out all motions which should be voted on individually for acceptance or any minor modifications. Such changes must not seek to alter the fundamental principles previously passed."

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

VI) Councillor Roberts proposed and Councillor Stone seconded:

Over 1 million people working in the public sector are paid less than the real Living Wage. As a result, more workers than ever are struggling to keep their heads above water on wages that don't meet the basic costs and pressures of everyday life;

That low pay is a leading cause of poverty, with most people living in poverty now being in working households;

That foodbank providers within the West Northants footprint have seen usage increase threefold as a result of the pandemic and ensuring a real living wage is available to as many as possible is essential to any Covid 19 Recovery Plan;

Research in 2018 found that the extra wages paid by local authorities accredited as Living Wage Employers are inevitably invested back into the local economy;

As a Council who has committed to producing an anti-poverty strategy taking steps to seek living wage accreditation would cement that commitment;

Through accreditation, this local authority would be making a commitment to tackle in-work poverty in our communities. Accreditation also means the authority can use the Living Wage Employer Mark to publicly demonstrate this commitment to the real Living Wage;

This will support a commitment to all staff and their quality of life. Raises the profile of the Living Wage campaign locally. Sets it stall out as a model employer and demonstrates visible leadership on tackling poverty pay, inspiring others to do the same;

Beyond being the right thing to do and an investment in both workers and the

community, paying the real Living Wage has distinct benefits for local authorities as employers;

This Council resolves:

- To commit to becoming a Living Wage Employer and seeking Living Wage Foundation Accreditation
- To ensure all directly employed staff are paid at least the real Living Wage
- To enquire with the Living Wage Foundation to begin the process and receive guidance
- To nominate an individual to be lead officer on the real Living Wage to liaise with the Living Wage Foundation and document progress
- To initiate an internal working group to plan and manage the Living Wage on an ongoing basis.
- To identify all relevant contracts that need the Living Wage embedded, with target dates for implementation
- To build Living Wage into all terms and conditions, pre-qualification questionnaires and future supplier communications
- To plan how this will be managed and reported annually to the Living Wage Foundation
- To report on the plan with dates for implementation at the Council's AGM"

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion Fell.

VII) Councillor Harris proposed and Councillor Humphreys seconded:

"In June 2021 West Northamptonshire Council ran a training event on the subject of equality. The aim of this training was to explain to councillors that the new council must offer equality of access to all our residents. In a report in 2019, The Office of National Statistics, highlighted the fact that more than 5 million people have never used the internet in the UK, with the vast majority of this offline minority being older people, and 79% of the total aged 65 or over.

Often, our residents are directed to 'online form filling' or asked to deal with issues that they may have using the council's website. Based on the data shown above, there is a high probability that we are alienating too many residents in our local wards. There are a number of instances where little or no thought has been given to those without internet access. A recent example is the green bin/garden waste renewal service in the Daventry area. This provided residents with a slip detailing the website to go to in order to renew their services, and no other apparent method of renewing. We are discriminating against many residents, simply by ignoring the fact that they do not either have access to or use the internet.

To rectify this, this council resolves to:

- review all of its service access points to ensure that individuals without internet access are not being discriminated against.

- ensure that there are always alternate means of access, in addition to online access, to services and/or renewal information, and these are readily available and communicated to our residents.
- retrain all of its workforce on equality matters, to ensure that all groups are always considered regarding communications and access to services.”

Councillor Gonzalez De Savage proposed and Councillor Nunn seconded an amendment.

Amended motion to read:

“In June 2021 West Northamptonshire Council ran a training event on the subject of equality. The aim of this training was to explain to councillors that the new council must offer equality of access to all our residents. In a report in 2019, The Office of National Statistics, highlighted the fact that more than 5 million people have never used the internet in the UK, with the vast majority of this offline minority being older people, and 79% of the total aged 65 or over.

Often, our residents are directed to ‘online form filling’ or asked to deal with issues that they may have using the council’s website. Based on the data shown above, there is a high probability that we are alienating too many residents in our local wards. There are a number of instances where little or no thought has been given to those without internet access. A recent example is the green bin/garden waste renewal service in the Daventry area. This provided residents with a slip detailing the website to go to in order to renew their services, and no other apparent method of renewing. We are discriminating against many residents, simply by ignoring the fact that they do not either have access to or use the internet.

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- review all of its service access points to ensure that individuals without internet access are not being discriminated against.
- ensure that there are always alternate means of access, in addition to online access, to services and/or renewal information, and these are readily available and communicated to our residents.
- Ensure that all staff are trained on equality matters, to ensure that all groups are always considered regarding communications and access to services.”

Council debated the amendment.

Upon a vote, the amendment was agreed and the amended motion became the substantive motion.

Council debated the substantive motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

VIII) Councillor Roberts proposed and Councillor Randall seconded:

“We understand that interim appointments to senior officer roles via recruitment agencies are occasionally made by the council. These must be fully transparent.

Recent information reported shows this transparency was not as would be expected. It would appear that these appointments should be captured by the pay policy and pay policy statement approved by Full Council earlier this year. It is clear that the policy and the Localism Act 2011 and relevant sections should apply to such appointment and remuneration information.

The pay policy provides a definition for Chief and Deputy Chief Officers and it is clear therefore that the remuneration package of those officers and all other statutory and non-statutory officers was expected to be detailed within that policy and any subsequent policy.

The Pay policy statement confirms: "Where an appointment proposes a remuneration package greater than £100,000, approval will be sought from Full Council". No such referral to full Council currently occurs prior to senior interim agency appointments.

Section 39(4) of the Localism Act 2011 allows "A relevant authority may by resolution amend its pay policy statement (including after the beginning of the financial year to which it relates)".

There cannot be any doubt that a fundamental reason for having such a pay policy is to inform and provide openness and accountability. If our policy provides any doubt around what is expected, whether a position is temporary or not and of what needs to be brought before Full Council, then that policy cannot be fit. Ambiguity cannot be allowed.

This Council resolves to:

1. Amend the pay policy statement for approval at the next full Council to ensure interim agency appointments are covered.
2. Amend the pay policy statement for approval at the next full Council to ensure complete clarity that any appointment that proposes a remuneration package that could reach £100,000 must have approval of full Council
3. Review all positions to ensure no other ambiguity remains.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

29. **Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman)**

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 10.25 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Report of Councillor Jonathan Nunn Leader of the Council

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

Since our last meeting I have worked with the Cabinet, Members, the Chief Executive and Officers across all areas of the Council. Many of these activities and issues are referred to in more detail in Cabinet colleagues' reports.

### **COUNCIL & CABINET MEETINGS**

As well as this Full Council meeting again being open to public attendance, it is also being streamed online, and this will continue to be the case with all Full Council and Cabinet meetings in the future. Our Cabinet meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September saw good attendance by Members and the public, and again was also streamed. Given the very suitable space available there, and the quality of the audio-visual equipment for streaming, our intention is to continue holding Cabinet meetings in the Towcester chamber.

### **TRANSFORMATION**

Transformation to deliver better and more cost-effective services is vital to the success and sustainability of the council. With the team in place, including the Head of Transformation Delivery, and Design Team Manager, a central projects register has been created using a digital platform, Monday.com, and this has resulted in increased consistency in approach and better structured management information to support and monitor the delivery of such a varied and complex portfolio of change and productivity initiatives.

A Transformation Board has been established which met for the first time in June and continues to meet on a monthly basis, chaired by the Chief Executive, with responsibility for monitoring the delivery of transformation projects.

There continue to be four main areas currently of the transformation portfolio:

#### **Stabilisation**

The team continue to work to complete projects that began ahead of the council coming into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April, to ensure the stability of service delivery, examples being:

- Inter Authority Agreements (IAA) finalisation continues at pace as we work with colleagues in the North to define suitable metrics.
- Projects across the directorates continue to be driven forward, and many are nearing completion against expected deadlines.

#### **Improvement Opportunities**

Opportunities and potential threats to service delivery have been examined and refined and the Transformation service has been supporting these to progress. Examples of things that are currently happening include:

- Each Assistant Director has been engaged in order to develop opportunities which could have a financial benefit. A number of those now have resources allocated to them to develop businesses cases.
- Exploratory work coordinated with Procurement colleagues has begun in the directorates in order to get the best out of recommissioning opportunities, whilst seeking positive improvement.

- The Transformation team are supporting all the directorates to engage fully with the forthcoming Star Chamber process, which will involve careful examination of all budget lines to both ensure that improvements are found, but that essential services are adequately funded.

### **Disaggregation / Aggregation**

Work to disaggregate the services between WNC and NNC is ongoing, along with work on the pipeline of service aggregation, bringing together and harmonising services from across the legacy councils. A change request process has been agreed, which is required to give approval to any changes sought to services or timescales compared to the original task and finish group timeline and blueprint. Examples of things currently happening include:

- Planning those services which are disaggregating this year, including impact assessments
- Lead services (where NNC or WNC currently take the lead) are being reviewed for detailed separation requirements
- Plans are being created to ensure all crucial service and service user data will be available for the receiver council upon disaggregation

Recently completed work in this area includes:

- Joint Officer Board and Joint Member Committees are in place for formal assessment and approval of change requests.
- Regular enabler sessions are progressing to assess and monitor disaggregation proposals and methods.

### **The Council's Future Way of Working**

The Transformation team are supporting the development of a plan for how council staff will work, post-covid, which we refer to as our target operating model. This work currently includes:

- The Future Ways of Working group are currently working on floor plans for the four main sites showing the teams zones to consider future requirements as more staff consider returning to buildings.
- Workstyles for all job types have been selected by managers and this evidence is now being considered and consolidated before a full consultation is launched with staff.
- A full guidance document on returning to the buildings is in progress and will be published by the end of September, supported by sessions at all of our four main sites conducted by the Corporate Services Director.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Communications activity includes:

- Working proactively with colleagues in the Home Office to provide clear communications regarding Afghan resettlement. We have seen such a positive response from our communities, with many offers of support received so far. Anyone who wishes to offer support can register through the relevant page of the WNC website, which is clearly marked as the first button on our website homepage. As well as update information here, there is a link to the funding page where you can donate, and a form of support to formally register what you can offer in terms of support.
- Regeneration communications promoting the future of Northampton Market Square and the appointment of heritage advisers.
- Press releases to support Cabinet papers including flood preparation work, facilities management contracts, property projects, transformation, council tax reduction scheme

- Working with Place and Economy colleagues on plans for Environment Summit including a series of targeted climate summit events which are planned for September/October covering key themes including: Climate Networks, Business, Transport, Agriculture and Rural Environment, Housing, Children and Young People. The events will be used to co-design the important Climate strategy for WNC, to be released in time for COP26 in November, helping to maximize public interest and engagement. A detailed action plan will be developed following approval of the strategy to ensure we can monitor progress, as part of important Sustainability Strategies.
- Heritage Open Days brochures have been distributed promoting events starting this month.
- Northants Chamber expo event at the Saints ground on 15 Sept - working with economic development team on marketing materials for this, Cllr Bowen to speak at launch and news release planned.

## **BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE, POLICY & PERFORMANCE**

- Our first corporate performance report has been developed and has been considered by Cabinet. Further developments are planned for our quarter 2 performance report, to ensure that we are measuring our performance against our Corporate Plan.
- Work continues on our website project to improve the quality of information and online services available to residents. Thank you to those councillors who have been helping with testing our new developments and providing feedback.
- Staff networks continue to operate for Black and Minority Ethnic colleagues, Carers, Disability, LGBTQ+, Mental Health & Wellbeing and Armed Forces Community. The networks are staff led and all have sponsors from our senior leadership team. The networks are helping to promote equalities across our organisation and to develop a new culture of inclusivity and innovation and celebrate key events including Pride and Black History Month.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW**

With the previous NCC wards boundaries having been used for the first term of our new unitary council, a full review of ward boundaries has been due to take place. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England have given us an outline timetable for their ward boundary review, which will see phases assessing the appropriate number of councillors, through to the boundaries for ward. Perhaps most importantly, I was pleased to understand that their timetable includes a briefing for all members before the process commences, plus consultation opportunities for representation to be made by WNC, party groups, or individuals throughout the stages of the review. The expectation is for their final recommendations to be ready by June 2023.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn  
**Leader of the Council**

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**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2021**

Across my portfolio we are really starting to pull together our service delivery to provide consistent services across West Northants whilst maintaining an approach that recognises the uniqueness of our local places. Below are some of the things we have taken forward over the last two months;

### **Housing strategy**

We have started work on our Housing strategy and over the next few months people will have a real opportunity to shape and influence its focus and priorities. Our intention with the strategy is for it to be a live document that depicts local need and recognises and promotes the interventions of both the Council and its partners. Local people will be able to see our priorities and feedback their experience of the support we provide.

### **Ending Rough Sleeping Plan 2021/2022**

In August we were required by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to submit our Ending Rough Sleeping Plan 2021/2022. This document outlines our plans to contribute to preventing single homelessness and ending rough sleeping by the end of the financial year. It will be used by MHCLG to track our progress against our agreed objectives. Our plan is orientated around the following three pillars;

1. Prevention - Stopping people sleeping rough for the first time.
2. Intervention – Support to those currently sleeping rough to move off the streets.
3. Recovery – Support to those who have slept rough to ensure they don't return to the streets.

The plan to date is very much structured in outline terms using the MHCLG proforma. Over the next few months we will be working with partners, stakeholders and local people to produce a public facing version that structures our activity for the next year.

### **Accommodation for ex-offenders**

In April, MHCLG announced a new scheme to provide grant funding to local authorities to support ex-offenders, who are, or are at risk of becoming homeless into their own private rented sector (PRS) tenancies. The government is committed to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping and re-offending and stresses the importance of settled accommodation in contributing to reducing re-offending.

The scheme specifically focussed at supporting ex-offenders, aims to build a pathway from prison into the private rented sector accommodation, by increasing access to private rented sector tenancies and sustainment through the provision of dedicated support and management via a tenancy support officer.

Improving housing outcomes for ex-offenders and removing barriers can be achieved through working with and strengthening the links with partners and stakeholders with appropriate procedures in place:

- Timely referrals i.e. Duty to Refer;
- Appropriate risk assessments;
- Adequate support and supervision;
- Financial support through rent deposit / rent in advance;
- Dedicated tenancy support and sustainment;

- Support mechanisms for landlords.

West Northants secured a grant award in August of £200,475. This funding covers interventions for:

- 40 service users
- 2 x tenancy support officers
- 1 private sector access officer (PSAO)
- Financial tenancy support package

The scheme will support eligible ex-offenders with low to medium needs into the private rented sector, alongside working closely with private sector landlords providing support and assurances of established property management expertise.

### **Library management system**

At cabinet last week we took a report to seek approval to replace our library management system. The Library Management System is the core system that is used by the Library Service, Community Managed Libraries, Council Customer Services and several traded services.

Alongside the library management system the report also sort permission to invest in a range of IT hardware as the previous computer and associated tech had not been replaced for some time.

The new system and hardware will be essential to the continuing success of our libraries being a central feature of our local communities

### **And finally...**

I would like to mention NPH Housing management team. The team was named Local Authority / ALMO Team of the Year in the national Housing Heroes Awards on the 7<sup>th</sup> September. The award ceremony, organised by The Chartered Institute of Housing, celebrates the achievements of social housing providers across England and shines a light on the incredible work carried out across the housing sector in the past 12 months.

NPH was recognised by the judging panel for “delivering wide ranging, pragmatic and effective services for many customers and supporting the whole community during hard times”.

Congratulations to everyone at NPH for their great work!

### **Museums – Reporting Period 15 June – 15 August 2021**

The second full month of opening of saw the new Northampton Museum & Art Gallery welcome 12,000 visitors over this reporting period. These figures are in line with the (pre Covid) projected visitor figures. This is a major achievement given many museums are operating at between 13 – 40% of visitor numbers compared to 2019 figures for the same period (source The Art Newspaper, 25 June 2021). Visitor comments have been very positive, and the museum continues to gain good reviews across traditional media and social media channels.

The museum, in partnership with Royal and Derngate Theatre and University of Northampton, hosted National Youth Theatre Summer School. The NYT ran a two week and a three week course for students aged 16-21 covering a wide range of acting and theatre skills, with several hundred students from across the region participating in the programme. This generated valuable income for the museums service and helping raise the museum’s profile as a professional, high quality venue for corporate and private hire customers.

The museum's retail operations are building on the very successful opening sales activity. The shop is continuing to develop its product ranges, particularly with regard to local suppliers and makers, with several new ranges slated for September and October. The Selling Gallery has performed well, providing a physical gallery space for local artists and makers. There has been significant interest and sales of artworks and sculpture have been strong, including several high-price point pieces from the Chris Fiddes exhibition, demonstrating a healthy market for higher ticket pieces.

The café continues to be very popular with visitors, with a menu strongly focused on produce from local suppliers and producers. The café turnover has increased by over 30% month on month since opening and is beginning to establish itself in its own right.

The museum service has continued to develop its national presence and partnerships. In a competitive process the museum service was selected from Museums across the UK to take part in an exclusive 2 year programme partnering with the National Portrait Gallery. The project is fully funded and. The programme includes an internship, mentoring opportunities, knowledge exchange partnerships with 7 other UK museums; and access to exclusive targeted seminars. It is anticipated that the programme will lead to other opportunities for partnership working with other museums. Work is underway identifying 10 high profile artwork loans from the National Portrait Gallery to be displayed in the Sense of Self running March – June 2023 at the museum.

### **Archives and Heritage Service**

The Archives have continued the process of opening up, whilst maintaining Covid safety measures. These have been well received by users, many of whom find the pre-booking and planned access to document and improvement on the previous arrangement. Plans are being developed to address various building issues, including levels of humidity in the main stores.

Remaining archaeological artefacts and related items have been transferred from Boulton House to the Arc at that Chester House Estate. The Boulton House building, at the end of its functional life, will be demolished.

**Councillor Adam Brown**  
**Deputy Leader of the Council**  
**Portfolio Holder for Housing, Culture & Leisure**

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**23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2021**

I am pleased to report the following :

- All our schools are all open, following the Summer break.
- Attendance levels, although low by normal standards, are a point higher than the percentage attendance reported by schools completing the return nationally;
- Pupils with a social worker, with an EHCP and / or entitled to free school meals are all attending at a higher level than nationally.
- Outbreaks of Covid at the moment are being appropriately contained; and there are no requirements for children to isolate, as was the case in the past.
- Nearly all pupils with EHCPs have been placed at a school, although it much be noted that we have insufficient specialist places to meet demand.
- We have launched a new web-based weekly update for school leaders, called 'HeadWest' this will help with our wish to have a great deal more engagement with Head teachers locally and ensure we have good future engagement. – see [HeadWest - \(tfemagazine.co.uk\)](http://tfemagazine.co.uk);
- Preparations for roll out of vaccinations for 12-15year has had approval by Chief medical advisers, we have been working with PH and schools to make sure things are in place for this to happen, ahead of he approval.

## **OFSTED CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE MONITORING VISIT JULY 2021**

### **1. Background to the Visit**

1.1 Between 13<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Ofsted undertook a monitoring visit of Children's Social Care, with a focus on children who are the subject of child in need and child protection plans. The visit looked at the quality and progress of social work delivered by Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) on behalf of the councils, and the impact this has for children who are the subject of child in need and child protection plans.

1.2 This was the fourth visit Ofsted have made since the inspection in June 2019 which found children's social care in Northamptonshire to be inadequate, as part of Ofsted's inspection framework. Ofsted are due to carry out between 4- 6 monitoring visits before completing a full inspection.

1.3 The previous visits were:

- **January 2020-** Focus on progress made in relation to the local authority's arrangements for the 'Front door' (contacts, referrals, assessments and planning for children in need of help, protection and support)
- **October 2020-** Focus on how social care has delivered child- centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- **February 2021-** Focus on progress made to improve the experiences of children in care, including disabled children. This was the first visit since the establishment of Northamptonshire Children's Trust.

1.4 This was therefore the first visit by Ofsted since the two unitary councils have been established. Ofsted chose to undertake two concurrent visits with two inspection teams and will take learning from this for future visits and inspections.

1.5 Two letters were published one for each Council.

1.6 We expect that there will be at least one further monitoring visit, in October/ November 2021, followed by a full inspection in Summer 2022. The full visit will result in a grading being given by Ofsted.

## 2. The Visit

2.1 The focus was on children who are the subject of child in need and child protection plans, and inspectors looked at:

- The quality of assessments, planning and reviews;
- The quality of visits and work with children to inform assessments and plans;
- Responding to children at risk of sustained neglect;
- The quality of management oversight and supervision to progress plans;
- The stability and sustainability of the safeguarding service workforce, including impact of current caseloads on practice; and
- The impact of leaders on practice with children and families

2.2 During the visit, the inspectors

- Spoke to political leaders, senior leaders, partners;
- Reviewed North, West and County data about the children we are/ have been working with;
- Reviewed all our documents and evidence, including the refresh of our self-evaluation focused on children who are the subject of a child in need and child protection plan;
- Reviewed 12 cases NCT managers had previously audited;
- Met with social workers and spoke to Child Protection Chairs, parents and young people
- Met with managers to review children's cases that are proceeding to court, where a ruling would be made as to whether the children would come into care;
- Sampled case records of children who are or who have been the subject of a child in need or child protection plan, including children with disabilities.

## 3. Initial feedback

3.1 Inspectors reported that they could see **tangible progress, which is gaining traction in improving outcomes for children**. They agreed with our self-assessment and said we know ourselves well. They said they were impressed by senior leaders' energy and commitment to children.

3.2 The Inspectors found NCT's **quality assurance activity to be thorough and comprehensive** and commented on the oversight that senior leaders have has

been strengthened through the introduction of the QA Board chaired by the NCT Chief Executive.

3.3 The inspectors recognised that we know that we still have a way to go to have a stable workforce and that some caseloads are higher than we would want them to be as a result. They recognised that there has been a lot of effort in relation to **recruitment and retention of social workers** and some progress has been made.

3.4 The inspectors said all the **social workers they met with were passionate** about their work and felt well supported by their managers and found senior managers to be accessible and visible.

3.5 The parents and young people who the inspectors spoke to were very positive about the support they had received from their social workers and the impact this has had. For example,

*“My Social Worker has helped me to achieve change and to keep safe and has had a positive impact on my relationship with my mum”*

*“My Social Worker was really good, supportive and nice, understood my circumstances. Helped guide me and stuck by me, I found the meetings helpful and professionals celebrated successes which is different to my previous experience. The child in need plan has ended which I am happy with but I will miss my Social Worker and am confident to ask for help if need to”.*

3.6 The inspectors could see that **social work practice has improved, whilst the quality is still variable**. They saw some examples of great practice that has made a positive impact on outcomes for children.

