



Council

A meeting of the Council will be held at the Great Hall, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Thursday 30 June 2022 at 6.00 pm
Councillors are hereby summoned to attend

Agenda

1.	Apologies for Absence
2.	Declarations of Interest 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.
3.	Minutes of Council (Pages 9 - 14) To confirm the Minutes of the annual meeting of the Council held on 19 th May 2022.
4.	Chairman's Announcements To receive communications from the Chairman of the Council.
5.	Public Participation (1) Receipt of Petitions (if any) from Local Government Electors for the District (2) Questions (if any) from the Public
6.	Priority Opposition Motion <u>Priority Opposition Motion</u> Proposed: Cllr. Wendy Randall Seconded: Cllr. Bob Purser The West Northamptonshire Council wishes to re-assert the importance of the 'Nolan principles' of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership for all in public life. These principles serve as the foundations of our Councillor Code of Conduct and underpin how Councillors must behave when

	<p>carrying out their duties.</p> <p>The honour of becoming an elected representative comes with the responsibility of maintaining and building the confidence in which the democratic political process is held, both for central and local governments. These principles guide not only how decisions and functions are carried out by elected members, but also how they treat officers, the public and their colleagues.</p> <p>In light of the attention these principles are receiving locally and nationally, this Council therefore notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seven Nolan Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership) underpin the conduct and behaviour expected of our elected representatives nationally and locally. • The obligation as a Council and as individual Councillors to adhere to these principles at all times. <p>This Council resolves:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To defend and protect these principles as a matter of duty, so as to maintain and build the confidence of residents in their democratic institutions. 2. That members should confront and report actions or omissions by other members of this council that appear to be contrary to the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, which includes and reflects the Nolan Principles.
7.	Cabinet Reports and Record of Decisions Taken by the Cabinet (Pages 15 - 94)
Items of Business	
8.	Integrated Care System and future role of the Health and Wellbeing Board (Pages 95 - 116)
9.	Local Government Boundary Review: Council Size Submission (Pages 117 - 164)
10.	Annual Report from the Audit Committee (Pages 165 - 180)
11.	Annual Report 2021/2022 of the Democracy and Standards Committee (Pages 181 - 196)
12.	Updates to the Constitution (Pages 197 - 490)
13.	Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub (Pages 491 - 644)

14.	Chief Officer Appointments (Pages 645 - 648)
15.	<p>Motions</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. Kevin Parker Seconded by Cllr. Cécile Irving-Swift</p> <p>"This Council recognises the importance of green spaces, and more importantly, green spaces which are accessible to all, physically and financially.</p> <p>Within West Northamptonshire Council, we have Brixworth Country Park, and Daventry Country Park both offering the chance to engage in both physical and mental health activities, with Daventry including open water swimming during the summer months, and also the Brampton Valley Way which is part of the Sustrans national cycle network. These are all great places for families and individuals alike where all can enjoy the benefits of physical activity and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>However, this council notes that there are disparities in the fees charged at the various country parks and recommends that a review is undertaken in order to thoroughly analyse the costs, the harmonising of charges and to consider as and when to implement as necessary."</p> <p><u>Motion 2</u></p> <p>Proposed: Cllr Jonathan Harris Seconded: Cllr Rosie Humphreys</p> <p>On 1 April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy price cap by 54%. In light of the increased energy price cap, the average standard tariff energy bill will increase by £693 per year. The average pre-pay meter energy bill will increase by £708 per year (Ofgem, 2022).</p> <p>On 6 April 2022, the Government increased National Insurance by 1.25 percentage points, which is projected to cost the average West Northants family an additional £108 per year.</p> <p>The Government has suspended the pensions 'triple lock' for 2022/3, meaning that pensioners will see a rise of 3.1% this year (instead of 8.3% under the triple lock formula). This year, this will cost a West Northants resident on the full new state pension an average of £487.</p> <p>Whilst the government finally, and belatedly, has imposed a 'Windfall Tax' on the super profits of oil and gas companies (proposed initially by the Liberal Democrats last year and subsequently Labour), it still will not be sufficient for many residents of West Northamptonshire with the cap rising again this coming Autumn.</p> <p>The recent 'State of Hunger' report from the Trussell Trust provides for shocking</p>

reading:

- 49% increase in the number of children supported by a food bank in the Trussell Trust network between 2018/19 and 2019/20
- 700,000 households used a food bank in 2019/20. The proportion of couples with children referred to a food bank increased from 19% in early 2020 to 24% during the Covid-19 pandemic in mid-2020.
- 6 in 10 of working age people referred to a food bank in early 2020 had a disability, over three times more than in the general population
- 95% of people referred to food banks are destitute
- Food bank use is driven by economic need – that is, not having enough money to buy food once essential bills have been paid.

The report goes on to indicate a key contributing factor and two background factors contributing to the significant growth of food bank use:

- The main factor is linked to Universal credit; people having to wait 5 weeks for the first UC payment, very low rate of standard UC allowance, deductions from UC to repay UC advances and other debts, low Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates and LHA caps, 'bedroom tax' and the structure and process of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment.
- The contributing factors – ill health or adverse life experiences (such as household separation or eviction) and the lack of informal and/or formal support.

This Council therefore declares a 'Cost of Living Emergency' and calls on the Government to:

1. Immediately reduce the standard rate of VAT from 20% to 17.5% for one year, saving the average West Northants household a further £600 this year
2. Immediately re-introduce the pensions triple lock to support West Northamptonshire's pensioners.
3. Urgently review the effectiveness of the Social Security system and restore the £20 per week Universal Credit cut.

And furthermore to:

4. Create a cross-party oversight/working group to work with council officers to generate ideas and formulate practical actions to help alleviate the looming disaster for many households.
5. Explore (through point four) the role that the forthcoming Integrated Care System can immediately bring to bear on this situation once they are out in place from 1st July 2022.

Motion 3

Proposed: Cllr. Keith Holland-Delamere

Seconded: Cllr. Danielle Stone

The visit of the Knife Angel to Northampton in May demonstrated how many different organisations can come together to help campaign against and tackle the blight of Knife Crime in our communities. During the many conversations that people had around the sculpture the issue of alternatives for young people was discussed.

The visit also illustrated how we need to build a cohesive eco system that helps to facilitate a broad diverse network of partnerships to provide an environment where our

young people regardless of their background or location can thrive and help make our area grow in every way and be a fantastic place to live. We call upon this Council to support and enable youth provision and opportunities that cater for our diverse communities.

1. Work with partners in the public, health, mental health, education sectors, the VCSE, uniformed organisations, sports providers, faith communities, campaigners, and parents to promote the provision that already exists for young people across West Northamptonshire.
2. To drive training and learning partnerships through our commitment to a Youth Centre in Northampton with outreach across West Northants. This Centre will provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, produce a youth manifesto. It will feed into and sustain the youth network.
3. To work with partners to ensure affordability of access to activities so that no young person is left out.

Motion 4

Proposed by Cllr. Bob Purser
 Seconded by Cllr. Rufia Ashraf

The level of street rubbish, fly tipping, overflowing waste bins, and bags of refuse waiting to be collected on the streets of Northampton is shocking and out of control bringing our Town into disrepute. We recognise the efforts of staff to collect rubbish and keep our streets clean, the work of neighbourhood wardens and the efforts of many voluntary groups including the Litter Wombles and local Councillors.

The causes of this are multiple. Nonetheless the current situation is unacceptable, and solutions are urgently needed.

We call on the Council as part of its aim to be clean and green to convene a summit of all interested and concerned parties including the Town and Parish Councils to:

- Identify litter hotspots e.g. the Wellingborough Road
- Identify the location of and causes of fly-tipping and legal and other action to tackle it.
- Review the enforcement of fly tipping regulations
- Review the collection of commercial and domestic rubbish e.g. shops and flats putting out bags on the streets, progress in the introduction of recycling bins.
- Develop an education plan for the public e.g. Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- Review street cleaning services and a schedule of priority areas.
- And to draw up an integrated action plan to clean up the streets of the Town.

16.	<p>Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman)</p> <p>The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.</p>
17.	<p>Exclusion of Press and Public</p> <p>Should Members decide not to make a decision in public, they are recommended to resolve as follows:</p>

	<p>“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.”</p>
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Catherine Whitehead
Proper Officer
22 June 2022

Council Members:

Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Chairman) Councillor John Shephard (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Ann Addison	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 Matt Golby
Councillor Mike Hallam
Councillor Lauryn Harrington-Carter
Councillor Cheryl Hawes
Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Councillor Nigel Hinch
Councillor Mark Hughes
Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift
Councillor Koulla Jolley
Councillor Andrew Kilbride
Councillor Jamie Lane
Councillor Daniel Lister
Councillor Greg Lunn
Councillor Peter Matten
Councillor Dennis Meredith
Councillor Charles Morton
Councillor Kevin Parker
Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Wendy Randall
Councillor Jake Roberts
Councillor Cathrine Russell
Councillor Brian Sargeant
Councillor David Smith
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms
Councillor Danielle Stone
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex
Councillor Mike Warren
Councillor Terry Gilford
Councillor Andrew Grant
Councillor Enam Haque
Councillor Jonathan Harris
Councillor Rosie Herring
Councillor James Hill
Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
Councillor Rosie Humphreys
Councillor David James
Councillor Paul Joyce
Councillor Anna King
Councillor Phil Larratt
Councillor Malcolm Longley
Councillor Charles Manners
Councillor Ian McCord
Councillor Colin Morgan
Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Councillor Suresh Patel
Councillor Bob Purser
Councillor Emma Roberts
Councillor Sam Rumens
Councillor Lisa Samiotis
Councillor Sue Sharps
Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Laura Stevenson
Councillor Winston Strachan
Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to 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

If a continuous fire alarm sounds you must evacuate the building via the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the assembly area as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

Access to Meetings

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

If you have any queries about this agenda, please contact Democratic Services via the following:

Email: democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk

Or by writing to:

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



Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Great Hall, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Thursday 19 May 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present 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
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 Councillor Penelope Flavell
 Councillor Louisa Fowler
 Councillor Rupert Frost
 Councillor Jo Gilford
 Councillor Terry Gilford
 Councillor Matt Golby
 Councillor Andrew Grant
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Councillor Lauryn Harrington-Carter
Councillor Jonathan Harris
Councillor Cheryl Hawes
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Councillor Koulla Jolley
Councillor Paul Joyce
Councillor Andrew Kilbride
Councillor Jamie Lane
Councillor Phil Larratt
Councillor Daniel Lister
Councillor Malcolm Longley
Councillor Greg Lunn
Councillor Peter Matten
Councillor Ian McCord
Councillor Dennis Meredith
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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 Richard Solesbury-Timms
Councillor Laura Stevenson
Councillor Danielle Stone
Councillor Winston Strachan
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex
Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz
Councillor Mike Warren

Apologies
for
Absence: Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift
Councillor Anna King
Councillor Charles Manners

Councillor Brian Sargeant
Councillor Zoe Smith

24. Election of Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and gave her thanks to members, the Cabinet, and officers, specifically the Executive Director for Finance and the Finance team for delivering a balanced budget. She felt honoured to be first Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council and expressed her gratitude for the support she received in respect of this role.

The Chairman then presented Nina Gandy with a cheque for £9,428.60 for Cynthia Spencer Hospice, the Chairman's chosen charity.

Councillor Nunn proposed that Councillor Gonzalez De Savage be elected Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2022-23.

Councillor D Smith seconded the proposal.

Upon a vote, the proposal was agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor André Gonzalez De Savage be elected the Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2022/23.

25. Appointment of Vice-Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council

Councillor Longley proposed that Councillor John Shephard be appointed Vice-Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2022-23.

Councillor D Smith seconded the proposal.

Upon a vote, the proposal was agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor John Shephard be appointed the Vice-Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2022-23.

26. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Z Smith, Irving-Swift, King, Lunn, Manners, and Sargeant.

27. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

28. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- His chosen charities for the year were Northamptonshire Search & Rescue and Northamptonshire & Warwickshire Air Ambulance.
- Badges and certificates for the Anti-Violence campaign, part of which saw the Knife Angel visit the town for a number of weeks, had been placed on desks – the Chairman encouraged all Members to sign the certificates, publicise the campaign and wear the badges with pride.
- Many events were due to take place over the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend, Members were encouraged to take part, and in turn encourage residents to take part in the festivities.
- Upcoming was the Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton Relay which would be passing through Northampton on 10th July. The full route had been announced and details circulated. The Chairman asked Members to please join in if they could.

29. **Minutes of Council**

Councillor Stone commented that under item 22, "issues falling under the gaps" should be recorded specifically, which she noted were cuckooing and homeless deaths on the streets. She asked that these be recorded in the minutes.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the addition of the words "cuckooing and homeless deaths on the streets" to item 21, the minutes of Council held on 21st April 2022 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

30. **Committee Proportionality and Appointment of Members to Committees and other bodies**

Councillor Nunn presented the report to Council which sought Members' approval regarding allocation of places on committees between the political groups in accordance with the political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and to confirm the appointment of Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs and members. The report also invited Council to note the names of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the political groups and to note the members of the Cabinet.

Councillor Patel seconded the report.

Members debated the report, and the following comments were made:

- It was felt by some Members that Chairs of Scrutiny should be opposition members since it could be difficult for the administration to scrutinise its own members/group.
- The way that the Chairman was currently elected was not fair; the position belonged to the entire district, not just the group in power. This should be done through the Democracy and Standards Committee, or through a formal motion.

- The Constitution made a point of using ungendered language and the Chairman should follow this example.
- Members felt sad that Councillor Bowen was leaving her Cabinet Member post. She had been a hard-working and responsive Member.
- Changes to committee membership should be advertised by the Monitoring Officer. Also, the scrutiny work programme had not been sent out to Members.
- Women made up 52% of the population and were disproportionately affected by Brexit, the pandemic, domestic violence and sexual violence, and there were now only 2 women sitting on the Cabinet.
- Responding to an earlier comment, it was stated that Scrutiny Chairs would have no issue challenging colleagues in their own party. This had in fact been the case in some of the predecessor authorities.
- It was noted that at the last Place OSC only 5 members attended the meeting and they were all Conservative.
- It was further noted that the Conservative Party was the only political party in the country to elect 2 female Prime Ministers.

Following the debate, the recommendations were put to a vote.

Upon a vote, the recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Received the names of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the political groups as set out at Appendix A of the report.
- b) Noted the members of the Cabinet set out at Appendix A of the report.
- c) Agreed to constitute and decide on the allocation of places on committees between the political groups in accordance with the political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as set out in section 5 of the report.
- d) Confirmed the appointment of Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs and members to the various Committees and Joint Committees as set out at Appendix A of the report.
- e) Noted that the appointments to the Local Area Planning Committees are not politically balanced as they fall within the political balance exemption for area committees; but should reflect the political makeup of the relevant area.
- f) Delegated to the Monitoring Officer the power to appoint councillors and substitute councillors to committees and sub-committees in accordance with the wishes of the Group Leaders except where appointments to those bodies is exercisable only by the Cabinet.

31. Calendar of Meetings 2022-23

Councillor Patel presented the report which sought Council's approval of the Calendar of Meetings for the year 2022-2023.

Councillor Hibbert seconded the report.

Council debated the report and made the following comments:

- Members of the public, as well as a number of Members, found it difficult to attend the Strategic Planning Committee at 2pm. None of the meetings had been fully attended.
- Day time meetings were not in accordance with the Council's aim to be open and transparent.
- It was noted that the start time of the Strategic Planning Committee had been the subject of extensive consultation, and that Members and officers agreed a 2pm start time would allow both to utilise their time most appropriately.

Following the debate, the recommendations were put to a vote.

Upon a vote, the recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

RESOLVED:

1. Council approved the Calendar of Meetings for the year 2022-2023 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

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

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 7.33 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____



Report of Councillor Jonathan Nunn Leader of the Council

Thursday 30th June 2022

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.

Communications:

The Queen's Jubilee:

Thousands of people turned out to enjoy a bank holiday weekend of events and activities as communities across West Northamptonshire celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and making it a weekend to remember.

Across West Northants there were beacon lighting ceremonies, and hundreds of street parties or community get-togethers took place in honour of her Majesty.

The festivities got underway on Thursday evening, when the Northampton Lift Tower was lit up in red, white and blue as part of a national event which also saw a number of other beacons simultaneously lit around West Northants, including in Brackley and Towcester.

On Saturday the crowds turned out for a spectacular countywide pageant, which saw military and emergency services personnel, youth and community groups and businesses from across Northamptonshire parade through Northampton town centre.

Then on Sunday a large crowd of people braved the damp conditions to attend The Big Lunch at Delapré Abbey, enjoying picnics and a range of live music, performances, activities and stalls.

Visitors to the free event were also treated to a special performance from local dance troupe Born To Perform, fresh from wowing the judges and the nation on their run to the semi-final of Britain's Got Talent.

They were joined by a range of community acts celebrating the best of West Northants including African dance from the Power of the Mind Network, Step By Step dance school, Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust, the Queen Eleanor and Real Soul choirs, African Youth Arise and The Masque Theatre.

[A video featuring photographs and videos of celebrations across West Northants can be viewed here](#)

Talk of the Town

As part of the National 'Love your Local Market' campaign, we have developed a 'talk of the town' campaign in partnership with our local market traders in Northampton to support them and promote the fantastic produce that is available via our social media channels.

Parish Briefings:

We have launched our monthly briefing newsletter for town and parish councils, updating on key information and events from across West Northants, leading to positive feedback being received from town and parish councils.

Reorganisation:

We have completed our Communications and Engagement Team Reorganisation following the additional investment that was agreed as part of this year's budget. The new structure has enabled career progression for internal colleagues, and we have been successful in appointing externally to our vacancies. The new structure will enable us to continue to develop and improve our communications and engagement activity.

Internal communications:

As part of our first birthday celebrations, roadshows have been carried out across our office locations and depots with the Leader, Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team engaging with colleagues about our first year and their hopes and aspirations for the future. Suggestions and issues identified by colleagues through the roadshows have been taken forward and featured in our weekly staff messages.

Our internal communications channels including intranet, all staff briefings, weekly councillor briefings, Chief Executive's Blog and teams channels continue to grow and are increasing engagement.

Staff networks continue to develop and have played a key role in celebrating events including Pride and Black History Month. Our Networks include Black and Minority Ethnic colleagues, Carers, Disability, LGBTQ+, Armed Forces Community, Mental Health and Wellbeing and Armed Forces Community. The networks are staff led and have sponsors from our senior leadership team, and are helping to promote equalities across our organisation and to develop a new culture of inclusivity and innovation

Business Intelligence, Policy and Performance

Annual Report

Our first annual report has been developed and was presented to Cabinet in June which demonstrates the many positive achievements that we have achieved in our first year as a new council. The report also sets out our key next steps for this year and enables us to have a clear baseline for our future performance.

Website Improvement

Work continues on our website project to improve the quality of information and online services available to our residents. Thank you to those councillors who have provided help with testing new areas and providing feedback.

Reorganisation

Work is underway to redesign our Business Intelligence Team to ensure that we are able to meet the needs of our new council.

Sustainability:

Following the launch of our sustainability strategy our cross-party working group has been established and has been leading work to develop our Sustainability work plan, areas of focus include:

- Planning & land use
- Transport
- Building, housing and infrastructure
- Commercial and industrial
- Energy generation and heating
- Natural Environment and Biodiversity
- Agriculture and Food
- Waste
- Emissions

- Education & Youth
- Public Health
- Community, Engagement and Placemaking

Work is underway to calculate the baseline emissions data for our first year using the Local Government Association Emissions Tool. This will enable benchmarking with comparable local authorities.

Recruitment has been completed for our new sustainability team with two additional project officers in place to join the team in July.

Two councillors from our Sustainability member working group have been nominated to attend the UK100 Leadership Academy.

Civic

Introductory communications have been issued to introduce our new West Northants Council Chairman and his chosen charities. Further work is planned to raise awareness of the role of the Chairman across our communities and with local businesses.

Work continues to design the West Northamptonshire Coat of Arms. Initial designs have been agreed by the Civic member working group and are now being developed into a final version by the College of Arms.

Transformation

Following the decision to integrate transformation resources into directorates to closer align priorities and to further enhance accountability, the transformation teams have been integrating into directorate management structures, and delivering a wide range of projects and programmes guided by their respective Executive Directors. Highlights of each directorates key developments is provided below.

Place

Green Waste Harmonisation Project is nearing completion and is due to close in October 2022. The charging process has been harmonised across all three areas of West Northamptonshire. As part of benefits realisation finance colleagues are monitoring the income against projected targets and current indications are that they will be met.

Planning & Development Management Aggregation Project continues at pace. A new single system is being designed with the support of colleagues in DTI to create a leaner, more efficient single team process. Staff engagement continues to be an important area of emphasis, with additional sessions be built in to ensure feedback is gathered, it being critical that we build and strengthen the team, ensure that they have everything they need to get this service back to strength, and involved in the improvement journey.

The Highway's Disaggregation and Restructure Project is also nearing completion and is due for closure in September 2022. In this complex and fast paced project, the disaggregation of the team is on track and is nearing completion, with the new structure for the West being launched imminently to support the new Highways contract, following the announcement of the preferred bidder.

People

The Health and Care Bill & People at the Heart of Care White Paper Project continues to support the implementation of the legislative changes that will need to be firmly cascaded, and implemented by the council. In part this will be achieved through a range of workshops and learning events which the project is coordinating.

The Establishment of Integrated Partnership Teams Project is firmly in delivery phase, aligned to corporate commitments, ICS agenda and our Live Your Best Life outcome board. This project is seeking to maximise the opportunities presented by the newly agreed locality structures, linking with key ICS partners to drive the best possible outcomes for residents in each locality.

Social Care Reform – The Market Management Project has been recently initiated to proactively engage with the legislative change that will result in very significant changes to current arrangements across social care and the structure of care provision/funding, which includes a cap on personal care costs. The design of this project will feature the inclusion of various workstreams such as Mobilisation, Governance, Market Shaping & Sustainability and Strategic Finance.

Also, across the People directorate projects have been initiated to support both Learning Disability and Transitions Support, the former initially being the design of a series of deliverables which will help the team achieve their £1.6m savings goal. The Reablement Pathways Project has increased its scope to be more ambitious and far reaching, building on earlier successes to include a wider range of pathways and options. Public Health Transition is currently underway to support staff in the changes brought about by disaggregation.

Communities and Opportunities

The Housing Solutions Project is in the concept phase and there is an Outline Business Case due in July 2022. Data gathering and analysis has taken place providing a robust baseline from which to drive improvements derived from customers, data and staff expertise, to better enable us to find people the right solutions to their housing needs. Supporting this is stakeholder mapping externally as well as a comprehensive communications plan for our staff.

The Debt & Money Advice Project aims to map, understand and then streamline the various advice sources across West Northamptonshire Council to provide an improved offer for our residents. Given the complex nature of this project a concept workshop has been held with senior stakeholders such as Citizens Advice to agree on the scope of the project, next steps and a delivery timeline. An outline business case is expected in August 2022.

The directorate is also engaged in a series of projects to disaggregate services. The disaggregation of Libraries has had the timescales extended to April 2023 via change request at June Shared Services Joint Committee.

Corporate

Work continues at pace for the How We Support Our Customer Programme with a focus on 4 main areas of activity. Improving self-service via the web by looking at continuous improvement to content and presentation, using additional resources from Customer Services to write content, Life Events development, and meeting customers where they are including a multi-agency surgery in Brackley Library to take place in June.

Future Ways of Working has now moved into implementation following Trade Union agreement on the West worker types. The key areas now being focused on are Hardware refresh, ensuring that staff have the right equipment to do their job, and the building optimisation workstream, looking at how we make the most of our office space. In addition, work is continuing on the reorganisation of space in each of our 4 main buildings. This has recently included the exit of North Northants staff from One Angel Square.

People Strategy: activity is continuing across all workstreams, including attending Corporate overview and scrutiny. The production of a Welcome / Induction video from CEO & Leader and the procurement of a new recruitment solution have been undertaken.

Pay and Grading: the preparation and attendance/presentation at the consultation negotiations with recognised Trade unions has taken place. These were productive sessions and following these the Trade unions are now consulting with their members. Planning for the next stage in the project has commenced this will involve matching and assimilating those on interim terms to the proposed West Northants Pay, Terms and conditions.

A review of our Legal service and initial conversations on how this may look in the future have begun. Unitary has left West Northants with a mixed model including some in-house and outsourced services, and therefore a full and detailed options appraisal and business case are being developed to understand the best future structure of this service.

There are numerous DTI projects underway, with some of the Key work being around supporting the Hardware Refresh to ensure staff have the right hardware to do their job. The telephony project is working to ensure we have a single platform across West Northants. This will also resolve ongoing technical issues with the phonelines particularly within OAS. Work continues on a replacement LANDesk solution and the decommissioning of Huddle and SharePoint 2007 and 2013.

Work has commenced on the disaggregation of the Learning and Development Service, this is being led by North Northants but is supported by West project resource, running concurrently with the disaggregation is the work to procure a new Learning Management system as the current joint contract is up for renewal in March 23. In addition, the disaggregation of Emergency Planning has been completed and this Service now sits within Corporate Services alongside Business continuity.

Following agreement at the Joint Committee for Shared Services, work has begun to disaggregate the Digital Team by December 2022, and a dedicated project team is being created to look at the discovery work required to understand the complexities of separating the remaining DTI services. This work will be supported by outside expertise to ensure a robust and impartial assessment.

Finance

Revenue and Benefits have initiated a project to complete an end to end review of systems and processes, following the restructure that has taken place to aggregate the service following unitary.

Our In-House Internal Audit Team went Live on the 1st April following a project to exit from the previous mixed arrangement of In-house, outsourced and lead authority services that previously existed.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Leader of the Council

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Thursday 30th June 2022

The Library Service

The Libraries have been working with colleagues in the Ukrainian Resettlement team to set up some initial welcome sessions that are taking place in libraries. These are a chance for sponsors and Ukrainian arrivals to meet each other, WNC staff and partner organisations who can help and support them with their settlement process. Sessions have taken place or are scheduled at Brackley, Brixworth, Daventry, Duston, Northampton Central and Towcester libraries. Some of these have developed into regular drop-in support sessions at the library where access to wi-fi and free computer use along with the knowledge of library staff are proving invaluable to the attendees. Public Health colleagues are also working with us to timetable sessions for the mobile vaccination unit to visit these libraries at key times to ensure take up of vaccinations by Ukrainians.

During the week beginning 30th May, all the libraries held celebration events for the Platinum Jubilee, engaging with local communities and schools to produce artwork for display in the libraries. Activities ranged from theatre visits to tea parties and picnics, craft activities and quizzes. The libraries will host a touring digital exhibition of art produced as part of WNCs “Queen of Arts” project.

As part of a 3-year DCMS funded programme the Business and IP Centre Northamptonshire launched a new round of Kick Start grants for Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in their first year of trading. Successful applicants will receive a £2,000 grant for business expenses, a year’s free membership with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), and ongoing support from the BIPC Northamptonshire team. Shortlisted applicants will be required to attend a panel event, where they pitch their business to a group of local business experts. Details of the grants and a new set of case study videos from Northamptonshire SMEs who were successful in the previous round can be found at www.bipcnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Housing

Improving energy efficiency - LAD2

The LAD2 scheme is a government funded project to improve the energy efficiency of the homes of people on lower incomes. The scheme is managed and overseen by the Greater South East Energy Hub who sit within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority but are funded by BEIS. BEIS provide the funding for the whole project. Working in conjunction with Northampton Partnership Homes (NP) we have been allocated £82,500 to upgrade 15 homes with air-source heat pumps (ASHP). These ASHP are being installed into homes that have also benefitted from the social housing decarbonisation fund (SHDFD).

Housing strategy

Work is well underway in the drafting of a new West Northants Housing strategy. The formal consultation on the draft themes and priorities closed on the 24th May. This followed some very productive workshops with internal teams, stakeholders and elected members. There were 594 responses in total, with 257 respondents completing the whole questionnaire, and 337

partial responses. We are currently collating these responses, along with the feedback received at the consultation events – stakeholder session and the Member session.

Homes for Ukraine – Accommodation Checks

The private sector housing teams across the three localities have continued to ensure that accommodation visits for the Homes for Ukraine resettlement scheme are undertaken. Government guidance supports an obligation on the Council to ensure that properties being volunteered to the scheme are safe. To date 300 properties have been volunteered to the scheme, and 222 of these have been visited and inspected. The majority of properties have been found to be suitable, with a small number having recommended improvements particularly around gas safety inspections and smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. However, a small number have been found to be unsuitable with serious safety defects or failure to comply with property licensing, the team are taking further action to resolve these defects and licensing requirements.

Improving Housing Standards and Enforcement Action

In March 2022, the team undertook ‘days of action’ in part of Semilong ward in Northampton. These ‘days of action’ involve a multi-agency response from the Council, partnered with Northamptonshire Police, Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue, and other Government Agencies to actively engage with residents to understand and take action to resolve housing, environmental, and behavioural concerns that impact their wellbeing. The team identified a range of issues for which continued responses from all partners continue. These ‘days of action’ form an integral part of the Council’s response to ensure the wellbeing of all residents and are targeted based on intelligence held by the Council and its partners.

Home Adaptations

At the West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board on the 7th June 2022, the Council’s Interim Head of Private Sector Housing, reported on the success of the Home Adaptations and Community Occupational Therapy Team in responding to residents home adaptation / disabled facilities grant requests of the previous year. The papers of the meeting are published, but the team should be congratulated on their achievements in addressing the backlog in cases from 2020/21, a year heavily impacted by the Covid pandemic. In summary, the Council committed to send £3.5m supporting 256 residents to continue to live at their home.

Sport & Active Lives

The Queens Baton Relay

Birmingham 2022 is hosting the 16th official Queen’s Baton Relay – a journey which brings together and celebrates communities across the Commonwealth during the build up to the Games.

On Sunday, 10 July, Northampton will officially welcome the Baton with a jam-packed schedule of family friendly events, stalls and the chance to take part in a variety of sporting games and activities.

The Relay will begin at Marefair outside Sol Central at **8am**, before travelling up Gold Street and on to George Row, then into St Giles Square before a photo shoot outside the Guildhall. The Baton will then travel down Guildhall Road, St Johns Street, Swan Street, across Victoria Promenade and on to Becketts Park, across the new pedestrian bridge and into the University of Northampton campus, ending at University Way at approximately **8.30am**.

Members of the public, schools and families are invited to get involved with the celebrations and embrace the arrival of the Baton, taking the opportunity to experience the buzz of Birmingham 2022 in our community. Join us for a morning of family friendly events at the UoN campus from 8am - midday.

Find out more, at: <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/events/queens-baton-relay> .

The Sport & Active Lives team are leading the event planning working closely with WNC colleagues and external partners to ensure a safe and activity packed event. WNC Comms team will launch social media promotion this week. A comms assets pack has been written to provide event partners the tools to support promotion of the event.

Playing Pitch Strategy and Facilities Planning Model

The Playing Pitch Strategy provides a strategic document that will detail the existing resource of sports playing pitches across West Northamptonshire. The strategy will make recommendation for facility preservation, improvement and new development based upon consultation with key partners and taking into account planned housing developments and population growth over the next 20 years.

This work will help WNC increase its understanding of our local facilities and inform our new strategies and support the Planning Team with negotiations for developer contributions and decision making for new build facilities/facility improvements. The strategy will also help the Council work in partnership with Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport.

The Playing Pitch Strategy will take up to 18 months for completion. It is hoped this work can start in Autumn 2022.

Northampton Bike Park

Due for completion on 10th August. The Sport & Active Lives team are developing a Governance Board with Northamptonshire Sport (NSport). The Board will support the delivery of the bike park and ongoing operational arrangements and development of the facility. WNC will be represented on the Board along with key stakeholders NSport (as facility operators), the developing MTB Club, Delapre Golf Club. Additional stakeholders will be introduced as appropriate to support a successful facility.

Museums

April saw exhibition changeover in the art gallery and temporary exhibition gallery with the *Valhalla – Life and Death in Viking Britain* and *British Wildlife Photographer of the Year* finishing. Both saw strong visitor numbers with 22,000 visitors to Valhalla and 18,500 to British Wildlife Photographer of the Year.

Two new exhibitions opened *Japan – A Floating Word in Print*, a captivating display of Japanese prints from the Edo and Meiji masters wood block prints, and *May The Toys Be With You*, an exhibition of the UK's finest collection of vintage Star Wars toys and original cinema posters from 1977 – 1985. Both have been very popular with over 11,000 visitors to *May the Toys Be With You* in its opening month.

Overall visitor numbers remain strong against a weaker national picture. April visitor numbers met target and May numbers overachieved by 35%.

Events across both museums continue to perform well, with 800 attending the Viking Mania event at Abington Park Museum and numbers for the Art History lecture series, focusing on Japanese art, continuing to grow.

The importance and national significance of the shoe collection continues to shine with the Head of Bespoke shoemaking for Hermes, Paris and Lobb, Northampton visiting the shoe collection to talk about best practise when looking after a shoe archive. Links with local industry continue to develop with a group of Dr Marten apprentices visiting for a talk on the shoe collection using shoes from the collection.

Our volunteers continue to grow, adding much needed capacity and breadth of skills and knowledge to the museum service. Over the last period the newly established group of military enquiry volunteers have researched and answered over 50 enquiries ranging from uniform styles to 'can you tell me what my grandfather did in the Regiment'.

Donations continue to come in across all collections. These included 8 pairs of shoes designed and worn by fashion designer Joe Casely-Hayford OBE and street furniture including bollards, drain covers, cobbles, and a small market stall from the soon to be refurbished market square.

The Cultural Compact.

The second meeting of the Cultural Compact Project Development Group took place in April. The Project Development Group is a time-limited/ interim body created to undertake the development of the Northampton Cultural Compact Outline Forward Plan. The ambition is to use culture to encourage economic growth; contribute to making Northampton a better place; rebalance cultural opportunity; upskill creative citizens; encourage artists' entrepreneurship; build social cohesion using culture; adopt best practice in cultural democracy and diversity; and transform the town's cultural profile.

Supporting the Local Visitor Economy

The Economy Team continue to support the Visitor Company and work with partners to promote local attractions, events and reasons to enjoy everything West Northamptonshire has to offer.

This included a highly effective marketing campaign for English Tourism Week (18-27 May) in partnership with the Communications Team. The celebration of attractions and reasons to love West Northants included content across all of our social media platforms and the creation of a WNC TikTok to target all audiences and utilise popular mediums for engagement. It may have been English Tourism Week, but this was an innovative showcase of West Northamptonshire to the world.

Ongoing plans are taking place to prepare for Heritage Open Days in September 2022, with a variety of businesses and attractions already signed up to take part, delivering events, tours and more. All of these free activities are publicised on the WNC website and will be built on each year, as the Economy Team celebrates heritage and culture in West Northamptonshire.

Archives and Heritage Service

Good progress is being made in terms of ensuring the Guildhall Road (Northampton) building is fit for purpose, thanks to much-needed support from staff within the division. Proactive maintenance work is being undertaken for the first time for many years and plans are underway for some major updates in terms of the building's environmental monitoring systems. These will be vital in ensuring that the archives can be kept in the right temperature and humidity into the future.

A key role of the service is ensuring that it collects appropriate records for permanent preservation that reflect the life of communities in the past and present day. Among those currently being worked on are the records of St Andrew's Hospital, the former private "lunatic asylum", as it was referred to at the time, for the county. These records provide a unique insight into treatment of patients over time, as well as providing a potential wealth of information for family historians. Work to assess and list them is currently being done in situ at St Andrew's with the aim of bringing the collection to the service in the autumn. This is a major undertaking.

Other archives received into the service recently include those of a number of Parish Councils, electoral registers, various school records, records of Northamptonshire Yeomanry, and papers relating to the Revd Wathen Wigg credited with starting Northampton Rugby Football Club, now known as the Saints.

Councillor Adam Brown

Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Leisure

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Thursday 30th June 2022

Planning Policy

Strategic Plan

Comments were received from 2,000 respondents making approximately 11,000 individual representations on the Options and Call for Sites consultations.

A report highlighting the main points made in these representations will be considered by the Planning Policy Committee at its meeting on 28th June. The Report will also consider the case for shortening the plan period from 2050 to 2041.

Northampton Part 2 plan

. Northampton Part 2 plan

Following dialogue with the local plan inspectors, the Modifications required to make the Northampton Part 2 plan sound have almost all been agreed. Subject to getting all of the modifications agreed, a report will be presented to Planning Policy Committee on 28th June, seeking authority to consult on the modifications

Employment areas SPD

Work is progressing on the production of an SPD for the employment areas in the part 2 plan for the former South Northamptonshire. A report is being considered by the Planning Policy Committee on the 28th June, with a recommendation that the proposed SPD goes out to consultation for 4 weeks.

Planning Policy Committee

Other reports to be considered at the June meeting of the policy committee include the making of a neighbourhood plan review for Kilsby, adoption of Conservation Area appraisals for Cottesbrooke and Canons Ashby and a Housing Delivery Action Plan for Northampton

Five Year Land Supply

5-year land supply reports have been produced. The supply is calculated on three policy areas identified in the West Northamptonshire joint core Strategy as follows:

The Northampton Related Development Area which has a 3.8-year supply

Daventry (outside of the NRDA) 7.5 years supply

South (outside of the NRDA) 6.9 years supply

Development Management

Planning application caseloads continue to be very high, and we are taking steps to recruit to vacant posts and also bringing in agency staff to try and reduce the backlog of work.