3.7 The inspectors identified the same **areas for development** that we have already identified and have plans in place to address: **improving the consistency of quality of practice** including in analytical assessments, realistic plans, purposeful visits, understanding and reflecting children’s individual and diversity needs, and supervision of social workers that impacts on experiences and outcomes for children.

3.8 The inspectors did not identify any noticeable differences in approach, practice or outcomes between the West and the North.

#### 4. Next steps

**9<sup>th</sup> September 2021:** Final letters were published on [Ofsted - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

**October/ November 2021:** Expected 5<sup>th</sup> monitoring visit by Ofsted

**Summer 2022:** Expected full inspection which will result in gradings of children’s social care for North and West Northamptonshire Councils

**Councillor Fiona Baker**  
**Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education**

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**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

It's a busy time across Adult Social Care and Public Health at the moment and people will have seen on the news some of the significant challenges being encountered including safeguarding concerns and staffing shortages in the care market. You will have also seen the government's announcement around future funding of Adult Social Care earlier this month. Once we have worked through the detail on this, I will provide a further update on what it means locally.

Below are four of the key areas I have been working on recently;

### **Integration with health - Integrated Care Systems**

Work continues to establish local arrangements for the Northamptonshire ICS. We are one of 42 ICS areas to be created across England, and now government legislation is in progress to give all of these Integrated Care Systems statutory status, most likely by April 2022. This will formally set out the powers and responsibilities of ICSs to support their populations to live healthy lives and get the care and support they need, when they need it.

Here in Northamptonshire, ICS status will allow us to formalise some of the existing joint working arrangements we have successfully developed through NHCP, involving many partners. It will enable us to simplify the way we work together and improve our ability to make decisions together in the same place. The short video below more information on Integrated care systems



#### **WATCH**

This [short animation](#) from NHS England and NHS Improvement explains more about Integrated Care Systems.

A key element of our preparation is confirming who we would expect to take up senior roles for our local NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), starting with the chair designate. The ICB will be the new body which will oversee NHS functions across Northamptonshire's ICS, working in close collaboration with a new statutory health and care partnership of wider organisations.

Following a robust process, NHS England and NHS Improvement have recommended, and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has agreed, that current NHCP Independent Chair Naomi Eisenstadt should be NHS ICB chair designate, ready to take up the post from April 2022 should Parliament confirm the current ICS plans.

At a system level we have confirmed 4 priority collaboratives that will be the focus of both integration and transformation programmes;

- Integration Across West Northamptonshire
- Mental Health and Learning Disability

- Elective
- Children and Young people

Each of these collaboratives are well established programmes and are actively taking forward integration programmes locally.

Next steps will see increased conversations about what do integrated health and Social Care look like at a place level. This conversation will commence through a health Wellbeing Being Board Workshop on the 30<sup>th</sup> September

### **Integrated Care Across Northamptonshire (iCAN)**

Following cabinet approval to commission Newton Europe the approach has been part mobilised. A people scrutiny session considered the approach on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021 considered the approach and supported its implementation with an expectation that a further scrutiny session take place on the 20<sup>th</sup> September. This session will look at;

- How the Council is ensuring that iCAN is consistent with the way it works in Adult Social Care.
- How risk around iCAN is being managed.
- How iCAN is supporting the Council to manage winter pressures.
- The rationale for the Council investing in iCAN and the latest position concerning the resources secured for it.

### **Anti-Poverty Strategy**

Work on the Anti-Poverty Strategy has begun. Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire are hosting the Poverty Truth Commission which will seek to discover the answer to the question, 'what if people who struggled against poverty were involved in making decisions about tackling poverty?'

A website has been set up for the commission Poverty Truth Commission ([poverty-truth.org.uk](http://poverty-truth.org.uk)) which is already encouraging real life stories, from those with lived experienced of poverty.

The first phase of the Poverty Truth Commission is establishing organisations and individuals who are interested in establishing a local commission. A key factor within this discernment process is whether there is sufficient interest and commitment by people with a direct experience of poverty as well as organisations and institutions in the local area for a Poverty Truth Commission.

This group has been established for West Northants and met for the first time on 22 July 2021.

The Group is very diverse and reflective of our BAME communities. There is a commitment from the agencies to gather real life stories during the month of August to feed into the development of a definition of what poverty means for West Northants. It is anticipated that we will have this definition by September 2021.

An introduction to our proposed approach went ahead on the 10<sup>th</sup> September and further workshop is planned for the 30<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Mandatory Vaccinations**

With effect from 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021, CQC Regulated Care Home Managers will not be permitted to allow any workers into the care home without showing evidence of full COVID 19 vaccination status or vaccination exemption status. This included all people who

require to enter a care home in order to undertake their jobs such as care home workers, electricians, hairdressers, social workers etc.

We have been actively working with the West Northamptonshire Care Home providers to understand what their current staff vaccination status is, as well as the level of risk or assurance with service delivery with effect from 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Since the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021, we have undertaken by weekly workshops with care homes where they can raise issues or concerns as well as to share best practice around implementation of this change. As a result, we have seen staff first dose vaccination levels increase from 80% to 88% across West Northamptonshire. This means that currently there are around 400 care home staff across West Northamptonshire who have not been vaccinated. We are running additional workshops on contingency planning following the first dose deadline, which is 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

Internal staff mandatory vaccination – we are working closely with HR and union colleagues to ensure that we are following the guidance on mandatory care home staff vaccination and that we have the relevant processes in place that are clearly communicated to those that are impacted. At this stage the numbers of West Northants employees working in our care homes that will not be fully vaccinated by the 11<sup>th</sup> November is 11. We will continue to support and work with them as they progress through the processes that should be signed off by mid-September following union consultation.

**Councillor Matt Golby**  
**Cabinet member for Adult Social Care and Public Health**

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**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

## **REGULATORY SERVICES**

### **Trading Standards**

The team have carried out some illegal tobacco visits over the last couple of weeks with Northamptonshire Police, Environmental Health/Licensing and a tobacco detection team. They have visited 15 shops in Northampton with one seizure of 1129 packets of illegal cigarettes and some illegal hand rolling tobacco and another of 2483 packets of illegal cigarettes and some illegal hand rolling tobacco

This is part of a national disruption exercise funded by HMRC. Lord Toby Harris, Chair of National Trading Standards, said:

*“The trade in illegal tobacco harms local communities and affects honest businesses operating within the law. The National Trading Standards initiative in partnership with HRMC is playing a significant role in disrupting this illicit trade and is helping to take illegal tobacco products off the streets.”*

Sentencing is due to take place in the coming weeks following guilty pleas by, E.Asthampton Ltd, Martin RYAN and Joseph RYAN to fraudulent trading. Operation Haggard, the investigation into this complex fraud has involved he amounts of work for members of the team over the past four years. A more detailed press release will be issued once sentencing has taken place.

The team are working hard to ensure that businesses are aware of their new responsibilities under the Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019. (Natasha’s Law). This legislation extends allergen labelling requirements to food items which are prepacked for direct sale.

### **Environmental Health**

The environmental health team are working to prioritise inspections of the new food businesses which have registered with the Council during the last 18 months. They are following guidelines outlined by the Food Standards Agency in their recovery roadmap. The team continue to carry out some work in support of the partnership efforts to deal with COVID 19 and continue to support investigations of outbreaks and promotion of vaccination but have been able to carry out more of their routine work.

The officers dealing with environmental crime have recently had some success with prosecutions for flytipping and littering offences

### **Building Control**

The team continue to deal with a large number of inspections reflecting the high levels of activity in the construction industry. They have also dealt with a number of dangerous structure cases in recent weeks. These were caused by incidents including fires in a cannabis factory and a vehicle crashing into a house.

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The second meeting of the West Northamptonshire Community Safety took place on 8 September 2021. The meeting included:

- An update on the positive outcomes being delivered by “True Knowledge” a youth project offering young people support from youth workers as they need it, at their pace, with people they trust and in spaces they feel confident. The project works with young people to build on their strengths as opposed to a traditional assessment of needs that can focus on deficits. The programme is open to 10-17 year olds in the Blackthorn, Spring Boroughs, Kings Health and Bellinge areas of Northampton.
- Approval of the delivery of a West Northants Community Safety School Engagement Programme to be delivered by agencies in the partnership to primary school aged pupils. The programme includes: face to face delivery of key community safety subjects in 12 priority schools and a virtual learning package for all local primary schools.

### **Beat the Streets**

West Northamptonshire Council working in partnership with Public Health Northamptonshire and NSport have attracted Sport England funding for Beat the Street Northampton. Beat the Street is a fun, free initiative that will see Northampton transformed into a giant game! Participants get a Beat the Street card which contains radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology and tap them against sensors called ‘Beat Boxes’ located on lamp posts across the area. Players receive points for each box they tap. The game encourages residents to get involved and provides an opportunity to form teams linked to schools, community groups and businesses promoting people to get more involved in their local community alongside becoming more physically active. The game will start on 22 September and end on 3 November 2021. To get involved go to: <https://www.beatthestreet.me/northampton>

### **Community Funding**

In recent months West Northamptonshire Council has been developing its approach to community funding for community projects and initiatives. The Council’s approach to Community Funding will be considered at the Council’s Cabinet meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October and the scheme will be launched shortly after that. People who want to keep up to date regarding the launch of the community funding scheme, the process and when funding rounds will open visit our “Community Funding and Grants” pages on the council’s website: <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/community-grants-and-funding>

### **Community Events**

Over the past 8 weeks, officers have delivered several community events, including Srebrenica, Love Parks Week and Northampton Pride which bring our local communities together to promote diversity and foster good relationships. In addition, officers have worked with our partners to deliver awareness campaigns around anti-social behaviour, bike theft and knife crime and have held 12 engagement days of action in our neighbourhoods to tackle environmental issues, crime and anti-social behaviour.

### **Resettlement of people from Afghanistan**

Over recent weeks officers from a range of teams across the council have worked at pace with other statutory agencies, North Northamptonshire Council and voluntary/community sector partners to develop a comprehensive package of wrap around support to people who have fled Afghanistan and are currently being accommodated in hotel-type accommodation booked by the Home Office within West Northamptonshire. A separate report outlining more details is included in the reports for this meeting of Full Council.

**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

## **Planning Policy**

Progress has been made on the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan. A paper on possible options to accommodate strategic housing and employment growth was presented to Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> September. Preparations are now underway for consultation and engagement on that paper, due to start in October.

There will be an all member briefing on the proposed Spatial Strategy Consultation imminently.

Cabinet also considered papers on proposals to designate a new conservation area at Spratton and update the conservation area designation in Hellidon (both in Daventry area), following consultation earlier in the year. Cabinet also considered proposals to make some immediate Article 4 directions in the villages of Flore, Weedon, Everdon, Little Everdon, Staverton, Kilsby, Pitsford and Welford.

Three neighbourhood plans are currently being examined, Clipston and Overstone in Daventry area and Hackleton in South area. Consultation has started on the submission version of Great Houghton neighbourhood plan in Northampton.

The Policy team is continuing preparations for the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 examination in Public, with Hearings most likely scheduled for the autumn. It has been agreed that the Hearings will be held physically but preparations will also be made for virtual Hearings should that prove necessary.

## **Development Management & Enforcement**

Planning application and Enforcement caseloads continue to be very high, and we are taking steps to recruit to vacant posts to reduce the backlog of work. We continue to look at new ways to improve our processes, efficiency and responsiveness. Over the coming months we will see improvements and service developments that acknowledge some of the challenges we have faced in providing the service we would like to offer.

A harmonised Enforcement Policy for the three Local Plan Areas has been drafted and will be coming to Cabinet in October. This will provide a clear framework for response times, investigation and actions for possible planning breaches. There will be a central portal on the WNC website for the public and members to report suspected breaches of planning law.

The administration of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy money continues to be a challenge, and it is intended that this can be addressed by the ongoing review of the Council's Constitution and in developing a more focused and responsive process.

**Councillor Rebecca Breese  
Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Built Environment & Rural Affairs**

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**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

## **FINANCE ISSUES**

### **Revenue Monitoring report**

Councillors will have seen the revenue monitoring report for the first quarter of this financial year as the Cabinet report has been published.

Whilst the budgets for the new authority are still settling down the early signs are encouraging about the robustness of the budget that was set for this year.

Currently, there are service pressures highlighted of £1.624m on a budget of £326.6m which in percentage terms is miniscule (an overall variance of 0.5%). The services will be aiming to close this gap between now and the end of the year but members may recall we also set up a contingency budget for this year to help with any 'bumps in the road' which can be utilised if required. Therefore, I am pleased to say that at this point we are projecting a 'nil variance' on our budget for this year.

Two other encouraging signs are contained within the report.

Firstly, all of the predecessor authorities in the West are provisionally showing underspends in their outturn position for last year (2020-21) which again bodes well for the robustness of the budget for this year.

Secondly, the overall level of reserves now estimated to be held at 1 April 2021 is higher than anticipated when compared on a like for like basis with the reserves estimate set out in the budget report. It was estimated there would be £95m of reserves and the latest position shows that a direct comparison with this figures shows an increase of £14m to £109m.

These are early days and we are taking nothing for granted but the initial signs are reassuring.

### **Budget Setting**

The next major task that we are progressing is the budget process for 2022-23 and the refresh of the medium-term financial position. Officers are currently in the process of organising budget scrutiny sessions (known as 'star chambers') to understand the robustness of the current service estimates, any service pressures and potential efficiencies and savings proposals.

The final budget papers estimated that the budget gap for next year was almost £15m or approximately 5% of the budget and we are beginning the process to determine how that gap will be closed.

### **Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)**

This is the subject of another Cabinet report as we have to go out to consultation on the CTRS in order to meet the requirements to have the scheme in place for 1 April 2022.

Members may recall that the previous CTRS was harmonised from the 1 April this year so that a consistent approach was in place across the whole of the West Northamptonshire area. A 20% scheme was adopted for this year meaning that if maximum support is given to working age claimants who are having difficulty paying their council tax there will still be a requirement to pay at least 20% of their council tax bill.

The proposal for 2022-23, which is subject to consultation, is to keep the amount of support at the same level.

The consultation also makes recommendations on providing support to Care Leavers through the scheme and other minor amendments.

### **Revenues and Benefits restructure**

Cabinet agreed that the currently overcomplicated way of delivering revenues and benefits services through three very different operating models should be brought together and there should be one service delivery model. It was agreed that a single in-house team should be implemented and officers have set about this with some gusto.

Consultation with all affected staff commenced in the w/c 6 September and the current plan is for the single in-house team to be in place for 5 November 2021.

This is a significant, large and complex project and is the first major service restructuring transformation that is taking place in West Northamptonshire. Officers highlight there could be a dip in performance whilst we go through this significant change but the expectation is that once the new structure is embedded the arrangements will be much more straightforward than they currently are, performance will be at least as good as it currently is, residents will get a consistent and improved service and the service will cost no more than it currently does.

## **ASSETS ISSUES**

### **Property Strategy & Estates**

The new team is supporting services across WNC as they continue their transformation journey, ensuring we have the right property to deliver services to residents whilst looking to secure increased income and reduced costs from property.

The team is transforming its delivery model and establishing a systematic approach to disposals, acquisitions and asset valuations. It is reviewing its wider operating model to unify the teams from the predecessor authorities with the aim of delivering a robust and consistent service covering all of WNC's assets. Excluding housing, these number about 900, ranging from important heritage buildings and corporate offices to commercial property and open spaces. A new corporate property records system will form part of this.

The team continues actively progress lettings within the Council's significant investment estate and review any vacant properties or sites to minimise the revenue costs of holding vacant estate.

Highlights of current work include:

*New Secondary School:* Working with education colleagues to consult on the proposed lease of a site at Wantage Farm, north of Northampton, for a new secondary school. This is the subject of a report to Cabinet in September.

*Delapre Abbey:* Working on proposals to enable the Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust to restore and preserve the 19<sup>th</sup> century stable block.

*Children's Trust:* Working through the arrangements for the Trust to legally occupy the range of buildings needed to provide its services.

*Fibre Optic Broadband:* Developing the legal mechanisms to allow City Fibre and OpenReach to serve residents in the Council's flats.

*Northampton Partnership Homes:* Working with NPH to identify suitable long-term accommodation options.

### **Facilities management**

The new team is continuing to support the safe operation of the new Council, now transitioning to the lower level of Covid-19 controls deemed appropriate.

*Covid-19:* Continuing to support the Mass Vaccination Facility at Mouton Park.

*Council and Cabinet meetings:* Making arrangements to support the new Council meet, as existing venues are not suitable without temporary adjustments.

*Vulcan Works and St Johns:* Working to receive and safely manage the properties from the construction contractor, prior to the appointment of a managing agent.

*Forum Café, Towcester:* Progressing with the reopening of the café for September, drawing on resources across the team to achieve this.

*Fleet Management:* Developing systems to manage the new Council's combined fleet, with a view to the 2030 carbon-neutral target.

*Parking:* Making revised arrangements for staff and Member parking as Covid-19 restrictions ease, and exploring arrangements to make payment simpler.

### **Property management and maintenance**

The new team is working on establishing systems and data for effective management of the Council's properties, ensuring they are fit for purpose and minimising lifetime costs. This exercise will take time to complete, but at present suggests legacy budgets are not sufficient to hold property in a decent condition. The new Council inherited a significant maintenance backlog.

The Northampton Schools PFI is one of the largest educational PFI projects in the country, with annual spend of around £28m, with a second schools PFI worth £4m per year. Work continues with contractors to ensure that the schools are safe and fit for purpose and provide welcoming and interesting places for pupils to learn in. Officers continue to challenge the managing contractors to ensure that the contract provides best value for money to schools and the public purse.

Highlights of current work include:

*Green Lane, Northampton:* Work to address the drainage system to reduce the risk of flooding. Existing culvert will shortly be replaced with bridges to reduce the risk of blockages.

*Wootton Hall Park:* Securing life-expired buildings to protect the public prior to their demolition.

## **Construction**

The team is working on a wide range of projects. Highlights among the construction projects include:

*Mulberry Place, Daventry:* Despite considerable challenges, rectification of the ceiling support system defects had largely concluded. Fit-out by the operator, Arc, should shortly resume. The scheme remains within the £12.75m budget.

*Marie Weller Primary School, Towcester:* Work on this new primary school, using off-site construction, is approaching completion. The project remains on budget and the school opened in September as planned.

*Braunston – Daventry Cycle Track:* Phase 1 (Middlemore, Daventry to Braunston Tunnel Portal on the Grand Union Canal) is approaching completion. The project remains well within the £0.75m budget, funded from CIL.

*Northampton Guildhall:* Major scheme of roofing and allied repairs. Opening up the roof has revealed a combination of conditions better and worse than indicated on the original survey. It should be possible to complete the scheme within the budget. Advantage will be taken to, separately, carry out some works best accessible by abseiling. The roof works will be followed by a scheme to replace the boilers.

*Professional services frameworks:* Procuring new frameworks for a range of professional services. These enable to secure good value in a timely way, and maximise the opportunity for local and smaller businesses to provide services to the Council and other public bodies.

*Northampton Leisure Centres:* Major scheme of replacement plant and equipment. An initial phase of work to replace boilers at the Mounts Swimming Pool is proceeding, with other works following.

*Northampton Watercourses:* A review of the watercourses owned by the Council to put in place arrangements for their sustainable management, including potential works.

**Councillor Malcolm Longley**  
**Cabinet Member for Finance**

**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

## **Economy Team Summary**

The Economy team have been actively engaging with the business community and responding to numerous enquiries, as well as posting regular updates through the dedicated Economy social media channels and ebulletin, to ensure local businesses are kept as up to date and informed of the latest information, support and guidance available.

On 15 September 2021, the Economy team will be exhibiting at the Northamptonshire Chamber Back2 Business Expo, this event will provide the team with an opportunity to promote the services available to West Northamptonshire businesses from the Economy team and create new contacts, networking to raise the profile of the services available to businesses from the Economy team.

The Economy team are supporting the launch event of a new business networking forum. The West Northamptonshire Business Forum inaugural event takes place on 21 September in Daventry and aims to bring West Northamptonshire businesses together and create a new networking group.

The Economy team have also been working on creating new business and employment support pages on the Council's website to provide information on how to contact the team and what support is available.

## **Major Projects and Regeneration**

- **Vulcan Works**

Building works to transform the former Vulcan Works site in Northampton into creative businesses with studios, workshops and managed workspaces have now been completed.

The £14 million development is located in the heart of the town's Cultural Quarter and involved a combination of renovation and new build that will provide a total of 68 lettable units specifically aimed at start-ups and growing businesses within the creative industry.

Work to appoint an operator for the facility has commenced, with three bidders having been shortlisted to be taken through to the final stage of the procurement. The tender process will be completed by the end of October. After this the final fit out of the facility will be undertaken, with an opening planned early in the new year.

- **Northampton Market Square**

The professional team to take this important project have now been appointed, with the architects Gilliespies leading the design work once again. Surveys to inform the design work including ground penetrating radar and topographical surveys taken place with the results now back with the design team to be incorporated to the next stage of work.

Consultation with the market Traders over the future operation of the market will be taking place from this month as the council aims to make changes to the market to make it financially sustainable and attract more people to the town centre

- **78 Derngate**

A business case for the use of £400k of Towns Fund monies, as was set out in the Northampton Town Investment Plan, has successfully been approved by the Northampton Forward Board and is now subject to WNC Cabinet approval. Subject to this final approval the monies will be made available to the 78 Derngate Trusts project to enable the extension to the much-loved local attraction to take place.

- **Former Marks and Spencer's site**

Works to remove the asbestos from the former Marks and Spencer's Site are now complete. A business case for the site will now be developed setting out the plans in more detail, this business case will come to the Northampton Forward Board and WNC Cabinet early in the new year for approval.

- **Watermeadows**

Work on the Watermeadows in Towcester continues with Phase 1 works now almost complete and the second phase of works, which will see new footpaths created across the site well underway.

**Councillor Elizabeth Bowen**

**Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth**

## **HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES**

### **HS2**

Regular pre-app meetings continue to be held with HS2 Ltd and their contractors on planning, landscape, ecology, noise and highways matters related to the construction period and the permanent arrangements, in advance of formal consents being submitted to the Council. The Council continues to facilitate meetings of the HS2 Liaison Group, a forum for local residents and other key stakeholders to receive updates from HS2 Ltd and raise issues directly. The Council continues to positively engage with HS2 Ltd to minimise as far as possible the impacts of the project on local residents as construction starts to accelerate. The possibility of HS2 Marshals, similar to a post recently recruited to in Buckinghamshire, are being investigated as an option for West Northamptonshire.