We have begun transformation of the service and are consulting and engaging with staff on a new structure so that it feels and functions as one team rather than three separate ones. We are close to achieving approval from IT of delivering a single planning software system across the West which will greatly help the work of the team to share resources and work pressures across the west.

Councillor Rebecca Breese

Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Built Environment & Rural Affairs

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Thursday 30th June 2022

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE' CHILDRENS TRUST

In NCT, good progress continues to be made on the improvement journey. The senior leadership team remains stable, has strong oversight of practice and is driving forward a culture change that is having a positive impact on practice and the workforce.

Practice

All performance indicators that are considered part of contractual arrangements are at target or within tolerance. Quality assurance shows positive trajectory and focus is on increasing consistency of good practice.

External scrutiny of services - Lincolnshire Partners in Practice completed a follow up to a review of the front door in May and found clear evidence of changes or plans to change systems / processes based on recommendations from January 22 peer review.

Recommendations from People Too review of placements commissioning are being implemented and further work with People Too in progress on process redesign and multi agency funding

Sufficiency of placements remains a challenge nationally and locally- planning permission has been approved for a new emergency children's home in North Northants which will support children from across Northants, and planning application is in progress for a second emergency home in West Northants. Frameworks for residential, fostering and independent supported accommodation have been re-opened to increase range of provision that can meet children's needs. NCT Fostering marketing and recruitment strategy in place to increase number and range of inhouse foster carers to meet needs of our children.

Inspections

Since the last update to Council, there has been a positive Inspection of Arnold House Children's home, the report is yet to be published.

Preparation for a full ILACS inspection with a focus on improving the quality and consistency of practice. Self evaluation is being refreshed in preparation and following feedback from Ofsted and peer review with regional LAs.

Require improvement to be Good would be positive outcome on consideration of inadequate position prior to constitution of the Children's Trust.

HMIP inspection of the YOS is overdue and preparation for this is ongoing.

Leadership

Lead Member and DCS continue to meet regularly with practitioners to hear their views

Vast majority of senior managers are permanent.

Focus on recruitment and retention and achieving stability within the workforce, in particular social worker teams. This is a national challenge. Positive move for social work vacancies at 16.5% better than national average (17%)

Improved relationships and creative efforts to attract and retain staff have seen the partnership between NCT and Opus receive Highly commended award in the Annual PPMA Excellence in People Management 2022 Awards.

EDUCATION

Introduction

This report outlines some key activities in the main statutory duty areas – school admissions, school standards, pupil place planning and school organisation, pupil attendance, special educational needs elective home education and safeguarding.

School admissions

The new head of place planning and admissions, Shazia Umer, took up her post on 20 May. She is now leading the process of disaggregating the school admissions service, which is currently commissioned from North Northants council (NNC).

The disaggregation of the service is on schedule for 1 September 2022. Therefore all 'in-year' admissions (that from term one of the 2022/23 schools year, and planned admissions (that is, all admissions at the beginning of each phase start (year R and year 7, plus year 3 for junior schools) for beginning of the 2023/24 school year will be the direct responsibility of West Northants council.

We are on schedule to put in place the agreed structure for the service by 1 September. Most staff will transfer under TUPE terms in accordance with the inter-authority agreement, but it may be necessary to appoint staff using an open recruitment process.

Pupil place planning and school organisation

As described above, the direct responsibility for place planning and school organisation will fall to the council. It is scheduled for 1 September, aligning with pupil admissions. Shazia Umer has started place planning already, since the head of place planning for NNC resigned on 27 February and the post is still vacant.

The main issues at present are:

- starting the procurement stage for commissioning a new free special school, using the free school presumption process: this went to the cabinet on 14 June
- making the case to the Department for Education for additional secondary school places in the Daventry area – taking forward a free school proposal, which must identify land for the school and provide evidence of basic need; and
- ensuring an appropriate structure is in place to ensure the council's statutory duties relating to planning pupil places and the capital resources required are in place – at present the place planning post is vacant, as is the capital manager post – and recruitment processes are started

School standards

The service is responsible for monitoring the performance of school in our area. It is, crucially, responsible for supporting and challenging 'schools of concern'. These are maintained schools that meet the criteria of 'concern' in the Department for Education's 'school causing concern' statutory guidance.

The main update for this meeting is to inform councillors that the interim director of children services is in the process of restructuring the education service. This will result in all services supporting pupil attendance at school, children missing from / missing out on education and being educated at home (called elective home education). At present these services sit in the education inclusion and specialist support services area.

SEND

The main activity, aside from 'business as usual – assessments, annual reviews and pupil placements, for example, has been the development of a special educational needs and disability (SEND) strategy, co-constructed with partners; and the completion of the consultation for a proposed new free special school and start of the procurement process.

The procurement involves the council inviting bids from multi academy trusts to run the school. The invitation and the application form are attached to this report for information. It is available on the council's website and the DfE portal.

The development of the workforce remains critical to the delivery of the priorities, and key workforce development within the SEND area remain the SEN assessment service, and the educational psychology service. The former has recruited to 11 vacancies, and the principal educational psychologist (PEP).

The nationwide situation with educational psychologists (EPs) is chronic, however, and there is a little chance of fully-staffing the service. Therefore the PEP has made an agreement with Reed, an employment agency, to outsource some of the advices that are a critical part of the SEN assessment process.

Children missing from / missing out on education and elective home education (EHE) and safeguarding

We have accurate and reliable data, and good knowledge of the number of children who are CME, and the length of their time out of education, as reported in the last update.

The council is responsible for ensuring all safeguarding allegations / concerns sent in by Ofsted are appropriately investigated. We are also responsible for the support and challenge of all schools and academies in our area relating to safeguarding. The service is currently commissioned from North Northamptonshire council but is 'disaggregating' with effect from 1 September 2022. This means that the budget for providing the service will be passed to WN council and will be appropriately staffed. There is a head of safeguarding, who will be allocated to a post in line with disaggregation agreements between both councils.

The location in the education service has been considered as a part of the wider restructuring, and from the disaggregation will be managed by the head of school effectiveness. This will bring together support for vulnerable children, and benefit from utilising school effectiveness staff who work closely with our maintained schools and academies on a range of issues.

WNC's safeguarding service is currently hosted by NNC. However, there is an option appraisal being undertaken, after which members of both councils' executives will determine whether WNC should run its own child safeguarding service. At present, it is likely that a decision will be made to do this, with the likely date if it is agreed of 1 September 2022.

The new specialist services area will include both the management of the council's SEN support service, and also act as the commissioner for specialist impairment services, which will be run from North Northamptonshire.

Councillor Fiona Baker

Cabinet Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills

Thursday 30th June 2022

Armed Forces Day

Vice Chairman, Cllr John Shephard, attended the flag raising ceremony outside County Hall on Saturday 25th June to mark Armed Forces Day.

Community Safety Strategy

Work has started to develop a West Northants Community Safety Strategy. A strategy development plan has been agreed by the Community Safety Partnership and we are starting to work with statutory partners to determine the key priorities for tackling crime and anti-social behaviour over the next three years. The aim is to have a completed strategy by the end of the year.

Knife Angel

The Angel was well received and generated a lot of activity during the two weeks it was with us. The Community Safety Team are now working with partners to develop a number of legacy projects. A task and finish group focussed on knife crime has been established to continue this work. Some of the key activities that took place whilst the Knife Angel was in Northampton included:

- Church service with 100 people in attendance
- Partnership support of agencies being present and delivering information sessions at the angel, more than 14 agencies in total.
- School engagement – over 600 children attending workshops, including 4 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities schools.
- All students became an anti-violence champion
- Over 30 schools that didn't attend the workshops have signed up for the legacy plan.
- Supported by 25 Cadets and 7 Leaders over 4 days of the 2 weekends. Promoting the Anti-Violence Champions campaign, signed up 153 Northampton residents to Neighbourhood Alert and delivered major bleed first aid demos.
- A number of training sessions were delivered including Child Exploitation awareness, parent sessions and trauma informed practice sessions.

A post evaluation report is currently being developed.

Domestic Abuse

Additional funding from the Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has been provided to Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service (NDAS) and Eve to support victims of domestic abuse find safer accommodation. This funding also enables grant funding to NDAS for their Specialist Drug and Alcohol Refuge to continue.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Over the past couple of months, we have seen a notable rise in large groups of youths causing ASB in Northampton. As a result of this, we have set up three localised partnership task and finish groups, working with the Police, Social Care, Schools and Youth Providers to discuss the

ongoing issues and with proactive action taken by speaking to the youths and parents and utilising early intervention methods we have seen positive outcomes and a significant decline in reports of ASB.

School Engagement

Planning is underway for the Young Citizens Scheme, which will take place over three days in September. This project works to promote healthy, safe and strong individuals and communities. Participants will become better citizens, be safer in their schools and communities, online and on the roads; be better equipped to make choices and understand the consequences of their actions; be better informed of how to react in an emergency and have a better understanding of and develop a relationship with the range of agencies which operate in West Northants.

Many agencies wish to get their officers into schools to assist in delivering their service objectives, improve understanding and break down barriers with young people. It is accepted that early interventions are more effective, particularly by targeting pupils in Year 6, the final year before they move up to secondary education having the greatest impact. Given the geographic spread of West Northants it is very difficult for some of these agencies to deliver to all schools at primary level, it is therefore more efficient to bring all the schools to the agencies.

For those schools who are not able to attend Young Citizens we have commissioned Amplitude Media to produce a series of animations which cover this range of subjects. The project is progressing well, with subject experts currently reviewing the scripts before the animation process commences. The series of animations will be available to schools for the autumn term.

Community Forums and Events

West Northants Diverse Communities Forum worked with Town of Sanctuary and the University of Northampton to host a partnership event relating to Refugee Week. The event took place on the 23 June, 4-6pm, in the Great Hall, at The Guildhall, Northampton. There were various stalls for the public to engage with, along with a full programme of speakers and materials such as music and short films. The event had exhibitions from L2L Youth Club, Northampton Town of Sanctuary plus stories from refugees who have settled here in Northamptonshire.

The forum and its members supported and promoted other events during Refugee Week including; a historical talk at Delapre Abbey, Short films being presented at the Derngate, Northampton Inter Faith Forum event and seminars hosted by the University of Northampton.

On Wednesday 22 June at 12 noon the Windrush Flag was raised at The Guildhall, Northampton. Attendees were able to hear from guest speakers. In the evening there was a service at the New Testament Church of God Church, College Street, Northampton.

Discussions have been taking place to explore expanding the reach and scope of the current Northampton Youth Forum. There are plans to set up new Youth Forums in the Daventry and South Northants localities with a view to creating an overarching Youth Parliament for West Northants, giving young people the opportunity to engage in local democracy. The current Youth Forum members have provided views and feedback on what this might look like and how to engage other young people. Three drop-in sessions have been arranged in August to tie in with International Youth Day to start engaging young people in each locality around the future plans.

The annual 'I am still me' face to face conference returned on 17 May and delivered a day of workshop sessions to education staff from across West Northants to improve LGBTQ inclusive education for young people. Over 40 teaching staff attended the event and heard from experts from Stonewall and local LGBTQ providers as well as sessions delivered by local schools Cedar Road and Northampton School for Boys regarding Primary and Secondary best practice. Attendees were also able to join the council, partners and community over lunch in a small event in the courtyard marking International Day of Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia concluding in a minute of noise.

Northampton Pride took place on Sunday 26 June, with a Parade around the town starting and finishing on the Market Square where a full stage programme of performances ran through to 4.30pm. The family friendly event was sponsored by Travis Perkins, Northampton Town Council and RS Components as well as support from GXO, Northampton BID, NLive Radio and Northampton University. The event was organised in partnership with the Northampton Pride committee, a collective of local LGBTQ and partner organisations. Over 40 local organisations and businesses had stalls promoting local LGBTQ services and accessibility to the LGBTQ community and their allies on the day. Promotional materials were placed in car parks and other locations in the public realm with posters being distributed by Pride committee partners. In addition, a web page and social media events were set up to promote the event and shared through the 'Love Northampton' socials.

Homes for Ukraine

We currently have just under 300 sponsors across West Northants and we are expecting approximately 600 Ukrainians to arrive, 400 have arrived so far.

Three of the new team of resettlement support workers are now in post. We already have a half post covered within the team and an expectation to have all 6 full time roles filled by the beginning of August (5 full time and 2 part time positions).

There have been seven "Meet and Greet" sessions for sponsors and their guests arranged at libraries in the areas where we have seen most arrivals – these have been held in Brixworth, Brackley, Towcester, Daventry, Northampton Central, Duston and Moulton. These meetings are intended to become focused drop-in sessions for support with the libraries acting as a community hub, where we will build and wrap around support local to that area. We are looking at other libraries that we can expand this to and the new team of support workers will pick these up and start to work closely with the community and voluntary sector in those areas.

Following the request for new sponsors for re-matching, we are building a solid pool of sponsors and we are progressing completing the necessary checks and working with them to understand what sort of family group / individual they are willing and able to support.

Afghan Bridging Hotels

There are currently 250 Afghans across the two hotels. There has been a recent women's only session delivered at both hotels by the British Red Cross, focusing on subjects like domestic abuse and women's sexual health. We are now working with Bright Path for Future, which is an Afghan led wellbeing project that provides integration and wellbeing workshops over two days in Dari and Pashto for Afghans staying in bridging hotels. The project also provides English literacy support for those attending. There will be workshops arranged over the summer at both hotels. We are also engaging with youth playworkers to deliver play sessions at the hotels over the summer holidays and looking at the HAF programme that local youth club L2L operate to see if it is possible to arrange for the secondary school-aged children to attend over the summer holidays.

Trading Standards

Xoshawi Kalend t/a UK Monopol, Northampton – on 14/4/22 at Northampton Magistrates Court he pleaded guilty to five offences in relation to a seizure of illicit tobacco.

The charges included: possessing with intent to sell 86 packets of cigarettes carrying false branding, possessing 239 packets and four tobacco pouches that were not labelled with the proper warnings and failing to act with due care to ensure that 36 packets of cigarettes complied with safety requirements (Reduced Ignition Propensity test). Total fines and contribution to prosecution costs £6388.

Further multi-agency visits with HMRC (HM Revenue and Customs) and Police planned for July.

Op June – WNC Trading Standards is joining forces with other Trading Standards Services across the East Midlands to promote 'Operation June' which aims to raise awareness about the additional dangers associated with smoking illegal cigarettes.

It is 10 years since 71 year old Lincolnshire resident June Buffham sadly lost her life in a tragic house fire caused by an illegal unsafe cigarette.

Scams Awareness fortnight (13 – 26 June) - This is an annual campaign run by Citizens Advice with the Consumer Protection Partnership (CPP) and supported by Trading Standards. The aim is to create a network of confident, #ScamAware consumers who can recognise a scam, take the right action when dealing with a scam and talk about their experiences to raise awareness and help others. This year's campaign will focus on scams and the cost-of-living crisis. With many people facing increased financial pressures, there is a high chance that scammers will take advantage of this, so it is of vital importance to equip consumers. Social media posts are being shared throughout the fortnight.

Carried out some cigarette and e-cigs test purchasing. 5 premises visited with 1 selling to the underage volunteer.

Advisory letters sent to 16 Northampton premises in relation to non-compliant disposable e-cigarettes which exceed the permitted 2ml maximum capacity. Further visits to be carried out.

Two illegally landed dogs and one cat – linked to import from the Ukraine. Allowed to be quarantined at home due to the lack of kennel capacity in the country.

Provided business advice in relation to ingredient labelling where sunflower oil replaced by rape seed oil. Russia and the Ukraine are the world's biggest suppliers of sunflower oil so supplies severely affected by the ongoing war.

Allergen samples purchased and sent for testing. Further sampling - Milk allergens in dairy free drinks – Daventry, Brackley and Towcester areas, Allergens at takeaways – including resampling at last year's unsatisfactory premises.

Unsafe telescopic ladders, tested by OPSS (Office for Product Safety and Standards) and failed, trader sold 300 pieces, allocated to West Northants TS to investigate via the Product Safety Database. Enquiries revealed that the importer, brand owner and seller are all linked and are based in Milton Keynes, so the case was passed to Milton Keynes TS.

Complaint from a West Northants business that had purchased 250,000 boxes of blue medical examination gloves after being shown a safety certificate from the Scottish importer. Many complaints received regarding the products sold to a variety of end users and own testing revealed non-compliance. Matter passed to and being investigated by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Continue to progress the disaggregation of the TS database and move on to Cx a cloud based Civica system.

Environmental Protection

The consultation on the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order has attracted a very high level of interest. A total of 1275 responses have been received. Work is progressing on the development of the order and a report will be coming to Cabinet in the Autumn to progress the declaration.

Colleagues from the Environmental Protection team contributed to the recent briefing for Ward members in areas affected by the HS2 project. The team are working closely with the new HS2 marshal.

Health Protection

The Health Protection Service Plan 2022-23 has been drafted and due to go before Cabinet on 12 July. The Plan is required by the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive to illustrate the demands on the service and state how the service will be delivered throughout 2022/23. The service has been hugely affected by the need for officers to engage in the COVID response over recent years, however the Health Protection service is actively recovering and working towards business as usual. Business as usual includes the carrying out of risk based programmed food hygiene inspections covering 3866 food premises, sampling food to ensure that it is safe to eat, providing advice and training to local businesses, carrying out targeted health and safety interventions across in 8601 local businesses, investigating workplace accidents, providing assured and business advice to Primary Authority Partners, investigating infectious diseases such as food poisoning, dealing with complaints and so on.

Business as usual continues to evolve as the Food Safety, Occupational Health & Safety and Infectious Disease services provided by sovereign authorities aggregate and transform within West Northants Council. The active review and harmonisation of procedures, regular full team face-to-face team meetings, the sharing of resources across areas and setting of SMART performance targets are all key tools being used to harmonise the service.

As a founder member of the [West and North Northamptonshire Event Safety Partnership](#), Health Protection has actively managed the development an online event notification form together with associated processes and advice. The Northampton Town Centre Management process the notifications to ensure that all partners are duly notified and can work collectively to ensure the safety of local events.

Health Protection are using available technology to help transform its service. For example, they have developed a web-based central repository using SharePoint for documents, procedures etc. to ensure that officers have easy access to key documents.

The current Student Environmental Health Officer is coming to the end of her fixed-term contract and has recently been offered an Environmental Health Officer position in another Local Authority. Recruitment will be commencing shortly to fill the position.

Environmental Crime

Three new members of staff have joined the Environmental Crime team and the team have refocused their resources to provide response to fly tipping and other environmental crime across the whole area.

In the period from 1 April to 31 May a total of 598 fixed penalty notices have been issued in respect of fly tipping, littering and other environmental crime and 9 prosecutions have been taken for fly tipping and littering offences.

Licensing

The Licensing team have been regularly meeting to progress the development of a uniform service across the area, this has included introducing more online Licensing applications and updating the processes on the Council website to create consistency for the trade where possible. A great deal of work has also been undertaken to improve some of the back office systems functions that will prepare the service for a more streamlined service in the future.

Due to the cost of living increases, there is currently a review being undertaken and a report is being prepared for the Taxi and General Licensing Committee to consider the hackney carriage fares for WNC

Regular meetings have commenced with the Home to School Transport team to look at more collaborative working and to discuss any particular items of concern.

During May the team have processed over;

- 400 taxi and private hire applications (new applications and renewals)
- 170 Alcohol applications
- 50 Miscellaneous applications including gambling, street pavement, tattooists, animal welfare licences etc.

The team have seen a high volume of new private hire driver applications since the start of the year and are currently undertaking checks on around 90 new driver applicants. This has included introducing the new HMRC tax checks and making checks in accordance with the licensed driver national NR3 register. The team have prepared a number of reports for the Taxi and General Licensing Committee which has recently resulted in 3 new driver applications being refused. Staff in the team have undertaken training on the NR3 system in order to ensure that they are familiar with the process for checking the national register and identifying any concerns with taxi/private hire driver applications received going forward.

The team have also received a high number of complaints recorded against drivers with several complex cases that will require detailed investigations and working with multi-agency partners. Following more serious incidents being recorded the team have taken immediate action and revoked 2 driver licences during May and which may now be the subject of the appeals process.

The team have presented 4 Licence Reviews and 3 New/Variation of Premises Licence applications to the Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Sub-Committee since the beginning of the year. This involves a considerable amount of officer time, in collating the necessary documents, liaising with applicants, licence holders, responsible authorities and legal

representatives etc. ensuring that the correct legal process is followed, in order to minimise any challenges which may arise from any technicalities and statutory processes not being followed.

Building Control

Building Control continue to progress with the work to bring the Daventry service into the West Northants team. They have met with the manager of the Warwick / Rugby consortium to discuss staffing, finance and data and will be progressing these workstreams over the coming months in readiness for the combined service starting to operate next April.

Councillor David Smith

Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Engagement and Regulatory Services

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Thursday 30th June, 2022

Major Projects and Regeneration Summary

Northampton Bike Park

Specialist contractor On Track starts work this week to create the Northampton Bike Park, providing mountain bike enthusiasts of all levels with an amazing new facility.

Vegetation clearance has already taken place at the former Hard Nine golf course west of Brackmills Industrial Estate and work on the main development begins today (Monday 25 April).

Once complete, the new free-to-use facility will comprise of:

- A multi-user green trail – an easy, dual-direction cycle route across the site, connecting Houghton Hill to the underpass for the A45
- Blue (moderate), red (difficult) and black (severe) off-road mountain bike trails for different abilities - dual tracks will allow head-to-head riding
- Five gathering spots where riders can meet to discuss the next section of track, and coaching can be provided
- A mountain bike skills area

Works on site continue on time and to budget with the bike park due to open later in the summer.

Sponne Arcade Car Park

Jenkins Wier were approved as the contractor to begin works to increase the size of Sponne Arcade in Towcester at Cabinet in June. The works will see the demolition of the former co-op building in Towcester which has become vacant. The building has lay dormant for many years and has been subject to vandalism, break-ins, other anti-social behaviour. The project will see increased car park capacity, which allows for greater accessibility for disabled and family parking, motorcycle bays, a bicycle shelter, as well as landscaped borders, improved lighting, CCTV and seating along the main pathway that joins Richmond Road with Watling Street, a vital pedestrian link for the town

Levelling Up Fund

At June Cabinet it was agreed that 4 project would be progressed as part of the council's submission into the Levelling Up Fund. The four projects that have been assessed as being a good fit for the LUF are Moulton College Development of Animal Welfare Training Facilities, Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub, Maggie's Northampton Cancer Support Clinic and Delapre Abbey Stable Blocks and Wellbeing Hub, these are now being worked into applications following the requirements set out by Government ahead of the deadline of submissions which is the 6th July. Other projects unfortunately were not developed enough to meet the requirements by government as part of the scheme and these will be considered to be worked up for submissions into the fund next year.

Northampton Market Square

Work on developing the design for the market square has been taking place with the planning application now submitted for the scheme.

A decision on where the traders will be moved, which is Commercial Street Car Park, with traders not being charged pitch fees during their two-year relocation while Market Square undergoes its planned transformation.

The move is necessary as construction work, additional traffic, noise, dust and disturbance make it impractical to keep the market on the square during the redevelopment, plus it would add more than £802k to the project cost and delay completion.

Work on Market Square – due to start by this winter – will include resurfacing, a major new water feature, additional trees, new public seating, redesigned market stalls and a new lighting scheme.

Old Black Lion

Works to restore the vacant Old Black Lion pub in Northampton commenced in June, with the works due to bring the building back to its former coach House splendour adding to the heritage Gateway area of Northampton

Watermeadows

Works on the first 2 phases of work at the Watermeadows in Towcester are now complete, with the third phase, which will be to remove the damaged weir, being progressed.

Economy Team Overview – Q1 Update (April-June)

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

West Northamptonshire has been allocated £5.4m of new funding to develop “pride in place”, focusing on three priorities: Communities & Place, Supporting Local Business and People & Skills. This fund replaces EU funding and requires local authorities to develop an Investment Plan outlining which interventions have the greatest need and will have the greatest impact, from a provided list of 41 recommended interventions.

The UKSPF aligns with the missions outlined in the Levelling Up White Paper and is a community fund, requiring the Economy Team to engage with local stakeholders, partners and community groups, including MPs and Councillors. Once a robust database has been developed, alongside the results of the WNC Big Conversation and the input of the consultation, an Investment Plan will be developed and submitted by the deadline of 1 August 2022. The first year funding is expected to be paid in October 2022, with UKSPF ending in March 2025. This fund is a combination of capital and revenue funding, with each local authority being able to outline however the funding will be best used.

West Northamptonshire has also been offered the opportunity to draw down £1.9m in “Multiply” funding. Multiply is part of UKSP and requires the council to develop a separate investment plan for bespoke adult numeracy programmes, against a national menu of interventions.

The key Objectives of the Multiply fund are more adults achieving maths qualifications courses and an increase in participation in numeracy courses, improved labour market outcomes and increased adult numeracy across the population.

Supporting Local Businesses

Supporting local employers, as well as attracting new ones into the area, is a high priority for the Economy Team. Not only does the team connect businesses of all sizes and scale to support, funding, expert advice, training and recruitment (from internal and external services), but they work with them for as long as the business needs. These services aren't one off's, the team build long-lasting relationships with the local businesses to help them throughout their growth journey, overcoming challenges and realising opportunities.

A recent initiative the Economy supported, was the two WNC procurement events to inform local businesses how they can win contracts and work with West Northamptonshire Council, to demystify the process and inform them of opportunities. The events were highly successful and not only helped employers but showcased West Northamptonshire Council as "Open for Business".

The Economy team's social media accounts and monthly business e-newsletter continues to grow in reach, posting content out which is seen by thousands, of latest news, local initiatives and opportunities, events, information and more. There has been a lot of activity recently around the new category which the Economy Team has sponsored in the Northamptonshire Business Awards 2022 – West Northamptonshire Business of the Year. These awards showcase the best of the County and it is expected that local employers will secure many of these awards, with many local finalists being recognised for their quality businesses. The finalists for these awards will be announced in September, with the winners being announced in early November.

Supporting Local Employment

The Economy Team continue to support local employment, working with residents and employers to ensure local vacancies are filled with local people.

The monthly employment e-newsletter, promoting events, vacancies, training and more continues to grow its database and provide instant access to beneficial information. The Economy Team regularly promote the combined offer of the 25+ partners working in collaboration with them to deliver free, accessible, and innovative employment support across West Northamptonshire. The Team regularly liaise with recruiting employers within the area to ensure their vacancies are highlighted to the local labour market, benefiting the local economy and the community.

The Economy Team attended the Brackley Community Hub event, held at Brackley Library on 10 June, promoting free employment support to residents. During the event, the team were able to talk to Ukrainian refugees looking for employment help and advice. The event was a big success and showed how valuable being accessible within the community is – the Economy Team will continue to support and deliver innovative actions to best support local residents from Brackley, Daventry, Northampton, Towcester and everywhere in between.

Supporting the Local Visitor Economy

The Economy Team continue to support the Visitor Company and work with partners to promote local attractions, events and reasons to enjoy everything West Northamptonshire has to offer.

This included a highly effective marketing campaign for English Tourism Week (18-27 May) in partnership with the Communications Team. The celebration of attractions and reasons to love West Northants included content across all of our social media platforms and the creation of a WNC TikTok to target all audiences and utilise popular mediums for engagement. It may have been English Tourism Week, but this was an innovative showcase of West Northamptonshire to the world.

Ongoing plans are taking place to prepare for Heritage Open Days in September 2022, with a variety of businesses and attractions already signed up to take part, delivering events, tours and more. All of these free activities are publicised on the WNC website and will be built on each year, as the Economy Team celebrates heritage and culture in West Northamptonshire.

The Economy team have been working on an exciting new “*Explore West Northants*” App, funded by the Welcome Back Fund, the App has been developed to showcase local businesses, attractions, events, walking paths and more. It will be a long-term tool to promote everything West Northants has to offer and allow residents and visitors to explore the wide variety of things to see, do and enjoy. The Economy Team are working closely with partners to promote *Explore West Northants* to businesses, so that it can be launched later in the year with a full spectrum of the great things to discover in this area.

Councillor Daniel Lister

Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration & Growth

Disaggregation

Since the last update we have disaggregated two teams that were previously hosted by the North Northants.

The deprivation of liberty safeguards (Dols) team disaggregated on 1st April 2022. We are really pleased to have them back as we start WNC's journey towards the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards the new legislative framework that will replace dols.

LIVE was also disaggregated on 1st April 2022 and supports people with learning disability with education, volunteering and employment. They are currently based in Abington Park where they support work-based programmes. LIVE also has a base in Towcester.

Joint Working

The Call Care and Assistive Technology Teams have been working collaboratively with health colleagues as part of the iCAN programme to set up a telehealth service that supports monitoring of people's health conditions remotely and using telehealth technology. We now have a team of clinical nursing staff from Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust based in the Call Care Team monitoring key clinical data for people currently in residential care homes which will extend over the next few months to people living in the community.

Winter planning

Winter planning is well underway for 22/23 this includes some elements of transformation change relating to the services that support people after they have been discharged from hospital and is being done in collaboration with NHFT and other system partners.

Tom Review

Following the adult social care transformation programme (Northants TOM) that was implemented in October 2020 we are carrying out a review following the first year of West Northamptonshire Council and to ensure that adult social care is aligned with the Local Area Partnerships that are being developed as part of the Integrated Care Partnership. This is being done in conjunction with staff as well as reviewing activity, data and customer feedback.

Social Care Reform – Fair Cost of Care

Progress is being made regarding the Fair Cost of Care exercise that is a requirement of social care reform. The residential care work is nearly completed and engagement has started with the care cost for homecare which needs to be completed by 14th October 2020.

90% of providers have had a full quality monitoring visit within the last 12 months. This means that we have awareness of quality concerns across the market and are using our quality improvement resources to work with those providers that need support to improve the quality within their service.

The financial assessment team's performance has significantly improved following their redeployment to the major incident earlier this year.

Integrated Care Partnership

The Health and Care Bill 2022 sets out plans for the future of health and care, including the statutory creation of Integrated Care Systems. The Bill also sets out Government plans to improve collaborative working, empower local leaders, address health inequalities, and focus on population health management.

The Bill has now received Royal Assent and the new arrangements will come into place on 1st July 2022. For West Northamptonshire, the Integrated Care System will exist at county (Northamptonshire) level.

Reforms will mean changes to governance and decision making through the Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership both at county and place (West Northants) level; to locality leadership and day-to-day officer roles and to mechanisms to support enhanced provider collaboration.

Reports to Cabinet and Council have set out the decisions that will need to be taken by the Council to ensure arrangements are fully reflected in the Council's Constitution.

On the 31st May the Northamptonshire Integrated Care partnership met in shadow form and agreed its future approach to;

- Local Area Partnership
- ICS Outcomes framework
- ICS Strategy

The reforms could be considered as just another moving of the deck chairs, NHS restructure however in West Northants we feel the reforms enable us to not only integrate our health and social care services locally but to better coordinate how we support local people to live their best lives.

For West Northants we will see the creation of 9 local area partnerships that will give us increased opportunities join up the way work and prioritise interventions that will make the biggest difference for local people.

Our Health and wellbeing Board has been adapted to provide oversight of progress and I believe our local approach has a real opportunity to improve outcomes for local people.

Public Health

Following a successful national recruitment Sally Burnes has been appointed as West Northants permanent Director of Public Health .

Sally will support us to disaggregate the existing public health team to create by October a West Northants dedicated structure.

My Next report will specifically highlight the work programme we are developing for Public health

House hold support fund

The Household Support Fund (2), announced by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on the 31st March 2022, is the second version of the Fund, the first (HSF1) operated between 1st December 2021 and 31st March 2022 across West Northamptonshire.

The latest fund can be delivered to households between 1 April 2022 and 30 September 2022. Previously, there was a stipulation that a minimum of 50% of the fund must be used to support families with children. However, in HSF (2) we have been advised to split the fund; one third to families with children, one third pensioners and the final third to households demonstrating severe financial hardship.

West Northamptonshire Council has been allocated a sum of £2,599, 628.53. Payment for the grant will be made in arrears, following the submission of spending returns to the DWP by 22 July 2022 (for the period to 30 June 2022) and 21 October 2022 (for the full length of the scheme).

At least one third of the total funding will be ring-fenced to support households with children, at least one third of the total funding will be ring fenced to support pensioners with up to one third of the total funding to other households genuinely in need of support. This may include households not currently in receipt of DWP welfare benefits;

The support provided through the scheme ranges from holiday school meal vouchers for the summer holidays; pensioners who are already receiving a Pension Credit and those who are severely disabled; to a food and fuel concept operated through the voluntary sector that identifies the individuals and families in severe financial hardship. Management and oversight will be provided by the Public Health Recovery and Wellbeing Programme Team.

Anti-Poverty Strategy

Following cabinet approval our antipoverty strategy has moved into implementation stage

'Our vision is for a fairer and more inclusive West Northamptonshire, where everyone is able to live their best life, prosperous and fulfilling, free from poverty and inequality'

Living in poverty has negative impacts in other aspects of people's lives and is not just about money, it impacts educational attainment, access to good paying work, increases the risk of developing poor health conditions and reduces life expectancy.

It also means that many people are not able to take part in the normal life of a place as experienced by other residents. The pandemic has particularly exacerbated the impacts of poverty on our most vulnerable residents and communities.

To achieve our vision, we must work together to maximise our resources and focus on activities that are likely to have a lasting impact on reducing poverty across West Northants to improve the lives of our local communities.

West Northamptonshire's Anti-Poverty Strategy provides a strategic framework for how we intend to tackle poverty. The Strategy for 2022-2025 has three key priorities: Supporting people who are struggling in poverty now; Preventing people from falling into poverty in the first place and Influencing the Government and other national organisations to get a better deal for the communities in West Northants.

Our priorities are supported by 8 strategic objectives and 33 commitments, high level ambition statements that collectively support the shared vision and are aligned to the 3 priorities. Our vision, priorities and shared commitment statements maps our strategic direction.

Through continued engagement and consultation, a detailed action plan and performance framework is now being developed which will underpin the strategy, setting out how we intend to deliver our outcomes.

The strategy has been coproduced through the Anti-Poverty Oversight Group, a West Northants partnership of cross party elected members, service providers, public health, housing, and voluntary and community representatives, including the VCSE Assembly and the Poverty Truth Commission.

Councillor Matt Golby
Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Thursday 30th June 2022

Highways and Transport Services

HS2

Pre-application meetings involving local Members are being 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 directly raise issues. This positive engagement with HS2 Ltd will help to minimise as far as possible the impacts of the project on local residents as construction starts to accelerate. The majority of the HS2 Road Safety Fund schemes have now been completed with only the installation of Vehicle Activated Signs and a scheme in Aston le Walls outstanding. Both schemes are on schedule to be completed by Christmas.

Following the securing of funding for a HS2 Marshal for West Northamptonshire as part of the budget setting process, the successful candidate started during May. A ward member briefing involving planning, highways and regulatory services was held in May and increased coordination between the officers working on the different elements of HS2 on behalf of WNC is helping ensure a robust 'one council' approach to responses.

North West Relief Road

Following Cabinet's approval in December 2021 to borrow against the funding shortfall created by the unsuccessful Levelling Up Fund bid, works have now commenced on site. Initial works including setting up the site compound, creating access routes to the site and preparing for the detailed archaeological investigations are complete and the archaeological surveys are now substantially complete with no significant finds. The main earthworks operation will commence imminently.

Land acquisition has now successfully concluded with all landowners with WNC now having the full rights to all land required for the permanent scheme reducing this element of WNC's risk of the project.

The Growth Deal funding was fully approved by SEMLEP and this important contribution to the project was received by the Authority in March 2022.

Construction work is scheduled to last until February 2024 and the project team will be working hard to ensure that affected landowners, residents and the travelling public are all kept up to date with progress and any potential impact of the works.

Off-site mitigation works are required in Boughton village and these have been agreed in principle with Boughton Parish Council following a series of very constructive meetings. KierWSP have now commenced feasibility work to assess the viability of the proposals agreed with the Parish Council and we hope to implement these as soon as practicable to help mitigate

the existing traffic problems experienced in the village which are predicted to be exacerbated by the North West Relief Road without intervention.

Road Bypass

Work has now commenced on the Road Bypass. I have recently visited and toured the site with the contractor. Compounds have been established. Roundabouts on the A508 at either end of the village are under construction and earthworks are underway. While providing a much-needed bypass to Roade, the construction includes significant improvements to the Ashton / Stoke Bruerne junctions with the A508.

New Highways Contract

Kier have been selected as preferred bidder and there is now a standstill period prior to the signing of the contract. Mobilisation is expected to commence in earnest in late June early July. During this period there will be a number of member briefing sessions to inform members of how the new contract will differ from the current arrangement and to allow members to meet with Kier's management team. The new contract is scheduled to begin in September 2022, slightly later than originally planned and agreement has been reached 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 ensure that we can prioritise key routes across our area, creating a network that will encourage more walking and cycling thereby reducing congestion and contribute to the Council's carbon reduction targets.

A briefing has been held with Place and Overview Scrutiny committee and an oversight group is in the process of being set up to help steer the development of this new strategy for West Northamptonshire.

Transport – Buses & Rail

Cabinet agreed to form an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators in April 2022. This is one of the key steps in delivering the Government's National Bus Strategy - Bus Back Better - within West Northamptonshire. Unfortunately, along with many other authorities, we were unsuccessful in securing any Government funding to take forward improvements to our bus network.