### **North West Relief Road**

We are awaiting news on our Levelling Up Fund bid which was submitted in June, although we are aware that other bidders are also still waiting announcements on their bids and announcements are due “between September and November 2021”. We have also been working with SEMLEP and Aecom to support the submission of a bid to the Central Area Growth Deal which we understand will be announced by December.

Acquisition of the land by agreement is progressing well in advance of a possible Public Inquiry into the Compulsory Purchase Order in March 2022.

The Contractor will be reviewing their programme and costs for a deferred start date in Q1 2022, and it is possible that some programme related savings may be realised by a later start date and any savings will support the Council’s risk and contingency allowances to reduce risk to the Authority.

### **Farthinghoe Bypass**

An update paper regarding the Farthinghoe bypass has been considered at September Cabinet. The paper provided the results of the latest consultation and the work proposed to progress this scheme including possible interim measures.

### **Cliftonville Corridor**

Work on Phase 2 of the Cliftonville Corridor scheme will commence on the 20th September 2021, with traffic management being installed on the evening of Sunday 19th September 2021 and programmed to be completed prior to Christmas 2021.

The scheme will create the eastern end of the Northampton Inner Ring Road, a historic policy objective of NCC and will help reduce traffic, improve air quality and bring both the Train Station and Northampton General Hospital inside of this route.

Phase 2 will see a reallocation of road space between Bedford Road and Cliftonville Road, with a dedicated north-bound lane being introduced for Hospital traffic. Southbound, the left turn movement onto Bedford will be improved by providing additional

road space via land secured as part of the St Andrew's development. Westbound traffic on Bedford Road wanting to continue beyond the Cliftonville Road junction into town or the University, will now only have to stop for crossing pedestrians, removing the delays currently experienced from queuing vehicles turning into Cliftonville Road.

### **New Highways Contract**

The procurement of a new contract for highways has now reached its second phase of Dialogue with bidders. At the end of this phase, in early October, bidders will submit their Detailed Solution which will be assessed, and one bidder will probably leave the process. The new contract is scheduled to begin in Summer 2022, slightly later than originally planned for and so discussions have commenced with KierWSP about extending their current contract to ensure there is no gap between the two contracts.

### **Active Travel**

We have secured money from the Department for Transport for funding to help develop a new Active Travel strategy for West Northamptonshire. This strategy can be used to identify improvements to our active travel schemes, which in turn will reduce congestion and contribute to the Council's carbon reduction targets.

We continue to work with Voi, who manage the electric scooters in Northampton. We have had a positive meeting discussing how to use the extension of the trial to resolve some of the issues associated with the hire scooters. We have also had a positive meeting with Northamptonshire Police to discuss the enforcement of non-Voi (private) e-scooters which remain illegal for use in public places.

### **Bus Lane Review**

A review of the St James / Westbridge Bus Lane is being conducted and the review has been extended to include consultation with stakeholders. When all data has been gathered, there will be a paper to inform a formal decision in due course.

### **Transport – Buses & Rail**

Following agreement at our June Cabinet meeting to develop a Bus Service Improvement Plan, work has been on going and a draft will be considered by Cabinet in October 2021. This is one of the key steps in delivering the Government's National Bus Strategy "Bus Back Better" within West Northamptonshire and allowing us to access the associated funding.

I, and Chris Wragg have met with a very competent 14-year-old young man Harry Burr. Harry lives just outside Northampton and is a very able rail campaigner. He was recently a guest columnist in Rail magazine. Harry is campaigning for better connectivity in West Northamptonshire, in particular a new train station at Weedon – Daventry Parkway. I believe he has already met other Members, visited the Parish Council, met with the local MP and Rail Minister, and has engaged with organisations such as Network Rail and Train Operators. Harry's web site details his campaign - <https://daventryparkway.co.uk/>

Councillor William Barter and I have met with the Rail Minister, Chris Heaton-Harris MP to discuss rail issues relative to West Northamptonshire and our aspirations for improved connectivity post HS2 as well as direct links to East/West Rail and the development of the North/South route through Aylesbury to Old Oak Common. We will be pursuing these issues with DfT, EHH and East West Rail.

## **Highways Maintenance**

A schedule of highways maintenance in West Northamptonshire is published regularly and is available for all elected members. The maintenance team are using new technology to help improve the speed and quality of repairs, including the Thermal Road Repair Unit and the Roadmaster unit which have been bought using capital investment from the Council. A highways 'open event' introduction day was held on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021 at Brixworth Depot and was attended by approximately 40 members from both West and North Northamptonshire Councils. Future events will be scheduled, and they are a good opportunity to find out more about the work that the team does on a daily basis.

## **WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

### **Waste Collections**

Waste collections in the three geographical areas of West Northamptonshire continued seamlessly through the transition to the new authority. The majority of services have remained fully operational during the latest period of the pandemic. Disruption to collection services caused by operatives having to self-isolate due to Covid had subsided, but we have, of late experienced service disruption due to availability of HGV Drivers during the traditional holiday period. This is part of a national shortage of HGV drivers and has resulted in difficulty in recruiting new and agency drivers, in Daventry and Northampton in particular. Service disruption has been minimised wherever possible, and the majority of services have been caught up by the end of the week. There have been communications released each day via various means in order that members of the public are aware of the issues and are informed as to what to do with their bins.

The problem should ease with the end of the school summer holidays, but the national shortage of HGV drivers continues, and so contingency plans are being considered, including looking at rates of pay, flexibility in the workforce and encouraging loaders to train as drivers.

### **Household Waste Recycling Centres**

The sites reverted to 5 day a week opening in July and have since eased the covid social distancing measures which has helped increase the flow of vehicles. These services have not (yet) been affected by the National driver shortages, which is good news.

### **Litter and Street Cleansing**

Dialogue with and support for the Northamptonshire Litter Wombles is on-going. WNC officers and contractors also recently supported a Northampton BID, "Business Tidy Day" and "Operation Unite" a day of action in Daventry which covered community safety, fly-tipping, recycling and waste education.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Environmental approach, including climate**

With the WNC Environmental Framework and Environmental Principles for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc in place, and a climate emergency recognised, the Council is now rolling up its sleeves for the hard work of making real change.

The Council has two roles in relation to climate. It has responsibilities as a major organisation and service provider, reflected in the target for internal carbon neutrality target of 2030. This will require a series of linked strategies covering:

- Assets (land and buildings).
- Energy, including renewable energy production.
- Fleet.
- Procurement of goods, works and services.

The Council's second set of responsibilities relate to its leadership of West Northamptonshire as a whole and include its activities as planning and highway authority, as well as a wider role in galvanising action across public, private and third sectors. Plans are being drawn up for a 'climate summit' and other actions to this end.

### **Parks and open spaces**

The parks remain very well used, and so the amount of maintenance required on the parks, such as extra litter picking, play equipment maintenance and graffiti removal remains high. The Park Rangers continue with their regular patrols and offer assistance and advice as required.

In partnership with the Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust, we have applied for funding from Round 3 of the Government's Active Travel Fund to improve paths in and around Delapre Park. If we are successful, this will deliver benefits to a wide area of southern Northampton.

Discussions about integrating the Council's country parks are developing. It seems likely that – subject to joint committee approval – the former NCC country parks will be disaggregated for April 2022. Whilst this will involve some change for the staff involved, it offers real opportunities to build a WNC parks service, getting the best out of all our parks.

I have attended several positive meetings with local Members and officers concerning issues in parks in Northampton, namely anti-social behaviour around the lake in Delapre Park, and the toilet provision in Abington Park.

I can confirm that litter bins will be installed in Towcester Water Meadows before the facility is officially opened.

### **Tree policy**

The Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered a presentation on the development of a WNC Tree Policy on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August. This identified the importance of trees for beauty and biodiversity, the pressures both to add and remove them and the need to have 'the right tree in the right place'. A Task & Finish Group, led by Councillor Chauhan, will look to the development of a Corporate Tree Policy for West Northamptonshire. The new policy will draw on expert advice to provide clear guidance, taking into account West Northamptonshire's climate, soils and styles of development, about how to get the best out of trees for everyone's benefit.

### **Flood management**

The Council has an important role as lead local flood authority and land drainage authority. The service responds to a large number of formal consultations and investigates flooding incidents. Strategically it works to identify and secure measures to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses.

There are a number of places, notably in Northampton and Yelverfoft, where flooding is a major concern to residents and businesses.

Cabinet is due to consider a report formally authorising the Council accepting a £6.2m grant for the Northamptonshire Innovative Flood Resilience Project, working with the Environment Agency, NNC, Anglian Water and other partners. This project seeks to

identify means of reducing people's vulnerability to flooding, with interventions ranging from water storage to helping householders prepare for flooding. In West Northamptonshire the Wootton Brook catchment is the area of focus.

### **Car parks**

Although still below pre-Covid levels, car park usage has been recovering. Currently we are projecting a loss of income of around £1.7m, against the budget of nearly £5m. Just under £0.3m has been met from the Government's Covid fees and charges scheme; the remainder will be met from the Covid grant the Council is holding. Officers are considering if there are ways to make the payment process easier, encouraging use whilst restoring this important source of income.

**Councillor Phil Larratt**

**Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste Services**

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**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

## **Human Resources**

As lead authority for payroll, we have continued to successfully process both West and North Northamptonshire payrolls, updated all staffing information, position changes and hierarchy restructures. This was done alongside continuing to provide the payroll for Children's Trust, Fire Service, Law, Cambridgeshire and Milton Keynes, as well as the Elections Payroll in June. All payrolls remained above 99.5% accuracy during this period. Focus for the coming months is on responding to a number of substantial Payroll changes/business requests (payment of increments and a new absence scheme) across the various clients

The HR Strategy, Policy and Projects team have continued writing and consulting on the new HR policies for WNC alongside building the HR pages of the intranet, to ensure information relating to HR is accessible to all staff. The new WNC employee (lifestyle) benefits scheme was launched in late July to all employees (and Councillors), currently c700 staff have registered. We will be focusing over the next few months on further communication to publicize the scheme as well as looking at what other benefits can be added to enhance the overall employee package.

The design activity around the creation of the new WNC People Strategy has moved forward at pace this quarter with the team carrying out c16 staff focus groups as well as various meetings with senior managers. We are also out for procurement for an employee survey which will provide a valuable baseline to move forward from. As we move into quarter 3 the focus of the team will be to start to shape the work streams arising from the emerging people strategy themes, such as induction, leadership and management development and talent management/succession planning.

In July the Learning and Development Team (hosted by NNC) launched our new WNC 'managing and leading performance excellence' course, which is a 12 week programme designed for experienced managers who want to refresh or develop their leadership and management knowledge and skills. Take up on the first course has been excellent. We have also been planning and piloting a new Microsoft 365 training across the workforce in collaboration with IT and Transformation, Councillor development programmes and working in partnership with Health, Safety and Wellbeing to review and refresh the key training offer.

Work has continued during this quarter on pay and grading for WNC. In addition to conducting the local pay bargaining for 2021/22 we have been undertaking 100 plus job evaluations jointly with our trade unions using the NJC job evaluation scheme. The outcomes of these will then be used to shape our new pay structure for new staff to WNC during the Autumn.

Finally, we remain busy in the HR Business Partnering and Advisory team, supporting some restructuring and early transformation activity in addition to the business as usual in terms of employee relations casework. We have also produced the first quarterly management information dashboards for services

## Legal and Governance

The delivery of effective, efficient and timely legal advice to all parts of the authority is key to ensuring the council acts lawfully in delivering against its objectives and protects itself from risk. A rationalisation of the contracts for the provision of legal advice inherited from the predecessor authorities is underway. This will result in a combination of in-house and external provision that best meets the council's needs.

The Constitution review is in progress, in conjunction with elected members in the form of a Task & Finish Group established by the Democracy & Standards Committee. A consultation was undertaken during August, including all members, parish councils and the public, which will inform the review and culminate in a report being submitted to full Council in December. Also being reviewed is the council's overall governance framework. This is an important piece of work, looking at the way in which we work together to make good decisions.

The Chief Executive, Leader and Director of Legal and Democratic met with the Chief Executive of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to start the review of Council Size and Ward Boundaries. The Review will be conducted by the LGBCE and they will be meeting with all members in the coming months. The outcome of the review will be implemented at the election in 2025.

The three Overview and Scrutiny Committees have produced short term Work Programmes, all of which have been approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group. The Coordinating Group met on 6 September 2021 to agree the process for the longer term work programme. The Chairs of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees will contact various community groups, Parish Councils, voluntary groups and other organisations asking them to suggest items for future Scrutiny review via a short online survey. Press releases will be issued and the questionnaire promoted on the Council's social media sites. The Committees are scheduling their work programming events in October 2021 and comprehensive consultation will take place with members and the public before then.

Recruitment of the Political Assistant posts previously approved by Council is now underway. It is expected that successful candidates will take up their posts later in the autumn. The motions from previous Councils have also been collated and will be considered by the Democracy and Standards Committee at the end of the his month.

In partnership with Property Services and IT, work is underway on the procurement of a modern audio visual system that will be able to meet the needs of future Council meetings, as well as enhancing the facilities available at OAS and The Guildhall.

Registration and Ceremony Service: The government lifted restrictions on wedding ceremonies on 19<sup>th</sup> July, and so ceremonies have been allowed to be undertaken with no maximum limit subject to the building capacity. However WNC ceremony staff continue to follow social distance measures.

General interest in new ceremonies has increased and additional temporary staff have been taken on to handle the volume in calls relating to the arranging or re-arranging of ceremonies. During the height of the "pingdemic", urgent calls were made to staff across the Council to support the conduct of wedding ceremonies and with support from Communications colleagues, 45 staff expressed an interest in being trained to support the conduct of ceremonies so that weddings could go ahead.

Coroners Service: At the beginning of April 2020 all Inquest hearings were adjourned to the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. Since resuming hearings, the Office has concluded 363 hearings. Normally we hear around 225 cases per year. In August we successfully completed 2 jury Inquests within the council chamber. An external supplier attended to facilitate the hearings, which went very well. The external provider is due to attend in October and November for further Jury Inquests.

Since October 2019 both Kettering General Hospital and Northampton General Hospital have had a Medical Examiner Service, to scrutinize all hospital deaths. The next step is to roll out the Medical Examiner service throughout the community. This will be a statutory obligation by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Both Medical Examiner areas have modelled their boundaries on the WNC and NNC boundaries. Both are about to commence pilots with GP surgery's, then progress a gradual rollout. The Registration and Coroners manager is working with the lead Medical Examiners to ensure all three service areas work together to provide a joined up service.

## **Technology and Digital**

A full strategic review of our technology provision has commenced ahead of budget setting and the publication of our first technology strategy as a WNC service. An in-depth analysis of the existing capabilities of the service has been completed, which has highlighted areas to develop and invest in – most notably cyber security, architecture, data, project management, business analysis, user training and relationship management of external entities who use our services. Our executive leadership team have approved an initial set of new hires to bolster these areas, and we are developing additional plans to take through service and budget planning for 2022. In addition, we have commenced a formal management training programme for all senior and middle managers to raise the standard and consistency of existing team management, as we seek to drive greater productivity with our current staff. A full reorganisation of the service, which will see former sovereign council teams merged and staff grouped by skill/function is expected c. Oct-Nov, with efficiencies in these teams identified during Q1 2022.

A complete governance structure for handling the complex web of stakeholders and approvals (given we support numerous internal and external customers) is in draft and expected to be approved and published to the organisation in the next month. This will include new early invention from Technology staff in projects, ensuring stakeholders are supported to devise systems that are the best technical as well as business fit.

We continue to work with partners at the Children's Trust, Northampton Partnership Homes, Northampton Leisure Trust and Northampton Museums to set and meet appropriate service standards. In addition, we are supporting work from North Northamptonshire to investigate the service with view to presenting options for potential disaggregation to members.

We are presently running two assessments in partnership with Microsoft, to help determine a) the economics of a full Cloud migration, ahead of a formal Cloud First strategy, and b) the full state of our security, ahead of the arrival of our new cyber security function.

Notable team work over the last several weeks has included:

- Rolling out Office 365 to all user desktops
- Recovery of services following fire outside County Hall
- Numerous adjustments to our main website as services "settle" into it
- Development of an automated mailbot to handle and reply to customer queries and reduce contact centre work

We have also been developing the following projects:

- Migration of children's services to a new Cloud-based application
- Hardware refresh of personal equipment to support new ways of working
- Desk booking system for all sites to support flexible working
- Migration of deprecated Sharepoint 2007 and 2013 instances to new WNC Sharepoint
- Deployment of new a service desk solution (to replace end-of-life)
- New income management tool (to replace end-of-life)
- Enhanced DR options

We will shortly be publishing the first service plan and technology strategy, and taking a number of immediate project priorities through the executive leadership team (replacement phone system, CRM, IT procurement policy, hardware refresh).

In August we also dealt with a significant business continuity issue. At approximately 1930hrs on Weds 11/08/2021, a fire in an electrical substation caused a power loss to the former NCC data centre at County Hall. At the same time and unrelated to the fire, engineers had taken the uninterruptible power supply (UPS) and backup generator unit offline for its annual maintenance. As a result, power was abruptly lost for all systems in what is now WNC's primary data centre. Power was restored by the power company at 0530hrs the following morning, but systems were not fully restored to staff until 1127hrs on Fri 13/08/2021. This meant disruption for the bulk of our services, as most business applications are still hosted on-premises at the data centre.

## **Customer Services**

The Customer Services department has continued to work on developing the approach to the Customer Experience Strategy by gathering customer stories, customer feedback and mapping customer pathways to understand where interactions can be streamlined.

August has proved challenging, with a number of telephony functionalities being lost due to a fire at County Hall. The team have adapted very quickly and put in place alternative ways of working to mitigate the impact on customers, and support back office teams affected by the outage.

Work has been carried out on developing a more effective and transparent process for logging and managing Councillor and MP enquiries, with a view to removing any unnecessary steps in the process. Following feedback from Councillors and the Leader, Responders have been identified in each Directorate to coordinate responses, provide updates, and be available for additional clarifications should these be required by Members.

The project to gather requirements and define the best solution for an organisation-wide Customer Experience Management system has now been initiated, and the department are working closely with ICT and Transformation to ensure that any solution developed is future-proof and offers the one view of the customer.

Over the past two months we have witnessed a steady increase in footfall in our One Stop Shop and receptions and are continuing to multi-skill advisors so they can assist customer with a multitude of queries when they make contact.

**Councillor Mike Hallam**  
**Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services**

Record of Decision made on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Item	Subject	Decision	Responsible Officer
04	Minutes of the meeting held in public on 8 June 2021	RESOLVED: That the Cabinet approved the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held in public on 8 June 2021.	Sofia Neal-Gonzalez
05	Environmental Principles and Framework	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>A. Endorsed the Arc shared environment principles as set out at Appendix 1.</p> <p>B. Supported the development of an Arc Environment Strategy which would provide for how the principles can be delivered.</p> <p>C. Adopted the proposals set out in the WNC Task and Finish Group report as set out at Appendix 2, subject to:</p> <p>i. The commitment to purchasing 100% 'green' energy was understood to mean electricity generated and gas produced without the use of fossil fuels, and to apply from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 or as soon as possible thereafter.</p> <p>ii. To accommodate this, an increase in the energy budget of £25,000 in the current financial year and £50,000 in 2022/23 is approved. The current year cost is to be met from in-year underspends or from General Fund balances if required.</p> <p>REASONS: These courses of action are proposed because the Arc Principles and proposed Strategy should support the objectives of the Council, notably as set out in the Corporate Plan 2021-2025, and reinforce its influence by working with partners across the Arc, and because the Framework offers a useful structure for the Council to embed environmental issues in its decision-taking and service delivery.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: The arrangements with OPUS are governed by individual service agreements that run until 8<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Choices with regard to OPUS and shareholding and dividend changes were part of the consideration, prior to vesting day.</p> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	Simon Bowers
06	Integrated Care across	RESOLVED: That Cabinet; <p>A. Noted the progress toward establishing the Integrated Care System and the further</p>	Stuart Lackenby

	Northamptonshire (iCAN) procurement	<p>work required to describe how the ICS will operate at a Council and neighbourhood level.</p> <p>B. Delegated to the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing in consultation with the Cabinet member for Adult Social Care and Public Health the decision whether to modify the adult social care TOM contract (with Newton Europe).</p> <p>C. Recommended to Council the approval of one-off revenue funding of up to £1m to be agreed from general fund balances to contribute to the iCAN programme, subject to satisfactory evidence of a likelihood of a positive return on the investment.</p> <p>D. Delegated to the Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with his Portfolio Holder the Executive Director of Finance (S151 officer), and the Portfolio holder for Finance the power to determine whether there is satisfactory evidence of a likelihood of a return on the investment.</p> <p>E. Noted that the iCAN funding will be included within the Better Care Fund section 75 and that this will be reported to and governed through the West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>F. Agreed that quarterly updates of this report would be presented to Cabinet.</p> <p><b>REASONS</b></p> <p>A. To respond to national guidance and requirements including the white paper Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all (Feb 21) and the formation of the ICS (integrated care system) since April 2021.</p> <p>B. To support the realisation of benefits across health and social care to achieve improved outcomes for residents, reduced operating costs and to reduce reliance on acute hospital care</p> <p>C. To utilise health funding to support the joint objectives outlined</p> <p>D. To progress the proposed changes before the winter of 2021 in order to secure early benefits and changes in ways of working ahead of anticipated high demand in hospitals and risk of poorer outcomes. This</p>	
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		<p>will minimise the risks and uncertainty of both demand and costs that are predicted for winter 2021.</p> <p>E. To further enable the integration of Adult Social Care and Health</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <p>A. Health partners have requested that the Council support the commissioning of the system partner for iCAN. The rationale for this decision is based upon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the strong working relationships between the Council and health partners,</li> <li>ii. the Council's proven track record in taking forward a similar approach in its implementation of the Adult Social Care TOM</li> <li>iii. the need to act before winter 2021 to secure the capacity and change and current pressure on health resources to support this themselves</li> <li>iv. the financial advantages of the Council hosting the arrangements</li> </ul> <p>B. The local system knows what needs to change and the opportunities available. However, unless we have the right capacity, with the right skills and experience to help us design new ways of working, based on evidence, we will be unable to implement the required changes sustainably at pace and scale. The consequential impact for the system of not providing the required capacity will be that at some point the demand for service will become greater than the capacity available.</p> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	
07	Appointments to Outside Bodies	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>A. Noted and endorsed the appointments to outside bodies set out at Appendix A</p> <p>B. Noted that further work is required in relation to a small number of outside bodies and agreed that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader(s) of any group to whom a place on an outside body has been allocated, to make such appointments in due course.</p>	Catherine Whitehead