We are currently progressing two key elements of work to progress our work on buses. The first is to work with commercial bus operators to co-design a sustainable network of services following the end of Government financial support for the loss of passengers due to Covid in October. The second linked piece of work is looking at how we improve the provision of bus services for rural areas. A cross party steering group will continue to meet quarterly to help review and shape the work related to the implementation of the strategy.

A cabinet paper is being prepared for July to agree our aspirations for improved rail services for West Northamptonshire once the opening of HS2 has released capacity on the existing rail network.

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.

Waste Management Services

Waste Collections

The chargeable garden waste service is now well established across WNC since it began on 1 April. At the time of writing, there have been over 79,000 subscriptions. 1,683 residents have taken advantage of the home composting offer. Plans to collect in the unwanted bins in the South area that have not been subscribed to are currently being finalised. This will be done in phases, starting in June, and residents will be informed by letter about the arrangements. Ward Councillors will be briefed when bins are being collected in their area.

The kerbside collection of small electrical items in the Daventry area is up and running and performing well. So far, we have collected 2 tonnes of small electrical items and 1 tonne of household batteries. This means that a kerbside collection of small electrical items and batteries is now offered across the whole of West Northamptonshire.

Litter and Street Cleansing

Dialogue with and support for the Northamptonshire Litter Wombles is on-going and very positive.

The additional litter picking equipment purchased with the Welcome Back funding has been received and has been in use across West Northamptonshire for both Spring Clean activities and “Clean for the Queen” in the run up to the Platinum Jubilee.

Grounds Maintenance

Spring / summer grounds maintenance works are well underway with grass cutting well into the second cut as well as weed treatment across Northampton. Seasonal sports pitches such as bowls and tennis are being prepared and maintained and plans are now in place to complete out of season works to football, rugby pitches etc.

Spring bedding plants have also been removed from flower beds, ready for replacing; we continue to donate the ‘old’ bedding plants to community groups for reuse.

Environment

Management

Interview for the Head of Public Realm & Heritage will take place shortly.

Parks and Open Spaces

Over the last month, three major parks, Daventry Country Park, Abington Park and Bradlaugh Fields have been visited by the Green Flag Judges. They will reveal their results in July or August. It is at this time, we would like to thank all the Park Rangers, Idverde, Veolia and the friends’ groups for all their hard work to prepare the parks for the judging.

Disaggregation of the former NCC Country Park service occurred on 1st April 2022. As a result, the integrated WNC Park Service now includes Daventry and Brixworth Country Park, Brampton Valley Way, Watermeadows, and the Everdon Outdoor Learning Centre. Eleven members of staff were welcomed by the teams in Environment, Countryside & Parks. Extensive work including staff meetings had taken place prior to this.

Since the disaggregation, WNC has installed additional play equipment at Brixworth Country Park to cater for the growing number of visitors to the park.

A new archway at the entrance to the much-loved Abington Park Aviary was unveiled recently. The new structure was first discussed a few years ago but was put on hold when the Covid-19 pandemic arrived. The arch acts as the gateway to a fabulous array of domestic birds that are much loved and cared for by the park staff.

Watermeadows Park in Towcester was purchased by the former South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) from the neighbouring Easton Neston Estate in 2009. The park, which has been used by local residents for a number of years, was not accessible by all. Therefore, work took place over the last couple of years to install new footpaths, benches, a picnic area, a viewing platform and a play area. The construction of this new park was carefully planned so not to disturb this rich historic biodiverse grassland.

At Delapre Abbey, WNC completed the new footpath that runs adjacent to the Walled Garden. Regular users of this walkway will say, in the winter months this footpath became very boggy and was difficult to manoeuvre across.

Climate Strategies

Three strategies are in various stages of progress to support the Council's achievement of net zero by 2030:

- Estate Climate Strategy: Work is well underway; with an understanding of emissions the Council is responsible for being established and a range of measures to address these being explored.
- Construction & Maintenance Climate Strategy: Work is briefed, and initial work has commenced. It is not meaningful to establish a baseline as such, as the construction programme varies on a year by year basis.
- Fleet Climate Strategy: Work has commenced, exploring the best options for the Council to transition to a zero or low carbon fleet.

All three Strategies seek to address scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions relevant to their functional scope. The Estate Climate Strategy will be expected to resolve any emissions which cannot be mitigated within the other Strategies.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

While I remain to be briefed on these strategies, the Council has been allocated a small 'new burdens' grant to commence work on a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Further funding of perhaps £120-170k is expected. A report will be considered by July Cabinet.

Flood Management

The Council has a vital role as Lead Local Flood Authority and Land Drainage Authority. The service responds to 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.

The Council has experienced problems with the provision of services by its outsourced service providers. It has therefore taken interim steps of engaging a number of agency workers. With the posts now graded, the Council will soon be seeking a full in-house technical team, which

should deliver a better service through efficiencies and secure local knowledge. Work will then also be able to commence on updating the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, which will define how we plan to manage local sources of flood risk (surface water, ordinary watercourses, and ground water) in the district.

The Innovative Flood Resilience Project is being rebranded Project RAIN – Resilience and Innovation Northamptonshire. The business case for this Defra-funded project is nearing completion and will be submitted to the Environment Agency at the end of June for approval. The project is expected to deliver catchment, community and property-level flood resilience measures to communities in the Wootton Brook (West Northamptonshire) and Harpers Brook (North Northamptonshire) catchments. It is anticipated that engagement of the benefitting communities will commence in anger in the summer, once the business case has been approved.

Car Parks

Parking demand is gradually increasing but remains significantly below pre-Covid levels. This is reflected in lower levels of income in 2021/22 and projected in 2022/23. During 2022/23 we will assess how demand is evolving. This may require changes of approach.

Work on the new parking control systems, which are designed to ease use, encouraging people to visit central Northampton and thereby also increase income, is well underway. The market appears to have a range of solutions, although there is still a need to ensure the desired user focus is delivered. The most challenging part will probably be integrating modern systems with the legislation governing Council car parks, which was written in a previous era.

Short term actions relating to the service include:

- Renewing outdated lifts in St Michaels (All other MSCP lifts were all renewed, replaced, or refurbished in recent years).
- Supporting the new cinema in Daventry – After meeting the cinema manager it has been agreed that no further steps are required at this time. The cinema is more than happy with the parking provision nearby that supports their business.
- Closing around half of Commercial Street car park to accommodate the market whilst works are undertaken on the Market Square.

During 2022/23 and into 2023/24 it is planned to develop a car parking strategy for central Northampton. This will provide a framework to take decisions such as on replacement or major refurbishment of the Mayorhold MSCP, pricing strategy, etc.

With the disaggregation of Brixworth Country Park from NNC we are having to set up a new contract with the card payment provider on the machines. This has proved particularly challenging and is interrupting the ability to take card transactions until resolved. We are working with the Communications team to ensure customers remain informed. We are also aiming to improve the payment arrangement for country park parking in the medium term.

Councillor Phil Larratt

Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste Services

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Thursday 30th June 2022

Finance

Accounts

Since the last update in April I am pleased to report that the final two sets of accounts have been through the Audit and Governance Committee which is chaired by Cllr Cecile Irving Swift. These were the 2019-20 accounts for Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council. These accounts still need final sign off from the external auditors but we are in a position where all the 'heavy lifting' has been done by the Audit and Governance Committee and officers and all of the old year accounts from all of the predecessor authorities are on the verge of being finalised. This will then set the opening balance sheet balances for West Northamptonshire and provide a starting point to close the first year's set of accounts for West Northamptonshire in their own right.

Thankfully, going forward we will only be responsible for one set of accounts, not the multiple sets of accounts we have had to deal with since the inception of West Northants which all related to the predecessor authorities.

Revenue Monitoring 2021-22

I reported at the April meeting that it looked likely that would be within budget in the first year of our existence. I am pleased to report that we still expect that to be the case. Officers are finalising the position of the 'provisional' outturn and we hope to be able to publicly report on that soon.

Revenue Monitoring 2022-23

Of course, as soon as one year closes another one opens and the finance team are also in the process of co-ordinating budget monitoring returns for us to be able to report on the latest position for this current financial year.

I do expect there to be a number of pressures flowing through our budget monitoring this year such as the significant impact of inflation which impacts not only households but also many aspects of the operations of big organisations like ourselves.

We will also begin to see what life without COVID funding is like and the overhang of any COVID related pressures on the provision of service costs. I expect there will continue to be a pressure on income budgets but also an increase in demand for services where I think demand for some services was suppressed throughout the pandemic and we may begin to see a much greater demand, and therefore costs, for our services and those operated by our partners. This picture will begin to emerge and be reported upon shortly.

Revenue and Benefits

Councillors will be aware that Revenues and Benefits was the first service that moved away from the separate arrangements that were inherited from predecessor authorities into a single operating model and team responsible for providing the service across the combined area.

There is still some way to go on the journey of transformation as we now need to streamline and harmonise systems that underpin the service but I wanted to highlight how performance has improved since the single in-house team was implemented.

The information detailed below tells its own story. Inherited performance was not great, and is still not where we want it to be, but the improvement is clear for all to see.

- The number of outstanding items of work inherited by the in-house team when it came into being on 8 November was **11,802 items**.
- The position at the end of the year with the in-house team only being in place for five months saw this figure reduced to **4,262 items**

- Total amount of in-year Council Tax and Business Rates outstanding the day before the in-house team was implemented **£19.9m**
- Total amount of in-year Council Tax and Business Rates outstanding at the end of the year **£7.5m**

- Average time to process a new benefit claim the day before the in-house team was implemented **45.32 days**
- Average time to process a new benefit claim by the end of 2021-22 **37.4 days**
- Current average time to process a new benefit claim **20.78 days**

- Average time to process a benefit change in circumstance the day before the in-house team was implemented **12.2 days**
- Average time to process a benefit change in circumstance by the end of 2021-22 **10.2 days**
- Current average time to process a benefit change in circumstance **4.89 days**

Can I remind members we also made savings of £200,000 in moving to a single in-house service. There appears to have been some concerns raised about the service so I just wanted to highlight some facts about it and the performance improvements since it was brought back in house in November.

Procurement

Finally, I just wanted to add my congratulations to our Head of Procurement Gus De Silva who picked up the “Individual Achievement of the Year Award” at the national Government Opportunities Excellence in Public Procurement Awards.

A very well deserved accolade for an excellent member of staff. Well done Gus!

Assets & Environment

Property Strategy and Estates

Since the last update, we are continuing to implement the new structure. Recruitment remains a challenge with numerous vacant posts in the structure. The Principal Surveyor post has recently been advertised, with no applicants and the Senior Surveyor post had no applicants at the time of writing; it closes on 17th June. The Property Strategy and Major Projects Manager post remains vacant pending the finalisation of other phases of the restructure which we are currently working closely with HR on completing.

The Property Strategy and Estates teams have continued to collaborate to implement standardised process and procedures in relation to legal instructions, disposal, and wider asset management activities. Work has continued on regularising the estates data of the former Northampton Borough Council (NBC) with a comprehensive review of all lease data from the former commercial estate nearing completion. In addition the project to prepare plans for all former NBC properties is progressing well and is helping to implement robust and structured estates management practices.

In terms of the other key projects that are currently ongoing:

- **Estates Management Database Procurement** – Work is progressing on the procurement of a new estates management database that will replace the four separate processes that existed in the predecessor councils. A working group and project board has been formed and is operational but currently awaiting the appointment of a Business Analyst. Initially planned to be a joint procurement with North Northamptonshire Council (NCC), given interdependency with K2 for the former County Council properties, it has recently been agreed that the parties will procure independently. System proposed to be in place by March 2024.
- **Estates Coding** – A standardised estates coding for the Council has been agreed. The Asset Records Team have mapped all locations and are currently inputting these into K2. This will then be used to generate new codes in ERP and facilitate the consolidation of existing costs centres (currently more than 60).
- **Asset Valuations** – A new asset valuation schedule has been created and is currently being reviewed. Estates are working with colleague in procurement to prepare a tender for new valuers for the 2022/23 financial year which we hope to have live within the next 4 weeks. Review of CIPFA classifications is being completed to ensure consistency.
- **Aged Debt** – We have now completed an extensive review of the debt position from the NBC portfolio and are currently working with Debt Recovery to agree processes for wider tenant engagement. We are also considering the potential impact that the Commercial Rent (Coronavirus) Bill may have on the Council's ability to recover all of the debt.
- **Portfolio Review** – We have continued to review the corporate portfolio and identify outstanding lease events. This work is still ongoing, but our understanding has increased since the last update. Once implemented and all lease events resolved, it is likely that this will generate improved revenue income for the Council.
- **EPC Assessment** – As part of the above portfolio review, we are also assessing current energy performance certificate (EPC) assessment, principally within the investment category at this stage, and are in the process of procuring an EPC on those properties

where one is currently not available, or where it has previously expired. This is to assess the potential impact on the Council of the changes to the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) which come into force in 2023 and which could require expenditure to MEES ratings.

- **Disposal of land at Sixfields** – A application for judicial review of the Cabinet decision to dispose of the land to Northampton Town FC Limited and County Developments (Northampton) Limited has been received and is being considered.

Facilities Management

Office provision

The service is working with Health, Safety and Wellbeing, HR, Transformation, and the trade unions to support employees. This includes:

- Completing the resetting of our main office accommodation to ensure space allocation meets the need of the services.
- A building user guide for each of the four main offices.
- Launching the WNC Facilities intranet pages.
- Restarting the Building User Groups, the One Angel Square meetings recommence on 16th June, with the Guildhall, Forum and Lodge Roads expected to commence soon after.
- Security – Awarding a WNC agreement to bring the former NCC, SNC and DDC contracts in line with contracts awarded by NBC prior to vesting day. This will allow for the full WNC requirement to be reprocured in 1-2 years' time.

Full Council meetings

The project to provide modern audio-visual equipment for full Council meetings in the Great Hall at the Guildhall was successfully completed.

Coroner's Service relocation

The Coroner's service successfully relocated to the Guildhall on Friday 1st April. The smaller inquests moved to the Council Chamber in the Guildhall some time ago. Following the installation of the new Audio-visual system in the Great Hall to support Council meetings we are working with the service to explore the opportunity for the larger inquests to be facilitated within this room.

Postal integration

The project will see the four former post service into one WNC service, based at the Guildhall. The process to integrate the teams from the Guildhall and Angel is underway and is expected to be completed within the next month, with the services in Daventry and Towcester expected to follow by the end of the year. Whilst there are some implementation challenges this is expected to realise a £100k pa saving. The computer software ('drivers') for hybrid outgoing mail were recently rolled out at Angel.

Rationalisation of reception arrangements

This former NCC team based out of One Angel Square included the Receptions and Business support functions. In order to provide a consistent customer experience across WNC the roles

have been disaggregated with the Receptionists moving from Assets and Environment to the Customer Service team from 1st April 2022.

Rationalisation of catering, Lodge Road

Pre-pandemic the Daventry offices of Lodge Road operated a tea trolley service. The service was ceased as part of the Covid control measures, and the two employees were redeployed to support enhanced cleaning on the sites. The accounts show the service has historically created a small annual budget pressure. However, Daventry District Council had deemed the pressure acceptable given the perceived wellbeing benefit the service provided for the building occupiers. Following a consultation process the service has now ceased permanently with one member of staff being made redundant and one being redeployed within the FM team. Alternative arrangements for onsite vending in line with other WNC offices has also been provided.

St Johns and the Vulcan works

The Service has worked across Assets & Environment to transfer the operational ownership of these facilities to the new provider, procured by the Regeneration team. FM continues to support this site until the transfer is completed.

Cleaning

3+1 years contract for WNC awarded from 1st May 2022. This included for the former NCC and SNC requirements. The DDC and NBC requirements will be reviewed during the term of the contract; currently these are provided in-house.

Current projects

There are several projects underway which the Facilities Management team are either leading or have a key role within:

- Office optimisation – Working to create a property portfolio that fits the needs of WNC both in terms of accommodation and budget.
- Integrated access control system for WNC – Approval has been given by ELT and a paper is now awaiting cabinet approval. Initial engagement with suppliers has also taken place.
- Integrating the Facilities Management Helpdesk service across WNC – The requirement is currently managed slightly differently across WNC. With the expected outcome to have one integrated Helpdesk for WNC. The Project is now underway with Towcester being chosen as the first area to integrate and provide proof of concept. Currently in the process of ensuring all the required system elements are in place before we move to user engagement and then go live.
- Driver Policy/Handbook - Working with colleagues from Waste (Tove depot) to develop a policy that suitable for all drivers at WNC. We are now working with policy summit to finalise and launch the policy for WNC.
- Grounds maintenance contract – transferring the former NCC requirement into the former NBC contract held by Veolia. This is to ensure we have continuity in service and management for WNC. This is in progress and has been slightly delayed due to processing the change notice for the former NBC contract. Continuity of service is in place during this transition.
- Fire Warden and First Aid requirements – There are currently different processed in place across WNC for payments. A paper has been submitted and approved by the CE and CFO which will see supplementary payments of £250pa, paid monthly, awarded to those staff that carry out Fire Warden, First Aid and Mental Health First Aid for WNC. We are now

meeting with HR colleagues to review the process of recruitment, training, payments, and budgets for these roles. Communication will then follow to employees.

- Service Management Solution (HALO) - IT have procured a new landesk facility to support the management of helpdesk requirements across WNC. This is a WNC DTI and the shared services project (Business Systems, Payroll Services and Finance Operations for WNC, NNC, MKC & CCC partners). The FM Helpdesk requirement had not been covered in the original scoping for this project, but it is being explored if it should be.

Works

Property Maintenance & Assurance

Term maintenance contracts

Re-procurement of term maintenance contracts covering activity such as electrical, mechanical, building fabric, lifts etc has continued. A number are now appointed, subject to completion of contracts.

Statutory and mandatory compliance

Statutory compliance continues to be delivered via existing arrangements including landlord gas safety inspections, fixed electrical testing, water management etc.

Procurement is currently approaching completion for fire and water risk assessments, asbestos, and radon surveys of assets.

Planned maintenance and minor works

A wide range of works continue, including:

Judges Lodgings: Works including replacing floor finishes and decoration are proceeding at the Judges Lodgings to bring the accommodation to a suitable standard and to isolate the building systems from the neighbouring Sessions House.

Wootton Hall Park: Pre-demolition works have completed at Wootton Hall Park; Ex-DVLA, Bolton House and Trading Standards. A demolition contractor has been appointed subject to contract completion.

Temporary accommodation: Working with housing colleagues 18 houses in Daventry have been refurbished to provide essential accommodation for the most vulnerable within the area. 12 houses are now suitable for use.

Elderly People's Homes (EPH): Refurbishment of water damaged shower facilities, undertaking works that have been identified via Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) and undertaking works that have been identified via building condition surveys. This work is ongoing.

Historic Monuments: Repairs to various structures are being procured.

Schools works: These continue to be undertaken in phases whereby each school has a condition survey completed to identify issues. Works are then undertaken to ensure that they are safe, warm and dry. Works include roof replacements, fenestration, drainage, structural and internal improvements.

Northampton PFI Schools

Indexation has been applied to costs and communicated to schools. Dialogue with several schools about the implications has taken place. Work to rebuild the PFI affordability model to enable further discussion with the Department for Education about the costs of the PFI contract is being commissioned.

Work to enable various schools to carry out modifications, and to meet special educational needs and disability (SEND) needs has continued.

Policies

Asbestos, water, fire, and radon corporate policies are currently in draft form to be consulted on within the organisation prior to being presented for approval and adoption.

Construction

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

Mulberry Place, Daventry: The cinema has been operational since March 2022, but the operator has not yet signed the lease so this is being pursued. A tripartite agreement between the contractor, the operator and the Council is to be completed which will facilitate the settlement of the operator's costs which it incurred whilst the contractor was rectifying the ceiling drop rod issues which, in turn, delayed the fit out works. The Council is not required to pay any of those costs. Following completion of the leases, the operator of the two restaurant units (Dough & Co and Amour Burger) commenced its fit-out works, but progress has been slower than anticipated so these are unlikely to be open until July 2022.

Marie Weller Primary School, Towcester: The new primary school opened in September 2021. A few snags remain to be rectified, some were undertaken during the Easter school holidays, but some remain which will be completed during the summer holiday. The building is still operating on a temporary electricity supply due to the permanent supply not yet being provided by the network operator (UK Power). The cable has been laid, but there is still a delay on the completion of the wayleave and the completion of the lease with the academy.

The target is for all matters to be resolved and the meter installed for the start of term in September 2022. Quotations have been obtained for installing a 12kW solar PV system at the school, with the cost of £13k being accepted.

Radstone Primary School, Brackley and Silverstone Primary School: Legal work between the Council and the liquidated original contractor's administrators is ongoing.

Braunston – Daventry Cycle Track: Phase 1 (Middlemore, Daventry to Canal & River Trust (CRT) access track near Braunston Tunnel Portal on the Grand Union Canal) has been completed and is now open for use. It is proposed that the unspent budget of £230k from the original £720k budget funded from CIL be carried forward for use on Phase 2 which will be located on Canal & Rover Trust (CRT) land and so requires its cooperation and partnership working. The Council has commissioned CRT to investigate options for the Phase 2 route and this has commenced. Funding from CIL is being sought for a further £500k to fund Phase 2.

Northampton Guildhall: The major roof works are now complete. There is ongoing discussion between the Council's contract administrator and the contractor regarding its claimed additional costs and additional time required to complete the works. In order to settle the dispute, the

contractor proposed a commercial settlement which the Council has rejected as the contractor has failed to adequately justify its position. The budget overspend is projected at circa £60k depending on the outcome of the discussions.

The feasibility work to replace and relocate the boilers at the Guildhall is ongoing. Various options are being investigated with the aim of improving energy efficiency and improved access for easier installation, maintenance and replacement.

Professional services frameworks: This evaluation of the submissions is now nearing completion. It is proposed to finalise the successful consultants by the end of June 2022, subject to any challenges being received. This will be followed by an award procedure with the framework being open for use in July 2022.

Northampton Leisure Centres: Major scheme of replacement plant and equipment. Reports approved by the former NBC Cabinet established a scope of works, energy saving objectives and a budget of £1.8 million to undertake the works. The first phase of works to replace the temporary boilers at Mounts Baths, with a gas fuelled combined heat and power (CHP) unit, new boilers, heat recover systems and new controls is now complete. The works at Lings Forum, to the boilers, the water heating systems, pumps and controls have been completed to the original intended specification. Options for work at Danes Camp have been evaluated and costed as have options for a second phase of work for Mounts Baths. It has been found that, due to the age and condition of some heating, ventilation and electrical equipment, more replacement and refurbishment works was necessary and is still required to achieve the original intended performance. This has resulted in additional cost. For example, at Lings Forum, a faulty and electrically unsafe control panel had to be replaced. Previously missed asbestos had to be removed at Mounts Baths and improvements to the access stairs to the plant room which were hazardous had to be undertaken. The additional works, the fact that there has been a 30% increase in the cost of mechanical and electrical works over the last 12 months and the significant demand for this type of work with a limited supply chain means that the cost to complete the works would exceed the budget by circa £600k. These issues are being considered and a strategy to resolve them being prepared.

Whilst undertaking design and installation work, it was discovered that works to reduce fire risk at the leisure centres is likely to be required and so a budget was approved by Cabinet in February 2022 for any works identified by a Fire Risk Assessment. This will be undertaken separately to the works described above.

Northampton Watercourses: A review of the watercourses owned by the Council is ongoing to put in place arrangements for their safe and sustainable management, including potential works. The Innovative Flood Resilience Project (see below) funded by the Environment Agency will integrate with this project.

Units 4 - 14 High March, Daventry: This project is to convert and refurbish six existing, individual, dilapidated commercial units that are adjacent to each other in a block to create circa 30,000 sq ft for a single tenant that needs to expand its business. A budget of £1.8 million has been approved. Multidisciplinary consultants have undertaken design and costings on options ranging from a basic refurbishment at circa £1.0m to achieving undertaking a refurbishment at £3.9 million which will achieve net zero in operation. Options are now being considered.

Completion of Highway Infrastructure at Middlemore Residential Estate, Daventry: Unfortunately, no tenders were received for completion of the remaining unsurfaced length of carriageway and footway at Middlemore, Daventry. Feedback is being sought from the contractors that initially expressed an interest as to why they did not submit a tender, but it may be reflective of the current 'over heated' market and cost risks that the industry is facing. An alternative procurement route through the Council's construction frameworks is being pursued.

Legacy Bridge, Grand Union Canal Towpath, Braunston: This is a circa £330k Canal & River Trust (CRT) project to replace an existing narrow footbridge which carries the towpath over an entrance to Braunston Marina to which the Council could choose to support by part funding of £100k from CIL. CRT is continuing with developing the design and an update on progress should be available for the next report.

Westbridge Depot – New Accommodation for NPH: The Council has agreed with NPH to provide it with 500m² of new accommodation (known as the Engagement Building) at Westbridge Depot. The Council was due to provide this by September 2022, up to a cost limit of £1m plus demolition works (if required) and subject to it being achievable. Any further investment would be the Council's choice. NPH would enter a lease with the Council for the accommodation. Options have been explored and constructing a new modular building was the preferred solution.

However, it has been determined that there are limitations on what can be achieved at the current location of the NPH offices at Westbridge as there is a substantial fuel storage facility adjacent to the site and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on new development in the proximity of this would need to be followed. Discussion with the Development Management has confirmed that it would strictly follow HSE guidance. Therefore, it will not be possible to locate the new accommodation adjacent to and linked to the existing NPH accommodation. As a result of this issue, other options are being considered. There is ongoing liaison with NPH as location and timescale are impacted.

Delapre Park – Active Travel Scheme and Cycle Hub: With the assistance of the Council, Delapre Park made an application to the Government's Active Social Prescribing Fund for circa £1.5 million as a Social Prescribing Pilot. The proposal was awarded £93k revenue funding to develop a feasibility project and this could lead to further funding to implement a pilot project. The evidence gained from the pilot could then be used to seek the full amount of capital funding. Applications have been submitted internally for CIL funding and Public Health Grant funding to support the implementation of the project should insufficient Government grant be awarded. The feasibility work was submitted to the Department for Transport at the end of April 2022 and the outcome is awaited.

Delapre Park – Gate Lodge Conversion – Feasibility work has been completed and it has been concluded that the currently vacant and dilapidated lodge could be renovated and reconfigured to provide office and meeting accommodation for the Far Cotton & Delapre Community Council. Funding will be sought to establish a budget to develop the project supported by a business case. Bat surveys will be undertaken in July 2022 to check if they are roosting in the building or trees nearby as this could be a constraint on the project.

Abington Park (East) Toilets: The existing toilet block and changing facilities on the eastern part of the park are subjected to repeated vandalism and the flat roof of the changing facilities is a health and safety concern as people climb on to it and that could result in injury. The project

is to relocate the facilities to a location where they are subject to greater natural surveillance to deter vandalism, and to demolish the existing facilities. The preferred location will be determined by consultation with users of the park, an assessment of whether the preferred location is reasonably practicable in terms of capital and revenue costs associated with the location and whether it would meet the objectives of security and practicality. The initial cost estimate is £1.2m and it is proposed that this be funded from CIL.

Queen's Green Canopy: To celebrate the platinum jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022, the Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) tree planting initiative has been created. This "invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee". WNC's role has two aspects: Firstly, engaging with parish councils and community groups to help them achieve suitable planting. Secondly, to agree and secure planting on WNC land. In both cases this needs to include consideration of the future management of maintenance of the trees. In order to deliver the second aspect, it will be necessary to have funding for the purchasing and planting of semi-mature trees on WNC land. The Council has purchased commemorative plaques which are now available for organisations/groups to collect and place at their planting project.

Long Buckby Flood Alleviation Scheme: Working with the Flood Resilience Team to deliver a flood alleviation scheme which is at design stage. Investigations into utility locations and pipe conditions along with statutory approvals from Anglian Water are ongoing. The works will temporarily prevent access to an agricultural field, so the framer requires the investigation works to be delayed until September 2022 after harvest.

New Care Home in Towcester: Initial feasibility work has enabled a site to be identified in Towcester. This can now be taken forward with further investigation and discussion with stakeholders to determine if constructing a new care home with circa 80-100 bedrooms to enhance provision in the area is viable. Funding will be sought to establish a budget to undertake more detailed feasibility work supported by a business case.

Refurbishment of New Street Toilets, Daventry: This is a legacy project and being delivered through the Council's construction framework. The works are nearing a start on site, but this will not commence until communications with interested parties have been completed to advise of the temporary closure whilst work is undertaken. Temporary toilets will be provided,

Proposed New Schools: Feasibility work is proceeding on the following:

- New 2FE primary school on the Overstone Leys SUE funded from S106 contributions.
- New 2 FE primary school on Norwood Farm SUE funded from S106 contributions.
- Conversion of a former young people's secure unit at St John's, Tiffield to provide an extension to the existing Gateway SEND School which is on the same site. This is feasible, but the estimated cost was significantly above the target budget, so this is being considered further.
- Conversion of an existing building at Elizabeth Woodville School (EWS) at Roade for SEND provision and construction of a new SEND unit on the same site. Feasibility will also be undertaken at St John's Tiffield site to see if it could accommodate this in the eventuality that the existing Academy operating the EWS was unsuccessful in its bid to run any new SEND school on its site, as it would not be practicable to have two different school operators on the same site.

Other School Works:

- Work is in progress on the provision of new toilets and a covered outside play area at Pitsford Primary School.
- Project at Harlestone Primary School to provide a new MUGA and playing fields drainage, funded from S106 contributions, is underway.
- Conversion of an existing building at the Dantre and Southbrook Learning Village (DSL) at Daventry for SEND provision with a budget of £500k. Consultants have been commissioned to design the facility and this is ongoing.

Councillor Malcolm Longley
Cabinet Member for Finance

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30th June 2022

Digital, Technology and Innovation

Strategy

Our first WNC Digital, Technology & Innovation Strategy is coming before Cabinet in July and will set out our plans for using technology to improve council services over the next three years, to the direct benefit of our residents and staff alike.

The strategy lays out 58 initiatives organised into three key themes:

- *Technology*: how to build the right infrastructure and foundations for improving services and efficiency at WNC.
- *Digital*: how we can use technology to create ever-faster, better and more tailored services that directly benefit our residents.
- *Innovation*: how we, in partnership with our community, identify future technologies that could further enhance how we work and the services we provide.

Key projects

- Implementing a new internal e-recruitment system that will streamline our recruiting process, speed up getting roles to market, reduce management time spent on the recruitment process and provide a far better candidate experience to people applying to work at West Northamptonshire.
- Supporting the Children's Trust with their implementation of a new case management system which improves the service we are able to offer to vulnerable children and families in Northamptonshire.
- Work on our telephony replacement project that will standardise phone and comms tools across all council properties, better empower internal staff with modern tools and support flexible working and provide savings on existing spend is ongoing. We have been doing work to better tailor the needs to better support colleagues working remotely and this has now moved into procurement.
- Integration of our customer experience platforms into a single platform, empowering the Customer Services team to work with a single system and data.
- Further planning work with NNC to support their request to disaggregate the service, including agreement from members to disaggregate the Digital service, one of six areas we currently share with North Northamptonshire. The latter is due to complete by December.
- A hardware replacement project to select and deploy new personal computer hardware to staff, and meet workforce needs as well as support flexible working. We are developing a map of our staff needs to ensure that everyone is supported, and this will enter procurement shortly.
- Consolidation of contracts: our review of contracts has so far identified £700k of savings across just three contracts we manage on behalf of ourselves, the Children's Trust and NNC.

- Replacing our income management system. This is now in delivery will run until April next year (as it is shared across four councils). As well as modernising and streamlining the system, it will allow the removal of another £100k system.
- Replacing our internal helpdesk system. The existing tool was first built in 1985 and is major inhibitor for technical staff as well as a frustrating customer experience. This is due to complete in August.
- Supporting the development of key business changes and transformation projects across Place, HR, Legal, Communities, Adults and in the Children's Trust.

Customer Services

Meet customers where they are

A very successful pilot was carried out at Brackley Library, allowing residents to come in and speak to council colleagues, as well as partner agencies (Citizens Advice, Community Law Service) about a variety of queries and concerns. This allowed us to deliver a wrap-around service in people's community. The learning from this event will be taken forward with similar initiatives across a range of locations, starting with Weston Favell and East Hunsbury in Northampton.

Consolidating resources

Work continues at pace to bring most of our services at the front door onto one Customer Experience Management system.

In addition, we are working closely with DTI to refine the business case for the procurement of a new telephony and contact centre management solution which will allow us to improve accessibility for residents and make better use of our resources.

Disseminating learning throughout the organisation

We are working closely with a number of service areas to support their ability to manage customer complaints and Member's enquiries in a timely and effective way – currently, there is positive work being undertaken with the Planning department.

Improving the customer experience through our website content

Additional resources are being identified to expedite the process of transferring content from the legacy websites with a focus on customer engagement and accessibility. Customer Services will continue to work very closely with the Web team to reflect customer feedback and improve interactions.

For example, the front page now reflects the way customers navigate various services, with a focus on action, so it is clear what they can do themselves.

Emergency planning and business continuity

The team are now fully resourced, and training is under-way to ensure WNC can deliver its own on-call rota with limited reliance on NNC by September. Quick action cards are available to officers via PC, laptop or phone, when they need to respond to any incidents, with a similar offer being developed for Members.

We are in the process of engaging with service areas to update their Business Continuity plans, having fully revised forms and templates to make them easily accessible and easy to keep up to date.

Human Resources

Attracting and Retaining Talent

- Continuing to review and implement recruitment strategies for hard to fill roles. Last Quarters focus has been on Planning and Adult Social Care with successful campaigns across both areas.

Planning

- Targeted advertising on LinkedIn, plus posts from the WNC LinkedIn account promoting vacancies, jobs advertised on industry specific job boards and Facebook targeted pay per click campaign
- Total of **111** applications received for the first round of 13 Planning jobs

Adult Social Care

- Recruitment campaign branding created "All in a day's work" to give the campaign a clear and strong identity. Recruitment events held at services monthly (2 recruits from the 2nd event held in May). Bus advertising, "recruiting now" banners, leaflets and posters, recruitment open days, Job Centres, NHS jobs & targeted FB ads.
 - Feedback from local manager in social care
"We are interviewing 9 people in Spinney this week which is never heard of! We have interviewed 20 in Reablement this month, Southfields have appointed at least 3 new staff, Obelisk have interviewed more than 10! Steve and I had over 90 people apply for dept manager, we interviewed around 15 and got 3 smashing people on board. One striking comment that candidates have said is that they want to be part of what WNC can offer!"
- Pay, Reward and Recognition: Proposals made to the Trade Unions in respect of the new WNC Local Pay Structure and the remaining 'Day One' terms and conditions following week of negotiation and consultation in May. Currently awaiting outcome of their consultation. Report to Cabinet in July and associated engagement activity across the workforce commenced 13th June.
 - Under 34s survey carried out around benefits.
 - Cycle to Work scheme to be launched this month and continuing to publicise other lifestyle benefits and our Pennies from Heaven charity giving scheme.
 - Recognition - First birthday celebrations THRIVE awards and the Kudoboard for peer-to-peer recognition.
 - Activity now commencing on additional employee benefits and recognition including long service, volunteer days etc.

Achieving our Goals Through Our High Performing and Flexible Workforce

- Leadership and Management: Pilot scheme for Coaching and Mentoring developed and ready to launch shortly.
- Developing for Autumn launch management development programmes (in addition to MALPE which launched in 2021)
- Basics of being a good manager produced and circulated.
- High Performing Teams: 2021/22 End of Year Conversations rolled out in March 2022.

- Valuing Individual Performance (VIP) Continuous conversation approach launched in June 2022 which are being supported by lunch and learn sessions:
- Diversity and Inclusion: Undertaken data improvement campaign to increase the number of equality monitoring responses (20% increase to date). This will help inform future strategy, however at this stage further activity is required.
- Culture of Learning and Development: Review of mandatory training requirements undertaken and paper going to ELT.
- Additional supporting resources for managers produced to encourage discussions around self directed learning.

Creating a Culture of Engagement and Wellbeing

- Culture and Engagement: Building on last year's employee survey, THRIVE Big Conversations were rolled out.
- Drafting of the behaviours framework is now underway.
- Survey carried out with managers of WNC's non office-based workforce to ascertain most appropriate methods of communication to aid engagement and participation. Outcomes of the survey delivered to ELT and the Communications team to form a basis for a future internal communications strategy.
- Work Environment: Categorisation of workforce into the worker types has taken place and West Ways of Working supporting documentation has been developed including policy and working with Health, Safety and Wellbeing to implement.
- Work in this area reaches across learning and development to produce supporting training material for managers and colleagues to equip them to work effectively in their work environment and aid adoption of a high performing culture.
- Wellbeing: A number of wellbeing roadshows took place across all sites, which are informing the design of the Wellbeing Strategy.

Legal and Democratic Services

Legal

The in-house legal team has continued to deliver a high level of property, contract, litigation and other transactions arising from the transition to unitary and to carry out the work that continues to be generated as part of the day-to-day work of the Council. The Land Charges Team have successfully transferred across from the Planning Team into the Legal Services Team. The Council recently underwent its first inspection under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act which concluded that

'In conclusion, although your organisation is still in its infancy, you seem well placed to manage covert activity should you choose to conduct it'.

Coroners

Following the successful move of the coroner's service to the Guildhall steps are underway to enhance the facility for coroner's hearings in the council chamber at the Guildhall. The team have also been developing a plan in the event of a mass fatality in the area including carry out a testing exercise with the police and senior Coroner.