		<p>REASONS: The Council is responsible for appointing Members to a range of outside bodies. By making such appointments the Council can ensure its interests are represented and/or those bodies receive appropriate support from the nominated Members.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	
08	MHCLG's Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme funding	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet agreed increase in HRA Capital programme of £1.32m to purchase and refurbish ten 1-bedroom properties through the HRA, in order to accommodate and support people who have been sleeping rough or are threatened with sleeping rough, funded by MHCLG/Homes England RSAP grant and HRA borrowing.</p> <p>REASONS: To provide rough sleepers with sustainable housing solutions, to reduce rough sleeping and enable people who have slept rough to thrive</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	Jacqueline Brooks
09	Various Freehold and Leasehold Asset Disposals	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>A. Delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Assets and Environment to dispose of the assets listed in the report and where relevant agree the terms of such disposal in line with the proposals in the relevant appendix.</p> <p>B. Noted that Property Number 14/Appendix J ((Part of Wantage Farm) was withdrawn and is no longer included in the recommendations.</p> <p>C. Items 15 and 16 may require the consent of the Secretary of State on the grounds that the disposal is at an undervalue of more than £2 million. Given the circumstances it is expected this would be forthcoming.</p> <p>D. A number of further delegations are required in order for officers to effectively manage a range of transactions on a day-to-day basis affecting the Council's property portfolio. These are set out in the table below and will be incorporated into Constitution on a permanent basis as part of the ongoing review that is currently being undertaken by Democracy &amp; Standards</p>	James Aldridge

		<p>Committee. Pending the outcome of that review in December, it is recommended that interim delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director Assets and Environment to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Agree, and enter into, leases of up to 125 years at nil, or otherwise a value at less than best consideration, which are directly related to the conversion of a local authority maintained school to an academy, or where as a result of a Council decision (including provisions of a Section 106 agreement entered into by the Council or Section 106 unilateral undertaking benefiting the Council) a new school is to be created, and that school will be an academy. This includes the authority to enter into agreements for such leases.</li> <li>b. In consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Financial Officer, agree, and enter into, leases of community centres and similar buildings at less than best consideration (including nil consideration) with parish/town councils or charities.</li> <li>c. Grant licenses and tenancies at will, including grant at less than best consideration, where this supports the effective management of the Council's property or enables implementation of the Council's policies or statutory duties.</li> <li>d. Grant leases on commercial terms for terms not exceeding 15 years or capable of break at the Council's discretion at intervals not exceeding 15 years.</li> </ul> <p>REASONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Cabinet will be fully aware of the history to LGR in Northamptonshire and therefore it is not proposed to cover this in detail as part of this report.</li> <li>B. At Vesting Day (1st April 2021), there were several freehold and leasehold disposals that had been agreed by the predecessor Councils. Approval to these transactions had been given via several different routes including cabinet, cabinet member and officer delegated decisions. These are summarised in more detail in the relevant Appendix.</li> </ul>	
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		<p>C. For varying reasons, these disposals were not completed prior to Vesting Day. The Monitoring Officer has advised that a previous decision from one of the predecessor Councils does not carry forward to WNC. New decisions are required.</p> <p>D. This paper therefore seeks authority from Cabinet to progress with the transactions as set out in this paper and more specifically, as set out in the relevant Appendix. For clarity of records, Cabinet is requested to make individual decisions in relation to each recommendation stated in Section 3 of this report.</p> <p>E. Considering these issues has highlighted certain where it is certain, or almost certain, what course of action the Council would be expected to take. In those cases, it is proposed that the necessary decisions be delegated to allow for efficient and expedient action to be taken.</p> <p>F. As members will be aware, under the Academies Act 2010 (the Act) there is a process for converting schools from maintained by the local authority to academy status. New schools are also normally created as academies. These are often called 'free schools' but legally are academies. The Department for Education's usual practice is to seek a 125-year lease for nil consideration. This is an alternative to the use of powers in the Act by the Secretary of State to require a freehold or leasehold transfer of the land.</p> <p>G. As there are no realistic alternative options to consider in such cases, it is proposed that leases up to 125 years in length be capable of being authorised by the Assistant Director Assets and Environment where they specifically relate to the conversion of a school to an academy or the assignment of an existing lease between appropriate academies. Under the current constitution, any leases over ten years (unless the Council can break the lease at intervals not exceeding ten years) require Cabinet approval.</p> <p>H. It has also become clear that there are likely to be various requests for leases of community centres / facilities. These leases enable a parish/town council or charity to operate such centres for the good of the local community. As such, it is usual to offer leases at a value which is lower than the one which could be reasonably obtainable in the market, often at nil consideration or at rent which covers only</p>	
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		<p>covers items such as insurance. It is therefore proposed that the Assistant Director Assets and Environment be authorised to grant such leases. (The constitution envisages such standing approval being granted as it excludes leases granted not at best consideration from officer delegations except in cases approved in policy.)</p> <p>I. The constitution does not expressly address the issue of tenancies at will or licenses to occupy property a value which is lower than the one which could be reasonably obtainable in the market. These flexible arrangements are needed to ensure property is effectively managed, the costs of void property are minimised and the Council can effectively implement its policies and comply with its statutory duties. It is proposed that it is made explicit that such arrangements can be made.</p> <p>J. It has been identified that commercial leases are often now required with fifteen-year terms. This applies to three of the transactions covered in this report. However, the constitution only delegates authority to grant commercial leases on market terms with terms up to ten years (or capable at break by the Council at ten-year intervals). It is therefore suggested that this period is extended to fifteen years so that routine lettings are not delayed.</p> <p>K. Whilst it is intended that these issues would be addressed in the review of the Constitution currently underway, this is not due to be considered by Council until December. It is therefore proposed that these additional delegations are approved pending the consideration by Council of the Constitutional review.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <p>A. Once the decision is confirmed, the appointments will be communicated to the Members and the outside bodies and partnerships. The schedule of appointments will be kept under review during the year and Democratic Services will deal with any changes that arise.</p> <p>B. The Council may choose not to appoint to the outside bodies in Appendix A but would need to consider whether there would be any implications arising for the Council or the body concerned by not making an appointment</p>	
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		CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.	
10	West Midlands Rail Ltd – Changes to Collaboration Agreement	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet ratified the proposed Collaboration Agreement between West Midlands Rail Ltd and the Department for Transport set out in Appendix A of this report in light of the forthcoming replacement of the West Midlands Rail Franchise by a National Rail Contract.</p> <p>REASONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. To reflect structural changes in the passenger rail industry involving the replacement of rail franchising by directly-awarded National Rail Contracts.</li> <li>B. To ensure the Council is able to influence the management and development of rail services between Northampton and Birmingham through its involvement with West Midlands Rail Ltd.</li> </ul> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. There are no obvious alternatives to the approach proposed if joint management of local rail services in the West Midlands is to continue as the Collaboration Agreement needs to reflect the replacement of rail franchising by National Rail Contracts.</li> <li>B. It would be possible for West Northamptonshire Council to resign the membership of WMRL which has been inherited from the County Council, but this would remove a route for influencing the development of rail services for Northampton and Long Buckby</li> </ul> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	Chris Wragg
11	OPUS – Governance and Delivery	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Noted the decisions made by Milton Keynes Council and Cambridgeshire County Council in relation to the Shareholding.</li> <li>B. Agreed to the addition of the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust as a new shareholder of Opus.</li> <li>C. Agreed to the proposed changes to the shareholding of each of the existing shareholders</li> <li>D. Agreed to the proposed amendments to the Dividend Policy</li> </ul>	Sarah Reed

		<p>E. Agreed to delegate responsibility for the negotiation on behalf of West Northamptonshire Council of a revised Shareholder agreement to the Executive Director of Corporate Services.</p> <p>REASONS:</p> <p>A. To ensure that Opus shareholding reflects the changes brought about through Local Government Reorganisation and the creation of the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust.</p> <p>B. To support the continuation of Opus in order that West Northamptonshire Council will have greater influence over the quality and pay of agency workers, achieve financial savings by reducing agency costs and achieve a continued supply of agency workers to support the ongoing efficient delivery of staff to the Council</p> <p>C. To enable the Head of Paid Service to have arrangements in place to meet the fluctuating demands of the Council.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: Arrangements with OPUS are governed by individual service agreements that run until 8<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Choices with regard to OPUS and shareholding and dividend changes were part of the consideration, prior to vesting day..</p> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	
12	Admissions priority for children adopted from state care outside of England	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet; Determined the necessary variations to the admission arrangements for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 as described below:</p> <p>A. To amend the first oversubscription criterion for all Community and VC Schools to give the highest priority to: ‘looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special</p>	Jan Baines

		<p>guardianship order). All references to previously looked after children in this Code mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B. To agree that WNC's new In-year scheme can be included in the admission arrangements;</li> <li>C. To approve the new FAP, subject to consultation with schools in West Northamptonshire;</li> <li>D. Any variation agreed will be conditional on the Code passing through Parliament;</li> <li>E. All such variations should come into force on 1 September 2021.</li> </ul> <p><b>REASONS:</b> The variations are necessary to comply with the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code (2021). It is the duty of all admission authorities to act in accordance with the Code</p> <p><b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. It is necessary to vary the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 admission arrangements (previously determined) of schools for which NNC admission authority (i.e. Community and VC schools) in order to comply with the new Code which will come into force on 1 September 2021.</li> <li>B. The 2021 School Admissions Code (the Code) requires children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted to be given equal first priority in admission arrangements, alongside looked after children (LAC) and children who were previously looked after by English local authorities (PLAC). The DfE advice to admission authorities refers to these children as internationally adopted previously looked after children – "IAPLAC"</li> <li>C. Paragraph 1.7 of the new Code will require that highest priority is given to "looked after</li> </ul>	
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		<p>children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted". State care is further defined as being in the care of public authorities, religious authorities or other organisations that act in the public benefit and could encompass a wide range of institutions.</p> <p>D. This new provision will necessitate variations to determined admission arrangements to take effect from 1 September 2021. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) will need to vary the admission arrangements for its schools for 2021/22 (which would have been determined by 28 February 2020) and their admission arrangements for 2022/23 (which would have been determined by 28 February 2021). Without these variations, admission arrangements that have already been determined will no longer comply with the Code from this date.</p> <p>E. Paragraph 3.6 of the current School Admissions Code (2014) states that once admission arrangements have been determined for a particular school year, they cannot be revised by the admission authority unless such revision is necessary to give effect to a mandatory requirement of the Code.</p> <p>F. The proposed variations described in this report will be necessary to comply with a mandatory requirement of the Code, so it will not be necessary to refer a variation request to the Schools Adjudicator (in respect of maintained schools).</p> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	
13	Shared Service Arrangements	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>A. Noted the contents of this report and the related appendices</p> <p>B. Approved the option to bring the Internal Audit Service in-house</p> <p>C. Approved the option of an in-house service delivery model for Revenues and Benefits</p>	Martin Henry

		<p>D. Granted delegated authority to Executive Director, Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance to take all necessary steps to implement the in-house provision of internal audit services and Revenues and Benefits services as soon as is practicable.</p> <p>REASONS: To enable the implementation of a single operating model for Internal Audit Services and Revenues and Benefits services in order to streamline service provision and become a more efficient arrangement which incorporates best practice wherever possible. This should lead to improved customer service to residents and businesses in the area. In addition, following the notice of termination of a partner (Cherwell District Council) and subsequent desire by the provider company to terminate the arrangement</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	
14.	Northampton Market Square Redevelopment	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>A. Noted the work to date on securing £8,427,625 for the redevelopment of Northampton Market Square and the next steps that are required to take forward this project.</p> <p>B. Approved the use of the ring fenced Future High Street Grant Funding of £8,427,625 for the Northampton Market Square public realm improvements as set out in this report and the Stage 2 Design report (appendix 1).</p> <p>C. Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Place, Economy and Environment in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth to:</p> <p>v. appoint the Design Team to develop the Market Square proposals following an OJEU compliant procurement process.</p>	Kevin Langley

		<p>vi. appoint the principle contractor that demonstrates best value and quality using an OJEU compliant procurement process.</p> <p>D. Delegated authority to the Head of Major Projects and Regeneration to approve the final design ahead of the procurement of a principal contractor. This will be taken through the Northampton Town Deals Board, Northampton Forward, to seek their agreement and incorporate feedback following the public consultation while ensuring that the design principles set out in the current stage of work are adhered to.</p> <p>E. Noted that a full planning application using the detailed design proposals will be submitted as part of this work.</p> <p>F. Noted the additional revenue pressure that this project will create to West Northamptonshire Council as a result of different maintenance regimes being required and as a result of the monitoring and evaluation obligation upon completion</p> <p>REASONS:</p> <p>A. The recommendations proposed align closely with the objectives established in the West Northamptonshire Council Corporate Plan 2021-2025, specifically the Green and Clean, Thriving Villages &amp; Towns and Economic Development priorities.</p> <p>B. The recommendations proposed align with the Northampton Town Centre Masterplan and will see the design and implementation of the catalyst regeneration project for the Town.</p> <p>C. The recommended course of action is in line with the objectives, outputs and benefits expected from the Future High Street Fund to renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that drives growth, improves experience and ensures future sustainability.</p> <p>D. The recommendations above are required to progress the public realm improvement as submitted to the FHSF</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>	
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		CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.	
15.	Northampton Towns Fund	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Noted the Towns Fund grant allocation to West Northamptonshire Council from MHCLG of £24.9m, subject to approval of stage two business cases for each project.</li> <li>B. Approved £110,000 of new WNC funding required to develop the stage two businesses cases for the Towns Fund as set out in points 4.26 – 4.31.</li> <li>C. Noted that each project business case will need to come back to Cabinet for consideration approval</li> </ul> <p>REASONS: The recommendation is being made so the regeneration of Northampton Town Centre can begin with the delivery of the Towns Fund projects.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. To approve the funding required to develop the stage two business cases for the Towns Fund projects as described in this report.</li> <li>B. To not approve the funding for the next stage. This will mean that there is not the adequate resource to develop the business cases for all projects and the Council wouldn't get awarded the full £24.9 million grant from Government</li> </ul> <p>CONFLICT OF INTERESTS DECLARED AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED: None.</p>	Kevin Langley
16.	Highways Contract Procurement Update	RESOLVED: Cabinet agreed the recommendations as set out in the report, the content of which was exempt from publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972	

Date Issued: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Expiry of call-in period: 5pm, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021



# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL COUNCIL

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

**Councillor Fiona Baker, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education)**

Report Title	Youth Offending Service Plan (Youth Justice Plan)
Report Author	Tony Challinor, Assistant Director Commissioning & Partnerships <a href="mailto:Tony.challinor@northnorthants.gov.uk">Tony.challinor@northnorthants.gov.uk</a>

## Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	Catherine Whitehead	09/09/2021
<b>Chief Finance Officer</b>	Martin Henry	09/09/2021
<b>Other Director</b>	Cathi Hadley	23/08/2021

## List of Appendices

### Appendix A – Youth Offending Service Plan (Youth Justice Plan)

#### 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 there is a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. The Youth Justice Board provides guidance about what must be included in the plan and recommends a structure for the plan. The draft Youth Justice Plan/Youth Offending Service Plan for the Northamptonshire Youth Justice Service is attached at Appendix One.

#### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 Youth Offending Teams are statutory partnerships, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. Local authorities are

responsible for establishing a Youth Offending Team. Police, the Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation.

- 2.2 This current plan covers performance for the period 2020/21 and provides service budgets, operational and strategic developments within the service and partnership, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan for 2021 – 2022.
- 2.3 The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead for YOS inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons library.

### **3. Recommendations**

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It is recommended that Council approves the Youth Justice Plan 2021/22 and performance summary for the period 2020/21.

### **4. Reason for Recommendations (NOTE: this section is mandatory and must be completed)**

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To accord with legislation or the policy of the Council

### **5. Report Background**

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- 5.1 Appendix A sets out the duties of the Council with respect to the Youth Justice Plan. This report and the attached plan give the opportunity for Cabinet and then full Council to consider and comment on the plan before it is submitted to the Youth Justice Board.
- 5.2 Local authorities continue to have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth offending partnership’s responsibilities in producing this plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out:
  - (a) how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded;
  - (b) how the YOS will be composed and funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.

### **6. Issues and Choices**

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- 6.1 In accordance with statutory requirements, the plan was placed before NYOS Management Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 where it was approved.

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

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## **7.1 Resources and Financial**

There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposals.

## **7.2 Legal**

There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

## **7.3 Risk**

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

## **7.4 Consultation**

Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service is a statutory partnership with Police, Health, Probation as members. All parties have agreed the contents of the plan.

## **7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

The report has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

## **7.6 Climate Impact**

No climate /environmental impact.

## **7.7 Community Impact**

The contents of the Youth Justice Plan seek to make local communities safer.

## **7.8 Communications**

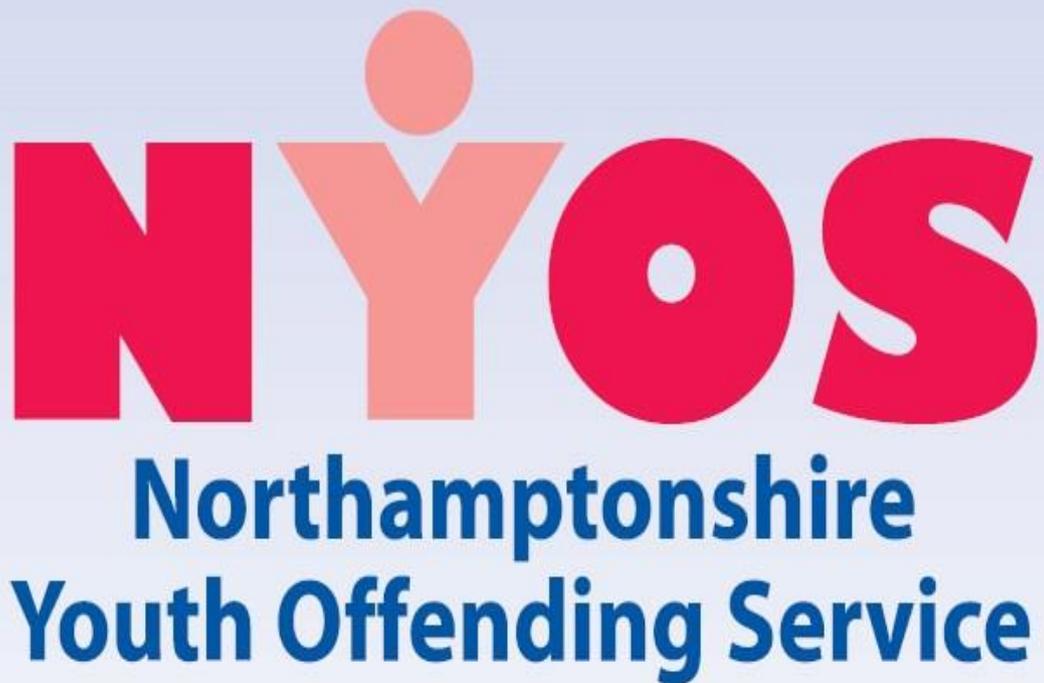
Possible interest from local press.

## **8. Background Papers**

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### **8.1 Youth Justice Plan.**

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## Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service Plan 21-22

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## Background and Context

Northamptonshire population estimate (2019) is 753,278- North Northamptonshire 348,228 and West Northamptonshire 405,050. Northamptonshire is projected to grow by almost 6% to 794,046 by 2026 - North Northamptonshire growth 7.21% to 371,937 and West Northamptonshire by 4.86% to 422,119. The county is a mixture of urban and rural communities with just over two thirds of the population living in urban areas and just under a third in rural areas. 30 % of the population live in the county town of Northampton. The map below shows the boundaries within the county for the district and borough councils with Northamptonshire.

Overall 14.7% of the county's population live in the top 20% most deprived areas in the country according to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation. These deprived areas contain higher proportions of children than the county's non-deprived areas.

The population of Northamptonshire grew by 8.86% between the 2011 Census and 2019. Over the same period the number of under 0 to 2 year olds and 17 to 25 year olds decreased and the highest increase was 8 year olds with an almost 30% increase (higher than the national average increase of 22.84%). Overall these changes have resulted in 13,989 more pupils in the school system over the last six years.

At the time of the 2011 Census 14.3% of the Northamptonshire's population came from an ethnic background other than White British. Over recent years the county has experienced high levels of net long-term international migration per thousand population compared to other English and Metropolitan counties.

*In April 2021 two new unitary local authorities were formed – West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire.*

*NCT provides early help and social care services on behalf of both councils*

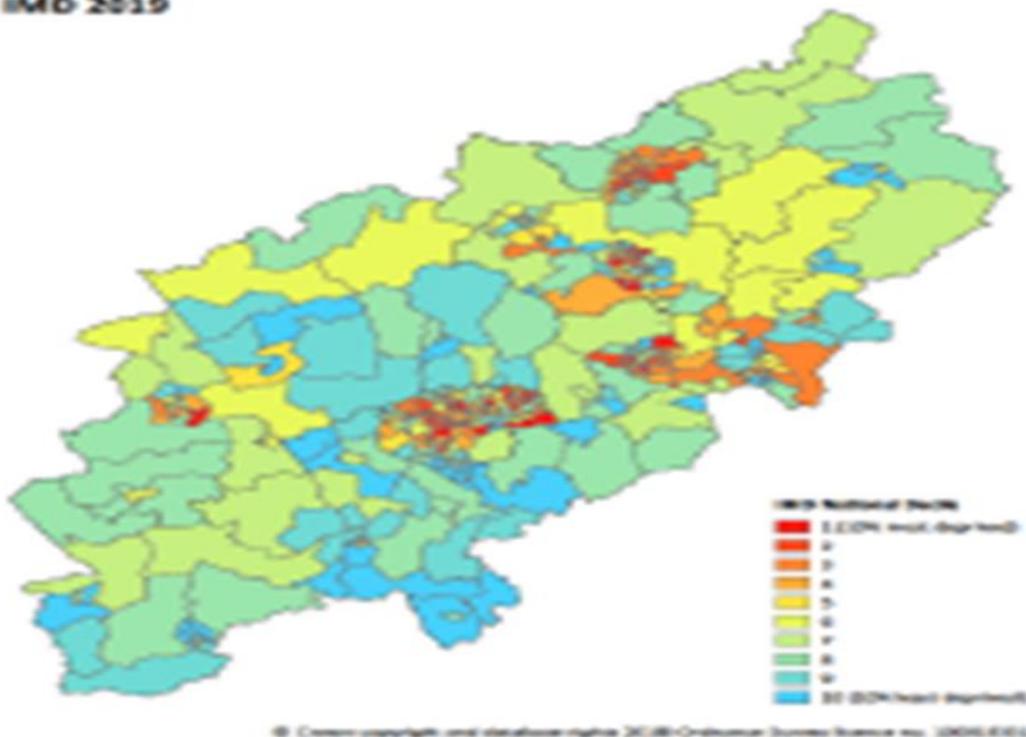


The county is middle ranking amongst the 152 county and Unitary authorities in terms deprivation, however there are pockets of high deprivation primarily in Corby, Northampton and Wellingborough. The map opposite shows the variation in levels of deprivation across the county. The colours show ranking from 1-10 from high to low levels of deprivation.