Registrations

The Registration Service is poised to launch online ceremony bookings. This is a significant step forward which will improve the service to the customer as they will be able to book ceremonies at any time, but it is also more efficient for the delivery of the service. There will

as a result be system downtime on 29th June and delays to email responses while we configure the system, but the service should then be up and running within a few weeks. This is a busy time for weddings and due to the backlog of people wanting to get married after Covid the team is busier than ever giving people their special day. As another service improvement the opening hours of Towcester Registration Office have increased.

On 25th May the Registration Service (North and West) took part in a Thank you Lunch, and Team build event at County Hall, Northampton. Each service had a tour of County Hall, and then a mock trial as a team build. The lunch was provided as a buffet style lunch to say "Thank you" to the service in receiving the Rose of Northamptonshire Award.

Elections

The Elections team have carried out two Neighbourhood Planning Referendums, one in Great Houghton on 5th May and the other in Pitsford on 16th June 2022. Great Houghton voted in favour of the Plan and the result for the count for Pitsford is not known at the time of writing.

The Elections Team have seeking to provide easy access information to parishes in response to discussions with parish about we could improve the services we provide. The team have introduced a parish page on our website under the elections page. The page is a developing resource, and more information is added as an when issues arise.

Democratic and Elections Services

Through a combined effort across the Directorate Members of the Democracy and Standards Committee have been supported to prepare the submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The work for the Elections team involves the gathering of significant data and population predictions at the request of the Commission as well as helping to prepare the Council's own submission on Council size. The Committee has also been supported to present the first Annual Report on its work and ethical governance.

Democratic Services are in the final stages of completing the coordinated admission appeals for secondary schools and academies. The team have held around 200 appeals for families in West Northamptonshire since the beginning of the summer term. This is a significant undertaking for the team each year and they carry out this exercise with sensitivity recognising that this can be difficult time for families affected.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services

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**Summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the
Cabinet held on Tuesday 12 April 2022**

1. Date of publication of this summary: 12th April 2022
2. Deadline for requests for call-in (detailing reasons for doing so): 19th April 2022
3. Earliest date for implementation of decisions: 19th April 2022
4. Urgent decisions taken and not subject to the call-in procedure: 12th April 2022

Agenda Item and Recommendations	Decision
<p>Agenda Item 6 West Northamptonshire Enhanced Partnership</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That the Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Made the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Enhanced Partnership Scheme, which form Appendices A and B of this report, as proposed in accordance with Section 138G of the Transport Act 2000. b) Noted the requirement to develop, consult on and publish a policy for subsidising bus services. c) Noted the allocation of additional Government funding to support bus services and the requirement to work with bus operators to co-design a financially sustainable and passenger-focused public transport network, that works for changing travel patterns postpandemic. d) Agreed to reimburse bus operators for concessionary travel at 100% of pre-Covid levels until 30 September 2022 and then at 90% of pre-Covid levels until 31 March 2023. e) Agree to allocate £50,000 of the resultant projected saving in the concessionary travel budget for 2022/23 to work with operators on a marketing strategy for bus services. <p>REASONS RESOLVED: Meeting the Council's legal duties to</p>

	<p>consult on and publish a policy on subsidised bus services and to provide West Northamptonshire communities with the best possible level of bus service with post-pandemic travel patterns.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7 West Northamptonshire Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-2025</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approved the West Northamptonshire Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-2025 for adoption and implementation by the Health and Wellbeing Board. 2) Approved the continued engagement of our community, partners and community and voluntary sector organisations to develop a robust set of action plans, aligned to the objectives set out in the strategy and the a performance framework which will underpin the strategy. 3) Approved the creation of an additional delivery fund to underpin the strategy, namely 'Community Health and Wellbeing Innovation Fund' using available Public Health Grant Reserve. That the strategy includes a commitment to produce an annual summary detailing key achievements and challenges faced in the preceding year. <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approval of the strategy will lead to a fairer and more inclusive West Northamptonshire, where everyone is able to live their best life, prosperous and fulfilling, free from poverty and inequality. 2) The strategy will deliver the following outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An improvement in population health and wellbeing. • Fewer households (and children) living in poverty. • An increase in average household incomes and wages • Fewer people unemployed and in receipt of out of work benefits.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the number of people paid at least the real Living Wage. • An increase in the amount of lower cost rented and social housing • Fewer young people aged 16-17 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). • Fewer people with no qualifications or skills training. • Reduce the impact of fuel poverty on families <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8 Appointment of an Operator for the Vulcan Works Creative Hub</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet approved the appointment of the preferred bidder following the procurement process for the operation of the Vulcan Works Creative Hub using Competitive Procedure with Negotiation (CPN).</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Allowed the Vulcan Works Creative Hub to become operational as well as a hub for business support for businesses in the creative and cultural industries. b) Ensured the operator was appointed and allow the centre to begin to generate income. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 9 Homes for Ukraine Scheme</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet noted the content of this report and associated appendices.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: To support the work being taken by statutory agencies across the county and the approach being taken locally in West Northants.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 10 Towns Fund: 35-45 Abington Street Project- Business Case and Delivery Strategy</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the 35-45 Abington Street Project, to draw down on

£9.7m of Towns Fund funding.

- b) Approved the Procurement and Delivery Strategy (Appendix B) that sets out the recommended delivery route for the 35-45 Abington Street Project (which recommends using a form of Development Agreement to deliver the project).
- c) Authorised the purchase of each of 35-39 Abington Street and 20-28 Wood Street, in each case subject to a red book valuation and satisfactory due diligence on the site, a resultant acquisition being made at no more than a fair commercial price taking account of all relevant factors.
- d) Confirmed it is willing in principle to exercise its compulsory purchase powers to facilitate the development, if necessary.
- e) Noted a further Cabinet report would be brought back upon the completion of the procurement process to seek approval for the preferred bidder.

REASONS RESOLVED:

- 1) Allowed the 35-45 Abington Street development site to proceed and to ensure the grant award is spent within the award timescales.
- 2) Maximised the opportunities for the effective use of public money.
- 3) Reduced the likelihood that current owners will attempt to 'ransom' the Council's aspirations for regeneration of the town centre by seeking excessive prices for their properties.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

If this is not approved, this would mean looking at other options that would not meet the objectives in delaying the project which is likely to then result in losing the allocated Government funding which in turn would mean the project would not be brought forward

**Summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the
Cabinet held on Tuesday 3 May 2022**

1. Date of publication of this summary: 3rd May 2022
2. Deadline for requests for call-in (detailing reasons for doing so): 10th May 2022
3. Earliest date for implementation of decisions: 10th May 2022
4. Urgent decisions taken and not subject to the call-in procedure: 3rd May 2022

Agenda Item and Recommendations	Decision
<p>Agenda Item 3 Minutes</p> <p>To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 12th April 2022.</p>	<p>The minutes from the Cabinet meeting of the 12th April 2022 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 6 Highways Contract Procurement Update</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the continued progress to procure new arrangements for highways and transport services and the readiness to make an award post Final Tender submission and evaluation in May 2022; b) Agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment and Executive Director Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste Services, and the Portfolio Holder for Finance to award the contract. <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Council had a statutory duty to provide highways services as set out in the Highways Act 1980. b) The Council must provide these services and the Council is procuring a new contract in order to

	<p>do so in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Failure to make an award would have a number of implications for the Council, not least the need to establish and mobilise alternative delivery arrangements from the end of the KierWSP contract in September 2022 and the cost and risk associated with commissioning and /or delivering an alternative solution in the medium to long term. d) The delegations requested would enable the procurement process to proceed with appropriate governance through to its conclusion. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7 Modern Income Management Solution</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the completion of the procurement of the Income Management Solution; and b) Delegated authority to Executive Director Corporate in consultation with Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services to award the contract to the identified best fit supplier. <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expiry of the incumbent contracts – all contracts expire in 2023 without the ability to extend any further. A competitive process needed to be followed to ensure continuity of the functionality required of income management systems, whilst creating an opportunity to harmonise and modernise the income management systems inherited by West Northamptonshire Council. 2. Economies of scale – by choosing to implement the Income Management Solution with partners, implementation and support costs would be shared, providing better value for money for the taxpayer. Furthermore, expertise and experience gained from partner

organisations can be used to benefit citizens of West Northamptonshire Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

Option 1 – Shared Income Management Solution

- This option would have seen West Northamptonshire Council pool their resources with partner organisations with whom they currently share Accounting System and back-office support teams to procure, develop and implement an Income Management Solution benefitting from economies of scale and scope, and accumulated expertise and knowledge across all partner organisations.
- This option was recommended having scored the highest in the Options Appraisal.

Option 2 – Individual Income Management Solution

- This option would have seen West Northamptonshire Council independently procure, develop, and implement an Income Management Solution for sole use of the council. Technically, this is equally as viable as Option 1, however, it does not offer the opportunity for additional efficiencies and the benefits of economies of scale and therefore would result in reduced long term cost savings. West Northamptonshire Council would be fully responsible for the procurement, development, implementation and ongoing support of the solution and therefore incur the whole burden of the cost.

Option 3 – Extend Existing Contracts

- West Northamptonshire Council to extend the contracts with the incumbent suppliers.
- This option was deemed not viable as West Northamptonshire Council will be in breach of Public Contract

	<p>Regulation 2015 opening them to challenge from prospective suppliers denied the opportunity to bid for the business.</p> <p>Option 4 – Do Nothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option was deemed not viable as after the current contracts expire in 2023, West Northamptonshire Council would lose the ability to effectively receive, manage and allocate monies from their service users.
<p>Agenda Item 8 Hunsbury Park SEND unit</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approved the publication of the statutory notice of its intent to establish a new, 50 place, SEND unit catering to pupils with a primary need of ASC, at Hunsbury Park Primary School. Noted that following the publication of the statutory notice a four week period of consultation on this matter will commence. Noted that a further, final decision will be required in July as to whether or not to establish the proposed SEND unit at Hunsbury Park Primary School. <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal would help ensure that the Council is able to fulfil its statutory obligation of providing a sufficiency of SEND places within West Northamptonshire. The proposal would provide an increased number of SEND places and will help ensure that children with additional needs were able to access education in a provision that is best placed to meet their individual needs. The proposal could be considered to benefit all West Northamptonshire primary schools as it will reduce the need for mainstream school settings to provide places to children with additional needs where that provision is not best placed to meet

a child's additional needs.

- The recommended course of action was the most cost-effective and will reduce pressure on the High Needs Block (HNB) element of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) via a reduction in the number of children being required to be placed in more expensive out of county and independent provisions to meet their individual needs.
- The Council and its customers would receive the maximum benefit from the option proposed.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

- Do nothing: This option would result in the failure of WNC fulfilling its statutory obligation of providing a sufficiency of SEND places in West Northamptonshire. It would also result in the requirement to utilise places in increasingly distant and more expensive places within the independent sector, which would place a further strain on the HNB of the DSG. If WNC cannot demonstrate that it is able to manage its DSG allocation in a balanced position (or have plans to do so) this would result in intervention by the DfE. This option would have also prevented WNC from addressing issues relating to the timely provision of places in an appropriate setting for pupils in receipt of an EHC plan. This option was discounted for these reasons.
- To provide the additional SEND places at another education setting: WNC officers have engaged in discussions with a significant number of area schools relating to the possible provision of additional SEND places. However, a number of important criteria must be considered and met before a setting can be considered suitable to provide SEND places;
 - The setting/operator must have the relevant expertise or proven track record of delivering a

- successful SEND provision;
- The setting must be willing to provide places that would meet the type of need specified by WNC;
- The capital cost of the proposed scheme must be cost effective and meet value for money considerations;
- The school must be located in or close to the areas of highest demand for SEND places (to reduce home to school transport costs);
- It must be possible to deliver new capacity at the setting by September 2022 (ideally) or September 2023 (at the latest);
- The school must have the physical space available to accommodate an increased number of pupils on its site.

**Summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the
Cabinet held on Tuesday 14 June 2022**

1. Date of publication of this summary: 14th June 2022
2. Deadline for requests for call-in (detailing reasons for doing so): 21st June 2022
3. Earliest date for implementation of decisions: 22nd June 2022
4. Urgent decisions taken and not subject to the call-in procedure: 14th June 2022

Agenda Item and Recommendations	Decision
<p>Agenda Item 6 Annual Report & Quarter 4 Performance Report 2021-22</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted the content of the appendix covering the annual review of WNCs 1st year (2021-22).</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report was for information purposes and discussion only, there were no direct decisions to be made following the report • The council was required as part of Local Government Act 1972 to report performance of the council to members. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7 Northamptonshire's Integrated Care System</p>	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted that the nomination process for West Northamptonshire Council's representative on the Integrated Care Board (ICB) is subject to strict legal requirements and that the nomination would be made by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services. b) Noted the West Health and

Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference for the Integrated Care System from the 1st July 2022 which would be put forward for approval at full council on the 30th June 2022

- c) Noted the proposed governance structure for the Integrated Care Partnership (West Place) which were put forward for approval at the Integrated Care Partnership Shadow Board on the 31st May 2022 and the West Health and Wellbeing Board on the 7th June 2022
- d) Cabinet noted the chairing arrangements for the Integrated Care Partnership Board.
- e) Approved the proposed Local Area Partnerships (LAP's) for the West Place as part of the ICP following consultation with stakeholders
- f) Approved the proposal for one elected member per unitary ward to sit on each of the nine Local Area Partnerships.
- g) Further updates would be presented to Cabinet, Full Council and People Scrutiny as the ICS develops to ensure the Council has appropriate oversight.

REASONS RESOLVED:

- As set out in the Act the local authority needed to have a representative on the Integrated Care Board and a process for the nomination.
- The Act set out new statutory responsibilities for the Health and Wellbeing Board and as the board is a statutory function of the local authority these changes needed to be approved by full council as per West Northamptonshire's Council Constitution.
- West Northamptonshire Council had a significant role in the development and delivery of the Integrated Care Partnership and this paper sets out the areas where the council has shaped key proposals in line with

	<p>the legislation and guidance.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8 Household Support Fund: Scheme 2 Recommendations</p>	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted that the Council had wide discretion in the allocation of the Household Support Fund (2); b) Approved the allocation of funds set out in the chart in paragraph 6 of the report; c) Approved the control and oversight approach set out at paragraph 8.1.1 of the report; and d) Noted that depending on take up of the proposed scheme it might have to be adjusted in order to ensure the full allocation is not under or over allocated. Any adjustment will be managed within the terms of existing DWP guidelines. <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To underpin the West Northamptonshire Anti-Poverty Strategy and ensure residents most in need receive support • To ensure that the distribution of funds met the wider communities' financial needs, where other grants and funding were not available • To ensure the level of duplication of grants for the same purpose was minimised • To ensure that the maximum assistance was provided to residents in greatest need and that the allocation of funding is fully utilised to meet the needs of residents. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 9 Commissioning residential and nursing care services for older people</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted legislative and policy requirements introduced by Government in relation to the Social

Care Charging Reforms and Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund.

- b) Delegated to the Executive Director for Adults Communities and Wellbeing the decision (subject to the Contract Procedure Rules) to extend the current Care Home Service DPS framework for a period of 8-months.
- c) Noted that a formal engagement and consultation exercise would be conducted with the provider market on the findings of the care home cost review.
- d) Noted that a further report would come to Cabinet in September 2022, which will set out the proposed commissioning intentions for securing future residential and nursing care service supply.

REASONS RESOLVED:

- To enable West Northamptonshire Council's to meet the latest changes to the statutory requirements originally set out in the Care Act 2014.
- To support the development of a sustainable care market as required by the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund.
- To maintain purchasing arrangements for the supply of residential and nursing care services for older people.
- To meet the needs and demands of residents in relation to care and support including people who self-fund their care.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

- Option 1 (recommended) – Extend the current contract to enable alignment of commissioning strategy and activity with requirements of the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund including market-wide engagement and consultation on how to develop the care market in response to the social care reforms.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 2 (Not recommended) – Proceed with commissioning and procurement activity to put new contract arrangements in place by September 2022 and respond separately to the social care reforms including assessment of care costs and sustainability planning through existing provider engagement activities.
<p>Agenda Item 10 UK Levelling Up Fund Round Two</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Noted the activity made to date, timescales and next steps for the Levelling Up Fund applications. Delegated Authority to the Executive Director of Place, Economy and Environment in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth and approved the final two bids being made to the LUF round two, subject to any Council funding contribution also being in place before submission. Recommended to Council Subject that, subject to the business case, and the capital and revenue implications stemming from it, being endorsed by the Chief Finance Officer and the relevant portfolio holders, that it approves the additional £21m. <p>REASONS RESOLVED: The recommendation was made to enable West Northamptonshire Council to make 2 submissions of up to £20m (up to £40m in total) of Government funding to improve infrastructure across the area for the communities that the council serves.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: To not approve the submission of bids into the LUF. This would mean that the council would miss out on the opportunity to receive funding from round two of the LUF. There is no guarantee that there will be a third round of LUF and this would mean</p>

<p>Agenda Item 11 Proposal to establish a 'School Minor Works' budget for 22/23</p>	<p>that WNC would receive no grant funding.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the 2022/23 'School Minor Works' budget to rectify condition issues in WNC maintained schools, ensuring the Council continues to fulfil its statutory obligation of maintaining its school estate; b) Noted that WNC's allocation of 'School Condition Allocation' funding had been confirmed by the DfE at £1,732,900 and that this grant funding will be utilised as WNC's 'School Minor Works' budget for 2022/23; c) Noted that any works undertaken under the 'Schools Minor Works' budget would be delivered as part of a rolling programme of conditions surveys at maintained schools in the Local Authority; d) Delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, to authorise all necessary legal, property and financial agreements to ensure effective delivery of condition schemes. <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WNC would continue to fulfil its statutory obligation of maintaining its school estate; • The recommended course of action was the most effective and prevents delays in procuring essential works; • Consistency with previous decisions. This is the third year of the 'School Minor Works' programme. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 12 Proposal to establish a new 250 place, 'all-through' Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) School for pupils</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the current deficit of SEND places that was being experienced across West Northamptonshire and

**with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)
at Tiffield St John's site, Tiffield, West
Northamptonshire**

the projected demand for places in coming academic years set out in paragraph 5.10-5.12.

- b) Agreed to the 'free school presumption' process being progressed to identify an academy trust to operate the new 'all-through' special school.
- c) Delegated responsibility to the Interim Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education to take any necessary decisions to progress the 'free school presumption' process and to confer 'preferred bidder' status upon the academy trust that is selected (subject to DfE approval) to operate the new school.
- d) Noted that all matters relating to the capital cost required to deliver the required new school will be subject to further reports to Cabinet once the expenditure required to deliver the new school has been finalised.

REASONS RESOLVED:

The proposal:

- Helped to ensure that the council was able to fulfil its statutory obligation of providing a sufficiency of SEND places within West Northamptonshire in future academic years;
- Provided an increased number of SEND places and would help ensure that children with additional needs were able to access education in a provision that is best placed to meet their needs; and
- Establish a new 'all-through' special school, which could be considered a benefit all West Northamptonshire's mainstream primary and secondary schools as it would reduce the need for mainstream school settings to provide places to children with additional needs where that provision was not best placed to meet very high-level, low incidence needs;

REASONS RESOLVED:

The recommended course of action was the most cost-effective and would reduce pressure on the high needs block (HNB) element of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) via a reduction in the number of children being required to be placed in more expensive out of county and independent provisions to meet their individual needs.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

- Do nothing: this option would result in the failure of WNC fulfilling its statutory obligation of providing a sufficiency of SEND places in West Northamptonshire in future academic years. It would also result in the requirement to utilise places in increasingly distant and more expensive places within the independent sector, which would place a further strain on the HNB of the DSG and revenue general fund home to school transport budget. If WNC cannot demonstrate that it is able to manage its DSG allocation in a balanced position (or have plans to do so) this would result in intervention by the DfE.

This option would have also prevented WNC from addressing issues relating to the timely provision of places in an appropriate setting for pupils in receipt of an EHC plan. This option was discounted for these reasons.

- Identify alternative site as the prospective location for the proposed new school: Tiffield is located approximately eight miles from Northampton town (from where the majority of the demand for SEND places arises). However, the site has excellent transport links to the south and west of Northampton town, Towcester, Silverstone and Brackley. There is a clear lack of SEND provision that caters to pupils with a primary need of ASC, SLCN or SLD in the former South

	<p>Northamptonshire area and the Tiffield StJohn's site would resolve this issue, reducing journey times to and from school for children and young people who reside in the area and also reducing home to school transport costs for WNC.</p> <p>➤ Accordingly, the Tiffield site was an appropriate one for the location of the school. It is part of the 'free school presumption' process that any LA seeking to establish new school must identify a proposed location for that school as part of the associated 'school specification'. However, while a location must be identified the location specified is not legally binding and should any bid received as part of the process identify a suitable alternative site for the new school, the process allows for alternative sites to be identified, considered and progressed. As such, although the Tiffield St John's site has been identified, the process allows for other the school to be located elsewhere if appropriate.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 13 UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Multiply Funding</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted UK Government had advised WNC as the Lead Authority for UKSPF (£5,426,224.00) and Multiply (£1,901,176.15) for a three-year provisional maximum allocation of £7,327,400.15 and the requirement to develop both a UKSPF Investment Plan and a Multiply Investment Plan b) Endorsed the approach to develop both Investment Plans by sourcing evidence and liaising with internal and external stakeholders c) Noted that under existing delegated powers, officers would submit a WNC Multiply Investment Plan by 30th June 2022 to the DfE and update Cabinet in July d) A further report would be submitted to Cabinet in July to address the submission of the UKSPF Investment Plan by the deadline of August 2022

	<p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To ensure West Northamptonshire benefits from this grant funding to enhance the community, boost the economy and support local residents and businesses. b) To maintain ongoing economic growth within the area, particular with the impending loss of EU funding and the need to utilise UKSPF to deliver positive economic development within the community. c) Would enable the Council to submit the Multiply Investment Plan by 30th June 2022. d) To secure the maximum level of investment to enhance local skill levels, benefiting the community and economy. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To not develop and submit an Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would result in a loss of major potential investment into the area, which would be used to support the community and place, business support and people and skills. • To not develop and submit an Investment Plan for Multiply Funding by the deadline would result in a loss of major potential investment into local skill levels, addressing existing and potential anti-poverty, impacting the local quality of life, local employment and future of West Northamptonshire residents.
<p>Agenda Item 14 Decision taken by the Leader under urgency procedures</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted the decisions taken by the Leader of the Council set out at Appendix A.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where decisions that would otherwise be taken by the Leader and Cabinet had been taken by the Leader alone, in the interests of transparency, the decision is reported to the next available

	<p>meeting of the Cabinet.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The decision taken provided the authority for the Council to exchange and complete on the above property which was subject to a short timescale. 3. Full reasons for the decision taken are set out in the decision records appended to this report. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 15 Sponne Arcade Short Stay Car Park</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the work to date in securing the land, gaining necessary planning approval and bringing the project to the on-site delivery stage. b) Authorised the appointment of Jeakins Weir Limited as principal contractor to undertake the construction works as defined by the construction information that has been developed by the Regeneration Team (a summary of the works is in this report). The contractor had already completed pre-construction services to the council including design, feasibility, and pricing to date, and are being procured through the Scape construction Framework. c) Noted the saving to the revenue budget of approximately £29,500. This saving was made mainly due to the reduction in National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR or known as 'business rates') that will be liable across the site with the demolition of the former Co-op unit. <p>REASONS RESOLVED: The recommendations establish financial and requisite authorities so that the Sponne Arcade short stay car park redevelopment could proceed.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: To leave the area as it currently stands, incur the annual charges and do nothing – this could have a reputational impact on the council through investing in the site</p>

and not delivering on its vision to improve the area as referred in the design and access statement of the approved planning application.



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

Thursday 30th June 2022

Cllr Matt Golby – Portfolio holder Adult Social Care

Report Title	Northamptonshire’s Integrated Care System
Report Author	Stuart Lackenby – Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing (DASS) Stuart.lackenby@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

West MO	Catherine Whitehead	23/5/22
West S151	Martin Henry	20/5/22
Other Director/SME		
Communications Lead/Head of Communications	Becky Hutson	23/5/22

List of Appendices

1. **Appendix A – Northamptonshire’s Integrated Care Structure**
2. **Appendix B – Proposed Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference**
3. **Appendix C – Proposed West Integrated Care Partnership Structure**
4. **Appendix D – Proposed West Northants Local Area Partnership structure**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1.1 To provide an update to Council on progress toward the Northamptonshire Integrated Care System (ICS) and gain Council's support for its planned implementation as described within this report.
- 1.1.2 Council to note the nomination process for West Northamptonshire Council's representative on the Integrated Care Board (ICB) as approved by Cabinet on 14th June 2022
- 1.1.3 Council to approve the West Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference for the Integrated Care System (ICS) from the 1st July 2022
- 1.1.4 Council to note the chairing arrangements for the Integrated Care Partnership Board.
- 1.1.5 Council to note the proposed governance structure for the Integrated Care Partnership (West Place) which were approved at the West Health and Wellbeing Board on the 7th June 2022
- 1.1.6 Council to note the proposed Local Area Partnerships (LAP's) for the West Place as part of the ICP following consultation with stakeholders.
- 1.1.7 Council to note the proposal for one elected member per unitary ward to sit on Local Area Partnerships.

2 Executive Summary

2.1 Integrated Care System

The Health and Care Act 2022 (the Act) sets out plans for the future of health and care, including the statutory creation of Integrated Care Systems. The Act also sets out Government plans to improve collaborative working, empower local leaders, address health inequalities, and focus on population health management. The Act has now received Royal Assent and the new requirements arrangements will come into force on 1st July 2022. For West Northamptonshire, the Integrated Care System will exist at county (Northamptonshire) level. Reforms will mean changes to governance and decision making through the Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership both at county and place (West Northants) level; to locality leadership and day-to-day officer roles and to mechanisms to support enhanced provider collaboration. This report updates cabinet on the preparatory work across Northamptonshire, and specifically on the detailed proposals emerging in West Northants. It sets out the decisions that will need to be taken by Cabinet, Council and the Health and Wellbeing Board, to ensure arrangements are fully reflected in the Council's Constitution.

3 Recommendations

3.1.1 It is recommended that Council:

- a) Note the nomination process for West Northamptonshire Council's representative on the Integrated Care Board (ICB) which was approved by Cabinet on the 14th June 2022 is supported

strict legal requirements and that the nomination will be made by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

- b) Approve the West Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference for the Integrated Care System from the 1st July 2022.
- c) Note the proposed governance structure for the Integrated Care Partnership (West Place) which were approved at the Integrated Care Partnership Shadow Board on the 31st May 2022 and the West Health and Wellbeing Board on the 7th June 2022
- d) Note the chairing arrangements for the Integrated Care Partnership Board.
- e) Note the proposed Local Area Partnerships (LAP's) for the West Place as part of the ICP following consultation with stakeholders
- f) Note the proposal for one elected member per unitary ward to sit on each of the nine Local Area Partnerships.
- g) Further updates will be presented to Cabinet, Council and People Scrutiny as the ICS develops to ensure the Council has appropriate oversight.

4 Reason for Recommendations:

- As set out in the Act the local authority needs to have a representative on the Integrated Care Board and a process for the nomination.
- The Act sets out new statutory responsibilities for the Health and Wellbeing Board and as the board is a statutory function of the local authority these changes need to be approved by Council as per West Northamptonshire's Council Constitution.
- West Northamptonshire Council has a significant role in the development and delivery of the Integrated Care Partnership and this paper sets out the areas where the council has shaped key proposals in line with the legislation and guidance.

5 Report Background

5.1 Integrated Care Systems

- 5.11 The NHS began its journey towards becoming an Integrated Care System four years ago, initially with the creation of Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) in 2016, and then the concept of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) from 2018. There are now ICS's that cover every part of England. The final 13 STPs were designated as ICSs from April 2021, including Northamptonshire.

- 5.12 The introduction of the Integrated Care System in Northamptonshire offers us an opportunity to work more closely with local areas and people to tackle wider determinants of health and health inequalities. This will be done by working collaboratively in local area partnerships with all stakeholders that will focus on key priorities in local areas. This will reflect the Living your Best Life ambitions that we have for people living in West Northamptonshire and is underpinned by a number of key priorities in the West Northamptonshire Corporate Plan.
- 5.13 In November 2020 NHS England and NHS Improvement published *Integrating care: Next steps to building strong and effective integrated care systems across England*.

It described the core purpose of an ICS being to:

- improve outcomes in population health and healthcare
- tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience, and access
- enhance productivity and value for money
- help the NHS support broader social and economic development

- 5.14 In an integrated care system, NHS organisations, in partnership with local councils and others, take collective responsibility for managing resources, delivering NHS care, and improving the health and care of the population they serve. This will be supported by legislation that mandates this, the dissolution of CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups) into statutory ICS bodies and sets out the role of Local Authorities as key partners in future integrated care.
- 5.15 Integrated care systems (ICSs) are new partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups
- 5.16 Further National guidance published has established that the ICS development should be rooted in underlying principles of subsidiarity and collaboration. It described common features that every system is expected to have and develop, as the foundations for integrating care, with local flexibility in how best to design these to achieve consistent national standards and reduce inequalities, as:
- decisions taken closer to, and in consultation with, the communities they affect are likely to lead to better outcomes
 - collaboration between partners, both within a place and at scale, is essential to address health inequalities, sustain joined-up, efficient and effective services and enhance productivity
 - local flexibility, enabled by common digital capabilities and coordinated flows of data, will allow systems to identify the best way to improve the health and wellbeing of their populations.

- 5.17 The structure of the Northamptonshire Integrated Care System is illustrated in **Appendix A**

5.2 Integrated Care Board

5.21 The Northamptonshire ICB Board will bring together leaders from across the system and is accountable for overall performance and use of resources. The (small) size of the Northamptonshire system means that we have an opportunity to build a Board which includes the most comprehensive range of NHS and Local Authority partners working across the County.

- The ICB Board will include Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives, as well as NHS leaders and non-executives (as required by legislation set out in the Act).
- The ICB will be responsible for the following:
 - Developing a plan to meet the health and health care needs of the population
 - Allocate resources
 - Establish joint working arrangements with partners and embed collaboration
 - Establish governance arrangements to support collective accountability for whole system delivery and performance
 - Arrange for the provision of health services in line with allocated resources
 - Lead system implementation of People priorities
 - Lead system wide action on data and digital
 - Use joined up data and digital capabilities
 - Ensure the NHS plays full part in achieving wider goals of social and economic development and environmental sustainability
 - Drive joint work on estates, procurement, supply chain and commercial strategies
 - Deliver functions delegated by NHSE/I
 - undertake strategic commissioning activities relating to countywide collaboratives, and to link to East Midlands specialist services planning.

5.3 West Northamptonshire's Nomination Process for representation on the ICB

In accordance with the guidance the following process will be undertaken for the West Northamptonshire Council nominated representative for the ICB

The Designate Chief Executive of the ICB will write to Monitoring officer requesting the nomination for the ICB board in accordance with the role description. The monitoring officer will conduct the process in accordance with the requirements of NHSE and the ICB and the council constitution.

5.4 Health and Wellbeing Board

Health and wellbeing boards were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to act as a forum in which key leaders from the local health and care system could work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population

5.41 Health and wellbeing boards are a formal committee of the local authority charged with promoting greater integration and partnership between bodies from the NHS, public health, and local government. They have a statutory duty, with clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to

produce a joint strategic needs assessment and a joint health and wellbeing strategy for their local population.

- 5.42 The boards currently have very limited formal powers. They are constituted as a partnership forum rather than an executive decision-making body.
- 5.43 Under the Act the Health and Wellbeing Board has some additional responsibilities and duties which are as follows: -
- To review the Integrated Care Board (ICB) 5 Year Plan to ensure it takes proper account of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
 - To review the ICB Joint Capital Resource Plan
 - To consult with the ICB for the ICN Annual Report on performance of any steps taken by the ICB to implement the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 5.44 The ICB and ICP will also have to work closely with local Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) as they have the experience as 'place-based' planners, and the ICB will be required to have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategies (JHWS) produced by HWBs.
- 5.45 Changes to the Terms of Reference for the West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board have been made in accordance with the Act (appendix B). These are put forward for approval as part of this report (**Appendix B**)

5.5 Integrated Care Partnerships

- 5.51 Integrated Care Partnerships' (ICP) central role is in the planning and improvement of health and care. They support placed based partnerships and coalitions with community partners which are well situated to act on the wider determinants of health in local areas. ICP's should bring the statutory and non-statutory interests of places together.
- 5.52 Integrated Care Partnerships are responsible for: -
- Developing an integrated care strategy to address the broad health and social care needs of the population within the ICP area, including determinants of health such as employment, environment, and housing issues. ICB's and local authorities will be required by law to have regard to the ICP's strategy when making decisions, commissioning services and delivery
 - Highlighting where coordination is needed on health and care issues and challenge partners to deliver the action required. These include as examples: -
 - Helping people live more independent, healthier lives for longer
 - Taking a holistic view of people's interactions with services across the system and the different pathways in it
 - addressing inequalities in health and wellbeing outcomes, experiences, and access to services
 - improving the wider social determinants that drive these inequalities, including employment, housing, education environment, and reducing offending

- improving the life chances and health outcomes of babies, children, and young people
- improving people's overall wellbeing and preventing ill health.

5.53.1 The Integrated Care Partnership will be made up from the membership of the two Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Boards (North and West) and the ICB Board. The Board will meet twice per year, to: -

- consider progress against Northamptonshire's Outcomes Framework over the past year, and (ii) agree a systemwide health and care strategy (or an update to the existing strategy, as appropriate) to improve population outcomes. This then forms the key mandate for the ICB, our Places and our Collaboratives.

5.53.2 After consultation with key system leads it has been agreed that there will be a tripartite chairing arrangement. The chairs of the Integrated Care Partnership will be: -

- The Chair of the ICB
- The Chair of the West Health and Wellbeing Board
- Executive member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing for North Northamptonshire Council

5.54 **Appendix C** outlines the West Place Governance proposal. This shows the governance that sits below the Health and Wellbeing Board and Integrated Care Partnership including the locality Health and Wellbeing Forums which reflect the two localities within the West Place; these are Northampton and Daventry/South Northants. The locality boards will oversee the Local Area Partnerships (5 for Northampton and 4 Daventry/South Northants) and will be responsible for ensuring that the Local Area Partnership Plan delivers against key priorities determined by local insight data. The terms of reference for the Health and Wellbeing Locality Forums and Local Area Partnership (LAP) including membership is currently being developed as part of wide stakeholder consultation and engagement.

5.55 Considerable work has been undertaken over the last 6 months to develop the structure of the Integrated Care Partnership and West Place. This has been done following engagement with members of the Council and its partners. As a system we are also undertaking the Place Development Programme funded by NHSE which is supporting with the development of the ICP and West Place.

5.56 We have also developed with support, a plan for the development of the Integrated Care Strategy. This work will ensure that the board owns and develops a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for West Northants that will underpin the Integrated Care Strategy, focused on its inequalities, health challenges and solutions and that drives local service design. This is a key requirement of the ICP and will influence the ICB's 5-year commissioning plan

5.57 Council is therefore asked to support the direction of travel identified in the report.

5.58 Further updates will be presented to cabinet, council and People Scrutiny as the ICS develops to ensure the Council has appropriate oversight.

6 Issues and Choices

- 6.1.1 The ICS and its requirements are requirements under the legislation laid out in the Act and therefore health and social care bodies are required to have in place the specified governance arrangements for 1st July 2022.
- 6.1.2 The structure of the West place has been developed in consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders and we have taken these views into consideration as part of the final proposal.

7 Implications (including financial implications)

7.1.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.2 There are currently no identified financial implications.
- 7.1.3 Staffing resources to facilitate the development of West Place is being managed through existing resources

7.2 Risk

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

7.3 Legal

- 7.3.1 To give effect to the requirements of the Act a number of changes will need to be made to the Council's existing governance arrangements, some of these are a necessary consequence of statute and can be made immediately under the Monitoring Officers powers to amend the Constitution to give effect to changes in the law. Any changes to the Constitution will be reported to the next meeting of Council after the change is made.
- 7.3.2 There are detailed requirements in relation to the nominations to the ICB. The legal requirements include that the local authority appointment is subject to the chair's approval and the person nominated must comply with the criteria of the fit and proper person; fulfil the requirements in the role specification and the eligibility criteria set out in the constitution. There is a model Constitution provided nationally. To ensure that the nomination process the authority follows is compliant with those requirements, the request for nomination will be directed to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services who will ensure that before the Council makes a nomination it is compliant with those requirements.

7.4 Communications and Consultation

7.4.1 Consultation in accordance with the developing ICB communication framework will continue as the ICS and its structures develop. To date we have consulted with all key stakeholders. These include: -

- Elected members
- GPs
- Health Partners
- VCSE
- Police
- Northamptonshire Children's Trusts
- Health and Wellbeing forums

7.4.2 The continued consultation has been key in ensuring that the ICP:

- Tackles wider determinants of health including Population Health Management and Health Inequalities
- Creates empowered and enabled communities with a focus on engagement and co-production with local people.

7.4.2 Communications will play a key role in informing and engaging the public around the creation of the new ICS and explaining the objectives, priorities to our local communities and how these will translate into future improved outcomes to meet their health and care needs. WNC is working closely with its partners on developing the communications framework for these future activities.

7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

7.51 People Scrutiny committee have received updates on the ICS including a specific task and finish group focussed on the iCAN collaborative.