Many of Northamptonshire’s children and young people experience poor outcomes. 28,876 children and young people live in the top 20% most deprived areas. Just over 20,000 of children aged 0-15 year olds live in low income families, while 17,500 live in out of work benefit households and around 1,700 dependent children of all ages live in households affected by the benefit cap.

The Trust works with West and North Northants councils who provide education services including schools admissions, schools development and improvements, education inclusion and services for children and young people with Special Educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Across Northamptonshire there are

- Primary schools 267
- Secondary Schools 43
- Special Schools 15



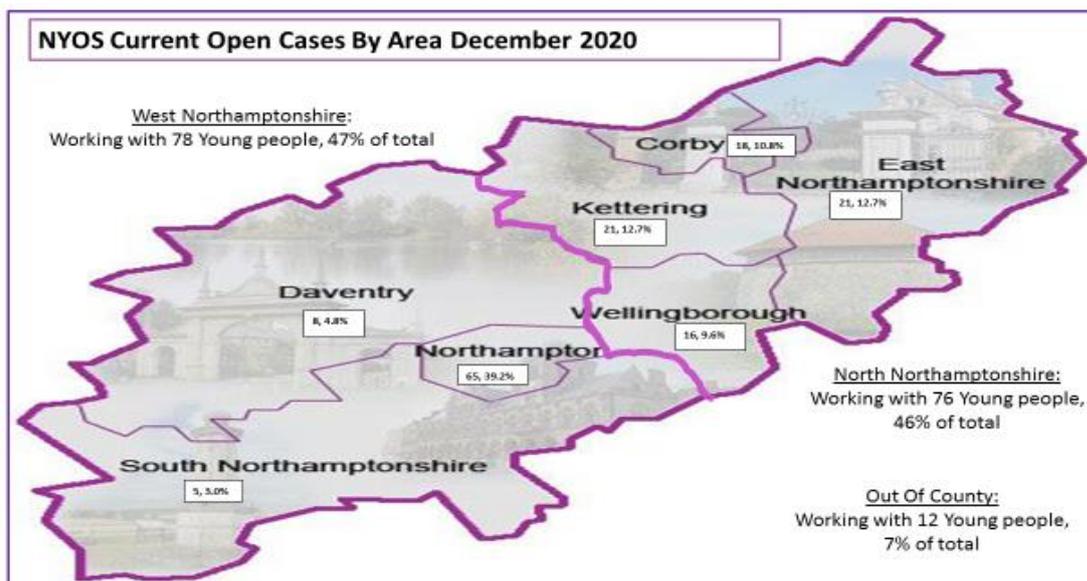
## Transfer to Children's Trust

The Youth Justice System was established by Section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), in order to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people aged 10 -17 years. The Crime and Disorder Act dictated that the Youth Justice System would be delivered and managed locally through Youth Offending Services (YOS), a multi-agency partnership with statutory representation from local authorities (specifically Social Care and Education), the Police, Probation and Health. Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service (NYOS) was therefore established as a statutory function of the Crime and Disorder Act

In 2020 the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Management Board considered the future of Northamptonshire in light of the plans for Children's Social Care to move to the alternative delivery model of a Children's Trust. A consultation process was implemented with key stakeholders in relation to the future service delivery model for youth offending in Northamptonshire, prompted by the twin developments of the unitary councils and the formation of the Children's Trust. The options were formally considered and discussed by partners at the Youth Offending Service Management Board. The shared focus that political leaders and strategic partners gave was to ensure the best possible outcomes for our young people and for our communities. The majority of elected leaders as well as those partners sitting on the statutory Youth Offending Service Management Board agreed that the Youth Offending Service will be best delivered through the Children's Trust. Also, that those with roles in providing statutory oversight, namely the Children's Commissioners and the Youth Justice Board, have supported this position and as a consequence the Youth Offending Service is now delivered through the Children's Trust.

The new model of delivery ensures that the Chief Executives of the Unitary Authorities still retain statutory responsibility for the delivery of Youth Justice Service within their geographical boundaries. NYOS boundaries are within those of the Northamptonshire Police area and Northamptonshire National Probation Service. NYOS Headquarters are based in the county town of Northampton. The operational offices of NYOS are based in Northampton and Kettering.

As a YOS we have started to plan for the North / West split and are producing data on our Young People. As indicated below there is almost a 50/50 split between North and West. Most young people living in the West reside in Northampton with a more equal distribution in the North between Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough. Producing such information will help plan our services in the future.



## Review of 2020-21

In last year's plan I wrote about how no one foresaw the pandemic and what that has meant for many services. The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to provide challenges for all however it has also identified new ways of working, creative ways of engaging young people and it has been commendable to see how resilient our young people and staff have been in adapting to the changes to frontline delivery. Northamptonshire YOS are incredibly proud that we have maintained frontline work.

The Covid 19 pandemic has not diverted the YOS from developing the service and achieving a substantial amount over the year, if anything it has raised our profile positively, and introduced new practice which is innovative and hopefully here to stay. There has been progress made against the actions identified on the 2020/21 plan and these are summarised within Appendix A (Page 32).

## Work we are proud of in 2020-21:

- **Alternative to Custody Panel**

The YOS Manager chairs a multi-agency group, reporting to the YOS Partnership Board, which works to ensure that as few young people as possible are detained in police custody and to limit the duration of youth custody detentions.

- **Northamptonshire QLIK. In Partnership with Northamptonshire Police we have introduced QLIK:**

### What It is?

QLIK is a business intelligence tool that turns raw data in actionable data that can be manipulated to drill down to various chosen information. This gives instant live recalculation of data to answer different queries without re-entry of information. The tool breaks down data into areas such as location, ethnicity, age, gender, person flags, outcomes, offence types and many more that can be set up by the system user dependant on what is wanting to be looked at. This data is presented in graphical format that make seeing patterns and areas of concern much simpler and therefore must more reactive to develop actions to tackle these areas and so potentially improve overall performance. The tool allows data provided by multiple agencies to be combined into one source of information and then be merged. This data going in therefore potentially could be from the specialist areas e.g. social care, YOS, Police, Education, Accommodation so be provided by the best sources and allows this to be shared, with specific restrictions to certain data that can be set in place, for the benefit of improving performance.

### The direct benefits of QLIK to the YOS will be: -

1. **Potential to Reduce FTE through YOS-Police data merging.** Looking at First Time Entrants to the YOS and combining this with the data the police hold on suspects in offences to ascertain how entrenched young people may be before they get and receive a substantive outcome that then would include them in the first time offender data. This would enable earlier potential referrals and an opportunity to change behaviours earlier in a young person's potential offending be that due to peer group influences, family communication breakdown, education support requirement or potential life changing event they may have experienced or any other factor that may be causing them to engage in offending behaviour. This earlier involvement potentially increases the probability of success in diverting them into positive behaviours and increases their likelihood of desisting from offending as well as keeping those young people and others safer due to this earlier involvement.
2. **Potential to Reduce Re-offending.** The combined data mentioned above will also fill in the gaps between substantive outcomes as we will also be able to see where Young People have been suspects in any activity in between these indicating the need for different interventions maybe or different methods of engagement to again increase the motivation for the young person to engage in pro-social behaviours. This may be due to behaviour patterns or peer group involvement we are not aware of outside of the actual offending resulting in outcomes. It will also highlight times and places where activity they have been a suspect in can be combined with these with where the offending has taken place to support more effective support to try to keep them out of areas or contacting specific individuals that may be triggers to offending which can then be potentially used in their outcome conditions making these more effective in achieving desistance from offending.
3. **Working Practice Improvement.** This achieves much stronger multiagency working and communication and due to this will support identification of areas of opportunity for all the agencies combined to improve their individual practice due to being able to visualise data combined that would otherwise not be achievable. For the YOS specifically we would get information on activity we would not otherwise be able to see in as much clarity in our co-working with the police example above.

**Rose of Northamptonshire** In January 2021 this culminated in the YOS winning the Rose of Northamptonshire Award for 'dedication and continued hard work to keep visiting young people who are vulnerable to offending, at risk of hidden harm and criminalisation during COV-19'. We are proud of this achievement awarded to us by the Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire.

## Other achievements over the past year

- The COVID-19 pandemic has provided challenges for all and it has been commendable to see how resilient our young people and staff have been in adapting to the changes to frontline delivery.
- Frontline work has been maintained, prioritised by levels of Risk and Safety/Wellbeing concerns. The YOS have been creative in the way in which appointments and interventions are delivered to ensure all statutory appointments are delivered.
- Reducing serious youth violence – knife crime initiative NYOS have successfully implemented a knife crime programme for all young people coming to our attention, with the aim of improving their understanding of the risk of knife possession to further safeguard and protect our young people.
- Knives end lives programme launched with the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership as a major part of their inaugural conference.
- Engaging and aligning with Adolescent Services ensuring pathways seamless pathways are offered between YOS and Adolescent service to offering children and young people seamless access to support.
- Reducing the criminalisation of children and young people in care - action plan was created with 11 objectives focussed on improving relationships with between social care and NYOS, ensuring that NYOS staff are able to represent these young people effectively within the Court system, and the development of a Joint protocol on the Decriminalisation of Looked After Children. The protocol has been completed with the input and commitment of the CPS, Probation Service, Children’s Social Care, Local Authority Placement Team, Education, and Substance Misuse intervention providers, and Northamptonshire Police Service.
- Strong performance against national indicator: reducing the use of custody.
- Maintained the reduced numbers of First Time Entrants.
- Reduced the rate of reoffending below the national and regional comparators.
- Completed a Mock inspection based on the HMIP Inspection model.
- Worked with local services and agencies to ensure a robust strategic and operational approach to Child Exploitation, Missing Children, County Lines and Gang Offending.
- Collaborative working with Police to strengthen the Prevention and Diversion scheme and interrogate reoffending data.
- Work with local Children’s Homes and Children’s Services to reduce Children in Care criminalisation.
- Reviewed and implemented new audit tools.
- Maintained the professional development of staff through a comprehensive training and development programme.
- Refined and reviewed the NYOS Education service for young people both pre- and post-court.
- Maintained contact and delivered intervention work with young people throughout Covid pandemic.
- Dedicated support for staff who require support and challenge.

- Quality Assurance policy and protocol implemented.
- Pre-Sentence Report Quality assurance process implemented.
- created an at-court support and signposting services to young people and their families within Wellingborough Youth court.
- Created effective alternative ways of communicating young people through virtual means.
- Review and restructure presented and agreed to Senior management.
- Back to Basics campaign successful and now renamed the PAR report and use is extended.
- Northamptonshire YOS has maintained its Quality Mark for Restorative Services awarded by the RJC. Having consistently had a core group of staff trained to full RJ Conference level, a recent series of training events mean that 31 members of staff are now trained to this level from all areas of the organisation. Full RJ conferencing is the 'gold standard'.

## Structure and Governance

### NYOS Management Board

The previous Chief Executive of Northamptonshire Council nominated the Director for Children's Services as the Chair of the YOS Management Board to ensure the Unitary Authorities remain responsible and have oversight of the work of NYOS. NYOS has a number of strategic and operational links across the Trusts services as well as the Unitary Authorities Education, SEN and Adult Services. This is positive and has great impact in relation to individual children and young people, and in developing and maintaining practice arrangements.

This has proven helpful following the Youth Justice Board's clear statements they are pursuing a 'Children first, offender second' approach which is encouraging.

In addition to the Board members, the Chair of the Youth Bench in the county also attends the Board meetings. This brings added value from the perspective of the magistracy, which is of considerable benefit to the work of the Board and the practice of the YOS. The Board also benefits from attendance from the YJB, CRC and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Board meet on a quarterly basis and receive reports; service updates on performance and case studies relevant to the operation of the service.

The Board provides the 'respectful challenge' needed to ensure that youth offending services not only meets its statutory requirements but also improves the outcomes for young people who offend. In 2020 the Terms of Reference of the Board were reviewed and re-appointed the Director of Children's Services as the Chair and the OPCC representative on the Board was appointed as the Vice-Chair.

The format of the YOS Board agenda allows for staff members or a Service User to share good practice and support the Board in accessing a first-hand perspective of the journey of the Child within YOS. Northamptonshire has robust information and data systems which ensures that it meets the requirements set out by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). This ensures that all data recording and submissions pertinent to the YJB grant criteria are produced in a timely and compliant manner.

The Children's Trust was created with the aim of supporting Children's Social Care services to realise and sustain improvements. The aim is to improve the performance of services and deliver higher quality and innovative social care services to children, young people and their families within Northamptonshire, protecting them and improving their lives.

The YOS Head of Service reports to the Assistant Director for Early Help and Youth offending. NYOS has a number of strategic and operational links across the Children's Services Directorate both in relation to individual children and young people, and in developing and maintaining practice arrangements.

The members of the YOS Management Board represent the work of the NYOS to be integrated into strategic planning for:

- Safeguarding,
- Public Protection,
- Criminal Justice,
- Community Safety
- Health & Well-Being.
- Northamptonshire Criminal Justice Board,
- Community Safety Partnerships,
- MAPPA Strategic Management Board,
- PREVENT,
- Corporate Parenting Board.

Similarly, links exist operationally through representation from NYOS Managers enabling NYOS to integrate and coordinate its work with the work done by partners such as Children's Social Care Services, Special Educational Needs Services, other Criminal Justice agencies, and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services across Northamptonshire. The panels and meetings attended are:

- **Safeguarding and Public Protection**
  - Child Protection Conferences,
  - Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) MARAC meetings, Local Community Safety Partnership operational meetings,
  - local complex needs panel meetings,
  - Early help and Troubled Families activities.
- **Child Exploitation and VAPP Panel**
  - Child Exploitation Tactical Groups within the Trust,
  - Local multi-agency information sharing arrangements to identify and protect children at risk of exploitation,

- In recent months the Assistant Director of Early Help and Youth Justice has introduced the Vulnerable Adolescent Panel in which the YOS manager is a standing Chair and a deputy to the running of the panel.
- **Reducing Re-Offending**
  - Northamptonshire Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group,
  - Community Safety Partnerships,
  - Risk Assessment Panels – management of YP identified as being at high risk of causing serious harm to others, or of experiencing significant harm themselves,
  - Harmful Sexual Behaviour - NYOS leads the work on Harmful sexual behaviour within the Trust with the support of the Police. The YOS and the Trust use recognised assessment and intervention approaches [AIM] for young people who commit harmful sexual behaviour.
- **Preventing Violent Extremism**
  - All relevant YOS staff have received training in raising awareness of ‘Prevent’,
  - NYOS attends the Northamptonshire Prevent Group to ensure that our work is aligned with local initiatives,
  - NYOS has sight and contributes to the local assessment of extremism risks,
  - NYOS police officers act as a link to local police processes for sharing intelligence in respect of possible violent extremism.
- **Restorative Justice and Support for Victims**
  - Restorative approaches underpin NYOS core values both in relation to our work with young people and the victims of their offences,
  - RJ approaches are embedded internally as a team and with all external colleagues we work alongside,
  - Referral Order Panels - completed via Zoom or Skype,
  - The RJ Team plan to continue to use this platform as an alternative to invite victims to panels, this may allow for a greater victim participation in this process,
  - All victims have a fully informed and effective opportunity to have their views heard and to receive an appropriate restorative intervention.

## Resources & Value for Money

NYOS operates a Pooled Partnership budget. This sits within NCT financial structures, containing contributions from across the partnership. Nevertheless, NYOS has complied with the spending control measures implemented by the Unitary Authorities. As host agency, NCT makes an additional contribution to infrastructure that cannot readily be quantified here. The budget for 2021/22 gives a review of NYOS’ income contributions, performance expectations and progress against the budget below: -

YOS Budget Contributions	2020/21 Cash	2020/21 Cash & Kind	2021/22 Cash	2021/22 Cash & Kind
Office Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner	200,900	420,900	200,900	420,900
Early Intervention Youth Fund (via OPFCC)	288,705	288,705		
National Probation Service	10,000	40,332	31,974	34,154
NHS Northamptonshire		122,798		122,798
Local Authority	1,546,945	1,546,945	1,563,205	1,563,205
Youth Justice Board Good Practice Grant (including JAC Grant)	592,241	592,241	636,514	636,514
Other (LA Substance Misuse)	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,718,791</b>	<b>3,091,921</b>	<b>2,512,593</b>	<b>2,857,571</b>

The table above shows both financial and contributions in kind (e.g. officers).

**2021/22 - Office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner** continue to provide NYOS with four seconded police officers plus funding of £200,900.

**2021/22 - one seconded Probation Officer**, national arrangements resulted in the level of funding for management costs of £5,000 per secondee, cash & kind (officers). Extra funding via NYOS and Probation Transitions Protocol resulted in £26,974 for additional NYOS Transitions Case Manager.

**2021/22 – Multi-disciplinary health** team consisting of Speech and Language therapy, Mental Health Practitioner, Psychologist, Physical Health Nursing and Health Support, commissioned directly for NYOS, real contribution is £122,798 (in-kind).

**2021/22 - Local Authority** funding increased from £1,546,945 to £1,563,205, by £16,260. NYOS works across the county, with office bases in Northampton and Kettering. Work is also undertaken in Partners' premises, and via home visits, reflecting the rural nature of Northamptonshire.

**2021/22 - Youth Justice Board (YJB)** overall contribution will be the same as notified last year, **uplifted by 8.8%, Youth Justice grant allocation for 2021/22 is £636,514**. This one-off uplift is by exception and is not guaranteed for future years. The YJB has sought for this additional funding to support local authorities to address some of the pressures in the system as you move into recovery following the impact of COVID-19 and to support the delivery of our strategic plan. Latest position re: self-assessment of national standards, signed off by NYOS Management Board. Quarterly submissions of core data required to build a national picture of youth crime, pinch points and challenges.

## YJB Funding

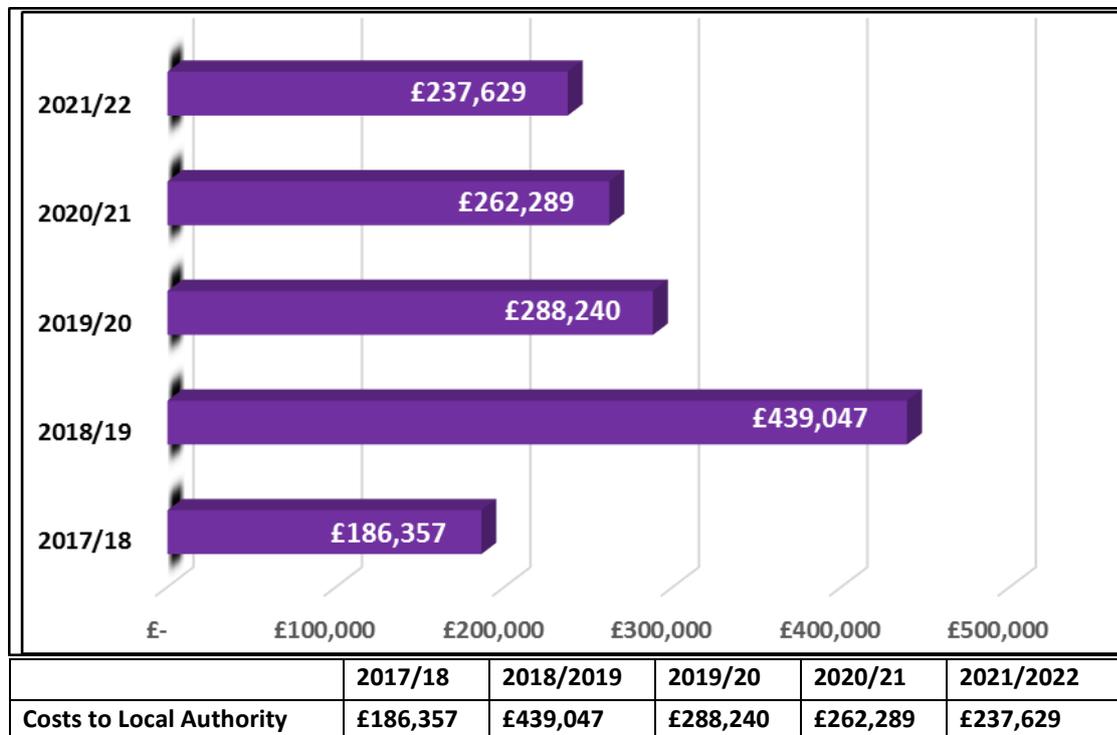
The YJB requires a breakdown providing details of how NYOS proposes to spend the grant for 2021/22. The chart below shows this indicative budget, but as NYOS operates with a pooled budget from a variety of sources it must be noted that it is purely indicative. The original legislation for YOTs had a principle that all agencies contribute to a pooled approach. This relates solely to the YJB Grant, including the Junior Attendance Centre, which is managed and accounted for separately via specialised activities, reducing re-offending programmes and staff salaries.

Priorities	Areas for action	Areas for spend	Indicative costs
1 All children and young people grow up in a safe environment	Reoffending - Custody - Remands –Accommodation – Violence – Child Sexual Exploitation	ISS	90,000
		Courts	76,000
		Information	30,000
		Management	5,000
2 All children and young people achieve their best in education, are ready for work and have skills for life	Education Training Employment (ETE) - Compliance/enforcement	ETE	35,000
3 All children and young people grow up healthy, and have improved life chances	First Time Entrants - Out of court –disposals – Community And Mental Health Services	Prevention	110,000
4 Improving outcomes for children and young people in care	Monitoring/reporting to effect changes	Children in Care Supervision Management	65,000
5 Victims	Restorative Justice - OPFCC Voice - Effective Practice - Police	Reparation	85,000
		Referral Orders	111,000
		& Victim work	
6 Junior Attendance Centre	Reduction in Reoffending & First Time Entrants & use of Custody.	Effective Public Protection & Safeguarding	30,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>£637,000</b>

Included in the overall budget is the additional funding secured from the Ministry of Justice by the OPFCC, which is being used to directly fund a significant extension of the Prevention and Diversion Scheme within NYOS.

NYOS actively supports the national Youth Justice Workforce Development Council. The Youth Justice Skills Matrix, developed by the Council in partnership with Skills for Justice, identifies core skills needed when working with young people who offend. NYOS has used this and undertaken a service wide skills audit of all staff. Training needs analysis has been completed, action plan developed and implemented in 2020 ensuring delivery against all core requirements. The current staffing structure of NYOS, along with the staff characteristics charts can be found in the appendices. Additionally, staff have benefitted from the high levels of training and developmental support provided by NYOS and a number have moved on to other organisations better able to meet financial aspirations.