7.6 Climate Impact

7.61 These proposals do not have any direct impact on the climate and sustainability.

7.7 Community Impact

7.71 The ICS will create positive impacts on communities, wellbeing and on our ability to collectively support better outcomes for residents. Key priorities at a local level underpinned by insight data and led by Local Area Partnerships will drive the delivery of services that meet the wider determinants of health supporting people to live their best life in West Northamptonshire.

8 Background Papers

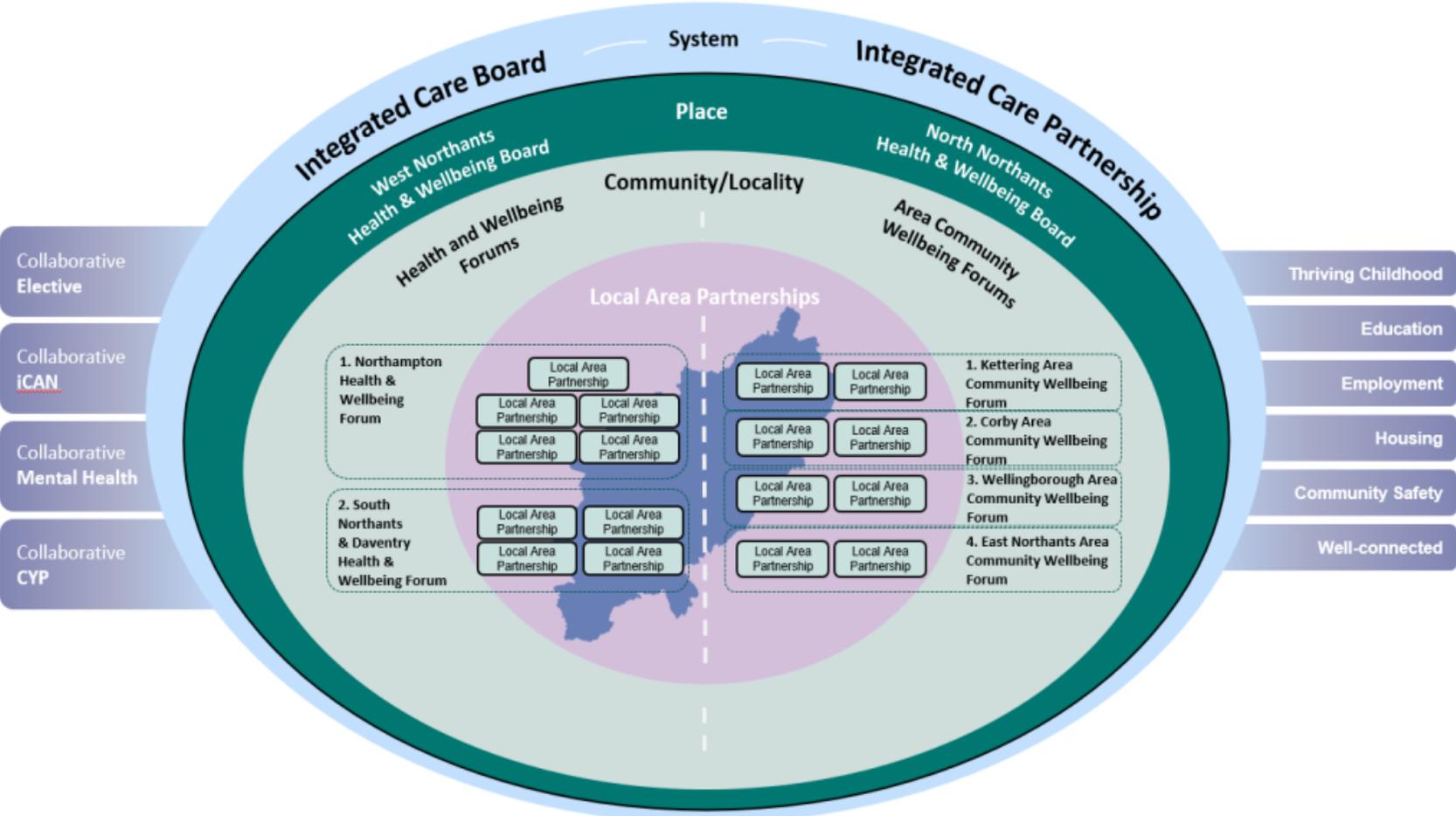
8.1 None

The core components of the ICS as defined in Northamptonshire

The Northamptonshire ICS has chosen to interpret the national guidance into a four-tiered model.

In Northamptonshire, the national guidance has been implemented by proposing that the Integrated Care System comprises of the following structure:

- System:** the Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership will have combined leadership for health and care. There will be 4 Collaboratives with a focus on system-wide service re-design
- Place:** there will be two places in Northamptonshire aligned to the two unitary authorities – North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire. These will be governed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in each Council
- Community:** each place will have community/localities, governed by community wellbeing forums. In North Place, there will be 4, known as Community Area Wellbeing Forums. In West Place, there will be 2 known as Health & Wellbeing Forums
- Local area partnerships:** for every community locality, there will be local area partnerships, covering a population size of circa. ~30-50k. There will be 8 LAPs in North Place and 9 LAPs in West Place and these will align to the community wellbeing forums



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West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board

Terms of Reference

1. Accountability

1.1 The West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory committee of West Northamptonshire Council which:

- a) Is established in accordance with section 194 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.
- b) Is treated as a Committee of the Council under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- c) Will be subject to any amendment or replacement of regulation or guidance applicable to any legislation relevant to the functions, powers and duties of Health and Wellbeing Boards.

2. Role

2.1 The Board is a forum that enables key leaders from across West Northamptonshire and the county to secure better health and wellbeing outcomes for the local population, better quality of care for all patients and care users, better value for the taxpayer and reduce health inequalities by shaping the future of services through a more integrated approach to commissioning health and wellbeing related services.

2.2 The Board aims to achieve this by:

- Providing a strategic lead for the local health and care system, and improving the commissioning of services across the NHS, local government and its partners.
- Initiating and encouraging the integrated delivery of health, social care and other services with health and wellbeing related responsibilities (such as housing, leisure, planning community activity).
- By reviewing its terms of reference every six months to ensure appropriate and timely alignment and/or integration with the emergent governance structure of the Integrated Care System (ICS) for Northamptonshire. Reviews will take into account the national direction of travel for ICS legislation, as outlined in *Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all (DHSC, February 2021)*, and any subsequent relevant publications and/or legislative change.
- Providing a key forum to increase democratic legitimacy in health, along with public and joint accountability of NHS, public health, social care for adults and children, and other commissioned services that the Board agrees are directly linked to health and wellbeing.

3. Key responsibilities/duties

3.1 The statutory duties of the Board are:

- The preparation of Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) which assesses the current and future health and social care needs of the local population.
- The preparation of a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS), ensuring its outcomes are contained within the Integrated Care Strategy.
- To encourage the integration of health and social care services, in particular providing appropriate advice, assistance or support for the purposes of integration of services under section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006.

- To encourage close working between commissioners of health-related services (such as housing and many other local government services) and commissioners of health and social care services.
- Overseeing the publication of the Directors of Public Health Annual Report.
- To endorse and oversee the successful implementation of Better Care Fund (BCF), Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) and Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) arrangements locally.
- To provide the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) with oversight of the development of the place based partnerships
- To oversee the development and implementation of West Northamptonshire Place to support the delivery of the health and wellbeing strategy.
To review the Integrated Care Board (ICB) 5 Year Plan to ensure it takes proper account of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- To review the ICB Joint Capital Resource Plan
- To consult with the ICB for the ICN Annual Report on performance of any steps taken by the ICB to implement the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- To advise the Care Quality Commission, NHS England, Trust Development Authority or NHS Improvement (as appropriate), where the Board has concerns about standards of service delivery or financial probity.
- Publication of a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.
- To undertake any additional responsibilities as delegated by the West Northamptonshire Council.

4. Authority

4.1 The Board may seek any information it requires from any employee of a Constituent Member organisation via a Member and all Constituent Members and Members are directed to co-operate with any reasonable request made by the Board.

4.2 The Board may obtain independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of outsiders with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary. The costs, if any, of obtaining such third party advice shall be shared among the constituent organisations as agreed between them.

4.3 The Board shall receive written and oral evidence from senior staff, and other partners, as appropriate.

4.4 The Board shall seek to ensure there is an acceptable balance between the value of the information it receives and the time and other costs it takes to acquire and process it.

5. Appointments

5.1 The Chair of the Board will be nominated by the Leader of West Northamptonshire Council. The Chair can be an independent co-opted member. Vice Chairs will be appointed by the Board.

5.2 The Chair and Vice Chairs term of office shall last for a maximum of two years, where they will be re-appointed or replaced as approved by Full Council.

6. Membership

6.1 The following are statutory members of the Board as stipulated in the Health and Social Care Act 2012 section 194:

- At least one elected member of the local authority nominated by the Leader of the local authority.
- The director of adult social services for the local authority.
- The director of children's services for the local authority.
- The director of public health for the local authority.
- A representative of the Local Healthwatch organisation for the local authority.
- A representative from the Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board

6.2 The Board may appoint additional persons to become members of the Board as it thinks appropriate.

6.3 West Northamptonshire Council must consult the Board before appointing a non statutory member to the Board.

6.4 Members of the Board shall each name a deputy who will have the authority to make decisions in the event that they are unable to attend a meeting.

6.5 In the absence of the Chair then one of the Vice-Chairs shall preside. If all are absent the Board shall appoint, from amongst its members, an Acting Chair for the meeting in question.

6.6 Individuals may be listed under membership of the Board as Special Advisors by invitation for specific issues and expertise.

7. Code of Conduct

7.1 All members of the Board are covered by the West Northamptonshire Council's code of conduct and must adhere to that code of conduct when acting in the capacity of a Board member.

7.2 Where any Board member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Non-Statutory Disclosable Interest, which will require them to leave the meeting for the duration of discussion on that item, they must make this known at the commencement of the meeting. They may remain and address the board on the relevant matter but must leave the room prior to any debate, voting or decision-making process.

8. Quorum

8.1 A quorum for any meeting shall be one-quarter of the members of the Board including at least one Elected Member, one officer and one representative from the Integrated Care Board. No business requiring a transaction shall take place where the meeting is not quorate, if this arises during a meeting the Chair must either suspend business until the meeting is again quorate or declare the meeting to be at an end.

9. Voting Arrangements

9.1 Unless the Council decides otherwise, all full members of the Health and Wellbeing Board have voting rights; only full board members (or nominated deputies in their absence) shall sit at the board room table, or join virtually so that the right to vote is obvious.

9.2 Decisions shall be made on the basis of a show of hands of a majority of voting members present. The Chair will have a second or casting vote.

10. Meeting Frequency

10.1 The Board shall meet on a quarterly basis, the frequency of meetings can change to a bi-monthly basis, if there is an increase in business requiring the Board's attention. The date, hour and place of meetings shall be fixed by the Board.

10.2 The Chair may convene an extraordinary meeting at short notice to consider matters of urgency, under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The notice must state the business to be transacted and no other business is to be transacted at the meeting.

10.3 The Chair will be required to consider convening a special meeting of the Board if he/she is in receipt of a written requisition to do so signed by no less than three of the Constituent Members of the Board. Such requisition shall specify the business to be transacted and no other business shall be transacted as such

meeting. The meeting, if convened by the Chair, must be held within seven days of the Chair's receipt of the requisition.

10.4 The Chair of the Board, or majority of those present at a Board meeting can take the decision meetings of the Board may be adjourned at any time to be reconvened at any other day, hour and place, as the Board decides.

11. Sub Groups

11.1 The Board can establish sub groups based on the Board's priority areas which will be reviewed on an annual basis. The Sub Groups will be informal officer groups, ensuring that the views of patients and service users are included. The Sub Groups should provide an overview of work undertaken and any issues arising for discussion at alternate Health and Wellbeing Board meetings to be considered by members.

12. Visitors and Speakers

12.1 As the Board is a public meeting observers may attend and will be seated in a viewing area or observe via YouTube if the meetings are held virtually.

12.2 Presenters who are not full Board Members may attend the meeting and should sit in the viewing area, they will be invited to address the floor by the Chair when their agenda item arrives.

12.3 Members of the public who wish to address the Board on matters listed on the Agenda for a specific meeting may do so for a period of not exceeding 3-minutes at the commencement of that meeting, only with the agreement of the Chairman, and provided they have given 48 hours' notice of the matter to be raised to the Chairman and Secretariat in writing.

13. Meeting Administration

13.1 The Board Secretariat shall give at least five clear working days' notice in writing to each member for every ordinary meeting of the Board, to include any agenda of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

13.2 Papers for each Board meeting will be sent out five clear working days in advance. Late papers will be sent out or tabled only in exceptional circumstances, and not without the prior consent of the Chairman.

13.3 The Board shall hold meetings, or parts of meetings, in private session when deemed appropriate in view of the nature of business to be discussed. The Board must first pass a resolution for the exclusion of press and public. The following must be stated at this time:

"In respect of the following items the Chairman moves that the resolution set out below, on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information (information regarded as private for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972) would be disclosed to them: The Committee is requested to resolve: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act of the descriptions against each item would be disclosed to them".

Appendix A: Board Membership

Membership of West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing board is agreed as follows:
Certain post holders have a statutory requirement to be members of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Statutory Board members

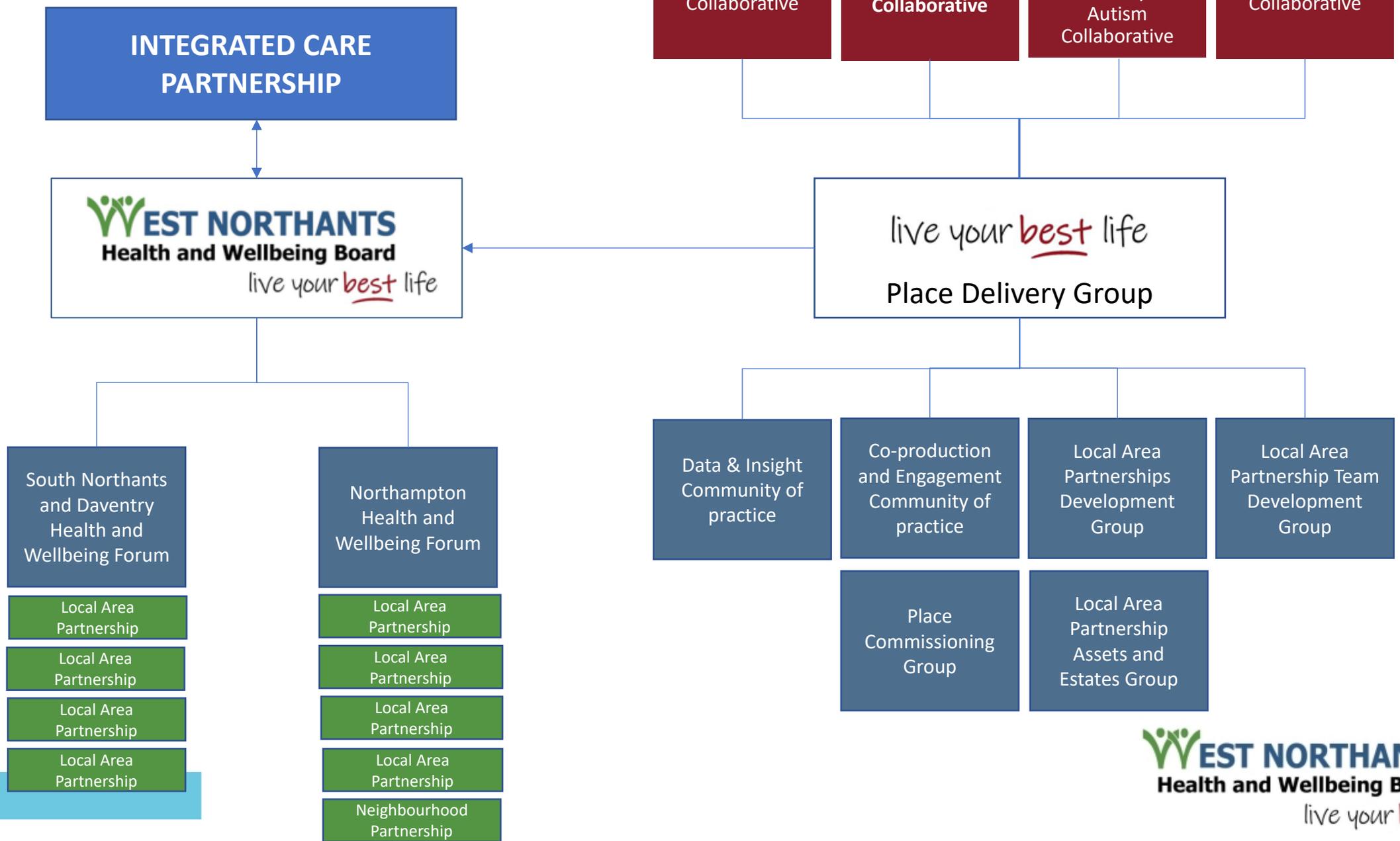
- One elected member as nominated by the Leader of West Northamptonshire Council - portfolio holder for Adults, Health and Wellbeing.
- The Director of Adult Social Services for West Northamptonshire Council
- The Director of Children's Services for West Northamptonshire Council
- The Director of Public Health for West Northamptonshire Council
- A representative of the Local Healthwatch organisation for Northamptonshire
- A representative from the Integrated Care Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board may co-opt additional members to the board as it thinks appropriate.

Non-Statutory Board members

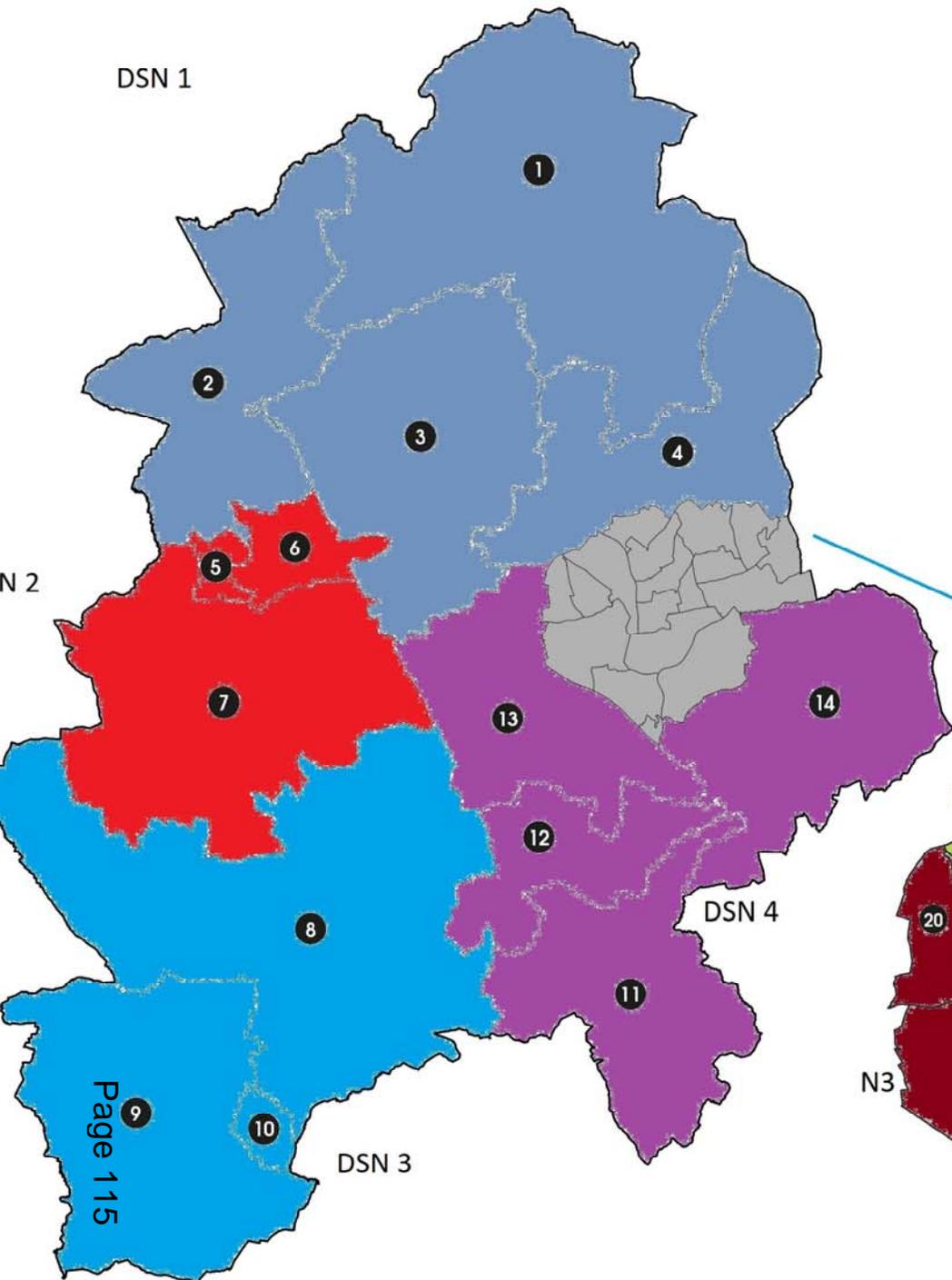
- West Northamptonshire Council - Leader
- West Northamptonshire Council – Portfolio Holder for Childrens, Families, Education and Skills
- West Northamptonshire Council – The Chief Executive
- Northamptonshire Police – Chief Superintendent
- Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust – One representative
- Northampton General Hospital and Kettering General Hospital Group - One representative
- Northamptonshire Local Medical Committee – One representative
- Voluntary and Community Sector – One representative
- University of Northampton – One representative
- Integrated Care Board - Chair
- Integrated Care Board – Chief Executive
- Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service – One representative
- East Midlands Ambulance Service – One representative
- Northamptonshire Children's Trust – Chief Executive
- Primary Care Networks – One Representative
- West Northamptonshire Council – Opposition elected member
- BAME Representative
- Northampton GP Locality – Chair
- Daventry and South Northamptonshire GP Locality – Chair
- Northampton Health and Wellbeing Forum – Chair
- Daventry and South Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Forum - Chair

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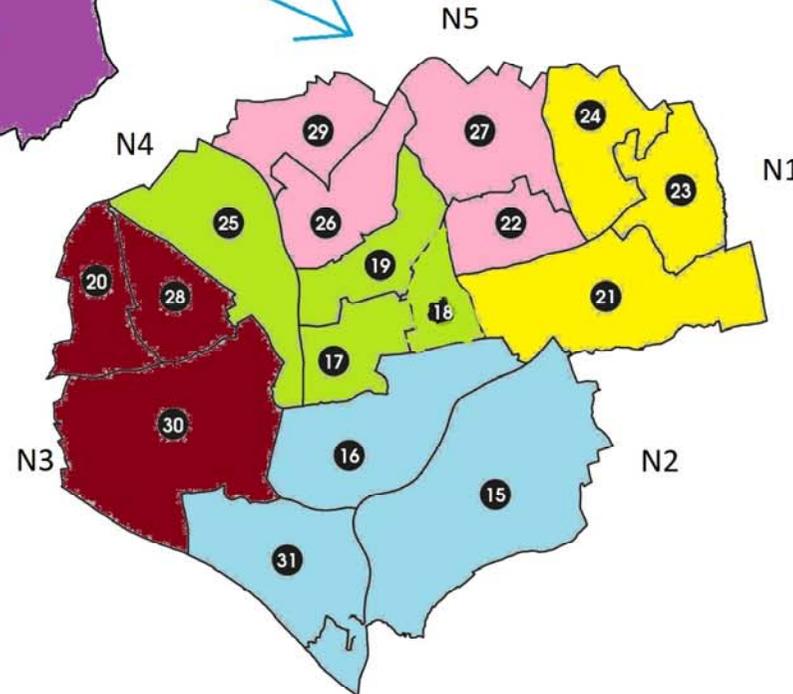


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West Northamptonshire Unitary | Electoral Wards



- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Brixworth | 15. Nene Valley |
| 2. Braunston and Crick | 16. Delapre and Rushmere |
| 3. Long Buckby | 17. Castle |
| 4. Moulton | 18. Abington and Phippsville |
| 5. Daventry West | 19. St George |
| 6. Daventry East | 20. Duston West and St. Crispin |
| 7. Woodford and Weedon | 21. Riverside Park |
| 8. Silverstone | 22. Headlands |
| 9. Middleton Cheney | 23. Billing and Rectory Farm |
| 10. Brackley | 24. Talavera |
| 11. Deanshanger | 25. Dallington Spencer |
| 12. Towcester and Roade | 26. Kingsthorpe South |
| 13. Bugbrooke | 27. Boothville and Parklands |
| 14. Hackleton and Grange Park | 28. Duston East |
| | 29. Kingsthorpe North |
| | 30. Sixfields |
| | 31. East Hunsbury and Shelfleys |



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WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Council
30 June 2022

Report Title	Local Government Boundary Review – Council Size Submission
Report Author	Catherine Whitehead catherine.whitehead@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

Monitoring Officer	Catherine Whitehead	21/06/2022
Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer)	Martin Henry	21/06/2022

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Council Size Submission for West Northamptonshire Area

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Council to agree the draft council size submission as recommended by the Democracy and Standards Committee meeting at their meeting held on 16 June 2022. The submission was prepared on behalf of the Committee by a cross-party working group, which has been meeting to consider draft proposals for the council size submission as part of the first stage of review of electoral arrangements in West Northamptonshire.
- 1.2 Council is asked to note that this report does not consider warding numbers, patterns or size, which will be the subject of the next stage of the review.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) are undertaking an electoral review of West Northamptonshire Council a process which requires the Commission to seek representations to assist it in formulating revised electoral arrangements.
- 2.2 Under the terms of the Council's constitution, the Democracy and Standards Committee has responsibility for boundary reviews. Pursuant to this responsibility and with support from

officers, the committee established a cross-party working group to formulate and consider recommendations for electoral arrangements for West Northamptonshire

- 2.3 The Working Group met a number of times and reported back to the Committee with proposals on 16 June 2022. The proposed submission, which is set out at Appendix 1 of this report, makes a recommendation to the LGBCE as to the number of councillors that should make up the Council from the point of the next ordinary election of councillors.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- a) Notes the work of the cross-party working group and the Democracy and Standards Committee on the first phase of electoral arrangements for West Northamptonshire;
- b) Approves the submission document set out at Appendix A for submission to the LGBCE;
- c) Approves a council size number of the Committee's recommended range of 77-82 councillors; and
- d) Delegates authority to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Chair of the Democracy and Standards Committee to make any amendments to the proposed submission to the LGBCE and to finalise the appendices to the submission in light of any comments from this Council and any minor or typographical changes identified.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1 To update the Council on the work carried out by the working group and the Democracy and Standards Committee and to agree a submission to the LGBCE. The Democracy and Standards Committee, through the working group it established, has considered in some detail the options available to the Council in relation to council size and the relative merits of increasing or reducing the future number of councillors. The submission and the evidence base was accepted by membership of the working group and the Democracy and Standards Committee.

5. Report Background

5.1 The LGBCE is responsible for conducting reviews of local authority electoral arrangements through electoral reviews. Each review is divided into stages, the first of which relates to councillor numbers. At this stage of a review, the LGBCE decides how many councillors should be elected to the Council in the future. This decision is taken by the LGBCE but takes into account evidence supplied by the Council as well as any other respondents who have made a representation. We will take a view on the council size for a local authority by considering four factors:

5.2 The document included at Appendix A follows the template supplied by the LGBCE. It sets out factual and contextual information about the Council, its governance arrangements and structures, together with information regarding council area, the electorate, growth etc.

5.3 The summary at the end of Appendix A sets out the conclusions and recommendations of the Democracy and Standards Committee, as formulated by the working group. It has set out the

considerations relating to future council size and proposes that the Council make the case that a future council size of 77-82 councillors would be optimal for West Northamptonshire.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The committee and its working group have considered the implications for the Council of proposing a range of future council size options. The working group and committee were able to reach a consensus about a proposed council size and considered that the evidence and information contained in the council size template supported this proposal.
- 6.2 It is recommended that Council approves the recommendation of a council size of between 77-82 councillors and the submission document set out at Appendix A. The only other option open to the Council would be to not submit a view about Council size to the LGBCE, but this is not recommended.
- 6.3 It should also be noted that political groups, individuals, members of the public and other interested parties may also submit proposals and evidence to the LGBCE for consideration.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly as a result of the review process. The resource requirements of the next stage of the review will be met from within the West Northamptonshire staffing structure. Technical expertise required for the gathering of statistical information, mapping and forecasting will be met from across the authority.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 The Democracy and Standards Committee has delegated authority for the preparation of submissions in relation to boundary reviews. The Committee established a cross-party working group to assist it in the formulation of proposals.

7.3 Risk

- 7.3.1 There are no significant risks associated with the proposal. It is recommended that the Democracy and Standards Committee continues to maintain oversight of the next stage of the review process in order to avoid the risk of a disjointed approach.

7.4 Consultation

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

7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

- 7.5.1 Not applicable to this report.

7.6 Climate Impact

7.6.1 There is no climate impact to consider in relation to the recommendation.

7.7 Community Impact

7.7.1 The primary objective of the review is to improve electoral equality across West Northamptonshire ensuring that each voter has roughly the same representation on the council. Citizens will have the opportunity to engage with the review process and submit their own proposals and comment on recommendations as part of the review process.

8. Background Papers

8.1 Democracy and Standards Committee – 16 June 2022:

[Agenda for Democracy and Standards Committee on Thursday 16th June 2022, 6.00 pm - West Northamptonshire Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

8.2 Democracy and Standards Committee – 30 September 2021:

[Agenda for Democracy and Standards Committee on Thursday 30th September 2021, 6.00 pm - West Northamptonshire Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

West Northamptonshire Council

Council Size Submission

West Northamptonshire Council Area

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The Context for the Proposal

Local Authority Profile

Council Size

Strategic Leadership

Accountability

Community Leadership

Other Issues

Summary and Conclusion

About The Council

This submission is made on behalf of West Northamptonshire Council. The Council has appointed a working group of members representing all political groups on the Council, which is drawn from the Democracy and Standards Committee to prepare this submission. The group has consulted with the groups through the representatives on the working group and has provided examples from different groups about the way that members work in the different areas of the Council. The recommendation was reached by broad consensus across the representatives on the group and represents a collective view.

Reason for Review

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has identified that this review is being conducted as a result of Local Government Reorganisation. West Northamptonshire Council became the unitary council for the areas previously covered by Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council South Northants District Council and the relevant part of the area of Northamptonshire County Council (made up of the areas of the other councils combined).

The current council size and boundary pattern were dictated by the Northamptonshire Structural Changes Order 2020 and reflected the division boundaries of the former County Council for the West Northamptonshire area. Analysis of the electoral variances for this area also shows that there are more than three wards which are greater than 10% and some greater than 20% and by 2028 one with a variance greater than 60% therefore the Council welcomes the review.

The Context for the proposal

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

West Northamptonshire Council is a new unitary council arising from Local Government Reorganisation. The Shadow Council established the governance arrangements for the new Council which were operational from May 2021 after the election to the new Council. There has been a lot for the Council to do in its first year of operation. The Council has focused on delivering services to residents over reviewing its own governance in its first year. A constitutional review was carried in the first six months but limited changes to governance structures have been made.

There is a review of Scrutiny arrangements underway which is being led by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny which is focused on effective Scrutiny, this may bring governance changes, but the outcome is not known at the time of writing.

There is also a review of the Planning Committee arrangements as part of a wider review of the planning service arrangements which is supported by the Planning Advisory Service. This may lead to some consolidation of the governance when the service is aggregated into a single service.

There is also an agreement to carry out a review of the overall governance. The Council was required to start out as a Cabinet and Leader model, but councillors agreed that this would be reviewed once the Council was established. It has not been possible to carry out this review before the Boundary Review.

In summary, West Northamptonshire Council is in its early stages and there may be governance reviews which bring about changes in the future, but at the current time, the arrangements that we have in place are those that have been established and have been operational since its inception and there are no immediate plans to change those arrangements.

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

The Council has several services which are subject to alternative delivery models or joint arrangements:

Shared Services – LGR led to the division of the former County Council into two Councils. The complexity of services (combined with the pandemic) made it difficult to carry out the disaggregation in the time available and therefore a number of services continued to operate across the whole county area as a joint service. In order to manage the joint service, the Council established a Joint Shared Services Committee between NNC and WNC. This is an Executive Committee and meets regularly (usually monthly) to monitor performance of the joint service and to make decisions about proposed changes to service arrangements, amendments to the Inter Authority Agreement which governs the joint arrangements and also to oversee further disaggregation work.

Children's Trust – prior to LGR the County Council established a Children's Trust for the whole of the County area to deliver improvements to Children's Services. The Children's Trust is a separate legal entity, and its management is subject to separate governance arrangements. The Council has established a Joint Committee between NNC and WNC to manage the relationship between the two Council's in relation to the Children's Trust. This is an Executive Committee.

Pensions Committee – following LGR the administration of the Northamptonshire Pensions Fund was transferred to West Northamptonshire Council. The Council has a Pensions Committee primarily made up from WNC Councillors with representatives from the NNC. This is a non-executive Committee.

Health and Wellbeing Board – following the disaggregation both Councils are required to have a Health and Wellbeing Board and therefore there is now one for each Council.

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

The council has not been subject to any inspections which have raised issues in relation to capacity or governance since April 2021. The ongoing involvement of the Ofsted in Children's Services led to the creation of the Children's Trust.

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

The effects of transition on the council continues to be felt across all services and impacts on both officers and members. The council has an extensive programme of transformation underway which will; enable the council to bring services from former councils together to operate as a single service, to disaggregate services which are currently shared with NNC, to enable staff to be treated as a single workforce with a set of terms and conditions, to enable all parts of the organisation to communicate effectively together on a single IT system, to have clarity in all budget lines, income and efficiency targets, to have an estate which is serving the needs of single council and local members and staff with aligned culture and values. This work is underway but continues to take up resource and impact on focus.

The wider context is one in which the challenges of the pandemic in terms of service backlog and staff absences continue to have an impact. The new challenge of cost of living rises and in particular rising energy prices, shortages of staff and materials and a widespread increase in hardship across residents provides an additional challenging backdrop for an emerging and transforming council. The added pressures arising from specific challenges like meeting expectations in relation to the response to the war in Ukraine will also impact on the council in an intermittent way over the next six years.

As a result of the pandemic there has been a widespread call for Council meetings to be able to be conducted remotely. West Northamptonshire Council has begun to put in place the facilities for the participation and viewing of meetings remotely. These facilities do not alter the current legislative requirement for meetings to be held in person. However, if new legislation is introduced to allow remote meetings this will have a significant impact on the role of a member and the extent of travel for the attendance at meetings for members of a council with the geographic size of West Northamptonshire.

There is a programme of legislative change including the new Health and Social Care Act 2022 which will have a significant impact on local authorities later this year, when its provisions start to take effect, and these will result in impacts on local authorities and the care sector particularly in terms of the cost of care. Members will receive briefings and support constituents. In addition, the Government has announced a wide range of proposed legislation, relating to devolution, planning, council tax, education, energy, housing, health, crime and justice. The Queen's Speech also included measures of interest to councils on business rates, data reform, public procurement, local audit and post-Brexit regulation.

In particular, the Levelling up Bill published on 11 May 2022 with an [accompanying policy note](#), aims to drive local growth, empower local leaders to regenerate their areas, and ensure everyone can share in prosperity. It is intended to place a duty on the Government to set Levelling Up missions for a period of no less than five years, through a levelling up mission statement, and produce an annual report updating the country on the delivery of these missions. The Bill is also intended to create a new model of combined authority called combined county authorities and to streamline the process for authorities to bring forward proposals for combined authorities to move into directly elected leadership governance models more quickly, to support devolution deals. The Bill is also intended to introduce a number of reforms to the planning system, including strengthening neighbourhood planning and digitalising the system to make local plans easier to find, understand and engage with; by making it easier for local authorities to get local plans in place, with a view to limiting speculative development. Until the legislation has made its way through Parliament it is difficult to know what precise impact this will have on elected members but the programme of change has the potential to be significant for local members.

This review sits within the context of a Council which is in a state of change and flux. Preparing a description of current governance and a case for future governance in this context includes an element of guesswork. It is very difficult to be clear about where the council is likely to be in six years' time or what its arrangements will be. For example, the Council has an ongoing programme of disaggregation of services. The Council has a number of shared services arrangements and a Joint Committee to manage Shared Services, these arrangements may not be required in 2028 if the programme of disaggregation moves at the current pace. The submission presents an analysis, taking into account the likelihood of further change and the lack of certainty about future challenges.

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

This proposal has recognised that in a pandemic, and at other times, there are difficulties in 93 Councillors meeting in a single venue, let alone socially distanced. However, the practicalities of meeting should not impact on the need to have appropriate levels of representation to enable Councillors to carry out their roles effectively.

The remainder of the submission focuses on the size of the Council required to deliver efficient and effective local government. This concludes that a reduction in councillors, at a time when there is a need for every council to focus on delivering efficient governance, will deliver a cost saving. However, West Northamptonshire has already seen a reduction in the number of Councillors from 134 to 93 Councillors under Local Government Reorganisation, and a further reduction to between 77 and 82 Councillors would see the total reduction in the number of Councillors between 2021 and 2025 reduce by 39-43%. It is important to ensure that this does not impact on local democracy; on the ability of local residents to have proper representation and the need for councillors to effectively serve the needs of residents at a time when so many are in need of support.

Local Authority Profile

Brief outline of area - are there any notable geographic constraints for example that may affect the review?