The most significant financial pressure on the partnership over the past 12 months has been the costs associated with young people being remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation. Funding for this is devolved from the Youth Custody Service to the Local Authority and the formula is based upon previous years' usage data. Having had relatively low remand figures, these have risen, causing pressure on budget set for a lower demand. The budget for the current financial year has decreased by £24,660 to £237,629. NYOS is working with partners to put actions and processes in place to reduce the use of remands, due to potentially detrimental effect on incarcerated children and young people who do not receive a custodial sentence.



	2017/18	2018/2019	2019/20	2020/21	2021/2022
Costs to Local Authority	£186,357	£439,047	£288,240	£262,289	£237,629

# Corona Virus

For many of our Young People the COVID-19 pandemic has added further challenges and barriers to their future. It has been an on-going priority for the YOS and its partners to respond effectively, safely and learn as we go during these challenging times. We have maintained contact and relationships with our most vulnerable children throughout the various lockdowns. Our staff have risen to the challenge and worked hard and creatively to promote engagement and meet our statutory obligations. We have adapted quickly both as an organisation and as employees to remote working. In relation to staff mobilisation we quickly distributed tools to work safely from home for all workers. Implemented an emergency duty team for the office to ensure any emergency facilities are available to young people.

During the first lockdown, from the 23rd March 2020 the YOS has maintained face to face contact (utilising PPE when appropriate) with all high and very high risk Young People. We tracked progress on a weekly basis and averaged 40-50 visits per week, for those who were medium and low risk we maintained telephone / virtual contact, on average we were completing 80-100 phone calls per week. This information was circulated to all staff on a weekly basis and also to partners. This bolstered our 'New Ways of Working' and ensured we built momentum. Maintaining our in house ETE and substance misuse provision has been particularly important when schools were closed as constructive use of time has been a scarce commodity. We included COVID Risk assessment completions in our weekly performance report, this ensured visits to our young people were both safe and effective, as shown below we now have very few outstanding assessments.

## COVID-19 Risk Assessment Completion Since Beginning of Tracking 13/04/20



In May 2020 we circulated our own document '*Engaging with Young People using phones and social media guidelines*' in order to assist staff and young people with engagement. At that time, we found that many Young People were complying with lockdown requirements, but staff were reporting back (as were young people) that sustained virtual engagement was difficult. It was proving particularly important that staff set the scene, have an appropriate place to work (at home) and plan their sessions, ice breakers were found to be an essential tool to engagement. We shared links with staff [naplic website](#) on improving Speech and Language (S&L) awareness and put on be-spoke externally run training by an experienced S&L Therapist in November 2020. If we want our staff to be the best they can be we need to invest in their skills and knowledge.

As a leadership (SMT) and management team we have met virtually on a weekly basis since March 2020 to 'check in', plan the week and resolve any issues that arise. Working during COVID 19 has been challenging for all, but it has brought out the best in many of our staff. Overall, COVID 19 has not diverted the YOS from developing the service and achieving a substantial amount over the year. There has been progress made against many of our performance and quality indicators as discussed in this assessment.

## Staffing

NYOS is now delivered through the Children's Trust since November 2020. NYOS is very much part of the Children's Trust and is fully integrated with its partners within Social care whilst maintaining links with schools and the North and West Unitary authorities.

NYOS has a number of strategic and operational links across the Children's Services Directorate both in relation to individual children and young people, and in developing and maintaining practice arrangements. Over the last year the Head of NYOS has undertaken a review of the current structure and strategic direction. There is a rationale for change in that the current structure has been developed as a response to legislative change, government initiatives over the last 20 years and the increasingly complex nature of the young people we work with. Whilst new posts have been introduced over the years, older posts from previous grants that are no longer in existence remain and are no longer fulfilling their original purpose. A proposal has been put forward for re-organising the current structure over the next 12 months however this is not a priority at present and we are planning in preparation for this over the next 6 months.

## Current YOS staffing Breakdown

Contract Type	Strategic Manager		Operations Managers		Practitioners		Administrators		Sessional	Students	Total
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time			
Permanent		4		7	4.88	28	0.81	5			49.69
Seconded Police						3					3
Seconded Probation											0
Seconded Health Mental Health						2					2
Seconded Health Physical Health											0
Seconded Health Speech & Language											0
Vacant				16		1		2			19
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4.88</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73.69</b>
Disabled (self classed)					1	1		1			

By Gender/Ethnicity											
Contract Type	Strategic Manager		Operations Managers		Practitioners		Administrators		Sessional	Students	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
White	1	3	3	4	12	23		5			51
Asian					1	1		1			3
Black					3	4					7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61</b>

In 2021 a priority for the YOS is to enhance the offer of opportunities to Social workers through the Northamptonshire Social Work Academy. We have had 1 student that has successfully qualified as a Social Worker and completed placement in YOS. This staff member has asked to remain at YOS and we hope to be able to facilitate this.

Another area we hope to introduce in 2021/22 is our apprenticeship offer. The Senior Leadership team are currently considering how this could be managed safely and appropriately.

All staff have been trained in AssetPlus which is the assessment and planning interventions framework developed by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) providing a holistic end-to-end assessment and intervention plan, allowing one record to follow a child or young person throughout their time in the youth justice system. AssetPlus is fully embedded within the YOT and a recent training session was held to share more efficient ways to use the framework and tools available.

Northamptonshire YOS has a commitment to ensure that all staff have access to Continued Professional Development (CPD). All staff have regular and timely supervisions which forms part of the wider Trust employee performance and development process. This ensures that the wider aims of the Trust are linked through the Children's Service Plan and are integral to any individual plan. In 2020-21 staff attended a range of relevant training courses including:

- AIM 3
- Desistance
- Unconscious Bias
- Youth Justice Effective practice certificate
- Contextual Safeguarding
- Speech and Language
- Health assessment

Caseload and workload management is completed through Operations managers using a spreadsheet tracker with their teams' caseloads on. This gives up and coming dates for Assetplus completion, Risk, Safety and Wellbeing panels and a general oversight for use in monthly supervisions held with team members. This tool or tracker has been designed and developed over the last 2 years to support the Inspection and National Standards areas identified and areas for improvement in the mock inspections and audits carried out within the service.

The senior management team gets a breakdown of cases and workload monthly to ensure fair, equitable and manageable caseloads are maintained and this is discussed at their monthly meetings. The report contains overall cases allocated, by unitary area and by individual operations manager teams. It additionally shows the scaled approach levels of young people that case managers work with to give an overview of intensity of worker's caseloads.

Finally, it also provides information on secondary allocated workers as well as victim, health, accommodation and education worker allocations. This information is presented in a 12-page document with comparable previous month data included for direct tracking purposes with the last page being any key actions needed. It ensures we maintain suitable contact with all the young people we work with and workload does not affect the timeliness or quality of the interaction with them or accuracy and therefore credibility of our data. It also supports fair work allocation for staff. A sample front page of the most recent caseload report is below as well as a team split example for the same month with names removed.

# Team Caseload Split

Run 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Run 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Based On 158 Open cases

Based On Open cases

Team	QTY of primary allocated YP
Court	28
North	63
West	66
OOC(victim working)	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>158</b>

Team	QTY of Primary Allocated YP
Court	36
North	72
West	71
Other	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>183</b>

- As you will see over the next slides the overall quantities of cases have increased and the average cases per worker has increased only slightly from 6.32 per worker to 6.54 as there are 2 extra workers compared to April and newer workers have increased their initial caseload. Secondary allocated cases have increased from 21 to 36 reflecting new workers supporting cases
- Intensive scaled approach has increased more than double 6 to 16 while enhanced has dropped 71 to 47 and standard has increased 29 to 35, potentially we have therefore had some YP who have increased risk and some that have lowered with an overall reduction in middle range scaled approach.
- In terms of Victim allocated workers there are still 64 allocated cases which is over double increase from last month.
- All unitary areas have increased in case quantity
- Secondary allocated cases have increased by 9 in the last month mainly due to new workers.

May 17<sup>th</sup> 2021

## Team Breakdown

Team Manager	QTY of YP	NO of team members	Av. Per team member
West OOC	38	5	7.60
North OOC	32	6	5.33
North Post Court	40	5	8.00
West Post Court	33	3	11.00
Courts	36	5	7.20
Not Yet Allocated	1		
Other Support	3	1	3.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7.32</b>

WEST

NORTH

Team member name	case qty
	12
	11
	9
	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>33</b>

West  
Post  
Court

Courts

Team member name	case qty
	10
	8
	8
	8
	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>36</b>

North  
Post  
Court

Team member name	case qty
	11
	10
	9
	7
	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>40</b>

Team member name	case qty
	11
	10
	8
	7
	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>38</b>

West  
OOC

Other Support

Team member name	case qty
	3
	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4</b>

North  
OOC

Team member name	case qty
	11
	10
	7
	1
	1
	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>32</b>

## From Back to Basics to Future Planning (PAR)

Following a new Head of Service being appointed in September 2019 it was identified that intensive work was required to improve, timeliness, quality and management oversight of all cases. In response NYOS has promoted a 'Back to Basics' performance drive.

This programme of work is endeavouring to improve:

the timeliness of the completion of Young Person's assessment

the quality and accuracy of assessment of Risk through risk panel data

Management oversight of assessment, and risk

Intervention planning consistently sequential and appropriate

Referrals to agencies are complete

Contacts are recorded appropriately

Cases are closed as per policy.

Compulsory Gang and CSE screening are completed in timely manner

Covid risk assessments are completed and pre checks done prior to 1-1 visits

To support the improvement, we have introduced a National Standards and Asset+ tracker for operations managers to use in team monitoring, and to support supervision and performance management in a supportive manner with easy to access data. This is now in its third version for Post Court teams updated with feedback from managers and Out Of Court teams third version is being finalised currently.

The above process evolved to the point where weekly performance reports not only flag '*up and coming*' deadlines along with '*out of date*' work but resulted in performance improvements within the YOS getting down to **Zero Asset +, Summary Assets and risk panels outstanding and no missing gang and CSE screening with all COVID checks being completed correctly.**

In April 2021 the "Back To Basics" name and purpose was revisited as due to the successful achievement of consistently good results and on feedback from managers and teams as to what they felt they wanted from this data. This led to the "**Heads Up P.A.R**" report (Performance Accountability Report).

The Ethos and methodology behind this new report was as follows:

- More support for Managers to manage their own teams
- Split the report to support the new Unitary Trust structure
- Separate the up and coming work required from the potentially out of date
- Not send out to all just to Operations and Area managers to be cascaded by them
- Celebrate what has been completed within report intervals rather than what hasn't

This has been validated in our performance meeting (PDG) and received very favorably by all levels of management as being the best format and data yet allowing them privacy of data for their teams and for them to manage and cascade the data in their own style tailored for their team. Communication has also been sent out to all staff on the format change in relation to their valuable feedback.

## Partnership Arrangements

### Courts

#### **The past year:**

Despite the continued restrictions brought about by Covid and required social distancing, NYOS and HMCTS colleagues and the Judiciary have implemented a collaborative approach to ensure that arrangements continue to offer the best service to the young people in our community and victims of crime. The quarterly liaison meetings between senior magistrates and the YOS senior management team has resulted in strengthening relationships and supported open communication about practice. Utilising new practice and introducing new digitised processes and IT based resources, we have continued to ensure that we provide a clear and focused pathway to assist sentencing and delivery of court outcomes. During 2020, in partnership with Northamptonshire County Youth Bench, Chrysalis Foundation, HMCTS and Service Six, the partnership created “Youth Court Solutions”. YCS is a new and exciting project which aims to provide an at-court support and signposting services to young people and their families. Due to restrictions to maintain social distancing, this pilot project was unable to commence in January 2021 as planned.

#### **Priority for 2021/2022:**

In recognition of the delays brought about by covid we will be focusing in 2021 in ensuring the implementation of the “Youth Court Solutions” pilot. Operating with adapted practice from the public area in the courthouse at Wellingborough, the at-court services will signpost a wide range of services for children, young people and their families, including help to identify and access support services to address the issues which bring children and young people to court, whether as a child who offends, victim or witness. NYOS will provide this exciting new collaborative project with significant staffing resources to ensure this project is a success. Ensure PSR’s are creative in sentencing suggestions and address all options including the use of ISSP when appropriate

Using new practice brought about by Covid restriction adaptations, NYOS will be looking to reinvigorate the successful Northamptonshire model of Youth Rehabilitation Order reviews with the magistrates and young people to further demonstrate our practice and support

## Health

### The past year:

Much progress has been made in YOS with our Health partners following liaison with the National Health Foundation Trust. NHFT have created a YOS Health Team which will be part of the wider Children and Young People's Service which comprises of 0-19 Universal Children's Services, and a range of Specialist Services. The YOS Health Service element will be made up of a small Multi-disciplinary team consisting of Speech and Language therapy, Mental Health Practitioner, Psychologist, Physical Health Nursing and Health Support; the team will be led by a Service Manager who is supported by the Head of Specialist Children's Services. Within pre court NYOS continues to work in partnership with the Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Liaison and Diversion team. Liaison and Diversion workers are:

- Screening all young people arrested and held in Police custody
- Providing reports to the Court in relation to mental health and capacity when requested.

The CAMHS Health and Justice provision within the PaDs team has continued with the Health and Justice Practitioners:

- Supporting in triage and outcome decision making.
- Offer wellbeing assessments and intervention for those young people open to the PaDs team
- Providing consultation services to staff and young people
- Providing training and guidance to staff by Speech Language and Communication Specialists

**Priority for 2021/22:** Ensure new Health offer is fully embedded and offered to every child as part of all forms of intervention with YOS.

## Community Safeguarding and Public Protection Incidents

### The past year:

1. The YOS Management board oversee the work in this area, receiving reports and agreeing action plans. Reports are produced following a thorough audit of the case and interviews with individuals both inside and outside the YOS.
2. Since the 2020-2021 Youth Justice Plan was produced there have been 5 further CSPPIs completed, with the most recent 3 due to be presented at the YOS management board. All are related to Safeguarding. Discussion and actions have been agreed.

### Priority for 2021/22:

The action plan in relation to our CSPPI incidents has been reviewed and presented along with the 3 most recent CSPPI reports to the Management Board.

## National Probation Service

**The past year:** Over the recent months NYOS and The Probation Service have implemented changes to improve the effectiveness of the Seconded Probation Officer role. The seconded Probation Officers are primarily responsible within the YOS for managing transitions of those young people who are assessed as suitable for transition to Probation. During 2020 management oversight was required to both improve working relationships with staff and to subsequently develop an alternative recruitment process, existing systems had not been effective. NYOS and NPS have worked innovatively together and have now successfully recruited a qualified Probation member of staff who has significant experience of Youth Justice and Probation. This will enable Probation and NYOS to develop existing practice within the protocol and enhance the experience of young people transitioning between services.

**Priority 2021/22:** The new arrangements will improve case holding oversight, assessment and partnership working. This will enable better preparation for transition and a smoother journey for the young person. We will start to capture the views of Young People transitioning during 2021 via a new questionnaire. Consequently, both services can reflect on the feedback received and work pro-actively to address any areas of development.

## Police

### **The past year:**

The seconded Police Officers continue to play a vital role in NYOS; requiring them to work with young people at the entry point to YOS through CIRV (PaDs) and Out of Court Disposals, managing young people assessed as 'High Risk' of serious harm on Referral Orders, Youth Rehabilitation Orders, through to those who subject to Detention and Training Orders and longer custodial sentences. Additionally, each officer is actively involved in initiatives focussing on NYOS development, including:

- Lead and run a cycle maintenance and restoration programme, Cyclopps,
- AIM 3 (sexual harmful behaviour assessment and intervention) training
- Act as a link into CIRV in order to support this project ensuring that young people in our county are protected and empowered to change problematic behaviours to reduce first time entrants into the criminal justice system.
- Two Officers have been identified to take a lead role in Serious Organised Crime and Gangs.

**Priorities for 21/22:** Recruitment of seconded NYOS Officers has been an issue since December 2020; NYOS is currently staffed with 50% of the usual compliment of four officers. This has impacted on the development of the role, as such, Officers have focussed on core tasks.

However, recruitment is currently being addressed and it is hoped to be resolved soon. Therefore, priorities will be;

- Identify one Officer to lead in the promotion of neighbourhood and response Police Teams issuing Outcome 21 and 22 where appropriate.
- Identify one Officer to lead in supporting young people making the transition from YOS to Probation and Integrated Offender Management (IOM).

## Volunteers

### **The past year:**

Recruitment for Volunteers continued and in October 2020 a Virtual training event was delivered by the RJ Team. We had 14 volunteers present, which is the most the training has ever been delivered to, the Team were able to make some of the sessions interactive. All members of the RJ Team completed elements of the training and feedback was very positive.

*'it is safe to say that I have joined an incredible team of people. The team who have supported and trained us is made up from some incredibly kind people who go out of their way to ensure that all of your questions and concerns are answered, and what makes it even better that one of them looks like Father Christmas – what more could you want during the 'virtual' build up to Christmas in December? The team are passionate about what they do, inclusive and welcoming to everyone no matter how long you have been a volunteer!'*

On-going training has been delivered, via zoom, to all Volunteers on a number of subjects, volunteers have been included in the delivery of training, delivering training to their colleagues from their specialist area.

The Referral Order paperwork has recently been updated to reflect some ideas put forward by the Volunteers, this includes, date of missed appointments, ensuring contract mirrors the Intervention Plan within the ASSET+ and arranging extra time for planning prior to a panel meeting. In addition, the panellists are offered a de-brief at the end of the panel from the Panel Advisor.

### **Priorities for 2021/22:**

Much of the focus of the team at the moment is on renewing the Investing in Volunteers (IiV) award for the fourth time. Changes the RJ Team have bought in this time, includes involving the Volunteers and NYOS Administrative team in IiV workshops to complete the Self-assessment. Having all parties involved will allow for open feedback and ideas from all on future development.

The RJ Team have recently contacted all Volunteers to explore who would be interested in becoming the NYOS Volunteer Representative. This will be an evolving role and will hopefully incorporate peer support and be the communication link and voice of the volunteers.

We are currently reviewing the Chair Training as we have identified 4 Volunteers who appear to be ready to take this next step. As well as Chair training, we will be looking at some existing chairs taking on a mentoring role to support their colleagues.

When we make the decision to complete panels face to face the RJ Team have planned to complete a refresher training event for all volunteers to support this change.

## Children and Young People

**The past year:** Although the last 18 months has been difficult, NYOS continued to run the Young People's forum until February 2021, during this time the group have completed the End of Order Questionnaire document, this is now an important part of the closure process used within NYOS. The group has also explored interventions and opportunities to support BAME young people open to NYOS, alongside this work case manager developed their own BLM interventions.

International Youth Day 2020 consisted of sharing a spoken word piece of work the Young People at the forum completed with all NYOS. Due to staff changes the forum has not run the last few months, however, this is a priority for the future.

The Voice of the Young Person plan is in place and this covers feedback on young people's views on Serious Youth Violence, Youth Rehabilitation Reviews and the Exit from Custody form.

A pilot virtual JAC programme was delivered by NYOS, feedback from the Young people attending was that although it was ok it was often difficult to concentrate not being with the workers and, that they were unable to see some of the interventions as they were using their own phones.

The RJ Team have worked closely with VOICE over the last year and there is an agreement in place that any referrals for specialist therapeutic support for young victims will be allocated as a priority.

### **Priorities for 21/22:**

YRO reviews continue, these are arranged on a monthly basis, as part of this young people attending are encouraged to complete a self-report, using a similar format as the Referral Order Young person's report.

A survey is currently in place, this was put together by the emerging practice group, to gather young people's views and understanding on Serious Youth Violence. The survey asks young people to feedback how it effects them, and their views of the professionals involved in addressing this. The outcomes will be fed into the creation of intervention available to those involved in or at risk of being involved in serious youth violence.

The RJ Team have identified and spoken to 2 young people, who have agreed to work alongside them to review the Young Person's victim leaflet. It is hoped that this will be completed over the next few months.

The RJ Team plan to put on a training event for panellists with young people. The session will involve young people who have recently finished their Referral Order and are happy to discuss their experience of attending panels and being on a Referral Order in 2021.

## Children and Young People continued

In the next few months the YOS will be introducing "Mind of My Own" in partnership with Social Care Children in Care Team. This app records the "Voice of the child" the application allows Young People to log their feelings and thoughts in real time not when meetings happen. This will give us valuable feedback during as well as post working with Young People. The app is in a young person format with emoji style pictorial indicators. It supports speech and language difficulties for young people (through picture and speech.) This app will provide the YOS with invaluable information on patterns of feelings or behaviours at varying times and places that we may not get information about in scheduled appointments.

### Recent YP feedback:

He Asked all the right questions and I understand

I knew she never judged me

It was Calm and didn't feel like a lesson

They never give up on me

## Restorative Justice

**The past year:** We piloted a scheme to enable the victims voice to be heard prior to an outcome decision for Out of Court Disposals and although this was really successful, due to staff moves, this trial has been put on hold.

With the continued use of zoom, access has been made easier for victims to attend panels and has enabled panellists to hear and understand, first-hand how a victim has been affected.

The use of specialist NYOS services has increased over the past month, allowing for the RJ Workers to offer the victim more internal support.

Focus on reviewing some of the existing paperwork has taken place this year with the Victim Feedback Report having been updated, it is hoped that this is a better document for Case Managers to view and will lead to automatic updates from the case manager to the victim worker. In addition, the RJ Team needed to increase the feedback received when closing the victims case and the Evaluation Form has been reviewed and is now more user friendly. We now send these evaluation forms out with a S.A.E. once we have gained verbal consent from the victim to do so.

**Priorities 2021/22:** We are currently involved in a recruitment drive for new members of staff to join the RJ Team and when all positions are filled, training will be a priority for the team over the next few months.

The RJ Team have recently started to review the Volunteer Panel Members Handbook, to reflect the changes in young people we currently work with and link in with the new Training materials offered at the Initial Training Event. A focus of this document will be to highlight how Restorative Approaches can be used to reduce offending behaviours and restore damaged relationships. This document will also be used as evidence in our application to renew the Investing in Volunteers Review.

As the world is starting to unlock, more focus will take place on developing a variety of different venues for reparation to support young people's desistance. This will support young people in gaining experience in areas they may want to consider as a future career.

## Prevention and Diversion

### **The past year:**

The Prevention and Diversion scheme, (PaDs), is managed by NYOS, in partnership with Northamptonshire Police. Over the past year PaDs has received approximately 369 referrals from the Police or diverted from Court, related to a crime and consideration of an Out of Court disposal. The prevention team is now funded as part of the main YOS budget and no longer is a project.