West Northamptonshire is a large mixed urban and rural local authority that has been newly created following local government reorganisation. West Northamptonshire has close links with North Northamptonshire Council which is also undergoing a Ward Boundary review. Our Strategy and Vision can be found on our website here: [Our vision | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

West Northamptonshire has three motorways running through it namely the M1, M40, and M45. The M6 is also easily achievable being only a few miles from Junction 18 of the M1. The area also has a number of key A-roads which impact on communities these include A14, A5, A45, A508, A428, A361 and A43. Overall, transport communication from Northamptonshire to other major urban centres such as London and Birmingham, and to other key towns such as Coventry, Milton Keynes and Bedford, are relatively straight forward making commuting to larger towns and cities reachable for work and leisure purposes.

The Grand Union Canal runs through many of our villages and towns such as Braunston, Weedon Bec, Northampton, Bugbrooke, Stoke Bruerne, Cosgrove to name but a few. The Oxford Canal also comes through our area linking to the Grand Union at Braunston and travelling down to Aynho in the south of the district. We also have the River Nene running through many of our towns and villages and on which the main urban centre of Northampton is based.

Trains run through Northampton on the Northampton loop of West Coast Main Line into London Euston which also stops at the station in Long Buckby and in the south of the county there is a rural station at Kings Sutton on the Chiltern Main Line which runs into London Marylebone. Trains in North Northamptonshire run to other London stations. DIRFT (Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal) is based in West Northamptonshire just outside the village of Crick and a second rail freight terminal is under construction to the south of Northampton. The HS2 rail line is also under construction and will bisect West Northamptonshire to the north of Brackley.

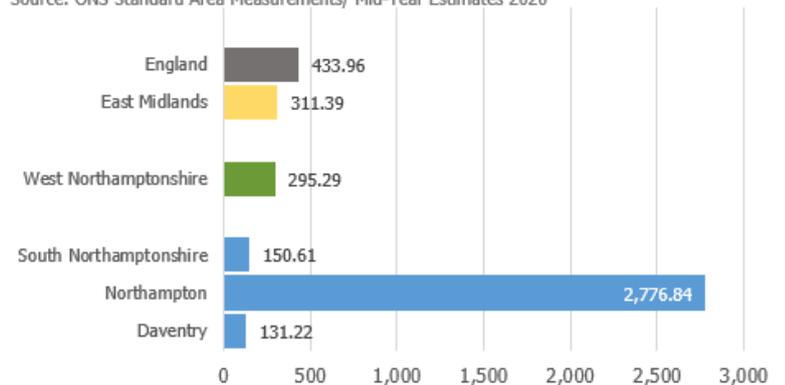
Rural or urban - what are the characteristics of the authority?

There are several urban and rural centres within the area including Northampton Town, Daventry, Towcester and Brackley.

55% of the population of West Northamptonshire live within Northampton (the former Northampton Borough boundary area), this equates to 2,777 people per sq km, in comparison the population density in the remaining area of West Northamptonshire is around 90% lower at 282 people per sq km. this results in very different challenges in accessing services, such as public meetings.

Pop Density per Sq KM

Source: ONS Standard Area Measurements/ Mid-Year Estimates 2020

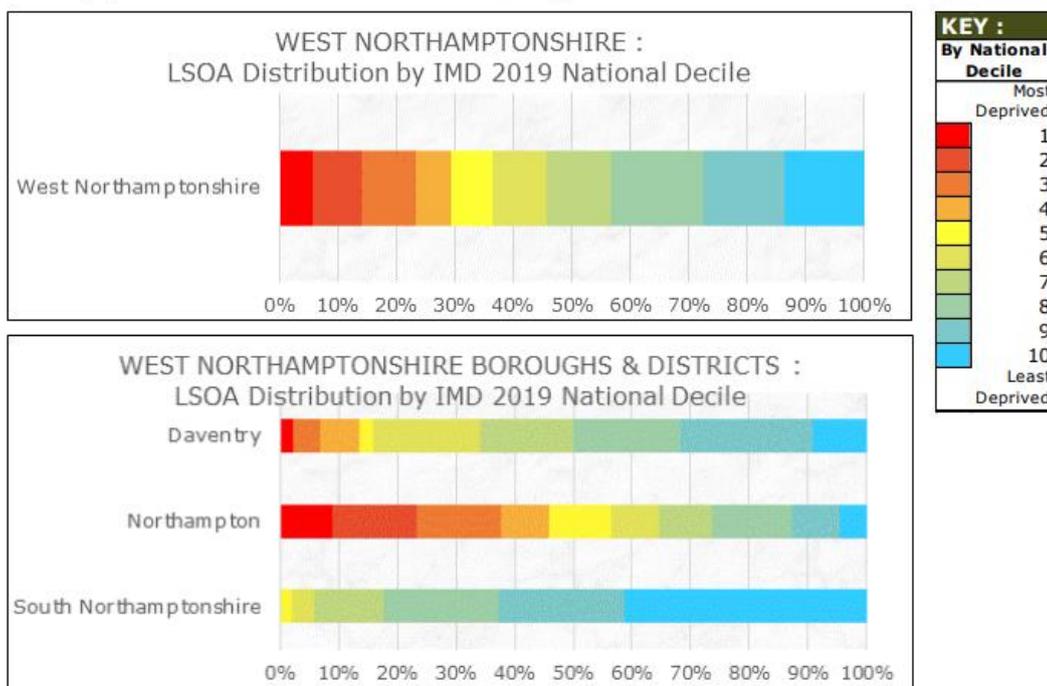


The Council also has sparsely populated wards such as Daventry East and Duston West and Crispin and a significant number of Parish Councils and Parish meetings representing the rural area. The total number of parish Councils and Meetings in West Northamptonshire is 166.

Community characteristics – is there presence of “hidden” or otherwise complex deprivation?

There are different challenges facing the urban wards which have levels of deprivation particularly in Northampton itself but also rural deprivation in areas where there are poor transport links and the cost of housing has been driven up by those moving in from outside the area to commute to London and Birmingham both of which can be readily reached by commuters.

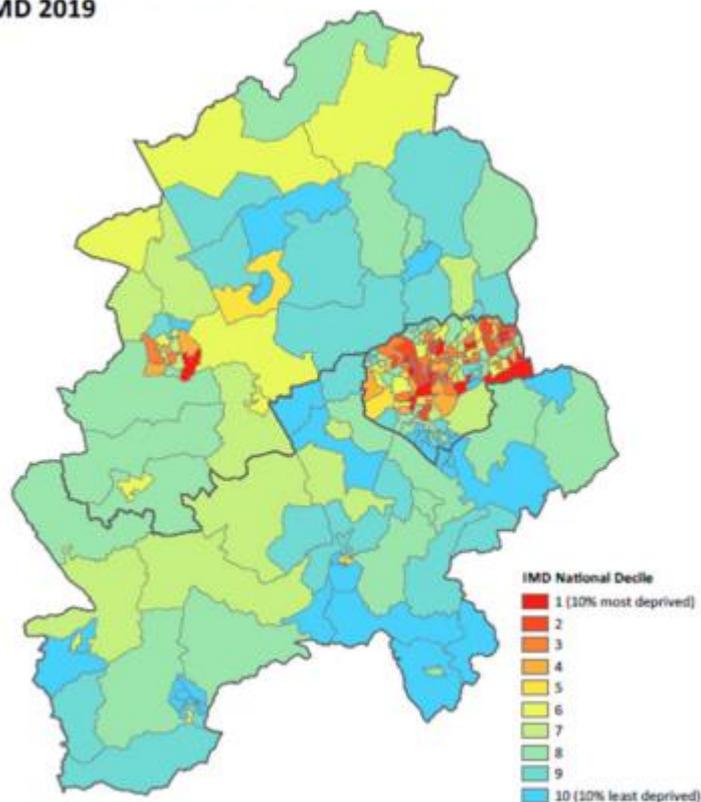
The bar graphs below shows the distribution of LSOAs by IMD national decile for West Northamptonshire.



Details of deprivation and the steps the Council is taking to tackle it are set out in the Council’s Anti-Poverty Strategy which has recently been agreed (page 9 sets out the levels of deprivation and a map of the deprivation in specific wards).

Demographic pressures - such as distinctive age profiles, migrant or transient populations, is there any large growth anticipated?

West Northamptonshire
IMD 2019

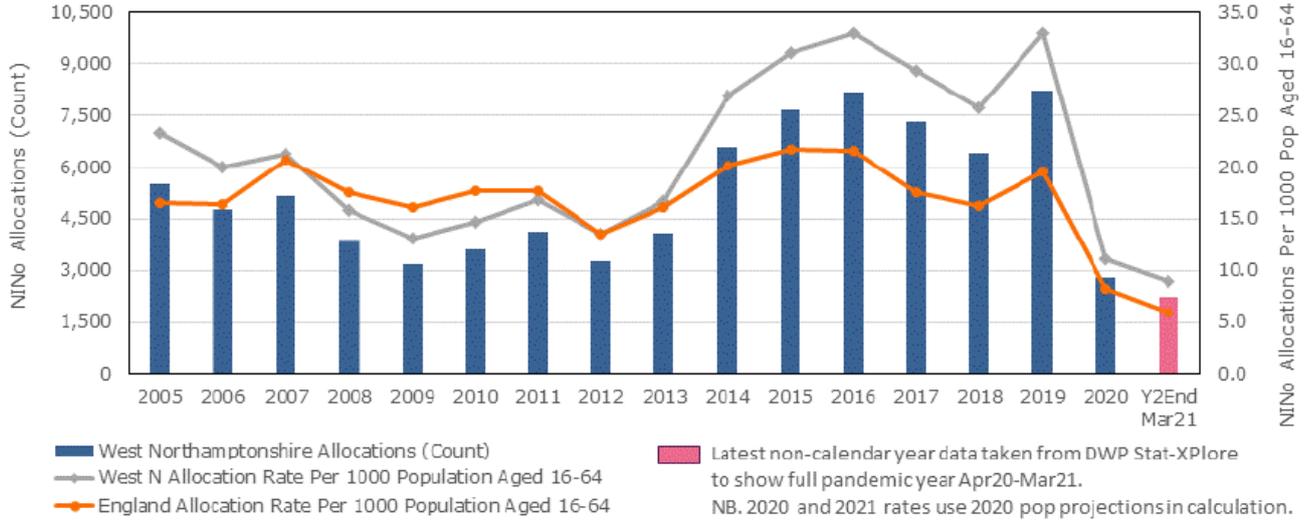


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The Council has an ONS mid-2020 estimated population of 406,733 and an electorate of 299,498 (as at 1st March 2022). We have 184,281 households. The area covers 531.82 square miles.

West Northamptonshire appears to have a significantly higher transient migrant population than the average across England's Local Authorities. Looking at National Insurance (NINo) allocations we know that since 2014 the rate of allocations to overseas nationals per 1,000 population (aged 18-64) across West Northamptonshire has consistently been substantially higher than the England average. In 2019, the gap rose to 13 people/1,000 population when over 55% of the WNC NINos were allocated to EU2 nationals and 88% were located in Northampton. With Brexit and the pandemic, NINos allocated to EU nationals have dropped by 82% in the last year while non EU NINos have dipped by 42% (South Asian recipients down just 31%), resulting in the non EU-group becoming more numerous than their EU counterparts. Whilst this gap is narrower at March 2021 West Northamptonshire remains higher than the England average.

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE : NINo Allocations to Overseas Nationals



In 2019, 9.6% (37,318) people in West Northants were living in income deprivation. This is lower than England (12.9%.) However, Citizen’s Advice have suggested that deprivation data does not give the full picture. They have found that 30% of people accessing their services live in the most deprived areas, but 72% of people accessing their service are living below the poverty line. Over half of those living in poverty live in working households, where work does not provide enough income to meet basic needs or people fall into poverty due to circumstances beyond their control. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation in England and is part of a suite of outputs that form the Indices of Deprivation (IoD). It follows an established methodological framework in broadly defining deprivation to encompass a wide range of an individual’s living conditions. The IMD shows that 16.9% of the population of West Northamptonshire live in the 20% most deprived areas (LSOA). The area with the highest proportion of residents living in the top 20% deprived areas is Northampton (28.2%).

Table 1: The LSOA areas in the most deprived decile on IMD

Local Authority District name (2019)	IMD Rank	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile	LSOA Name
Northampton	185	1	Billing Aquadrome, Bellinge- Fieldmill Road
Northampton	1,139	1	Briar Hill- Ringway, Southwood Hill
Northampton	1,372	1	St James’ End- St James Retail Park, Black Lion Hill, St Peter’s Way, Drapery
Northampton	1,398	1	Kingsheath- Park Drive, West Oval
Northampton	1,520	1	Dallington Road, Merthyr Road
Northampton	1,803	1	Blackthorn Primary School
Northampton	2,238	1	Eastfield park, Grange Road
Daventry	2,375	1	Borough Hill, Trafalgar Way
Northampton	2,420	1	Marriot Street, St George’s Street, Deal Street, Sheep Street
Northampton	2,765	1	St Andrews Hospital, Rushmere Road
Northampton	2,963	1	Auckland Close, Kingsland Avenue, Whilton Road
Northampton	3,065	1	Ecton Brook Road, Pennycress Place
Northampton	3,246	1	Goldings/ Overstone Lodge/ Blackthorn

Electoral Statistics

The electoral make-up of West Northamptonshire comprises:

4 Parliamentary Constituencies
 31 Wards
 307 Polling Districts
 166 Parishes of which 18 are warded

In the North, the electoral makeup for unitary wards is; 264,009 and for parliamentary it is; 243,055.

Electorate and Variance projections from 2021 to 2028

Below is a table showing the Electorate per ward as at December 2021 along with the projected electorate for 2028 following the Council's methodology. As you can see from the table, there are, at present, variances of 20% or over in three wards: Brackley, Duston West & St Crispin and Towcester & Roade and 10% or over in six wards: Billing and Rectory Farm, Daventry East, Moulton, Nene Valley and Sixfields.

In 2028, those variances are predicted to change to the following: Over 20% - Moulton (62.41%) and Towcester & Roade (28.6%). Over 10% - Boothville and Parklands, Brackley, Duston West and St Crispin, Long Buckby, Middleton Cheney, St George and Woodford & Weedon. There is a significant amount of development taking place now and planned for the future in the Moulton Ward.

Name of ward	Number of cllrs per ward	Electorate 2021	Variance 2021	Electorate 2028	Variance 2028
Abington & Phippsville	3	9,319	-3%	9,741	-8.14%
Billing & Rectory Farm	3	10,799	12%	11,324	6.79%
Boothville & Parklands	3	8,760	-9%	9,273	-12.55%
Brackley	3	11,699	21%	12,516	18.03%
Braunston and Crick	3	9,903	3%	10,681	0.73%
Brixworth	3	9,537	-1%	9,761	-7.95%
Bugbrooke	3	9,801	2%	10,205	-3.76%
Castle	3	10,371	8%	11,265	6.23%
Dallington Spencer	3	8,808	-9%	10,003	-5.67%
Daventry East	3	8,239	-14%	10,112	-4.64%
Daventry West	3	9,068	-6%	9,916	-6.49%
Deanshanger	3	9,468	-2%	9,893	-6.71%
Delapre & Rushmere	3	9,175	-5%	10,241	-3.42%
Duston East	3	9,125	-5%	9,393	-11.42%
Duston West & St Crispin	3	7,678	-20%	8,787	-17.14%
East Hunsbury & Shelfleys	3	8,983	-7%	10,435	-1.59%
Hackleton & Grange Park	3	10,212	6%	10,969	3.44%
Headlands	3	10,185	6%	10,466	-1.30%

Kingsthorpe North	3	9,797	2%	10,110	-4.66%
Kingsthorpe South	3	9,383	-3%	11,294	6.51%
Long Buckby	3	8,971	-7%	9,183	-13.40%
Middleton Cheney	3	8,846	-8%	9,186	-13.37%
Moulton	3	11,057	15%	17,592	65.90%
Nene Valley	3	8,572	-11%	10,552	-0.49%
Riverside Park	3	9,949	3%	10,257	-3.27%
Silverstone	3	9,999	4%	10,433	-1.61%
Sixfields	3	11,465	19%	12,866	21.33%
St George	3	8,682	-10%	8,993	-15.19%
Talavera	3	9,721	1%	10,152	-4.26%
Towcester & Roade	3	11,940	24%	13,535	27.64%
Woodford & Weedon	3	9,122	-5%	9,590	-9.56%

In summary, the forecast from 2021 to 2028 for West Northamptonshire looks like this:

	2021	2028
<i>Number of councillors:</i>	93	93
<i>Overall electorate:</i>	298,634	339,281
<i>Average electorate per cllr:</i>	3,211	3,648

Are there any other constraints, challenges, issues or changes ahead?

Health and Care Act 2022

The Council alongside other Councils nationally is currently establishing an Integrated Care System (ICS). This will result in a statutory health and care partnership which brings together NHS organisations and local councils in a partnership of equals, alongside the statutory ICS bodies which will allow the NHS and local government to act as strong partners. The Health and Social Care Act 2022 abolishes CCGs and sets out new governance requirements. There will be an Integrated Care Board with leaders from across the system which is accountable for overall performance and use of resources and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs).

ICPs will be established which have a central role in the planning and improvement of health and care. They support placed based partnerships and coalitions with community partners. The format of ICPs is not prescriptive but guidance sets out the role of ICP's and encourages each area to develop its own partnerships based on the needs of each area and involving key players in the area. ICP's should bring the statutory and non-statutory interests of places together. Annex B outlines the West Place Governance proposal. The structure of the arrangements is a series of hubs in each placed based area and agreement has been reached with health colleagues that the existing ward boundaries will be used as the building blocks for the areas. Elected members are expected to have a role in contributing directly to discussions about the needs of their areas. The existing ward boundaries have been used because these have been based around existing communities. This enables local members to have a role in the ICS through the proposed governance. Changes to the size of the

Council and this will impact more or less on the proposed wards. As ward boundary changes will be based on communities it is anticipated that the planning for arrangements in relation to the ICS

There will also be new responsibilities for Health and Wellbeing boards which already act as a forum in which key leaders from the local health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population. Under the Health and Care Act 2022 the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBs) has some additional responsibilities and duties.

The ICB and ICP will also have to work closely with local HWBs as they have the experience as 'place-based' planners, and the ICB will be required to have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategies (JHWSs) produced by HWBs. There will be specific roles for those members who sit on the HWBs but there will also be additional responsibilities for local members representing their local areas. The proposals about the specific size and nature of the arrangements are still being developed but a Cabinet Report which envisages a specific role for elected members was considered at the meeting of Cabinet on 14th June 2022 (link below). Annex B of the report outlines the West Place Governance proposal based on existing ward boundaries. This shows the governance that sits below the Health and Wellbeing Board and Integrated Care Partnership including the locality Health and Wellbeing Forums which reflect the two localities within the West Place; these are Northampton and Daventry/South Northants. The locality boards will oversee the Local Area Partnerships (5 for Northampton and 4 Daventry/South Northants) and will be responsible for ensuring that the Local Area Partnership Plan delivers against key priorities determined by local insight data. The terms of reference for the Health and Wellbeing Locality Forums and Local Area Partnership (LAP) including membership is currently being developed as part of wide stakeholder consultation and engagement

<https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g687/Public%20reports%20pack%2014th-Jun-2022%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Characteristics of the Council

The distinctive feature of West Northamptonshire is that it is central. Geographically the Council area is located in the centre of England with good transport to a range of urban centres. This has both positives in terms of Economic Growth but also challenges as it is a place with a mobile population who have the opportunity to work, shop and do business outside of the area as well as locally. The area does not demonstrate a higher level of deprivation than the national average but does have pockets in key areas. There are also examples of hidden deprivation. The makeup of the area is not significantly diverse in terms of demographic pressures, but there are challenges in both the urban and rural areas for in demography, in a growing older population particularly in rural areas and growing diversity. Transport links are very good for travelling to key urban centres out of the area and within the area to Northampton but travelling from place to place within the area is more difficult due to the number of small rural communities. It is therefore challenging for Councillors representing large urban wards attending meetings at the large number of parish councils within their areas. It is likewise challenging for urban members who represent the deprived wards to meet the needs of the high concentration of deprivation in their area.

The Council's proposal for Council Size is reflective of these challenges, recognising that there is a need to reduce the number of members to demonstrate efficiency at a time of

austerity and hardship for residents, whilst recognising that the need to support and help the most vulnerable of residents requires representation that leaves a single member representing a high number of electors. Whilst comparison with other areas doesn't answer the question it helps to demonstrate that the proposal will leave members representing in between 4,138 and 4,406 electors per Councillor which when compared to other recent reviews is in the mid-range for other similar councils, particularly those that have undergone local government reorganisation recently. Durham County Council (UA) is currently 4207 electors per councillor but is currently subject to review.

West Northamptonshire	2021	2028	2028	2028	
<i>Number of councillors:</i>	93	93	77	82	
<i>Overall electorate:</i>	298,634	339,281	339,281	339,281	
<i>Average electorate per cllr:</i>	3,211	3,648	4,406	4,138	
	Bristol 2020	Bucks 2027	Dorset 2023	BCP* 2023	Wiltshire 2024
<i>Number of councillors:</i>	70	98	82	76	98
<i>Overall electorate:</i>	341,607	443,064	308,050	309,792	417,228
<i>Average electorate per cllr:</i>	4,880	4,521	3,757	4,076	4,257

*Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

Council Size

In accordance with the template set out by the LGBCE this submission addresses the key factors in determining Council size below. These are categorised as: **Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulatory and Partnerships), and Community Leadership**. The analysis for each area is imbedded within the narrative and summarised in the summary section below.

Strategic Leadership

West Northamptonshire Council has a Leader and Cabinet form of Executive arrangements. The Council is a relatively large unitary authority and is responsible for a wide range of services. As such, it has a Cabinet comprising ten members including the Leader. Each Cabinet Member has a portfolio for which they are responsible. The current Cabinet Portfolios are set out in the 'portfolios' section below.

Leader and Cabinet Model

West Northamptonshire operates a system where the monthly Cabinet meeting is the main forum for taking executive decisions. Decisions are taken collectively by a majority vote of members of the Cabinet. This makes for strong accountability. The Shadow Council set out key principles in relation to its governance model which included transparency, efficiency and accountability and these are supported by the Cabinet and Leader model.

Cabinet meetings are held in public, and this provides transparency and the opportunity for public attendance and questions at meetings. Cabinet meetings are actively attended by members of the public and other members of Council, all of whom may ask questions, make statements, and hold the Cabinet to account as decisions are considered.

In common with other authorities operating executive arrangements, the Cabinet at West Northamptonshire Council is responsible for the formulation of policy. For policies that form part of the Council's policy framework, the Cabinet will consult with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as well as undertaking public consultation, prior to making recommendations for the council to approve. For other policies, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees may also contribute to their development as part of their regular work plans. Portfolio holders will attend Overview and Scrutiny Committees to answer questions on policy development. They will also lead briefings for members on activities undertaken by the Council in relation to policy development.

Portfolio holders also have regular one-to-one meetings with their Director and their leadership teams to provide political leadership on the various matters that need to be considered and decided upon within their own portfolios and across the Council. All of executive members meet every week with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and emerging issues, specific policy, future decisions and overarching strategy are discussed. The ELT and the executive members also meet periodically at away days to discuss the wider issues such as performance, change and future direction. The Leader of the Council has regular meetings (sometimes involving other Cabinet members) with members of ELT on a one-to-one basis.

The Council also operates a Planning Policy Committee. This is a sub-committee of Cabinet but also includes non-cabinet members including the chairs of each local area planning committee and members of opposition groups. While the decision-making power is exercised by the members of Cabinet, there is a wider accountability in terms of policy development as these other members are encouraged to contribute at these meetings.

The Cabinet has also delegated responsibility for Shared Services and the Children's Trust to two joint executive committees with North Northamptonshire Council – details of these are set out in Joint Arrangements below and these committees are made up of Cabinet Members from both Councils.

Portfolios

The Cabinet comprises ten portfolio holders including the Leader. The portfolios are:

- Strategy (Leader)
- Housing, Culture and Leisure (Deputy Leader)
- Finance
- Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth

- Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste
- Community Safety and Engagement and Regulatory Services
- Strategic Planning, Built Environment and Rural Affairs
- Adult Care, Wellbeing and Health Integration
- HR and Corporate Services
- Children, Families and Education

The Council considers that this structure and allocation of portfolio responsibilities allows effective oversight of services. There are no strong drivers to change the number of portfolio holders. The maximum number of Cabinet Members allowed is ten and this number does leave some Cabinet Members with significant responsibilities. This is particularly true in the area of Place where there are already 4 Portfolio holders operating, but the benefits of this type of Executive arrangements is that decisions can be made relatively quickly and with the minimum number of meetings and reports to enable focus on the delivery of services rather than the administration of decision making.

As mentioned above, the monthly Cabinet meeting is the main forum for taking executive decisions. Decisions are taken collectively by a majority vote of members of the Cabinet. Individual portfolio holders do not generally take decisions, with the exception of the Leader of the Council, who has authority to take decisions when required by circumstances.

The portfolio holders are supported by a number of Assistant Cabinet Members. These positions provide support to the portfolio holders by focussing on specific areas. Examples of Assistant Cabinet Member portfolios include climate, social housing, education and rail. This structure allows more councillors to become involved in the development and oversight of policy that would ordinarily remain the responsibility of portfolio holders, whilst accountability remains with the designated portfolio holder. This enables the council to maintain accountability but provide those, particularly with specific areas of interest or expertise to make a larger contribution to the Council and to support busy portfolio holders to carry out their roles effectively.

Portfolio holders liaise with partners and represent the Council externally on a number of organisations and joint committees/boards including, but not limited to:

- Shared Services Joint Committee;
- Children's Trust Joint Committee;
- West Midlands Rail Ltd.;
- Environment Agency Flood Committees;
- Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone Board; and
- Northampton Town Centre Business Improvement District Board.

Portfolio holders also attend Overview & Scrutiny committee meetings to give account of their actions and decisions.

There is a significant time commitment associated with the role of portfolio holder. The Cabinet meets formally monthly, with additional meetings held when required.

Portfolio holders represent the Council at political meetings of local government associations. These duties are carried out in addition to their representative role as a ward councillor and any positions they may hold on external organisations.

There can also be very significant commitments of Cabinet members involved in emerging areas for example the Portfolio holder for Community Safety, Engagement and Regulatory Services has become significantly involved in supporting the Afghan Refugee provision, when West Northamptonshire Council took a lead in establishing hotel for housing refugees, supporting them to get the help they needed in the chosen locations and then helping refugees to move on. Similar work is also underway now in relation to Ukrainian Refugees. This type of issue can double the work of a portfolio holder because the significant interest from the media and local residents. Members play a significant role as spokesperson for the Council and in liaising between residents and officers.

Although there is no formal full-time requirement for the role a portfolio holder undertakes, the scope of services the Council is responsible for and the scale of its ambitions require a significant time commitment by portfolio holders. In many cases this will be akin to a full-time position.

Joint arrangements

- West and North Northamptonshire Shared Services Joint Committee. The Joint Committee's role is to oversee the management of those services which are provided on a Northamptonshire-wide basis on behalf of North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Councils to ensure effective delivery of such services and to provide strategic direction.
- Children's Trust Joint Committee. The West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire Councils have established a Joint Committee to oversee functions that relate to the joint ownership of, and commissioning of services from, the Northamptonshire Children's Trust.
- Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel. The Police, Fire and Crime Panel is responsible for carrying out the powers and duties of the of the Police and Crime Panel as provided for within the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire (Fire and Rescue Authority) Order 2018.

Delegated Responsibilities

- The West Northamptonshire Council operates a scheme of delegation to committees and officers. In line with the stated aims of the Council's corporate plan, managerial and operational decisions are taken, within a framework of democratic accountability, at the most appropriate level; usually the closest point of contact to citizens. The scheme of delegation to officers is set out at section 9 of the Council's Constitution. The effective operation of the delegation scheme relies upon close co-operation and liaison between officers and Members. The scheme of delegation ensures that Council Members are involved in decisions which are of a sensitive or political nature. The Exceptions Charts set out the matters which must be decided by members.
- County Wide Services - West Northamptonshire Council continues to deliver several services which operate for the County as a whole. For example, the Coronial area is Northamptonshire, and Coronial service sits with West Northamptonshire. This is a service which is and will be, until a statutory order is made to amend the Coronial area. The Portfolio Holder is responsible for the oversight of the Coroner's Service

- and this includes the provision for the death management within the County, inquest hearings and the offices and staff of the HM Coroner who is employed by WNC.
- Police and Fire - The Police Fire and Crime Commissioner is a separate elected role and employs their own staff. The Councils are responsible for administering the Police and Fire Panel which is responsible for holding the PFCC to account. The Committee meets regularly and reviews the work of the PFCC. Members sit on the Joint Committee and complaints about the PFCC are dealt with by the Joint Committee. The Committee also requires annual reports in relation to both the Police and Fire Service and these are scrutinised by the Committee with the attendance of the PFCC and his staff. The support to the Committee is provided entirely by WNC and the committee includes Councillors from WNC Council.
 - Shared Services – There is an Inter Authority Agreement between the West and North Northamptonshire Councils (NNC) which governs the services which have not disaggregated. There were 52 services which were shared on 1st April 2022 and there have been several services which have disaggregated. Some of the shared services are the largest and most significant Council services for example the Highways Service is in the process of disaggregating, and this includes the contract for the delivery of the majority of Highways repairs and maintenance. Adult Social Care is also a largely shared service, with the West Northamptonshire Council continuing to provide the bulk of the Adult Social Care Service for the County area. Some services have long-term sharing arrangements. For example, the Head of Coroners and Registration is a joint post hosted by the West. The Coronial service is managed entirely by the West, although regular engagement takes place with officers in the North on key decisions affecting provision, such as the arrangements for death management in the event of excess deaths which is in the North. The Registration Service is disaggregated. Both services report into the Head of Coroner's and Registration. Members sit on the Shared Services Joint Committee and the Joint Committee is also subject to Scrutiny. Support to the Lord-Lieutenant is undertaken by WNC on behalf of both WNC and NNC. Other shared services include IT Operations and Services Delivery, Street Lighting PFI, County Archives, the Countywide Traveller Unit and Payroll are all operated by WNC on behalf of NNC. NNC provide adult learning, safeguarding, school admissions, virtual school, country parks for WNC.
 - Children's Trust – The Children's Trust is a separate entity and provides services for Children (excluding Education) for the County. The Children's Trust buys support services from the Councils. There is a Support Services Agreement which governs these arrangements. The majority of the Support Services delivered to the Trust are delivered by West Northamptonshire Council. These include transactional finance and human resources including payroll, IT, assets, insurance and a range of other services. Members sit on the Children's Trust Joint Committee, and it is also subject to Scrutiny.
 - Housing – The Council has an arm's length company – ALMO – delivering its housing stock. Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) operated previously in the Northampton area which is the most significant housing provision in the area, but its area of operation may change as the boundaries for Northampton change with the boundary review. NPH has a very significant capital budget which is larger than that of the Council. Members sit on the Board of the NPH and the portfolio holder is responsible for Housing and the relationship with NPH. The land continues to be owned by West Northamptonshire Council and the Housing Revenue Account

continues to be managed through the Council as part of the Council's budget management. This arrangement covers the Northampton area and in other areas ie. Daventry and South Northants there is a housing association on which members sit as board members but there are no formal management arrangements in place. Decisions are made by Cabinet and scrutinised by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

Although WNC has a population of 339,281 by 2028 several services are delivered across the whole County area, and this will continue to be the case in some services for the foreseeable future. It is therefore important to recognise that the remit and responsibility of the members is broader than that for other Councils with a similar population and that Members are directly involved in committees which go beyond the scope of boundaries of West Northamptonshire and when combined with North Northamptonshire the population served is currently approximately 760,000 in accordance with mid-year 2020 population estimate by ONS.

Other Standing Committees

- The Council discharges its functions through a number of standing committees:
- Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee (15 members). This committee deals with all the licensing functions of the Council under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 where such functions cannot be delegated.
- Taxi and General Licensing Committee (15 members). This committee is responsible for determining licensing policy and applications where not delegated to officers.
- Strategic Planning Committee (13 members). This committee deals with large-scale major developments, large commercial developments or strategically important developments.
- Local Area Planning Committees. There are three such committees. These committees consider applications that fall below the threshold for Strategic Planning Committee but above the threshold for delegation to officers. The committees are:
 - Northampton Local Area Planning Committee (11 members).
 - Daventry Local Area Planning Committee (9 members).
 - South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee (9 members).
- Democracy and Standards Committee (9 members). This committee has overall responsibility for the Council's Constitution, elections and community governance/boundary reviews and the Council's Code of Conduct.
- Audit and Governance Committee (9 members). The committee is responsible for overseeing the Council's governance and risk management framework and associated control environment and to provide independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance and financial reporting process.
- Pension Committee (7 West Northamptonshire Councillors and 2 North Northamptonshire members - 13 members in total). The committee is responsible for the Council's statutory function as administering authority under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and associated legislation. West Northants is the administering authority for Northamptonshire.
- Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board is a statutory committee that enables leaders from across West Northamptonshire to secure better health and wellbeing outcomes for the local population, better quality of care for all patients and care users, better value for the taxpayer and reduce health inequalities by shaping the

future of services through a more integrated approach to commissioning health and wellbeing related services.

- Senior Appointments Committee (7 members). The committee recommends to the Council the appointment and, where appropriate, the dismissal of chief officers.

Accountability

Accountability is one of the key principles agreed by members when the Council drew up the Constitution in relation to our decision-making governance. They are:

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Accessibility
- Inclusivity

Accountability requires that it is clear who is making the decisions and is responsible for the decisions that are made so that they can be held to account. The Cabinet make the majority of decisions and they are held to account by the Scrutiny Committees. The Council also has two other committees who ensure that the way the Council operates is accountable.

Democracy and Standards Committee

The Committee deals with the Council's Democratic and Governance arrangements and is responsible for reviewing the Council's constitution, decision making arrangements and member training. It also oversees the Council's ethical framework, code of conduct and member complaints. The Committee is responsible for Boundary, Ward Boundary and Community Governance Reviews and deals with electoral arrangements such as polling places reviews. The Democracy and Standards Committee have carried out specific task and finish groups on the Constitution and the preparation of this submission.

The Audit and Governance Committee

The Audit Committee deals with the Council's financial arrangements including risk and corporate governance. It reviews and signs off the accounts. It receives the external audit reports and manages the oversees the internal audit work of the Council and receives the annual report. It also deals with Corporate Governance arrangements including dealing with risk and assurance. It oversees the Code of Corporate Governance and the Annual Governance Statement and the wider Governance Framework, whistleblowing, anti-fraud and corruption and performance management. It holds the Cabinet to account for the financial safeguards and arrangements for managing the Council's resources.

Scrutiny Arrangements

West Northamptonshire Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements have been designed to maximise transparency and the effectiveness of the scrutiny function. The current structure and way of working has been in place since May 2021.

Portfolio holders and Directors are expected to attend each meeting of the relevant scrutiny committee. This enhances communication between scrutiny, the cabinet and Directors and is an important opportunity for decision makers to be held to account.

The Council's three scrutiny committees are aligned with the principal functions of the Council:

- Corporate Scrutiny Committee (17 members): responsible for finance and resources, corporate services, shared services and corporate strategy and priorities.

- People Scrutiny Committee (15 members): responsible for adult care, public health, wellbeing, children, families and education, housing and communities.
- Place Scrutiny Committee (15 members): responsible for built and natural environment, transport and highways, community safety and regulatory services, economic development, regeneration and growth and scrutiny of flood risk management.

The size of each committee is partly a product of the size of the authority itself and partly to ensure that each political group is represented on each committee. It is important to the success of the scrutiny function that committees are able to draw on the experience and knowledge of a wide range of members and larger committees are a product of this philosophy. However, there is a point where the number of members becomes unwieldy and can even deter members from attending if their opportunities to contribute to discussion are hampered by the number of members. It is therefore suggested that if a reduction of members is agreed that the number of members of Scrutiny Committee will be reviewed at that time (if not before) and consideration will be given to committee sizes not larger than 12 members. A reduction to 12 for each of the current Scrutiny Committees would be 11 places (i.e., 3 from Place, 3 from People and 5 from Corporate) and this would be the same number of members if the Council Size was at the highest number of the proposed range i.e. 82.

The overview and scrutiny function is underpinned by the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group. This group generally meets informally and comprises the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Its principal function is to oversee the work programmes of the three committees and ensure these do not overlap, thus helping to ensure the process is managed efficiently and work is not duplicated.

The workload of Scrutiny is strictly timetabled. Each Committee has a work programme which work through several workshops and consultations. The work programme is also included as an agenda item at its ordinary committee meetings and the procedure for Members to place an item on Scrutiny is set out within part 7 of the Council's Constitution.

Each committee has the ability to establish task and finish groups. West Northamptonshire Council does not have a dedicated team of scrutiny support, with committees supported by Democratic Services and relevant senior officers, but very much led by members. For reasons of efficiency and resourcing, committees are expected to keep the number of task and finish groups to a manageable level (around 3 per committee). Task and finish panels may draw on the membership of the wider council, but not from the Cabinet.

At this early stage in the Council's life there are limited examples to draw upon, but current task and finish groups include tree policy, the budget preparation and child and adolescent mental health and risk of self-harm. Task and finish group memberships is not fixed but 7-10 members is typical. Meetings may take place every 3-4 weeks until the work is concluded. Scrutiny Committees also examine the Executive decisions either by being asked, requesting, or calling in decisions of Cabinet.

A review of Scrutiny Arrangements is underway by the CfGS and the outcome of the review is not known at the time of writing. It is expected however that the recommendations of the review will primarily relate to ensuring the effectiveness of Scrutiny and will focus on the size and shape of the Scrutiny Work Programmes.

Statutory Committees

Planning and Development Control

The Council's structure of planning committees is summarised above and set out in more detail here.

The Council operates one overarching Strategic Planning Committee and three Local Area Planning Committees.

The Strategic Planning Committee (13 members) is responsible for functions relating to town and country planning and development control including in relation to strategic applications meeting the thresholds set out in below

- Large-scale major developments defined (by the Government's planning application statistical returns) as those of 200 houses (or 4 hectares) or more; or
- Commercial developments of 10,000 square metres (or 2 hectares) or more; and
- Strategically important developments (as identified by the Assistant Director – Growth and Investment, following consultation with the Chair of the Local Planning Committee for the area in which the development is proposed).

The Strategic Planning Committee also deals with:

- Applications called-in that cross the boundary of two local area committees.
- Any application where the Assistant Director – Growth and Investment considers it inappropriate to exercise delegated powers having regard to the public representations received and consultee responses.

There is no referral of applications from Strategic Planning Committee to Local Area Planning committees.

The three Local Area Planning Committees reflect the areas of the local plans in place in West Northamptonshire:

- Northampton Local Area Planning Committee (11 members).
- Daventry Local Area Planning Committee (9 members).
- South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee (9 members).

The Local Area Planning Committees are not politically balanced as they fall within the political balance exemption for area committees, but they do reflect the political make-up of the relevant area.

The Local Area Planning Committees are responsible for functions relating to town and country planning and development control that do not fall within the responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Committee. These include:

- Major Developments below the limits set for the Strategic Planning Committee;
- Applications which do not meet the criteria for Major Development;
- Change of Use;
- Householder Developments;
- Consent to display advertisements under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended);

- Shop fronts;
- Listed Building Consents;
- Conservation Area Consents.

Local Area Planning committees may not refer applications to the Strategic Planning Committee. The Assistant Director - Growth and Investment is responsible for determining whether an application falls within the remit of Strategic Planning Committee or the relevant Local Area Planning Committee, following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Portfolio Holders do not serve on planning committees, with the exception of the Planning Policy Committee (detailed above).

Each planning committee meets monthly, with an additional time requirement relating to site visits where required.

Member Training

West Northamptonshire Council has a robust and comprehensive training and development programme for Councillors that is aimed to equip them with the required knowledge and skills to enable them effectively to carry out their various roles. Councillor training and development comprises both core and mandatory development sessions. Mandatory training includes Licensing training for Members of that Committee, Planning Committee training and all Councillors are required to attend training on the Council's Code of Conduct and associated issues.

Core training includes a general introduction for all Councillors – “Hitting the ground running” - to bring them up to a good basic understanding of their remit and key local government context. A session on Councillor Roles and Relationships that outlines the different roles of Councillors and officers, expectations of each other and how to create and maintain constructive and effective relationships the differing (but complementary) roles of councillors. Committee specific sessions are held, including a session for Councillors on the Audit Committee to understand how to be most effective in this role, and how to draw on the insights of auditors to ensure that the public can have confidence in the way the council is managing its financial affairs; sessions in relation to Overview and Scrutiny, such as work programming and “doing good scrutiny - understanding what makes for effective and impactful scrutiny.”

Chairing skills is a key training session for all Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and prospective Chairmen. A session on Local Government Finance covered an introduction to Local Government Finance and picked out the key figures and issues from the previous year's budget. In addition to a comprehensive development programme, regular important briefing sessions are held for all Councillors, for example around mineral and waste planning, decarbonisation of the Pensions Fund. All sessions are currently held remotely over an online audio and web conferencing platform with the aim to maximise attendance. All training and briefing sessions are recorded and saved into a Teams Channel for Councillors to access again at a later date.

Future Arrangements

The current arrangements reflect transition from three Local Plans to a single local Plan for West Northants. As the Boundary Review changes the ward boundary it will be necessary to redraw the areas of the Planning Committees and at that time there may be a change to the arrangements for Planning Committees. A review of planning arrangements and the planning service is underway. The current arrangements place high demand on the time of officers servicing the three committees and there have been times when planning committees have not taken place. The percentage of decision making to officers is not well understood and this will form part of the review. Area planning committees can increase the risk of in quorate meetings particularly in relation to applications with strong local feeling where areas not of wards are impacted by the proposals and residents are seeking support from their local member to represent their concerns. A review of Planning Committees is likely to bring changes and may reduce the number of committees. It is unlikely however that there will be a significant reduction of work for members in relation to planning matters.

West Northants is an area with good transport links, access to significant motorways and train routes into London and other major cities. It also has land value which are slightly lower than some of its neighbours and fewer planning restrictions in relation to areas designated as AONB or constrained by Topography. It therefore continues to offer significant opportunities for developers and house building. The potential for development will continue to impact on the workload for the Council in dealing with development including planning.

Licensing Committees

West Northamptonshire Council operates two Licensing Committees, as set out above. The first committee is established in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003. The legislation is specific in terms of what can or cannot be delegated. The majority of business is delegated to officers (i.e. non contested applications) or to a sub-committee of 3 members where the application is contested.

The other Licensing Committee deals with taxis and general licensing and its membership replicates that of the alcohol and gambling committee.

Membership of these committees is fixed. It is not anticipated that a change in the overall number of members would have a significant impact on the operation of licensing functions as members sitting on the committees need to have the necessary experience and training and the available members are therefore limited at the current time.

The Council's Licensing Committee discharges most of its functions through licensing sub-committees. These sub-committees meet around 36 times per year to determine the outcome of licensing issues.

Licensing sub-committees are essentially ad hoc, drawing on members of the parent committee depending on availability and the location of the applications or issues under consideration. The time commitment for members can be significant, depending on the issues that must be considered.

When there are several hearings in a short space of time, there is a difficulty in finding available members able to sit on all of them. There is also an issue when the same

applicant comes back on a second or third time and it is necessary to appoint a different panel. Licensing is one area where there can be a shortage of members however this could be overcome by the training and appointment of a wider pool of members.

External Partnerships

Council Members are actively involved in the Partnerships at all levels including delivery. Council members sit on several outside bodies and these are appointed by full Council and the Executive as appropriate. These appointments vary in their nature and complexity. Members are also active in several joint arrangements in which they are acting as the council and not as representatives. Some of the external bodies are separate legal entities and members are required to act in accordance with the relevant legal requirements. Company directorships require councillors to carry out the duties of company directors and act in the interests of the companies on which they serve as set out within companies' legislation. Councillors sit on several voluntary and charitable bodies as trustees. Members are required to understand and carry out the responsibilities of trustees in carrying out these roles. These responsibilities are in addition to their roles as councillors. A full list of outside bodies appointments is presented to council and cabinet for approval after each election in order to make the relevant appointments.

Community Leadership

West Northants Council was created in unprecedented times. Northamptonshire was the most significant Local Government Reorganisation of recent times which disaggregated large county wide services into two new councils. Splitting the County Council frontline and support services created significant complexities in data management, in staffing, finance, accommodation, the provision of technology solutions and direct service provision to customers. The transition work took place across not just the four councils of the West but also the Districts of the North of the County. Staff and members had to learn to work together and deliver this complex transition at a time when they couldn't meet in person or travel. At the same time the eight Councils were placed under significant additional strain responding to the need to deliver enhanced social care provision and respond to unprecedented situations created by the pandemic. Local government reorganisation in Northamptonshire was externally imposed to respond to crises rather than a planned and desired programme of improvement. Nevertheless, West Northants Council has thrived in its first year and come through it with a balanced budget, having closed not less than ten unresolved previous sets of accounts, has delivered a nationally recognised high level of response to provide refugee centres to respond to the crisis facing Afghan refugees and is currently responding again to the crisis arising from the war in Ukraine.

This level of achievement has been a combined effort of the officers and members of West Northants Council and the contribution made by partners and residents to bring about this transformation in public service. There is, however, inevitably a lot more to do, transition in West Northants is ongoing and the next phase will define the future relationship between the council and those it serves.

Residents are facing unprecedented financial challenges with a rising cost of living and many businesses still reeling from the effects of the pandemic. There will be a period of low or no economic growth; unprecedented environmental challenges to reduce carbon and waste; social polarisation between local communities as the effects of the financial challenges are felt; significant legislative change and re-organisation in areas like social care and health; and rising demand for services. All these factors combine to place significant strain on the delivery of local services and the roles of elected members who represent their local areas.

West Northants is a reasonably sized unitary Council and has the potential to provide a real step change in local services in the years ahead, but this depends on the contribution of local members to provide the conduit to Council services for residents in times of change. Local councillors work to champion the views of people and communities and provide local democratic leadership, in a way that is often not recognised. West Northants Council supported by local councillors will work hard to stimulate good local economic growth and engage with local communities encouraging them to contribute to their local areas and play their own part in driving the economy. Councils, and councillors, will need new approaches to do this successfully, such as utilising less formal social networks, participatory democracy, better engagement with young people and a broader influencing role, rather than the more formal traditional structures we associate with the public sector. There are crucial roles for councillors in providing visible civic leadership to enable and support the work of others. Councillors work hard to foster strong relationships within local communities, with Parishes and local voluntary groups to identify individuals from all walks of life, and organisations from all sectors who want to play a role and to inspire others to do the same and more. There is a need for Local ward councillors to reclaim their leadership role as the

accepted and mandated voice of citizens. They need recognition and support, to help them enhance their role as key influencers and door-openers to other community leaders who can make things happen.

Councillors in West Northants are supported to carry out roles in their communities through training and briefing which is detailed in the section above on training and in addition a range of other briefing and training sessions have been held through the year to support members to understand their new roles for unitary council. In order to illustrate how members are currently carrying out their representational roles are attached to this document as Annex A. These documents have been produced by councillors in different parts of the area, in different roles and from different political groups.

Area Committees

Discussion has taken place during transition about whether to follow other local government reorganisations and create area committees. The decision recognised that unlike other councils there was limited capacity and opportunity to consult with communities during the pandemic. It was also felt that the new Council should have the opportunity to decide its future governance arrangements. It is recognised that formal committee arrangements can be a barrier to effective engagement. At the current time the proposal is to establish Local Area Forums as outlined in relation to the ICS and to use this as a way to comprehensively engage with local communities and to involve local elected members without the need for formal committees. The question of Area Committees remains an option open to the Council to consider if a need is identified for a formal decision-making forum.

The Council has recently established a Youth Forum for the Northampton area and is in the process of looking at replicating this model across the whole council area.

The Council has undertaken a comprehensive engagement exercise entitled the Big Conversation which engaged residents and staff (separately) to understand their aspirations for the Council. The Big Conversation is conducted by external consultants with specific expertise with conducting consultation conversations with residents. The consultation engaged with a broad range of individuals and details of the profiles of participants shows the diverse spread of participants.

In relation to the residents' element of the survey the consultants read and analysed 682 written contributions (ideas and comments) as well as a total of 6,332 votes (likes and dislikes). The written contributions were thematically coded, resulting in 29 initial codes, which were then laddered up and organised in 10 themes put into three main categories. In the order of their relevance these were:

- Urban planning, development and services
- Communication and citizen engagement
- Council role, responsibilities and structure

Specifically in relation to the last category they collected 50 written contributions and 421 votes. Their summary of the contributions is set out below:

- Participants main requests related to councillors being more responsive, treating residents well, attending meetings, having clear accountability systems and ways to measure success.

- A popular idea was the creation of a Youth Council or department to address the needs of young people.
- There was a controversial discussion around WNC's area coverage, but despite differing opinions, it appears that participants' main concern was whether WNC will manage to meet the needs of all its residents in such a large area.
- There was a small discussion around the role of the Parish Councils and while some requested more resourcing to support increasing responsibilities, others insisted that Parish Councils should not be lumbered with more tasks.
- The Council will respond to the exercise with specific actions to respond to the points made and this may lead to further changes in the way that local councillors are supported to engage with local communities.

Case Work

The approach to casework varies with different Councillors, in order to give a flavour of the different approaches we have included samples from members from different political groups and different parts of the local authority to show how members work with communities.

Summary and Conclusion

West Northants is a new Council. The area of the Council has recently seen a reduction in council members from 134 to 93 Councillors under Local Government Reorganisation

This submission has assessed the effect of a further change in Council size on local democracy; on the ability of local residents to have proper representation and the need for councillors to effectively serve the needs of residents at a time when so many are in need of support. The consultation exercise undertaken recently with a broad spectrum of residents demonstrates that residents are concerned about the need to ensure that all areas are adequately represented under the new West Northamptonshire Council and that residents are concerned about the responsiveness of elected members. There is therefore a need to maintain sufficient councillors to represent residents and carry out the community leadership role effectively. On a rough estimate each ward could not tolerate the loss (on average) of more than half a member across 31 wards. For these reasons the Council has determined that it would not be able to serve residents adequately if the reduction was greater than 16 and Council size was reduced below 77 members.

The submission has set out a number of areas where future governance needs remain uncertain. For example there may be a need to review the current planning committees, the question of committee or executive arrangements remains subject to review, there is an ongoing question about whether the number of members on the scrutiny committees is too large to support effective debate in scrutiny meetings, there is doubt about whether there will be an ongoing need for a shared services committee as disaggregation progresses and the council is engaged in putting in place local area forums to support the new ICS. The demands of these arrangements on elected members and whether or not there will be a future need for area committees remains subject to ongoing work. Changes under consideration could both increase and decrease the number of councillors required. New area arrangements are likely to operate across all councillors regardless of the number of councillors and shared service arrangements only affect Executive members. The most significant impacts on council size are considered to be those related to the number of planning committees and scrutiny places. The proposed upper figure is based on an assessment of a reasonable reduction in the number of Scrutiny Places ie 11. Therefore whilst it is difficult for the Council to set out definitive governance arrangements to inform the size of the Council it is proposed a reduction to 82 could be readily achieved without impacting negatively on the governance of the Council.

This submission therefore proposes a range of between 77 being the figure below which the council feels representation would be compromised and 82 being the figure which could be readily achieved without impacting governance. The additional proposed reduction of between 77-82 would see the total number of Councillors available to residents reduce between 2021 and 2025 by 39-43%. The Council has undertaken a temperature check against other comparable councils and is satisfied that the ratio of electorate per member within the size proposals in this submission would put the Council in the mid-range of ratio for similar councils at between 4138 and 4406 electors per Councillor

This submission therefore concludes that, taking into account the governance requirements (so far as they can be ascertained), the need for robust scrutiny and other arrangements and the need for effective community leadership, a council size within the proposed range will best meet the needs of West Northamptonshire. The Council therefore recommends a reduction to between 77 and 82 Councillors on West Northamptonshire Council from 2025.

Community Engagement

Councillor Andrew Grant – Conservatives Member for Hackleton & Grange Park ward	Councillor Jonathan Harris – Liberal Democrats Member for Brixworth ward	Councillor Keith Holland- Delamere – Labour Member for Billing & Rectory Farm ward	Councillor Ken Pritchard – Conservative Member for Deanshanger ward	Councillor Daniel Cribbin – Conservative Member for Moulton ward
In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?				
<p>We are active in our communities and attend various functions and events. Telephone and email is also a significant way of dealing with issues in our areas.</p> <p>Attendances at Parish Council Meetings.</p>	<p>I have worked hard to raise my profile, and through newsletters and social media, my contact details are available to all. I have dogs and I walk them every day within Brixworth (which is the largest populous within the ward). I invariably interact with residents almost every time I do this.</p> <p>There are councillors and councillors - my approach is to be recognisable, proactive and accessible rather than just wait for case work to arrive.</p> <p>We do regular targeted community surveys across the ward to identify local issues. This provides the information to work with Parish Councils where possible or to take a progressive approach to issues that need resolving. This enables me to identify patterns and priorities across the ward. Examples of this include rural transport/</p>	<p>The key factors are in relation mainly to the urban areas, particularly the poorer areas. It is not just about Councillors signposting people to services etc., but there is an element of having to guide them through it, which takes time, often having to repeat it. In these areas, there are more housing, street scene, fly tipping, anti-social behaviour, planning issues in particular in relation to HIMO issues that the ward Councillors have to deal with too.</p> <p>Due to the diversity of the urban communities' extra time is spent on asylum applications, domestic abuse and modern slavery issues.</p>		

MEMBER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CASEWORK

	<p>connectivity, the looming cost of living crisis which is already indicating wider cases of hardship and the possible requirement for a community larder, even in this rural area, the isolation of the elderly and greater opportunity for active travel connectivity (cycling/ walking etc.), climate and environmental issues such as clean air, protection of green space and the climate emergency.</p>			
<p>Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?</p>				
<p>The Council does not currently have area committees, localism arrangements are addressed in the main report.</p>				
<p>How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?</p>				
<p>We contribute regular information to parish magazines which are delivered to all properties in the area. We use Social Media i.e. Facebook.</p> <p>Councillors regularly hold surgeries and attend senior clubs.</p> <p>Many councillors also represent WNC outside bodies on top of council meetings and various allocated committees. I have 3 parish councils in my patch. Also, I work and meet with</p>	<p>Facebook page.</p> <p>'Live' listening posts (been on hold since COVID times).</p> <p>Newsletters to all doors 3 - 4 times a year, additional ad hoc newsletters for particular issues within communities.</p> <p>Update posts providing council information on village Facebook pages (announcements/grant schemes or applications processes / COVID information.</p> <p>Councillor website page.</p>	<p>Councillors engage with constituents in various ways. In some areas surgeries work. Labour group councillors do send out newsletters and many use social media to communicate.</p>		<p>In my Ward we do not hold regular surgeries, but all legacy Daventry area councillors do link in with the local MP and attend action days across the WNC area. There are surgeries held across the legacy DDC area and regular coffee mornings with the MP and Councillors. The aim is to have one or two a month across the area. This is a relatively new initiative which links in our MP and ward Councillors as we find this gets a better</p>

<p>local PCSO's on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Parish newsletter to Parish Councils and Meetings. Annual Councillor report to parishes</p> <p>Councillor Annual report to all doors</p> <p>1-1 liaison with Parish Clerks and Chairs</p>			<p>attendance and is of more benefit to our residents.</p> <p>We attend our parish councils when we can. My ward has 12 parish councils and we split our time between these. In my ward each Councillor has been allocated their own villages as a primary contact point. We then pick up the majority of issues in that area.</p> <p>Collectively we all will pick up issues for all areas, but we publicise a particular Councillor for an area so as to maintain a strong personal link for our villages. This is easier to do in our ward as we are all from one political party. In wards where there are members from different parties this is more difficult to achieve thus putting more of a burden on each councillor in terms of workload.</p> <p>We actively publicise our contact details to each parish/village and our door is always open. We are in</p>
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MEMBER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CASEWORK

				<p>regular contact with each parish - often daily discussing local issues with them.</p> <p>Our details are published in local village magazines resulting in the ability for residents to contact us when needed.</p>
<p>Are there any mechanisms in place that help councillors interact with young people, those not on the electoral register, and/or other minority groups and their representative bodies?</p>				
<p>A Youth committee is being set up and will give all councillors the opportunity to engage with young people. Many councillors have close connections with minority groups depending on the area they represent.</p>	<p>There are very few minority groups within this ward. Our biggest challenge is interacting with young people and working and engaging with younger members of the community – it is clearly an area we intend to focus on.</p> <p>Some Parishes are considering Youth Councils, and this is an area I believe I can support them to implement.</p>	<p>A number of our Labour Group have good working relationships with various youth work organisations, minority group umbrella organisations for example, the Northampton Bangladeshi Association, Northampton Town of Sanctuary, the Association of Northamptonshire Supplementary Schools and the Somali community. Our group is diverse, and this helps with how we engage with harder to reach communities.</p>	<p>Parish Meetings – Old Stratford, Wicken, Deanshanger- monthly meetings which last about 2-3 hours plus preparation and travel.</p> <p>Members will attend meetings if asked to and help as needed.</p>	<p>We link in with our parish councils who often have links with these groups. For example in Moulton the Parish Council is very good in catering for young people and other minority groups through the Community Centre and Local Community Connector scheme. As Councillors we actively support this and promote these services to those in the area and also showcase these services with WNC.</p>
<p>Are councillors expected to attend community meetings, such as parish or resident’s association meetings? If so, what is their level of involvement and what roles do they play?</p>				
	<p>There are no specific expectations however, I attend as many Parish Councils and Parish Meetings as I can. For example, I estimate I have</p>	<p>Whenever they can our councillors do attend residents’ meetings and where there are Parish Council meetings. With some</p>		<p>We attend our parishes when we can (we have 12 parishes in our ward. It is often difficult to attend every meeting as often</p>

	<p>attended over forty of these meetings in the 12 months since the start of WNC. I fundamentally believe that my role as a Councillor is to act as a connector for parishes and parish conceals and to join up the dots, share knowledge, experience, and ideas from around the ward.</p> <p>I have facilitated residents' meetings - for example with Futures Group regarding social housing issues.</p> <p>I have also organised Parish Council and West Northants Officer meetings on specific issues. (EG Spatial Consultation).</p> <p>Actively involved in COVID Volunteer Support - identification and co-ordination of volunteers (110 volunteers during peak COVID lockdown period).</p> <p>Active involvement in Homes for Ukraine - liaising with Council and Hosts as well as the establishment of an outreach hub at Brixworth Library.</p>	<p>residents' groups they struggle with participation and a lot of the engagement is via social media. Rejuvenating these groups is a great need.</p>		<p>they fall on the same evening or clash with other council or personal commitments). Our involvement will be listening to local issues and concerns and giving advice about how to solve these based on our extensive knowledge of how local government works.</p> <p>We are all very experienced councillors with over 20 years' experience each. We will feed back to WNC any issues which need to be followed up.</p>
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MEMBER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CASEWORK

	<p>An understanding of, and engagement with the community, allowed for the full allocation of the COVID support grant in a timely and focused way.</p>			
<p>Explain your approach to the Area Governance structure. Is your Area Governance a decision-making forum or an advisory board? What is their relationship with locally elected members and Community bodies such as Town and Parish Councils?</p>				
<p>As elected councillors, we all have a number of Parish Councils or town councils within our ward.</p> <p>Council Colleagues - we attend all meetings to report on the work of the Council both locally and District wide. Taking questions and dealing with issues which may arise.</p>	<p>I take a proactive role in providing information to Parish Councils and Parish Meetings. There is no specific area governance in this ward.</p> <p>I take the perspective that a ward councillor should not just respond to case work and enquiries but rather take a more strategic view to progressively identify and change/champion specific areas of challenge for the ward. For example, the Brixworth ward is extremely rural and there are major challenges regarding public transport and the isolation of older people. I have worked with a local community bus provider and during the last year have re connected 4 villages with a once a fortnight or once a week in the instance of Scaldwell, community bus service.</p>	<p>A number of the Labour Group are also Town Councillors. They also work closely with colleagues who are just Town or Parish Councillors.</p>		<p>The Council does not currently have area committees but Daventry District did have an area committee type group working in the Moulton Ward which met with officers and parish councils to discuss issues relating to planning and highways and other related issues as a result of the new SUE's being built in the ward. This arrangement is currently being considered by WNC with this DDC group being used as a template for future area committees.</p> <p>I was Chairman of the legacy Daventry Standards Committee for many years and I often gave advice to local parish councils about governance issues that arose in my ward.</p>

MEMBER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CASEWORK

Looking forward how could they be improved to enhance decision-making?

As a council we could perhaps involve our parishes more with regard to governance. Having said that NCALC does give good advice to parishes. Issues relating to governance of parishes will fall to WNC and the monitoring officer to resolve initially. To date as members we have not had any issues to deal with on the Democracy and standards committee.

Other

Full Council - Northampton
4/5 per year, last about
3/4 hours plus preparation
and travel to
Northampton.

Northamptonshire Police
Crime and Fire Panel - 4/5
meetings per year – last
about 4 hours plus
preparation and travel to
Northampton.

Northamptonshire PCFP-
Commissioners Complaints
Hearings max 2 per year,
last about 2 hours, plus
prep and travel to
Northampton.

			<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 4/5 meetings per year - last 2+ hours plus prep and travel to Northampton.</p> <p>Pension Board- 4 meetings per year, last about 2/3 hours plus preparation, on Zoom.</p> <p>Local Area Planning Committee - (Vice Chair) Monthly Meetings. last approx. 2/3 hours plus Preparation and travel to Towcester.</p> <p>Plus, briefings previous days last about 1 to 2 hours plus plus any site visits.</p> <p>Substitute at meetings 4/5 per year, average length 3 hours.</p> <p>By choice I do try and attend part of the Cabinet meetings each month for 1 to 2 hours on specific subjects to 'keep abreast' of what is happening.</p>	
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			Adhoc meetings and visits since Jan 1 till 30th April number 17+.	
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Casework

How do councillors deal with their casework? Do they pass it on to council officers? Or do they take a more in-depth approach to resolving issues?

Through Officers, MP's, NHS as necessary to get a satisfied outcome.	I take the approach that if I can deal with the issue directly then that is what I shall do. There are of course instances where officer engagement is required to achieve resolution. I take the view that the building of productive and professional relationships with officers in key directorates is invaluable. As a group we hold 6 - 8 weekly meetings with the most senior heads of functional directorates to review broader issues that may be emerging from casework (pattern identification) and also to deal with any outstanding casework.	Although the Councillors have the same number of electors to other wards, the workload in these areas is heavy. A key role is helping people to navigate the system and having to explain this a number of times which takes time.	Case Work Last year dealing with Floods, Bus, Planning, Gigaclear problems plus other various issues – approx. 2 Hours per week. Training – Pensions, Planning etc all via Zoom etc. Spatial Strategy – Dealing with members' numerous enquiries and this is ongoing.	I have a hybrid approach to case work. We have a members enquiry email which I will send issues through to for follow up in most cases where the issue is complex. This is of great benefit to me. However, the results do not always provide an adequate response for the resident and further follow up and personal intervention is often needed. Therefore I find a more personalised approach of telephoning officers works. If the issue is a simple one then I will often deal with it without involving members enquiries. With over 20 years' experience as a Councillor often matters can we
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MEMBER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CASEWORK

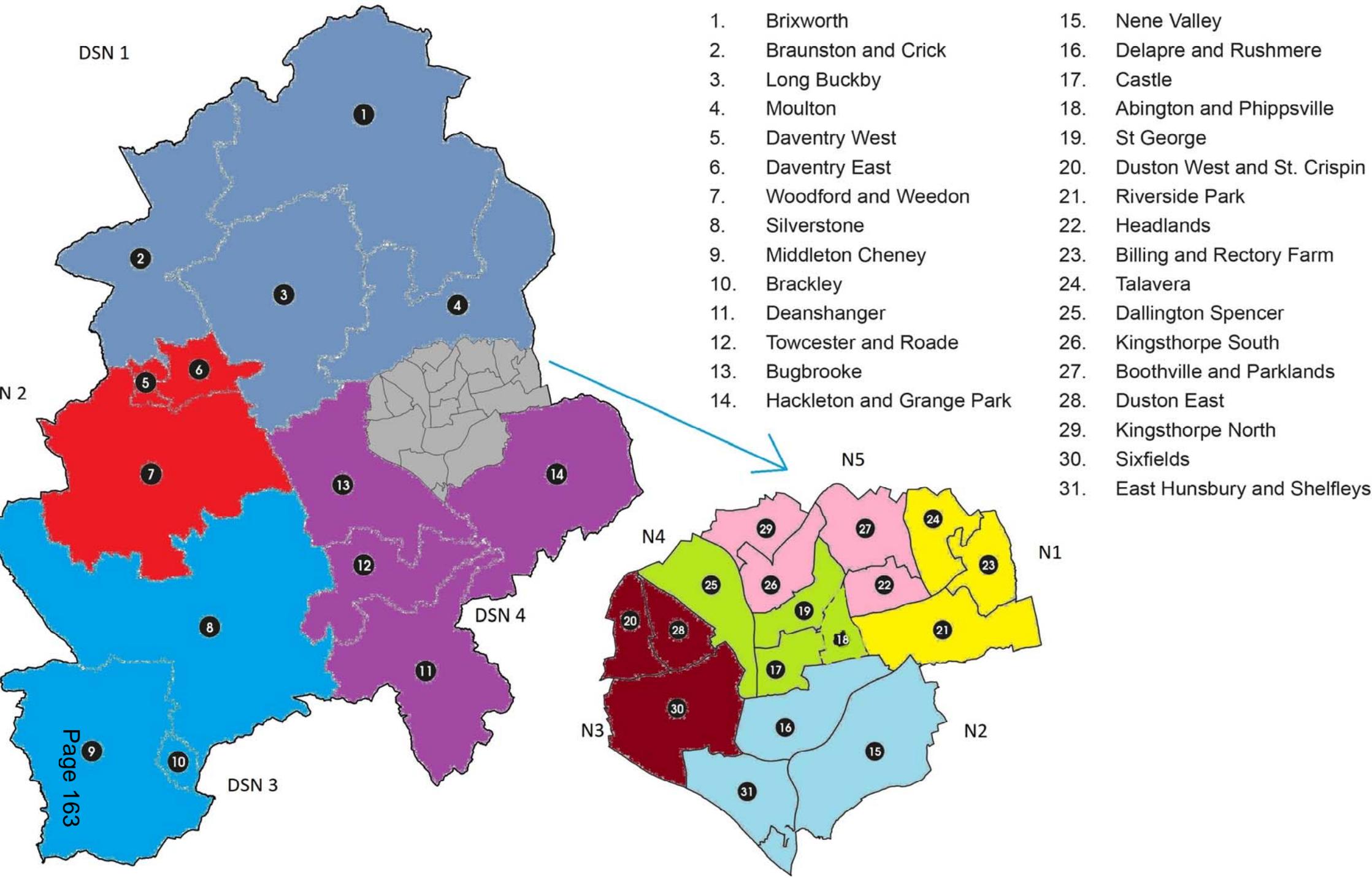
				easily dealt with without too much involvement of the council just by using local knowledge.
What support do members receive?				
A central system of recording and being passed to officers to answer the issues raised.	Support is generally good from Council officers if relationships are built.			Member's enquiry email. Political assistant
How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?				
We need to be flexible in using all types of communication, so all groups feel part of the Council in how they are dealt with.	<p>The option of hybrid meetings is crucial and should be maintained (as per during the pandemic) and ideally enhanced.</p> <p>My personal view is that the legislation that allowed for remote access to committees during the pandemic should not have been removed as it provided greater access, particularly for councillors who work full-time, to be able to join from remote locations. It has been extremely useful from a resident point of view as video calls are now the norm for a large number of people and this has meant greater access to residents without the need for face-to-face meetings or surgeries.</p> <p>A concern the still exists however is that there are many, particularly some senior</p>	Still an area that needs developing. We are fully aware that there are those who do not engage with technology or are digitally excluded due to living conditions/ affordability		Email and zoom meetings have really helped in the past 2 years. However, this is no substitute for face-to-face meetings and getting out there and seeing residents.

MEMBER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CASEWORK

	<p>residents, who do not have access to the internet. What I would like to see is a restoration of outreach services in libraries where councillors can be present and supported by officers - for at least once a week for several hours. To facilitate this, it may be necessary to provide flexible times such as out of office hours.</p>			
<p>In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors?</p>				
	<p>There is a heavy reliance on Twitter and Facebook for the provision of announcements e.g., grant applications which specifically precludes accessibility for many.</p> <p>There is a heavy requirement on online accessibility and the reliance on the ability to complete online forms.</p> <p>Street doctor has been in existence for many years and despite constant reminder from residents there is either a reluctance to use the system or a lack of ability to do so.</p>			<p>Not aware of how we do this. For officers to explain more fully. We certainly as members do seem to get involved in a lot of issues which WNC could deal with at a more "Council" level.</p>

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West Northamptonshire Unitary | Electoral Wards



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WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL

30 June 2022

Report Title	Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report
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1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide a report on the activities of the Audit and Governance Committee over the financial year 2021-22.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Council considers the attached Audit and Governance Committee Annual report which was considered and endorsed by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting held on the 22 June 2022.

3. Issues and Choices

Information

- 3.1 Attached at Appendix A is a report on the work of Audit and Governance Committee over the first year of its operations at West Northants Council.
- 3.2 Council is requested to consider the attached report. The attached report was considered and endorsed by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting held on the 22 June 2022.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1. Policy

- 4.1.1. There are no significant policy implications associated with this report.

4.2. Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1. There are no financial and risk implications associated directly with this report.

4.3. Legal

4.3.1. There are no specific legal risks associated with this report.

4.4. Equality and Health

4.4.1. There are no specific equality and health issues associated with this report.

**Report Author: Martin Henry
Executive Director – Finance
S151 Officer**



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report

2021 - 2022

www.westnorthants.gov.uk

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Annex A – Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference

West Northamptonshire Council

1. Foreward from the Chair of Audit and Governance Committee

The Council is requested to note the work carried out by the Audit and Governance Committee. It is therefore my pleasure to present the Audit and Governance Committee's Annual Report for the year 2021/2022.

It is important to emphasise how important this year 2021/2022 has been. It is our first year as an Unitary West Northamptonshire Council. As such, our Audit and Governance Committee has had a pivotal role to play to ensure the robustness of the foundations of WNC.

As the committee's chair, I would like to thank all the Committee Members for their engagement in all our debates and discussions about the Council's governance arrangements, showing an independent, non party political approach to what we did.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank officers for their reports, which allowed members to challenge our risk and governance processes. As a result, our committee's suggestions should be beneficial for the common good.

This report illustrates how the Audit and Governance Committee has made a positive contribution to the Council's governance and control environment. Our committee, besides closing multiple sets of accounts from predecessor authorities, looked into internal control, risk management, internal audit, anti-fraud and corruption and external audit.

Our committee is looking forward to our second year with measured optimism. It would be unwise not to recognise that 2022/2023 will be a testing year. How we manage our risks, how we prioritise and how we work with our partners will be vital to deliver our vision. The Audit and Governance Committee is privileged to hold a unique position as its existence is to challenge and scrutinise the whole activities of the council. It would be remiss not to note that 2022/2023 will also mark the important strengthening of the Internal Audit department.

With my fellow councillors on the Committee, I am looking forward to a dynamic and progressive Audit 2022/2023

Councillor Cecile Irving - Swift

2. Introduction

This is the first annual report produced by West Northamptonshire Council's Audit and Governance Committee. It is produced in accordance with best practice and shows that the Council is committed to working as an exemplary organisation, operating the highest standards of governance.

This report demonstrates how the Audit and Governance Committee has successfully fulfilled its terms of reference and has endeavoured to improve the Council's governance and control environments.

The purpose of the Audit and Governance Committee is to:

3 | West Northamptonshire Council – Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report

- Provide independent assurance as to the Council's governance, risk management framework and associated control environment;
- Provide independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance and oversee the Council's financial reporting process;
- Act as an advisory committee to the Council and the Cabinet on audit and governance issues.

The Terms of Reference for the Audit and Governance Committee can be found at **Annex A** of this report.

This report sets out the work undertaken by the Audit and Governance Committee for 2021-22 and has overseen good progress in all areas under its supervision.

3. Meetings and Membership

During 2021-22, the Audit and Governance Committee met on the following dates:

- 16 June 2021
- 28 July 2021
- 29 September 2021
- 10 November 2021
- 26 January 2022

There is a cross representation of all parties in accordance with the make-up of the Council. The members for 2021-22 were (excluding substitutes):

Table 1: Audit and Governance Committee Membership 2021 / 2022 as at 31 March 2022:

Councillor	Member status	Party
Cecile Irving-Swift	Chair	Conservative
Charles Manners	Member from 10/11/21	Conservative
Jamal Alwahabi	Member	Labour
John Shephard	Vice chair	Conservative
Rosie Humphreys	Member	Liberal Democrats
Stephen Clarke	Member	Conservative
Jake Roberts	Member	Conservative
Danielle Stone	Member	Labour
Alan Chantler	Member from 29/09/21	Conservative
Michael Brown	Member until 10/11/21	Conservative
Pinder Chauhan	Member until 28/07/21	Conservative

Senior officers from the Council are also present, including the Executive Director - Finance (S151), Assistant Director (Accounting), Chief Internal Auditor and other officers dependent on the subject matter on the agendas in addition to external representation from the Council's External Auditors.

4. Key Activities during 2021-22

Background

The Audit Committee's terms of reference covers 3 main areas:

- Audit
- Corporate Governance
- Financial Reporting

Audit

Terms of Reference:

4.7.2 Audit:

- To consider the annual report of the internal audit service and to consider a summary of actual and proposed internal audit activity and the levels of assurance over the Council's corporate governance arrangements;*
- To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested;*
- To consider and approve the Council's arrangements for the internal audit service;*
- To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale;*
- To consider any high priority recommendations contained in internal audit reports or 'limited assurance' audit reports;*
- To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance;*
- To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor;*
- To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and ensure that it gives the Council good value for money;*
- Through the Executive Director of Finance liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the council's external auditor;*
- Through the Executive Director of Finance commission specific pieces of work from internal and external audit if there is a perceived need expressed by Committee members and sufficient funding available for such work.*

16th June 2021

- *Internal Audit Plan 2021 / 2022* The Audit and Governance Committee had the opportunity to consider and comment on the proposed Audit Plan for 2021 / 2022. The Committee were invited to highlight any areas of focus they wish the service to prioritise within the first six months of the new Council's operations.
- *Internal Audit Update Report* The Chief Internal Auditor provided a periodic update on work delivered by the Internal Audit & Counter Fraud team, as at 31st May 2021.