We have continued to work with our Police partners in strengthening and embedding our extended prevention offer. Since the inception of this work we have offered an additional 229 young people access to intervention and support to prevent offending or manage risks of criminal exploitation and knife crime. We have continued to have high rates of engagement through this voluntary route and have received positive feedback from young people and families about the support offered.

We are continually reviewing our assessments and processes to ensure we are able to be responsive to the needs of the young people, offering a careful balance of intervening but not labelling, which is key in the preventative work we do.

**Priorities for 21/22:** Taking into consideration the importance of early intervention and what works, NYOS have reviewed our current offer and the next steps we will take to ensure we are delivering a quality service to all. The following are our priorities for the coming year:

- NYOS will offer preventative services to children aged 10 and over, identified as being involved in, or significantly likely to be involved in criminal activities
- NYOS will ensure that all preventative and diversionary support and intervention is mindful and responsive to the risks of criminal and sexual exploitation
- NYOS will consciously use Restorative Practices in its preventative work.
- NYOS will work effectively in partnership with others to provide young people with access to support to promote positive futures

### **To ensure we reach our priorities we as a team will ensure:**

- Regular and relevant training will be provided to all staff to ensure they have the knowledge and awareness to effectively support the young people and families we work with.
- Reviews of assessments and processes - what is working well and what needs to be changed or adapted to achieve continued effective service delivery
- Strengthen our early help partnerships
- Continue to explore ways in which we can reach young people in need of our support at the right time
- Continue to develop our health offer
- Strengthen our engagement with victims and delivery of restorative practices
- Develop performance indicators to measure impact and success

## Performance against KPIs

The YOS monitors national and local Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) to ensure the Service is making a positive impact. The KPI's are as follows:

- Re-offending rates
- First Time Entrants into the youth justice system
- Custody rates for young people
- Engagement in Education, Training or Employment
- Access to suitable accommodation for young people

NYOS continues to make good progress with many of the indicators and will continue to mitigate risks and promote continuous improvement within the service.

On a local level we track specific metrics including Asset+ timeliness, completion of risk panels and more recently COVID 19 risk assessments for home visits. All measure provides useful information about the timeliness of assessments and the quality of our risk management. All this information is shared across the YOS on weekly basis as we aim to drive performance improvement through our '**Back To Basics**' approach.

## Re-offending Rates

In terms of overall re-offending, NYOS performs well. The most recently published 12-month reoffending data from the Police National Computer (PNC) for April 17 – March 2018 sets Northamptonshire's binary performance (percentage of young people who go on to reoffend) at 31.7%. This compares favourably with the national average (38.2%) and East-Midlands average (36.9%) - See table on next page.

NYOS continues to drive down re-offending by working closely with partners: Police, North and West Unitary Authorities , National Probation Service, and local providers to exchange information, reduce risk, monitor outcomes and develop creative interventions to reduce reoffending. This work includes young people both within and on the edge of the criminal justice system. Our work with Out Of Court Disposals through the PADS (Prevention and Diversion Scheme) is an expanding part of our business and ensures we work with Young People at an early stage preventing further re-offending. We also invest in our Employment and Education team ensuring Young People receive adequate provision and support with their future aspirations.

Furthermore, NYOS is closely involved with the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV), a Police-led project designed to reduce gang and other serious violence by offering an alternative pathway through mentoring, support, job opportunities and other change programmes. It is such initiatives that will ensure NYOS continues to drive positive change and prevent re-offending in the future.

## Latest YJB Re-offending Cohort (Apr 2017 – March 2018)

April 2017 - March 2018 Reoffending						
YOT	Number in the cohort	Number of reoffenders	Number of reoffences	Reoffences per reoffender	Reoffences per offender	% Reoffending
Northamptonshire	265	84	258	3.07	0.97	31.7%
Family Average	321.4	116.6	458.6	3.93	1.43	36.3%
Regional	2,064	761	3,066	4.03	1.49	36.9%
England	26,992	10,315	41,851	4.06	1.55	38.2%

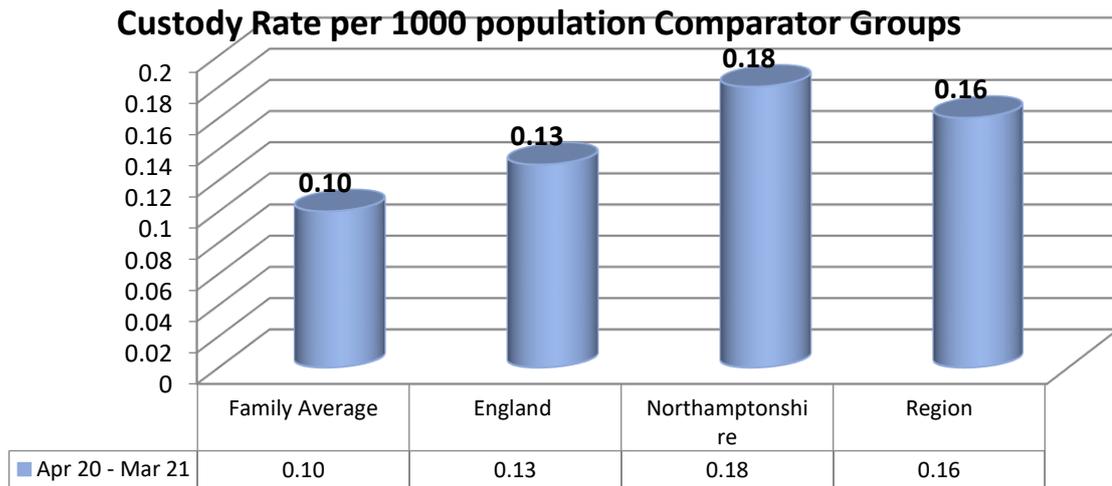
### First Time Entrants

Due to Covid 19 there have been no updates of the FTE using the data from PNC, however, the local report indicates for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 the number of first time entrants as 144, this is head count and not rate per 100,000 as is normally reported by MoJ. There is no comparable data for this information.

### Young People who receive a conviction in Court who are sentenced to custody

#### Custody

For the period 2020/21 there were a total of 13 custodial sentenced in the period. Six of these were sentenced at Northampton Crown Court for the most serious offences, with just 4 being sentenced at Northamptonshire Youth Court. Five of the 13 custodial sentences link to 2 siblings over a period of 4 months. The other 3 custodial sentences were from out of county courts.



Northamptonshire are showing an increase on custody rate per 1000 population against England, Regional and Family Average. Nearly 50% of the custody cases for the period were sentenced at the Crown Court due to the seriousness of the offences.

**Engagement in Employment Training and Education (ETE) for Young People who offend**

This KPI measures the proportion of young people on relevant youth justice disposals who are actively engaged in suitable education, training and employment (ETE) when the disposal closes. Active engagement is defined as 25 or more hours for young people of school age and 16 or more hours for those above statutory school age. The local target is 80%.

During Quarters 1 and 4 of 2020/21, schools were closed for the majority of students due to Covid19. For quarter 2, when a young person finished an order during a period the school is shut (school holidays) the counting rules, require for the last day of school to be the counted measurement, as above, this means that any young person who had an order close between the end of July and throughout August, would have their ETE counted as per Covid requirements.

In 20/21 36.1% continued with ETE and included those young people still working and elected home school pupils.

50% could not access full provision due to the closures.

We have also made the assumption, that had there been no Covid19, schools and colleges would have been open and those young people would have been in provision, which would have provided a figure of 86.1% engaged with ETE at the end of their order, this is an increase on last year of 4%.

ETE 2020/21	School Age	Above School Age	Total
In ETE (25+/16+ hours)	31.7%	41.8%	36.1%
Unable due to Covid	66.7%	27.7%	50.0%
No Covid assumption	97.9%	70.9%	86.1%

With the closure of schools, colleges and other providers Covid has had a significant impact on learning for our young people. Not all have had access to reliable technology and have not adapted well to this way of learning. For a few who find social interaction in a group setting difficult it has been positive and it has enabled them to re-engage in provision on line.

As the YOS ETE team this has also been difficult. Our work relies on building and maintaining relationships with young people in order to support them to move forward. Trying to achieve this online has presented challenges for ourselves and the Northampton College tutors who work with us as most of our young people respond best to face to face individual contact.

We are an accredited centre for ASDAN awards. Evidence for the awards are provided by case managers from interventions undertaken with young people and moderated by the ETE team. We noted a reduction of work being presented for moderation through April 2020 – March 2021. Now that restrictions are lifting we should see numbers increasing again.

In relation to partnership working we now have in place a Service Level Agreement with Northampton College. The YOS and Northampton College have recently developed a City and Guilds Employability qualification which is offered alongside other accredited awards in Literacy and Math. More vocational subjects are also offered such as driving theory tests, CSCS (building industry H&S) and CV preparation.

We work in partnership with Prospects to engage our NEET Post 16 young people. We have also recently submitted a bid to work with the Skill Mill, an organisation that provides employment opportunities for young people age 16-18, if our bid is successful.

The ETE Blueprint has been developed since the summer of 2020 and is operational within the YOS. We are seeing better co-ordination of ETE work across the YOS and improved recording.

ETE interventions are now scaled around need and follow a Signs of Safety format. The information provided to case managers is aligned to the Asset and feeds into the whole YOS intervention plan. This ensures we have integrated practice and the young person is clear on what that they need to achieve. Data is available to the ETE Team on a weekly basis which allows us to monitor our work against agreed performance indicators. During 2021 we have developed an ETE dashboard and are going live with this during the summer of 2021.

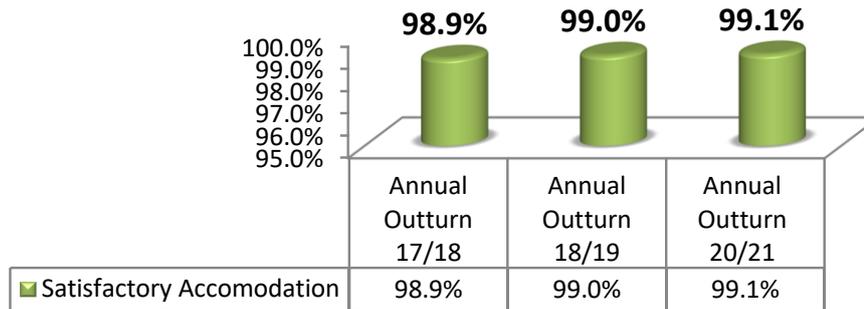
**Priority areas for development over the next 6 months are as follows:**

- Increase and improve ASDAN accreditations following the lifting of Covid restrictions.
- Review Information Sharing agreements with all local colleges.
- Develop closer working with Specialist Training and Employment brokers.

## Accommodation

Percentage of young people at the end of YOS Orders who are in satisfactory accommodation. The YOS has consistently performed above target on this indicator.

### Accommodation Outcomes



## Risks to future Delivery in 2021/22

There are a number of risks to future delivery, including:

**Ongoing Covid-19 pandemic presents an obvious health risk plus a disruption to a normal level of service.**

**Changing patterns in frequency of particular offences reflecting national trends in violent offending, child exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour.**

**Future budget settlements (including changes in national funding arrangements) will have a significant impact on the ability to provide the range of services and intervention required in Northamptonshire and will have an impact on performance.**

**Disparity in service delivery due to the introduction of two Unitary authorities that may have separate priorities.**

## Appendix A

### Youth Justice Work Plan 2021-2022

#### **Performance Priorities for 2021/22**

It is evident that there have been significant improvements with performance over the past 8 months in the YOS. Many of these improvements have been quantitative in nature and whilst such measures remain important a focus on qualitative indicators in the future is also required. Consequently, more attention will be given to 3 areas:

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
<p>Enhance and embed Quality assurance processes</p> <p>Develop QA policy document for staff</p>	<p>To promote effective performance improvement and quality management – Produce policy To promote effective performance improvement and quality management</p>	June	Performance Team
<p>Support the development of information sharing for young people at risk contextual safeguarding</p> <p>Devise one screening tool to ensure all contextual safe guarding is covered</p> <p>Identify Contextual safeguarding staffing team</p>	<p>Understanding our gang and CSE profile to better respond to need.</p> <p>Reduction in contextual safeguarding</p> <p>Create specialist internal knowledge and advice for all staff in YOS</p>	Sept 21	Gaye Arnold
<p>Enhance and ensure ETE blue print becomes an operational document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•the level of support provided by a programme matches a person’s risk of reoffending</li> <li>•the content of the programme covers the areas a person needs to address to stop further offending. For</li> </ul>	<p>Improve and increase the ETE interventions and outcomes - including ASDAN qualification (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network). The YOS is an accredited provider of ASDAN</p> <p>Young person receives correct level of support to reduce NEET</p>	Jun 21	Education Team

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
<p>example, being impulsive or having poor relationship skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the approach is adapted to respond to people's individual circumstances, abilities and strengths. For example, there are programmes specifically for people with learning disabilities</li> </ul> <p>Education worker to parallel plan with Speech and language therapist [when recruited] for young people with SEN requirement's</p> <p>Roll out skill mill to those YP most at risk of reoffending if successful with bid</p>	<p>Resource adapted to meet the needs of the child Improve Child/young person employability</p> <p>Create employable jobs and apprentices for YP</p> <p>Create a Health offer with a clear team that young people accessing</p>	July 2021	Claire O'Keeffe
Identify and embed health contribution			

## Priorities for sustaining practice for 2021/22

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
<p>Define agency roles and responsibilities with respect to young offenders and their families; especially in relation to Early Help and Adolescent service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase clarity as to the role and function of partner agencies in the youth justice arena,</li> <li>Attend VAP</li> <li>Multi-agency invite to ROSH meetings</li> </ul>	<p>Improve responses in earlier intervention and prevention of offending as a wider partnership</p> <p>improve shared understanding of the requirements of Section 17 1998 CDA to 'do all that is reasonable to prevent crime'.</p> <p>Prevent duplication and encourage co-production and clarity of roles with a family.</p>	July 2021	<p>Adolescent Team [Liz Fowler]</p> <p>Performance Team</p> <p>Mark Johnstone</p>

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
	Family have clarity of service provision and outcomes/ intervention		
<p>Applying trauma-informed approaches to a broader range of services, e.g. education, housing, policing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmes that address health-harming behaviours associated with adverse experiences.</li> <li>• Increasing 'trauma awareness' in YOS workforce</li> </ul> <p>Identify trauma training for YOS staff</p>	<p>Understand and mitigate the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in the YOT cohort and operate a trauma informed approach</p> <p>As per the finding of the YJB research that the YOT management board and YOT design, guide and deliver services that take proper account of the impact of trauma in young people's lives</p>	November 21	Leanne Tomlinson
<p>Increase understanding of YP cohort on FTE and reoffending.</p> <p>In partnership with the police use like to monitor and measure performance in relation to young people cohort data and then profile them in terms of prior history, who goes on to reoffend etc, what characteristics they have, what are the biggest predictors</p> <p>If Successful with Skill Mill bid target most prolific YP to the skill mill project</p> <p>Support staff to be creative and 'think out of the box' in Risk panels to ensure intervention meets the yps needs</p>	<p>Reduce reoffending by maximising support for vulnerable and complex young people in the statutory cohort.</p> <p>Through team meetings and Alternative to Custody Panels.</p>	Dec 2021	Police [Sean Scannell] YOS Performance Team Performance Team in the NCT
Head of Service reports on YOS YP to Corporate Parenting Board yearly	Prevent the over criminalisation of children in care and support their life chances	Feb 22	Leanne Tomlinson

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
<p>Weekly meeting in respect of children in care with strategic managers and Head of YOS</p> <p>Update Analysis of disproportionality of children in care, or experience of care, in the Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service (NYOS) offending population</p>	<p>look at more preventative services/interventions and how well we are working with other agencies to best meet the needs of these young people and their families</p>		
<p>Ensure contextual safeguarding toolkit is disseminated to the YOS</p> <p>All staff attend contextual safeguarding training</p> <p>Introduction and implementation of VAP Panel YOS HOS co-Chair and managed VAP coordinator</p>	<p>Ensure the YOT is a key player shaping contextual safeguarding in Northamptonshire</p>	Oct 21	Gaye Arnold
<p>Disproportionality- February 2018 the YOS put a proposal forward to the Management Board to look at areas of possible disproportionality, with a focus on gender, ethnicity and children in care.</p> <p>Reports have been over a 2 year this period looking at these areas in greater detail, identifying areas of disproportionality and where this becomes more pronounced.</p> <p>An action plan has now been put together. In some areas the actions require a multi-agency approach and commitment, others are a single agency responsibility. The YOS Management Board needs to confirm owners and timescales for these actions.</p>	<p>Monitoring disproportionality and responding to any over-representation strategically and operationally</p> <p>Further explanatory investigation was also undertaken to understand what was being presented, and recommendations made as to how to address the issues identified in the data</p>	July 21	Leanne Tomlinson Claire O’Keeffe Performance Team

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
Monitoring and implementing improvements identified by audit and inspection.	Addressing any areas for development identified in the National Standards Audit/Mock Inspection Fewer children committing offences. Proportionality results in fewer children entering the formal system, Re-offending reduces. Use of RJ increases. Co-production of community based offer, with full access to resources, Significant development of preventative service. Robust leadership. Clear, accurate assessments and intervention plans. Appropriate support for children transitioning to adult services.	Throughout the year	Performance team  SMT

### Priorities for improving practice 2021/22

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
Increase resources for, and the effectiveness of, support to NEET young people to get back into education, employment or training	To be able to implement Blue Print.	Nov 21	Education Team
Embed and be participants in the creation of the serious violence partnership  Two YOS Police Officers have been identified to take a lead role in areas such as, Serious Organised Crime and Gangs	Respond to the significant issues of serious youth violence, offences involving weapons and other emerging priorities. Reduce violent crime and tackle the emerging concerns in relation to gang related offending. Police intelligence in relation to youth violence has assisted in identifying emerging issues at an earlier stage, allowing NYOS to respond without unnecessarily criminalising additional children and young people.		Claire O'Keeffe  Police

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
	This work is being undertaken alongside the Police CIRV (Community Initiative Reducing Violence) project to reduce violent crime and tackle the emerging concerns in relation to gang related offending. Police intelligence in relation to youth violence has assisted in identifying emerging issues at an earlier stage, allowing NYOS to respond without unnecessarily criminalising additional children and young people.		
Mainstream Prevention and Diversion and create a bigger offer in Northamptonshire	Following a successful bid by OPFCC to the Home Office under the Early Intervention Youth Fund in 2018, NYOS significantly extended the work of PaDs. This work is now being mainstreamed and financed through the mainstream YOS budget alongside the Police CIRV (Community Initiative Reducing Violence). The reduce violent crime and tackle the emerging concerns in relation to gang related offending. Police intelligence in relation to youth violence has assisted in identifying emerging issues at an earlier stage, allowing NYOS to respond without unnecessarily criminalising additional children and young people. This work is being undertaken alongside the Police CIRV (Community Initiative Reducing Violence) project to reduce violent crime and tackle the emerging concerns in relation to gang related offending. Police	March 2022	Area Manager SMT Carly McLear

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
	intelligence in relation to youth violence has assisted in identifying emerging issues at an earlier stage, allowing NYOS to respond without unnecessarily criminalising additional children and young people.		
Applying trauma-informed approaches to a broader range of services, e.g. education, housing, policing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programmes that address health-harming behaviours associated with adverse experiences.</li> <li>Increasing 'trauma awareness' in YOS workforce</li> </ul> Identify trauma training for YOS staff	Understand and mitigate the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in the YOT cohort and operate a trauma informed approach  As per the finding of the YJB research that the YOT management board and YOT design, guide and deliver services that take proper account of the impact of trauma in young people's lives.	March 2022	SMT
Development for this year will be to continue the reviewing of the transition period, improve understanding of the process within NYOS, increase forecasting of resource requirements, and improve case holding oversight	Ensure transitions to probation are effective and explore innovative responses to 18-21-year olds with partners (NPS & CRC).  Enhanced and clear transition plan such as move to adult services, CIC to care leaver, CAHMS to Adult Mental Health Service.		Leanne Tomlinson Mark Johnstone Probation
Continue to address disproportionality and any overrepresentation priority areas: Children in care - CIN/ARM/CP  Children in care - Early Intervention  Ethnicity Gender	Improve joint working between social care and YOS, in particular developing strong links with the integrated adolescent team at all levels.  Introduce to new CIC YOS workers.  Intervene at an earlier stage to avoid young people entering the criminal justice system with the use of QLIK.	Jan 2022	Leanne Tomlinson  Performance Team Operational Managers

Action	Benefit/Impact	Timescale	Owner
	Ensure consistency in practice and highlight any abnormalities in those being breach based on ethnicity, sentencing and gender.		
Build capacity and expertise to respond to Contextual Exploitation	<p>Co-lead and introduce the VAP Panel for young people at risk of contextual safeguarding.</p> <p>Identify Contextual safeguarding lead.</p> <p>Add a section to RISK and Safety plans to specifically name contextual safeguarding and assessment of this.</p> <p>Ensure all staff have clarity of contextual safeguarding and procedures that are required to respond the concerns.</p>	March 2021	Claire O’Keeffe Gaye Arnold

### Priorities for improving practice 2021/22

Create and embed positive culture within YOS	<p>Celebrate success,</p> <p>Identify employee of the month,</p> <p>Acknowledge and send information about good work to Colin Foster,</p> <p>Introduce six weekly all team meetings,</p> <p>Arrange staff development days throughout the year.</p>	August 21	Whole service led by SMT
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<p>Increase resources for, and the effectiveness of, support to NEET young people to get back into education, employment or training</p>	<p>Embed the ETE Blue Print and ensure all young people are monitored and receive educational support if NEET.</p> <p>Continue with quarterly Prospects meetings.</p> <p>Increase numbers of Education workers within the service.</p> <p>Identify a range of educational option pre and post 16 if a YP not engaging.</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>Education team</p>
<p>Be active partners in the delivery of the Serious Violence Strategy</p> <p>Respond to the significant issues of serious youth violence, offences involving weapons and other emerging priorities</p>	<p>Commit to working with YP who actively live and are involved in areas where serious violence is most present.</p> <p>Work collaboratively with Police, Community safety groups and local communities to identify solutions.</p> <p>YOS will be proactive in working with the police to identify and offer intervention or disruption to young people who commit such crime.</p> <p>Ensure we have an accurate profile of all gangs within the borough by linking with CIRV, Police and other agencies.</p> <p>Reinforce and renew the Knives means lives program for schools and local community groups.</p>	<p>Oct 2022</p>	<p>Operational Manager Lead SMT Police</p>
<p>Develop the skills, knowledge and experience of staff with trauma informed approaches</p>	<p>Base our model of inception on the Understanding and inception of trauma informed practice. see link at end of document.</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>SMT</p>

<p>Ensure transitions to probation are effective and explore innovative responses to 18-21-year olds with partners (NPS &amp; CRC)</p>	<p>Ensure we follow the Joint national protocol for transitions in England Protocol to support the planned and safe movement of young people from youth offending teams (YOTs) to the Probation Service when they turn 18.</p> <p>Embed Probation officers into teams and ensure they receive training and supervision from YOS Managers.</p>		<p>Leanne Tomlinson</p> <p>Mark Thompson Probation</p>
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# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL COUNCIL

23rd September 2021

**Cllr Rebecca Breese, Portfolio Holder for  
Planning, Built Environment and Rural Affairs**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Planning policy, conservation areas, local lists and Article 4 Directions – suggested approach for decision making</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Richard Wood, Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy</b>

## **Contributors/Checkers/Approvers**

<b>West MO</b>	<b>Catherine Whitehead</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
<b>West S151</b>	Martin Henry	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
<b>WNC Communications</b>		Sent 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021

## **List of Appendices**

None

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

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- 1.1. To seek approval from members for an approach to making decisions on the various stages of preparing and adopting planning policy and related documents, designating conservation areas, adding buildings to the local list, and making article 4 directions.

### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 1.2. This report sets out a suggested approach for decision making in relation to planning policy and related documents, designating conservation areas, adding buildings to the local list, and making Article 4 directions

### **3. Recommendations**

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3.1 It is recommended that Council:

1. Agrees the approaches to the preparation of planning policy and related documents, designation of conservation areas, adding buildings to the local list and making article 4 directions as set out in this report
2. Delegates to the Head of Planning & Climate Change Policy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Built Environment & Rural Affairs:
  - a) Responses to consultations on local plans from neighbouring authorities and production of Statements of Common Ground
  - b) Responses to consultations on other planning policy documents from neighbouring authorities
3. Cabinet will delegate to Planning Policy Committee relevant responsibilities relating to Planning Policy when that committee has been established.

### **4. Reason for Recommendations**

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This report sets out proposed arrangements for dealing with the various decisions that the Council has to take in progressing planning policy documents, designating conservation areas and making article 4 directions and consequent changes to the constitution. Whilst the regulations prescribe much of what councils have to do there is still some discretion about how this is done, and different practises have been established in each of the predecessor councils. It is now important that a consistent approach is taken across West Northamptonshire.

### **5. Report Background**

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- 5.1 The Council is responsible for producing and maintaining an up to date set of planning policy documents. These will take various forms and will cover different geographies, and can cover different topics. The production of Neighbourhood Plans is dealt with in a separate report on this agenda.
- 5.2 The suggested approach seeks to ensure that local plans can progress efficiently through the process, and to ensure the regulations will be complied with. Progressing plans efficiently is important as plans gain increasing weight as they move through the stages and the National Planning Policy Framework requires plans to be kept up to date. The risk of having out-of-date plans is a reduced level of control the council has in determining planning applications.
- 5.3 If approved the approach would apply for decisions after this council meeting and would apply to policies and plans which are already being prepared.
- 5.4 The approach will also provide clarity about how decisions are made on the designation of conservation areas, adding buildings, sites and monuments to the local list and the making of article 4 directions.

## **6. Issues and Choices**

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### **6.1 Preparation of Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plans and Plans of Neighbouring authorities**

6.2 The regulations set out various stages for the production of local plans. The approach set out in this report is for the production of the Part 1 (i.e. West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan) and Part 2 Plans. Neighbourhood planning will be dealt with in a separate report to be considered by Cabinet in October.

6.3 The first stage of consultation is what is termed regulation 18 stage. This provides some discretion to the local authority on the form of consultation, but usually it takes the form of issues and options consultations. In West Northamptonshire's case an issues paper was consulted on from 5<sup>th</sup> August to 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019. A proposal for an options consultation (also regulation 18) was included in the papers for cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

6.4 It is intended that there will be two further stages of consultation on emerging plans. It is suggested that the request for permission to consult on these plans be a matter for cabinet to decide.

6.5 Proposals for making decisions about later stages of plan production will be subject of future reports to cabinet.

6.6 The council is also required to produce related documents, namely a Statement of Community Involvement which sets out how the community will be engaged and invited to comment on emerging plans and a Local Development Scheme which sets out the programme for the production of plans. Both of these were included in the papers for cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

6.7 The council is consulted from time to time on local plans and other planning policy documents from neighbouring authorities and will be asked to complete Statements of Common Ground (SOCG). The purpose of a SOCG is to set out clearly for the examiner of the plan, areas of agreement and any areas of concern. It is suggested that the responsibility for responding to such consultations and completing SOCG's be delegated to the Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment and Rural Affairs.

### **6.8 Proposed Process for making Supplementary Planning Documents**

6.9 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) can be topic based (existing examples in West Northamptonshire include Housing, Biodiversity and Developer Contributions) or based on a particular geography (e.g. a conservation area appraisal or village design statement for a particular village).

6.10 Regulations set out the approach to their production, which includes a formal stage of consultation and an adoption stage. In some cases SPDs are produced by the community, such

as village design statements. The local community will often do their own consultation and engagement activity in the early stages of preparation.

- 6.11 In order to enable consultation to start promptly, it is suggested that requests to consult on draft documents be a matter for cabinet to decide.
- 6.12 When consultation has concluded, any comments received will be carefully assessed, and appropriate changes to the consultation document will be identified. A report will be prepared recommending whether or not to proceed to adoption, together with any changes as a result of the consultation. It is suggested that these reports be referred to cabinet for decision.
- 6.13 Proposed Process for Designating Conservation Areas and Local Lists.
- 6.14 Local Authorities have a duty to determine which areas it is desirable to preserve and enhance and designate them as conservation areas, and produce management plans for those areas.
- 6.15 Across West Northamptonshire there are 119 designated conservation areas. Most have a recently adopted appraisal, but some are still in the course of being reviewed, and assessments are underway or in programme for potential new designations.
- 6.16 If an appraisal indicates that a new or modified conservation area boundary should be designated, members would be asked to make a formal decision to agree to such a designation – this is in addition to the decision to adopt an appraisal as a Supplementary Planning Document (as covered in paragraphs 6.9 -6.12).
- 6.17 It is suggested that consultations on proposals to designate new or amend existing boundaries be referred to cabinet for agreement, and that final proposals to designate, or not, be also referred to cabinet.
- 6.18 Across West Northamptonshire there are many heritage assets which do not have any designation but are an important part of the area’s heritage. A separate report will be presented to members in due course setting out a proposed methodology for adding buildings, sites or monuments to a local list, this will seek to achieve agreement for a West Northamptonshire approach, however in the interim some proposals for adding to the list will emerge through conservation area reviews and neighbourhood planning activity, and in the interests of progressing that work cabinet will be asked to consider any such requests.
- 6.19 Article 4 directions
- 6.20 Article 4 directions provide additional control for local authorities to manage change. Changes allowed by permitted development rights may appear minor when viewed individually, but cumulatively can affect the overall character of an area, leading to the gradual erosion of its special interest, or they can undermine policy objectives. Article 4 Directions can be put in place to add further controls for features which are particularly important to the historic and architectural interest of the area, and to ensure control e.g. over changes of use of buildings.

- 6.21 It is suggested that proposals to consult on article 4 directions be referred to cabinet for approval and that the final decision to confirm, amend or not confirm also be referred to cabinet for decision, except in cases where an article 4 direction be required to be imposed in an emergency situation – in those cases it is suggested that the power be delegated to the Assistant Director Growth, Climate and Regeneration.

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

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### **7.1 Resources and Financial**

- 7.1.1 The tasks would be met from existing resources.

### **7.2 Legal**

- 7.2.1 The proposals are in order to comply with the relevant legislation and regulations

### **7.3 Risk**

- 7.3.1 Having an agreed approach in place significantly reduces the risk of inconsistent approaches in producing plans and policies.

### **7.4 Consultation**

- 7.4.1 No consultations have been undertaken in relation to this report.

### **7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

- 7.5.1 Not applicable.

### **7.6 Climate Impact**

- 7.6.1 There are no direct consequences of this report, however the plans themselves may contain policies that deal with climate change.

### **7.7 Community Impact**

- 7.7.1 None as a direct result of this report, however an important part of producing polices and plans is engagement with the community.

## **8. Background Papers**

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- 8.1 None

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# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL COUNCIL

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

**Councillor Mike Hallam, Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Services**

Report Title	Changes to Committee Places
Report Author	Paul Hanson, Democratic Services Manager

## Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	Catherine Whitehead	09/09/2021
<b>Chief Finance Officer</b>	Martin Henry	09/09/2021
<b>Communications Lead/Head of Communications</b>	Marie McCormack	09/09/2021

## List of Appendices

None

### 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 This report invites Council to approve changes to the membership of committees as requested by political groups.

### 2. Recommendations

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It is recommended that Council appoints members to the committees listed in Section 4 below to give effect to the wishes expressed by the political groups to which the seats have been allocated.

### 3. Reason for Recommendations

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The Council is responsible for appointing members to committees.

#### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 At its annual meeting on 20 May 2021, the Council confirmed the allocation of seats on committees between Political Groups. The Conservative and Labour Groups would like to make changes to the membership of the following Committees as detailed below:
- 4.2 Audit Committee: Councillor Alan Chantler will replace Councillor Pinder Chauhan.
- 4.3 People Scrutiny Committee: Councillor Ray Connolly to replace Councillor Fiona Cole.
- 4.4 Corporate Scrutiny Committee: Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere to replace Councillor Terrie Eales.
- 4.5 Place Scrutiny Committee: Councillor Terrie Eales to replace Councillor Paul Joyce.
- 4.6 Strategic Planning Committee: Councillor Paul Joyce to replace Councillor Terrie Eales.

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

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

There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposals.

##### **5.2 Legal**

There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

##### **5.3 Risk**

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

##### **5.4 Consultation**

No consultation was necessary prior to making the recommendations set out above to Council.

##### **5.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

The report has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

##### **5.6 Climate Impact**

No climate /environmental impact.

5.7 **Community Impact**

No community impact.

5.8 **Communications**

No communications implications.

**6. Background Papers**

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Report to Council – 20 May 2021

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## WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

23 September 2021

Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Engagement and Regulatory Services -  
Councillor David Smith

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Update on Afghan Resettlement and Relocation in West Northamptonshire</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	Joanne Barrett, Assistant Director: Housing & Communities <a href="mailto:joanne.barrett@westnorthants.gov.uk">joanne.barrett@westnorthants.gov.uk</a>

### Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

<b>West MO</b>	Cath Whitehead	20.9.2021
<b>West S151</b>	Martin Henry	20.9.2021
<b>Other Director/SME</b>	Martin Henry (as Senior Officer acting as Gold for this project w/c 13/09/21)	20.9.2021
<b>Communications Lead/Head of Communications</b>	Craig Forsyth	20.9.2021

### List of Appendices

None

### 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. To update Full Council on Afghan resettlement and relocation in West Northamptonshire.

### 2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report sets out the different elements of the Government's Afghanistan relocation programme, how West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is supporting families currently accommodated in interim hotel accommodation and the council's 'offer' regarding the permanent resettlement of Afghan families in our area.

### 3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- a) Note the use of existing powers and delegation to;
- b) Support central Government's Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and welcome Afghan Locally Employed Staff (ALES) who have worked for UK and risked their lives alongside British forces in Afghanistan and are now relocating to the UK with their families following NATO's decision to withdraw military forces from Afghanistan.
- c) Support Central Government's Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) which will provide vulnerable refugees from Afghanistan and those put at risk by recent events in Afghanistan with a route to safety.
- d) Support officers to work collaboratively with Police, Fire, Northamptonshire Children's Trust, North Northamptonshire Council, Public Health Northamptonshire, other health partners and the local community and voluntary sector to provide a co-ordinated response to the Government's appeal to provide support to affected adults and children under ARAP and ACRS currently being provided with short-term "holding accommodation" in West Northamptonshire.
- e) Support the assessment of the likely long term support needs of this group of people alongside the availability of local services to inform the scale of the Councils offer to permanently resettle households in West Northamptonshire under the ARAP scheme.

#### **4. Reason for Recommendations**

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- 4.1 To support central Government to respond to this humanitarian situation.
- 4.2 The Home Office has had to look at a range of options across the UK to provide short-term "holding accommodation" for families who have cleared quarantine but have not yet been allocated more permanent accommodation. The Home Office is using hotels in West Northamptonshire as they had availability. Funding is available from central Government to help meet the costs of providing support to these vulnerable families. Therefore, the council would like to assist and provide wrap-around support to these vulnerable families otherwise their needs may not be met.
- 4.3 To respond to central Government's national resettlement programme designed to provide a safe haven to Afghan families who have assisted the British Government or our armed forces in Afghanistan.

#### **5. Report Background**

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- 5.1 With the decision to withdraw military forces from Afghanistan and subsequent overthrowing of the Afghan Government by the Taliban, there was considered to be a real threat to the safety of Afghan nationals who had assisted the British Government and armed forces over the past two decades. The British Government recognised this threat

of violent retaliation against people who we have a moral duty to safeguard and therefore committed to airlift these Afghans and their immediate families to safety in the UK.

- 5.2 The Government has established two schemes to support Afghan citizens and their families who are seeking to rebuild their lives in the UK: The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme; and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS).
- 5.3 Funding has been put in place to implement these schemes and central Government is seeking offers of support from all UK councils to resettle people who have fled Afghanistan.

## **6. Issues and Choices**

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### **Current Position – National Level**

#### **Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)**

- 6.1 Since the first flight landed on 22 June, around 7,000 locally employed staff and their families have been welcomed to the UK under the ARAP scheme, including around 5,000 people who were evacuated during August.
- 6.2 ARAP was launched in April 2021 and supplements an existing scheme that had operated since 2013. ARAP offers eligible current or former locally employed staff who were assessed to be under serious threat to life priority relocation to the UK regardless of their employment status, rank or role, or length of time served.

#### **Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)**

- 6.3 On 18 August 2021, the Prime Minister announced the ACRS. This scheme will resettle up to 20,000 people at risk, with 5,000 in the first year. This is in addition to those brought to the UK under ARAP.
- 6.4 On 13 September 2021, the Government announced further details of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). The scheme will provide vulnerable refugees from Afghanistan and those put at risk by recent events in Afghanistan with a route to safety. The scheme will prioritise:
  - Those who have assisted the UK efforts in Afghanistan and stood up for values such as democracy, women’s rights and freedom of speech, rule of law (for example, judges, women’s rights activists, journalists)
  - Vulnerable people, including women and girls at risk, and members of minority groups at risk (including ethnic and religious minorities and LGBT+).
- 6.5 Some of those who arrived in the UK under the evacuation programme, which included individuals who were considered to be at particular risk – including women’s rights activists, prosecutors and journalists – will be the first to be resettled under the ACRS. People who were notified by the UK government that they had been called forward or specifically authorised for evacuation, but were not able to board flights, will also be offered a place under the scheme if they subsequently come to the UK.

6.6 Although the Government has announced further details of the ACRS, the scheme is not yet open.

### **Integration Support for ARAP and ACRS**

6.7 Those arriving through either ARAP or ACRS will be granted immediate indefinite leave to remain allowing them to benefit from full rights and entitlements and providing them with the certainty and stability they need to build their lives here.

6.8 The integration packages for the ACRS and ARAP will be aligned, providing one comprehensive offer to individuals, local authorities and mainstream services. The resettlement package that has been developed is designed to support ARAP/ACRS arrivals to acclimatise to the UK, learn the language (where appropriate), and find work, thus enabling rapid self-sufficiency and social integration in UK communities. The Government package will cover health, education and integration support costs.

6.9 Up to £20,520 per person will be provided to local authorities to support Afghans to resettle and integrate into British Society and become self-sufficient as quickly as possible. The funding is paid over a 12 to 36 months period, depending on the circumstances.

6.10 Central Government has also agreed a further £20m fund of flexible funding in the current financial year (2021/22) to support local authorities with higher cost bases with any additional costs in the provision of services.

### **Current Position – Local Level**

6.11 As outlined above, The Home Office is using hotels in West Northamptonshire as short term 'holding accommodation' as they had sufficient availability at the right time. As at 13 September there were a total of 212 people being accommodated in two hotels in West Northamptonshire. There are a small number of single people, but the majority are family groups with children ranging from 0 to 17 years old.

6.12 Those councils where the Home Office is providing short term 'holding accommodation' for families in their area are being requested to provide general welfare support at the hotels and lead and coordinate a multi-agency approach to assist the families including access to education, healthcare, banking facilities, applying for a National Insurance number and provision of childcare support. Central Government will provide funding to assist local authorities provide this wraparound support.

6.13 The wraparound support provided by West Northamptonshire Council to date at the 'holding accommodation' has included:

- Visits by local GPs to meet urgent medical needs
- Psychosocial support on-site from British Red Cross and Salvation Army volunteers
- Healthcare pathway set up to enable access to a mental health helpline, mental health crisis staff and a local psychologist originally from Afghanistan
- Midwife team have attended site, pregnancy tests available and pregnant women have attended an obstetrics clinic
- Calling 111 to address health needs out of office hours
- Securing urgent prescriptions and medication

- Fortnightly visits from mobile lateral flow test (LFT) unit plus LFT kits also available at hotels
- Transport provided to local mosques for Friday Prayer
- Community cohesion activities, for example guided walks and football matches
- Youth activators delivering organised physical activities in the grounds of the accommodation several times a week
- Walking buses to local parks
- Provision of donated clothes, shoes, toys, cots, pushchairs and other essential items

6.14 The British Red Cross (who are providing voluntary sector support across numerous holding accommodation sites) and the Home Office Resettlement Team have commented on the comprehensive offer that WNC is providing to people in holding accommodation within its area.

### **Offers of support for Afghan families**

6.15 Central Government is seeking a commitment from every local authority in the UK to make a firm offer of support to resettle a set number of families under the different resettlement schemes.

6.16 The following factors should be taken into consideration by the council when making offers under the resettlement schemes:

- Capacity within local services to meet the needs of those being resettled, for example health and education
- Availability of suitable and affordable accommodation. Individuals will cover rental costs themselves using Universal Credit, Housing Benefit or other income. Therefore, properties will need to be secured at or as close as possible to the relevant area's Local Housing Allowance rates. There are also high levels of need for social housing in many parts of West Northamptonshire. Taking this into account in the first instance the local authority will consider the offers of accommodation that have been made by local private landlords/individuals (so far about ten individual offers have been made directly to the council) before considering the use of social/affordable housing. If social housing did need to be in scope, then areas with lower housing need could be considered before areas of higher housing need.
- Previous experience of resettling individuals/families through similar schemes, for example asylum seeker dispersal areas and the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS). Resettlement of individual/families in these circumstances is a complex work area and the regional strategic migration partnerships recommend local authorities have previous experience and specialist expertise in this area before committing to the resettlement of considerable numbers of people under the schemes.
- Other local authorities making commitments under other schemes, for example SVPRS, have agreed an initial offer and once this has been achieved, they have completed a review. Where the resettlement of the first cohort of individuals/families has been achievable, viable and successful, local authorities have committed to resettle more households. WNC could adopt a similar approach.
- Local authorities can make an additional pledge at a later date and/or make separate pledges for each of the different resettlement schemes.

- f) Officers are gathering information from a number of other larger/unitary councils (similar to WNC) to understand their pledges to resettle people fleeing Afghanistan under the ARAP scheme alongside availability of local services to inform the scale of the Councils offer to permanently resettle households in West Northamptonshire under the ARAP scheme.

## **7 Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **7.7 Resources and Financial**

The ARAP and ACRS schemes both have a Funding Instruction issued by the Home Office. The bridging hotel funding arrangements have been provisionally agreed but the Funding Instruction is still to be published. The Council has been advised by the Home Office to work on the funding basis as per the ARAP Guidance for the Integration Support Package of £10,500 per person, on a standard per capita per annum. Data is being captured to ensure that appropriate expenditure is recorded to enable it to be easily used to claim against schemes guidance when it is published by Government.

### **7.8 Legal**

- 7.8.1 The relocation scheme will be governed by regulations and guidance to be published by the Home Office.
- 7.8.2 Participation in the Home Office Schemes is on a voluntary basis and is not a statutory requirement.
- 7.8.3 As a local housing authority, the Council is limited in the type of tenancy it can offer direct to the applicants. It is likely that the tenancies granted by the Council will be secure tenancies after the first year's occupation, if not before, unless the tenancies are excluded because they fall within the categories set out in Schedule 1 to the Housing Act 1985. These include tenancies granted in pursuance of the Council's homelessness duties, or granted to provide accommodation to asylum seekers (assuming in each case the applicants meet the relevant criteria). The Council will have limited rights to obtain possession of the properties (especially after the first year), and the tenants will enjoy the usual benefits of being secure tenants, including the Right to Buy. If the Council has to enter into any legal arrangements with private landlords, further decisions in accordance with the Council's constitution may be required.

### **7.9 Risk**

- 7.9.1 The council and the previous councils that were amalgamated to form WNC do not have extensive experience of resettlement schemes. Also, there could be some level of financial risk in terms of the council not claiming eligible expenditure costs back from Home Office. However, the finance team is already involved in the workstream, inputting into the financial management of the project and completing financial modelling to inform project expenditure/financial planning.

### **7.10 Consultation**

Members of the local Afghan community have been volunteering alongside WNC officers and helping them to:

- Understand Afghanistan, its culture and religious beliefs
- Design the wraparound support provision
- Engage with people in the 'holding accommodation'

7.10.2 Local community and voluntary sector organisations are being consulted to establish how they can support the resettlement of people in 'holding accommodation' and provide the wraparound support.

7.10.3 Local residents and organisations have been consulted and asked if they would like to support the resettlement efforts by completing a form on the council's website where they can outline what they can offer and/or how they can help.

7.10.4 Local ward members have been informed on a strictly confidential basis if they have 'holding accommodation' in their ward.

### **7.11 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

- This report has not been presented to Overview and Scrutiny.

### **7.12 Climate Impact**

- There is no climate/environmental impact arising from the report.

### **7.13 Community Impact**

7.13.1 There could be the potential for community tension related to these resettlement schemes. However, to date most residents and local businesses have been very supportive. Many local people have donated required items or services, the local community/voluntary sector are positively supporting the project and many residents and local businesses are keen to help meet the needs of these families and support their resettlement and integration.

### **7.14 Communications**

- Report reviewed for accessibility and amendments suggested.

## **8 Background Papers**

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8.1 The following background papers may be useful:

- ARAP: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy>
- ACRS: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

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