28th July 2021

- *Internal Audit Update Report* The report sets out the work in progress to the Audit and Governance Committee to provide assurance to the Council. The report is

structured to provide progress of planned audits, a summary of referrals (and outcomes) to the Counter Fraud team, a summary of any other work and a summary of resource issues / assurance.

- *Internal Audit Annual Reports for Predecessor Authorities* A summary of the 2020/21 Annual Internal Audit Reports giving opinion on the adequacy of the systems of control for:
Northamptonshire County Council (NCC),
South Northants District Council (SNC),
Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
Daventry District Council (DDC).
It was recommended that the opinions be noted and that the key issues highlighted in each report be considered as part of the 2021/22 Internal Audit and External Audit programmes of work.
- Annual Audit Letters were presented for predecessor authorities SNC and DDC for 2019 / 2020 and the Annual Audit Letters for 2018 / 2019 were presented for NBC and NCC and the Northamptonshire Pension Fund.

29th September 2021

- *Internal Audit Update Report* The report is structured to provide: Progress of planned audits, a summary of follow up / recommendations, a summary of referrals (and outcomes) to the Counter Fraud team, a summary of any other work and a summary of resource issues / assurance.

10th November 2021

- *Internal Audit Update Report* The report is structured to provide: Progress of planned audits, a summary of follow up / recommendations, a summary of referrals (and outcomes) to the Counter Fraud team, a summary of any other work and a summary of resource issues / assurance.

26th January 2022

- *Internal Audit Update Report* Report to provide the detailed update on progress to complete the 2021/22 approved Audit Plan.
- *External Audit (EY) Annual Audit Letters* for NCC and NBC 2019 / 2020. The NCC Annual Audit Planning Report for 2020 / 2021 was also presented.

Corporate Governance

Terms of Reference:

4.7.3 Corporate Governance:

- (a) *Maintain an overview of all aspects of the Council's Constitution, including Finance Reservations in the Scheme of Delegation, contract procedure rules and financial regulations. Any proposed changes to the Constitution shall be referred to the Democracy & Standards Committee;*
- (b) *Review any issue referred to it within these Terms of Reference by the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer or any body of the Council;*
- (c) *Monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance within the Council;*
- (d) *Approve and monitor the Council's 'whistle-blowing', anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies;*
- (e) *Review and make recommendations on the Council's Annual Governance Statement;*
- (f) *Consider the Council's corporate governance arrangements and make recommendations to ensure compliance best practice;*
- (g) *Monitor the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls;*
- (h) *Consider reports dealing with risk management across the organisation and those reports which identify key risks the Council faces, seeking assurance of appropriate management action;*
- (i) *The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee shall act as the Member Risk Champion;*
- (j) *To have oversight the Council's Performance Management Framework so far as it relates to the Corporate Governance Functions of the committee;*
- (k) *Such other matters as required by law or guidance to be the proper remit of the Audit and Governance Committee;*
- (l) *To receive annually statistical reports and details of complaints received and investigated through the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure which have resulted in payments or other benefits being provided by the Council in cases of maladministration;*
- (m) *Receive on behalf of the Council reports issued by the Local Government Ombudsman into investigations that the Council's actions have amounted to maladministration causing injustice.*

16th June 2021

- *Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme* Draft work programme for the Committee focussing primarily on the first two meetings. This document was further developed during the first year of the Audit and Governance Committee to detail the areas of work covered.

28th July 2021

- *Risk Management Strategy* Presentation of the Risk Management Strategy approved by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Finance.
- *Strategic Risk Register* Presentation of the Strategic Risk Register which has been considered and approved by the Executive Leadership Team.
- *Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme* Updated work programme for the Committee.

29th September 2021

- *Risk Management Deep Dive – Corporate Risks Update, Critical Incidents and Information Security* The purpose of the report was to provide an update on work being undertaken to mitigate both of these strategic risks.
- *Strategic Risk Register* Presentation of the updated Strategic Risk Register for comment.
- *Approval of West Northamptonshires Code of Corporate Governance* Review of the Code of Corporate Governance for West Northamptonshire and approved the document for publication on the Council's website.
- *Legacy Annual Governance Statements* The Annual Governance Statements were approved for: NBC – years 2019 / 2020 and 2020 / 2021, DDC 2020 / 2021 and SNC 2020 / 2021.
- *Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme* Updated work programme for the Committee.

10th November 2021

- *Strategic Risk Register* Update of the Strategic Risk Register as at 30th September 2021. The report highlighted what the main strategic corporate risks had been and what the current risk scores were.
- *Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme* Updated work programme for the Committee.

26th January 2022

- *Risk Register Deep Dive – Corporate Services, Economic Recovery* The Assistant Director for Economic Growth and Regeneration presented the report. It was recommended that the Committee notes the actions that have been taken to mitigate the risk.
- *Strategic Risk Register* Update of the Strategic Risk Register as of 31st December 2021.
- *Annual Governance Statement* NCC Annual Governance Report for 2020 / 2021 was presented for approval.
- *Audit and Governance Committee Work Programme* Updated work programme for the Committee.

Financial Reporting

Terms of Reference:

4.7.4 Financial Reporting:

- (a) *View the Council's annual statement of accounts and specifically consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed, and whether there are any concerns arising from the financial statements, or the audit which should be brought to the attention of the Council;*

(b) Consider reports of the external auditor to those in charge of governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

16th June 2021

- *External Audit Update* For the financial year 2021-22 Grant Thornton have been selected as the external auditors for WNC. However, the external auditors for all of the predecessor councils was Ernst and Young (EY) and where previous years accounts are discussed, EY presented the update report. EY presented the outline plan for the predecessor areas of Daventry District Council and South Northamptonshire Council and a letter from the EY Partner setting out the scheduling for 20-21 audits.
- *Closure of Accounts* The Executive Director of Finance reported on the closure of accounts. In addition to preparing the accounts for West Northamptonshire for the financial year 2021-22 onwards it also has responsibility for closing the outstanding prior year accounts down for: - Northamptonshire County Council - Northampton Borough Council - Daventry District Council - South Northamptonshire Council.

28th July 2021

- *External Audit Update* Verbal updates were given by Grant Thornton and EY. External Audit Planning reports were presented for 2019 / 2020 for NCC and NBC; 2020 / 2021 for SNC, DDC and the Northamptonshire Pension Fund.

29th September 2021

- *External Audit (Grant Thornton)* Grant Thornton provided and update on the progress of the audit for 2021 / 2022.
- *External Audit (EY)* External Audit Results Report for NBC 2019 / 2020, approval of NBC Statement of Accounts 2019 / 2020.
External Audit Results Report for NCC 2019 / 2020 and approval of NCC Statement of Accounts 2019 / 2020.
External Audit Results Report for DDC 2020 / 2021 and approval of DDC Statement of Accounts 2020 / 2021.
External Audit Results Report for SNC 2020 / 2021 and approval of SNC Statement of Accounts 2020 / 2021.
Pension Fund Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2020 / 2021.

10th November 2021

- *External Audit Update (EY)* Verbal updates for NCC 2019-20, NBC 2019-20, NCC 2020-21. Written report presented for NBC 2020-21.
- *External Audit Update (Grant Thornton)* Verbal update on progress of current audit work.

- *Future Appointment of External Auditor* The Committee supported Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1 April 2023.

26th January 2022

- *External Audit (Grant Thornton) Report* to update on the progress of current audit work.

5. Training and Development Activity to support the Committee

Throughout the year, the provision of ongoing training to Members has been the cornerstone of developing new and existing Members. During the year, training and briefing sessions were given for:

- General induction for new and existing Councillors
- Governance/Ethics/Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Relationships/the Role of a Councillor
- Data Protection and GDPR
- Equality in Local Government: The Councillors' Role
- Local Government Finance: The Essentials
- Overview and Scrutiny
- Good and Efficient Chairing of Meetings
- Treasury Management Briefing

In addition, members have access to a committee handbook which provides additional support / information.

6. Future Developments and Plans for 2022 / 2023

Overall, the Audit and Governance Committee want to continue to develop and build on our current achievements. For 2022-23 this will involve:

- Continuing to drive up standards of corporate governance;
- Continuing to equip existing and any new Members to fulfil the Audit Committee's responsibilities by providing or facilitating training on all aspects of the Audit Committee's remit;
- Assisting and supporting officers to promote the work of the Audit Committee and the roles of internal audit, external audit and risk management;
- Supporting the continued production of high quality and compliant statutory accounts;
- Increase training for members of the Audit Committee, ensuring members are best placed to scrutinise effectively the work of the Council;

- Helping to further increase awareness within the Council of governance arrangements, with particular emphasis on information and tackling fraud and corruption; and
- Providing effective challenge to officers, raising awareness for sound internal control arrangements and giving assurance to the Authority that control arrangements are sound.

ANNEX A

EXTRACT FROM THE WNC CONSTITUTION

4.7 *Audit and Governance Committee*

Members 9: Quorum 3. Appointments will be made having regard to the rules on political proportionality.

Purpose:

4.7.1 *The purpose of the Audit and Governance Committee is to:*

- (a) Provide independent assurance as to the Council's governance, risk management framework and associated control environment;*
- (b) Provide independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance and oversee the Council's financial reporting process;*
- (c) Act as an advisory committee to the Council and the Cabinet on audit and governance issues.*

Terms of Reference:

4.7.2 *Audit:*

- (k) To consider the annual report of the internal audit service and to consider a summary of actual and proposed internal audit activity and the levels of assurance over the Council's corporate governance arrangements;*
- (l) To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested;*
- (m) To consider and approve the Council's arrangements for the internal audit service;*
- (n) To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale;*
- (o) To consider any high priority recommendations contained in internal audit reports or 'limited assurance' audit reports;*
- (p) To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance;*
- (q) To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor;*
- (r) To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and ensure that it gives the Council good value for money;*

- (s) *Through the Executive Director of Finance liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the council's external auditor;*
- (t) *Through the Executive Director of Finance commission specific pieces of work from internal and external audit if there is a perceived need expressed by Committee members and sufficient funding available for such work.*

4.7.3 Corporate Governance:

- (n) *Maintain an overview of all aspects of the Council's Constitution, including Finance Reservations in the Scheme of Delegation, contract procedure rules and financial regulations. Any proposed changes to the Constitution shall be referred to the Democracy & Standards Committee;*
- (o) *Review any issue referred to it within these Terms of Reference by the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer or any body of the Council;*
- (p) *Monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance within the Council;*
- (q) *Approve and monitor the Council's 'whistle-blowing', anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies;*
- (r) *Review and make recommendations on the Council's Annual Governance Statement;*
- (s) *Consider the Council's corporate governance arrangements and make recommendations to ensure compliance best practice;*
- (t) *Monitor the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls;*
- (u) *Consider reports dealing with risk management across the organisation and those reports which identify key risks the Council faces, seeking assurance of appropriate management action;*
- (v) *The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee shall act as the Member Risk Champion;*
- (w) *To have oversight the Council's Performance Management Framework so far as it relates to the Corporate Governance Functions of the committee;*
- (x) *Such other matters as required by law or guidance to be the proper remit of the Audit and Governance Committee;*
- (y) *To receive annually statistical reports and details of complaints received and investigated through the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure which have resulted in payments or other benefits being provided by the Council in cases of maladministration;*
- (z) *Receive on behalf of the Council reports issued by the Local Government Ombudsman into investigations that the Council's actions have amounted to maladministration causing injustice.*

4.7.4 Financial Reporting:

- (c) *View the Council's annual statement of accounts and specifically consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed, and whether there are any concerns arising from the financial statements, or the audit which should be brought to the attention of the Council;*
- (d) *Consider reports of the external auditor to those in charge of governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.*

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WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

30 June 2022

Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services: Councillor Mike Hallam

Report Title	Annual Report 2021/2022 of the Democracy and Standards Committee
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Report Author	Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager, tracy.tiff@westnorthants.gov.uk
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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

Monitoring Officer	Catherine Whitehead	13 June 2022
Section 151 Officer	Martin Henry	16 June 2022

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Annual Report 2021/2022 of the Democracy and Standards Committee

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to full Council the Annual Report of the Democracy and Standards Committee for 2021/2022. The report notes the work undertaken by the Committee over its first year.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 17 June 2022, the Democracy and Standards Committee approved its Annual Report 2021/2022 for submission to full Council at its meeting on 30 June 2022.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is for full Council to note the Annual Report 2021/2022 of the Democracy and Standards Committee.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Full Council is recommended to:

a) Note the Annual Report 2021/2022 of the Democracy and Standards Committee.

3.2 Reasons for Recommendations

3.2.1 To highlight the work carried out by the Democracy and Standards Committee in fulfilling its statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of ethical conduct.

3.2.2 To highlight the work carried out by the Democracy and Standards Committee in relation to Member Development and Democracy.

3.2.3 The Democracy and Standards Committee, at its meeting in January 2022 agreed that it would present its first annual report to the Council meeting on 30th June 2022.

4 Report Background

- 4.1 The Democracy and Standards Committee has a number of key responsibilities set out below and it is important that the work of the committee is planned to enable it to meet those responsibilities and ensure that the work of the committee is appropriate. The Annual Report details how the Committee has met these responsibilities.

Key Responsibilities

- 4.2 The terms of reference of the Democracy and Standards Committee are set out in Part 4 Committees in the Council's Constitution. They are as follows:

- (a) to have overall responsibility for the Council's Constitution and decision making governance
- (b) to make necessary decisions in relation to Elections and to have responsibility for the Community Governance and Boundary Reviews on behalf of the Council
- (c) To oversee and develop the Council's Code of Conduct and overall standards of conduct for Council Members, co-opted Members and Parish and Town Councillors of West Northamptonshire

- (a) Reviewing the Council's Constitution and decision-making governance, i.e., the guidance and documents that support decision making, e.g., the Forward Plan guidance and the rules on officer records, and recommending any proposed changes to the Council;
- (b) Conducting polling station reviews and other election functions which it is necessary for the Council to decide (but not the functions delegated directly by statute to the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer);
- (c) Preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in relation to the governance of the area;
- (d) Preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for England.

In relation to the Standards functions of the Democracy and Standards Committee:

- (a) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils;
- (b) Keeping the Member Code of Conduct and, where appropriate, the Planning Code of Conduct under review and make recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the Codes;
- (c) Advising, training or arranging training for Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on matters relating to the Member Code of Conduct and the Planning Code of Conduct;
- (d) Giving general guidance and advice to Members and Co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on Member's interests and keeping under review the Registers of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer and the Register of Gifts and Hospitality;
- (e) Granting dispensations to Members and co-opted Members from requirements relating to interests;
- (f) Keeping the Council's arrangements for dealing with standards complaints under review and making recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the arrangements;
- (g) Assessing and/or referring for investigation allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils, if so requested by the Monitoring Officer;
- (h) Determining allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils;
- (i) To be a consultee in relation to the Council's Officer Code of Conduct;

- (j) Making recommendations to Council with regard to the appointment of Independent Persons;
- (k) Overseeing the Council's Protocol on Member/Officer Relations and making recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the protocol;
- (l) Receiving an annual report from the Monitoring Officer detailing complaints received, complaints dealt with and resolutions achieved;
- (m) Exercising all the Council's functions, as specified in Regulation 2 of the Local Authority (Functions and Responsibility) (England) Regulations 2000 insofar as such functions are not the responsibility of the Cabinet, Council or any other committee of the Council.

4.3.2 It is good practice for a Standards Committee to report to Council on the way in which it has carried out its duties each year to allow the wider membership to comment or make suggestions to the Committee. As this is the first year of the Democracy and Standards Committee, which held its first meeting in July 2021, the Committee presents its first annual report to the full Council meeting on 30th June 2022.

5 Issues and Choices

- 5.1 Full Council is asked to note the Annual Report 2021/2022 of the Democracy and Standards Committee.

6 Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from the proposals.
- 6.1.2 There are no direct manpower implications arising from this report.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 The Council has a legal responsibility under the Localism Act in relation to standards of conduct it also has a duty to respond to complaints made against councillors of allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct; a responsibility to maintain a constitution and to conduct boundary and other reviews as required. The Council has delegated core responsibility for these matters to the Committee.

6.3 Risk

- 6.3.1 There are none specifically.

6.4 Consultation

6.4.1 The Democracy and Standards Committee was consulted on the draft Annual Report 2021/2022 at its meeting on 17 June 2022.

6.4.2 All Members of West Northamptonshire Council will receive a copy of the report at the meeting of full Council on 30 June 2022.

6.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

6.5.1 The Democracy and Standards Committee is a Committee carrying out non-executive functions which are the remit of full Council. The Annual Report is designed to consult the wider membership of the Council on the way that the Committee carries out the Council's statutory functions

6.6 Climate Impact

6.6.1 There are no immediate climate change implications arising from this report.

6.7 Community Impact

6.7.1 There are no immediate climate change implications arising from this report.

7 Background Papers

Meetings of the Democracy and Standards Committee from July 2021 to 30 June 2022

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**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Democracy and Standards Committee

Annual Report 2021/2022

Message from Councillor Suresh Patel, Chair, Standards Committee

This is the first Annual Report of the Democracy and Standards Committee.

It has been a very busy year for the Democracy and Standards Committee. Instead of a complete commentary of all that the Committee has achieved over the year this Annual Report provides a summary of the key highlights of the work the Committee has been engaged in during 2021/2022.

The Democracy and Standards Committee (the Committee) promotes and maintains high standards of conduct.

The work of the Committee includes:

- Having an overall responsibility for the Council's Constitution and decision-making governance
- Making necessary decisions in relation to Elections and having responsibility for the Community Governance and Boundary Reviews on behalf of the Council
- Overseeing and developing the Council's Code of Conduct and overall standards of conduct for Council Members, co-opted Members and Parish and Town Councillors of West Northamptonshire
- Reviewing the Council's Constitution and decision-making governance, i.e., the guidance and documents that support decision making, e.g., the Forward Plan guidance and the rules on officer records, and recommending any proposed changes to the Council
- Conducting polling station reviews and other election functions which it is necessary for the Council to decide (but not the functions delegated directly by statute to the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer)
- Preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in relation to the governance of the area
- Preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for England. Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils
- Keeping the Member Code of Conduct and, where appropriate, the Planning Code of Conduct under review and make recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the Codes
- Advising, training, or arranging training for Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on matters relating to the Member Code of Conduct and the Planning Code of Conduct
- Giving general guidance and advice to Members and Co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on Member's interests and keeping under review the Registers of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer and the Register of Gifts and Hospitality
- Granting dispensations to Members and co-opted Members from requirements relating to interests
- Keeping the Council's arrangements for dealing with standards complaints under review and making recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the arrangements
- Assessing and/or referring for investigation allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils, if so, requested by the Monitoring Officer Determining allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils

I would like to thank everyone for their endeavours to uphold these standards. My thanks are particularly extended to the four Independent Persons for their input into Code of Conduct complaints. I would also like to pass on my thanks to the Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services and Election staff.



Councillor Suresh Patel
Chairman, Democracy and Standards Committee

Introduction

West Northamptonshire Council has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members and the Council aims to have the highest possible ethical standards in place across the Council.

Membership of the Democracy and Standards Committee 2021/2022

The Democracy and Standards Committee comprised the following Members for 2021/2022:

Councillor Suresh Patel (Chairman)
Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Fiona Cole
Councillor Daniel Cribbin
Councillor Gareth Eales
Councillor Jonathan Harris
Councillor Cecile Irving- Swift
Councillor Andrew Kilbride
Councillor Laura Stevenson

Independent Persons

Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council is required to appoint one or more Independent Persons to assist in the Standards process. The functions of the Independent Persons are:

- they must be consulted by the authority and their views taken into account before the authority makes a finding as to whether a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct or decides on action to be taken in respect of that member. (This means that their views must be sought on a decision to take no action where the investigation finds no evidence of breach or, where the investigation finds evidence that there has been a breach, on any local resolution of the complaint, or on any finding of breach and on any decision on action as a result of that finding).
- they may be consulted by the authority in respect of a standards complaint at any other stage; and
- they may be consulted by a member or co-opted member of the Borough Council or of a Parish Council against whom a complaint has been made.

In 2021 the Council appointed the following Independent Persons:

Tom Edwards
Peter Glover
Alan Haynes
John Peachy

During 2021/2022 the Monitoring Officer consulted the Independent Persons on a number cases.

Work of the Democracy and Standards Committee during 2021/2022

During the year the Standards Committee has met five times. Its work consisted of:

- Approval of the Work Programme of the Democracy and Standards Committee
- To action items on the Work Programme
- To undertake a review of the Council’s Constitution
- To undertake a Boundary Review, making recommendations to full Council
- To receive statistics in relation to the number of complaints received and dealt with in respect of the Code of Conduct
- To oversee Member Development and identify further training needs and to identify mandatory training
- Approval of the first Annual Report of the Democracy and Standards Committee

Code of Conduct

Complaints about Councillors are dealt with as part of the Council’s standards process.

This Council’s arrangements for dealing with complaints against Councillors also apply to complaints made about Parish Councillors within West Northamptonshire.

Each Parish Council is responsible for adopting a code of conduct for its Parish Councillors.

Code of Conduct Complaints

During 2021/2022 the Committee was appraised of the completed complaints and any outstanding complaints of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct since May 2021 to January 2022:

Date received	Council	Assessment of the Monitoring Officer	Status
08/06/21 (on the prescribed form)	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint regarding failure to declare a non-pecuniary interest and continuing to participate, debate and vote.	The Monitoring Officer consulted the Independent Person and assessed that there had been a potential breach of the Code - Referred for Investigation	Closed. Investigation taken place – alternative form of resolution recommended - that equalities training be undertaken
06/07/21	Parish Council Complaint regarding alleged bullying.	The complaint is currently on hold whilst the results of another matter are awaited.	Live whilst the results of another matter are awaited
06/07/21	Parish Council Complaint regarding withholding information	No further action – Outside the scope of the Code of Conduct	Closed
19/07/21	Parish Council Complaint regarding comments	No further action. The Councillor was not acting in the capacity as	Closed

	made by the subject Member	Councillor	
20/07/21	Parish Council Complaint regarding comments made by the subject Member	No further action. Outside the scope of the Code of Conduct	Closed
27/7/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint regarding comments made by the Subject Member	No further action – Outside the Scope of the Code of Conduct	Closed
02/08/21	West Northamptonshire Council Five complaints submitted regarding the completion of all sections of the Register of Interest form	The Monitoring Officer was in discussion with the subject Members. Matters resolved informally	Closed
11/09/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint regarding the completion of all sections of the Register of Interest form	The Monitoring Officer held discussions with the subject Member. Matter resolved informally	Closed
13/09/21	Parish Council Complaint regarding failure to declare a non-pecuniary interest and continuing to participate, debate and vote.	The Monitoring Officer consulted the Independent Person and assessed that there had been a potential breach of the Code – Referred for Investigation	Closed. Investigation taken place – alternative form of resolution recommended - that equalities training be undertaken
14/09/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint submitted regarding the completion of all sections of the Register of Interest form	The Monitoring Officer held discussions with the subject Member. Matter resolved informally	Closed
16/09/21	Parish Council Complaint regarding the way that the Parish Council is conducting its business	No further action in accordance with complaints regarding the Member Code of Conduct – Outside the Scope of the Code of Conduct	Closed
03/10/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint received regarding comments made by a Councillor. Further information requested in order that the Monitoring Officer can conduct an initial assessment. Further information not received.	No further information received as requested by the Monitoring Officer therefore this complaint was closed.	Closed
07/10/21	Parish Council	No further action in accordance	Closed

	Complaint regarding publication made by the Parish Council	with complaints regarding the Member Code of Conduct – Outside the Scope of the Code of Conduct	
18/10/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint regarding Council Tax refund	No further action in accordance with complaints regarding the Member Code of Conduct – Outside the Scope of the Code of Conduct	Closed
20/10/21	Parish Council Further information requested on 1/11/21 to enable the Monitoring Officer to undertake an initial assessment – information not received from the complainant	No further action as the requested information was not received.	Closed
27/10/21	West Northamptonshire Council Three complaints submitted regarding the completion of all sections of the Register of Interest form	The Monitoring Officer held discussions with the subject Members. Matter resolved informally	Closed
30/10/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint submitted regarding the completion of all sections of the Register of Interest form	The Monitoring Officer held discussions with the subject Member. Matter resolved informally	Closed
8/11/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint submitted regarding the completion of all sections of the Register of Interest form	The Monitoring Officer held discussions with the subject Member. Matter resolved informally	Closed
10/11/21	Parish Council Complaint regarding an election	No further action in accordance with complaints – Outside the Scope of the Code of Conduct	Closed
17/11/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint submitted regarding a licensed taxi driver	No further action in accordance with complaints regarding the Member Code of Conduct – Outside the Scope of the Code of Conduct. Referred to the Licensing Department.	Closed
19/11/21	Parish Council Complaint submitted in respect of not behaving in accordance with the seven Nolan Principles of public life	No further action. The Monitoring Officer concluded, in consultation with the Independent Person, that the complaint is not suitable to be referred for investigation and that no further action should be taken.	Closed

21/11/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint received and complainant asked to complete the prescribed. Completed form not received.	Monitoring Officer awaiting receipt of the completed complaints form and has now closed the complaint	Closed
22/11/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint received and complainant asked to complete the prescribed form and provide further detail. Completed form not received.	Monitoring Officer awaiting receipt of the completed complaints form and has now closed the complaint	Closed
23/11/21	Parish Council Complaint received regarding communication by the Parish Council.	Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, concluded that this complaint is outside the scope of the Member Code of Conduct and no further action.	Closed
24/11/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint received in respect of alleged bullying	Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, confirmed the complaint is not suitable for formal investigation but might be suitable for alternative resolution. The complainant has been contacted to indicate their views on alternative remedy and to provide further information, which has not been received.	Closed
28/11/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint in respect of alleged bullying and non-disclosure of interests.	The Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, concluded that the complaint is not suitable to be referred for investigation and no further action should be taken.	Closed
28/11/21	West Northamptonshire Council Complaint received in respect of alleged bullying and non-disclosure of interests. Complaint relates to before 1 April 2021.	The Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, concluded that the complaint is not suitable to be referred for investigation and no further action should be taken.	Closed
02/12/21	West Northamptonshire Council A complaint was received that the subject Member did not	The Monitoring Officer concluded that there had been no breach by the subject Member of the Member Code of Conduct. No	Closed.

	declare an interest at meeting.	further action.	
8/12/21	West Northamptonshire Council This complaint relates to before 1 April 2021.	The Monitoring Officer, concluded that the complaint is not suitable to be referred for investigation and no further action should be taken.	Closed
13/12/21	West Northamptonshire Council Three complaints submitted regarding the completion of all sections of the Register of Interest form	The Monitoring Officer held discussions with the subject Members. Matter resolved informally	Closed

Councillor Training and Development

The standards responsibilities of the Committee include advising, training, or arranging training for Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on matters relating to the member Code of Conduct and the Planning Code of Conduct. Member training is a wider issue and particularly for a new Council it is important that there is Member oversight of the Member training programme to ensure that Members have the skills they need to support effective decision making.

Member development is training and development opportunities, activities and programmes that offered to elected members by West Northamptonshire Council which support members to carry out their roles effectively.

West Northamptonshire Council has a robust and comprehensive training and development programme for Councillors that is aimed to equip them with the required knowledge and skills to enable them effectively to carry out their various roles. Councillor training and development comprises both core and mandatory development sessions. The Councillor Induction Programme was designed for both returning and newly elected councillors. West Northamptonshire Council is a new Council, and the induction programme was relevant to all Councillors as there a far greater range of services than any one of the predecessor councils. It was therefore important to provide a programme of training and development that raised awareness and provided vital information to assist members as a newly elected or returning councillor.

Mandatory training includes Licensing training for Members of that Committee, Planning Committee training and all Councillors are required to attend training on the Council's Council Code of Conduct and associated issues. Core training includes a general introduction for all Councillors – "Hitting the ground running" - to bring them up to a good basic understanding of their remit and key local government context. A session on Councillor Roles and Relationships that outlines the different roles of Councillors and officers, expectations of each other and how to create and maintain constructive and effective relationships the differing (but complementary) roles of councillors.

Committee specific sessions are held, including a session for Councillors on the Audit Committee to understand how to be most effective in this role, and how to draw on the insights of auditors to ensure that the public can have confidence in the way the council is managing its financial affairs; sessions in relation to Overview and Scrutiny, such as work programming and "doing good scrutiny - understanding

what makes for effective and impactful scrutiny.” Chairing skills is a key training session for all Chairmen, Vice Chairmen, and prospective Chairmen. A session on Local Government Finance covered an introduction to Local Government Finance and picked out the key figures and issues from the previous year’s budget. In addition to a comprehensive development programme, regular important briefing sessions are held for all Councillors, for example around mineral and waste planning, decarbonisation of the Pensions Fund.

All sessions are currently held remotely over an online audio and web conferencing platform with the aim to maximise attendance. All training and briefing sessions are recorded and saved into a Teams Channel for Councillors to access again at a later date. The Committee received at its meeting in January 2022 statistics in relation to the training sessions held the number of Councillors attending each session.

In addition, the Learning & Development (L&D) Service support Members with their continued professional development (CPD). Officers from L&D are working closely with officers from Democratic Services to ensure the member offer is focused on their needs. A number of resources available for Members within the Council’s e-learning system.

Constitution Review

The Committee established a Task and Finish Group to conduct a review of the Council’s Constitution and make proposals to the Committee for onward recommendations to Cabinet and full Council. The Committee approved a consultation programme for the Constitution review which was a consultation exercise with elected Members, NCALC and the general public that took place during August 2021. The results of the consultation exercise, together with proposed amendments put forward by Officers, were considered by the Task and Finish Group over two meetings in September 2021. The outcome of those meetings was a revised Constitution that was approved by full Council at its meeting in December 2021.

Local Government Boundary Review

The Committee established a Task and Finish Group lead on putting forward suggestions for the submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for the Local Government Boundary Review for West Northamptonshire Council. The draft submission document as proposed by the Committee will be presented to full Council at its June 2022 meeting for consideration and approval. The submission document will then be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The Task and Finish Group of the Democracy and Standards Committee will then continue further work on this review, concentrating on ward boundaries.

Future Activity

The Work Plan for 2023/2024 will be considered by the Democracy and Standards Committee at its January 2023 meeting. It will include standing annual items but will evolve as necessary during the year, taking into account any developing issues pertaining to democracy and standards.



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Council
30 June 2022

Report Title	Updates to the Constitution
Report Author	Catherine Whitehead catherine.whitehead@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

Monitoring Officer	Paul Hanson on behalf of Catherine Whitehead	20/06/2022
Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer)	Martin Henry	21/06/2022
Other Director/SME	Sarah Reed	TBC

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Draft revised Constitution (available on request from democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to:
- 1.1.1 Provide an update on behalf of the Democracy & Standards Committee on a number of minor updates to the Constitution made by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority;
 - 1.1.2 Propose revised arrangements for Priority Opposition Motions set out at Paragraph 26 of the Council Procedure Rules;
 - 1.1.3 Recommend the revised Constitution for adoption.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Constitution for West Northamptonshire Council was formally adopted by the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority prior to vesting day (1 April 2021). A major review of the Constitution was then undertaken by this committee in the autumn of 2021, reporting to Council in December 2021.

- 2.2 Since that time, a number of minor or consequential changes have been made to the Constitution by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority. These are summarised in section 5 below. These changes have generally been made to correct errors that have been identified or to ensure the Constitution is up-to-date, for example by reflecting changes to the leadership structure.
- 2.3 Following the Council meeting on 21 April 2022, the Democracy and Standards Committee was asked to review the arrangements that were put in place for the consideration of Priority Opposition Motions. This is expanded on in Section 5 below.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Council:
- a) Note and approve the updates to the Constitution as set out in Section 5; and
 - b) Approve the revised arrangements for Priority Opposition Motions, also set out in Section 5 below.

4. Reason for Recommendations

Keeping the Constitution under regular review will help ensure that it is legally compliant, complete, reflects the character and culture of the authority and supports effective and efficient decision making.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 Following the review undertaken by the Democracy and Standards Committee in the autumn of 2021, the Council adopted a revised Constitution at its meeting on 2 December 2021. The Monitoring Officer has a standing delegation to make updates to the Constitution, for example to ensure it reflects changes to the structure of the Council, to ensure compliance with the law or to correct errors that have been identified.
- 5.2 A number of such changes have been made since December 2021. These are summarised below:
- 5.2.1 The Terms of Reference for the Planning Policy Committee at paragraph 5.2.17 (a) (p.69) have been corrected to read: *“To oversee the preparation of Local Plans to ensure they meet the “tests of soundness” set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.”* Reference to “West Northamptonshire Local Plan” has been removed as this is not an accurate reflection of the current position.
 - 5.2.2 In the scheme of delegation to officers, the areas of responsibility have been clarified to reflect the most up-to-date structure (i.e. the creation of the position of Director of Communities and Opportunities, Director of People etc (p.178).
 - 5.2.3 In the scheme of delegation to officers (p.187), the authority to sign any document on behalf of the Council has been allocated to the Monitoring Officer, for any purpose unless signing the document has otherwise been delegated to an Executive Director, the Chief

Executive, the Assistant Chief Executive, Director or Proper Officer within this constitution or by law.

- 5.2.4 Substitutions: this section has been updated to remove a practical obstacle in relation to substitute members, where a significant proportion of the members have declared an interest and must therefore withdraw from a meeting (p.40) “It is not possible to substitute for part of a meeting only unless more than 50% of members of the substantive members have declared an interest or are unable to attend and there is (in the opinion of Monitoring Officer) a risk that the meeting could become inquorate for one or more item.
- 5.2.5 Planning Protocol (p.151) Clarified to read “Ward Members *are welcome* to attend all site visits and invited to attend the Planning committee meeting in respect of applications within or affecting their wards.” to avoid confusion about formal invitations being issued.
- 5.2.6 Scheme of delegation (p.181) removed reference to consultation with cabinet member in the case of fixed term contract extensions as this is unnecessarily onerous and would appear to be an error.
- 5.2.7 Glossary (p.279) expanded the wording for chair/chairman “The term Chair or Chairman may be used in this constitution and relevant documents to describe the role referred to as Chairman in s3 Local Government Act 1972. As such the holder may decide how they wish to be addressed and described during their term of office.”
- 5.2.8 Priority Opposition Motion. Following the Council meeting held on 21 April 2022, the Democracy and Standards Committee was asked to review the rules that were adopted in December 2021 for the priority opposition motion. The existing rules (p.29) state:

Priority Opposition Motion

A member nominated by the Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration may move a single Priority Motion on notice (in accordance with Rule 28). The total time allowed for the item will be 15 minutes.

The proposer may speak for up to five minutes, the seconder may speak for up to three minutes, and the member responding on behalf of the Administration may speak for up to five minutes. The Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration may exercise a right of reply for up to two minutes before the motion is put to the vote. No other questions or debate shall be allowed.

- 5.2.9 The committee was invited to consider the existing rules and determine if any changes should be recommended to Council. The committee has proposed the following changes:

Priority Opposition Business

26.1 *A member nominated by the Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration (subject to 26.3 below) may speak to a single item of priority opposition business. The total time allowed for the item will be 15 minutes.*

26.2 *The member referred to in paragraph 26.1 may speak for up to five minutes, a member responding on behalf of the Administration may speak for up to five minutes. The Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration may exercise a right of reply for up to five minutes. The matter under discussion shall not be put to the vote and no other questions or debate shall be allowed.*

26.3 *The second largest political group not forming part of the administration shall be allocated one item of priority opposition business per year. The meeting at which this is allocated shall be determined by the Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration.*

6. Issues and Choices

6.1 The issues and choices insofar as they relate to Opposition Priority Motions are set out in section 5 above.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

7.1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly as a result of the Constitution review process.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 Every local authority is under a legal duty to prepare and keep up to date its Constitution (see Appendix B). In particular, section 9P of the Local Government Act 2000 requires the Constitution to contain:

- a) a copy of the authority's standing orders;
- b) a copy of the authority's code of conduct;
- c) such information as the Secretary of State may direct; and
- d) such other information (if any) as the authority considers appropriate.

7.2.2 Regular review of the Constitution helps to ensure these legal requirements are met.

7.3 Risk

7.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from this report. Reviewing the Constitution helps to reduce any risks that could arise as a result of the Constitution not properly supporting decision making and delivery of Council services.

7.4 Consultation

7.4.1 Consultation will be undertaken with this committee prior to recommendations being submitted to Cabinet.

7.5 **Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

7.5.1 Not applicable to this report.

7.6 **Climate Impact**

7.6.1 There is no climate impact to consider in relation to the recommendation.

7.7 **Community Impact**

7.7.1 None specific.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None

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**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

CONSTITUTION

**Approved by the Council
2 December 2021**

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1.0 SUMMARY AND EXPLANATION

General

- 1.1 The West Northamptonshire Council has agreed this Constitution. The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by the law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose. The Council must operate in accordance with its Constitution and the rules set out in it.
- 1.2 The Constitution is divided into different parts which set out the basic rules governing the Council's business as well as some of the detailed rules. The Council has chosen to make decisions through a Leader and Cabinet and this is explained below.
- 1.3 The Council's current corporate objectives and priorities are set out in its Corporate Plan. This is available on the Council's website together with the Council's Values.
- 1.4 The Constitution ensures that the Council's decision-making and governance arrangements support the corporate aims, objectives and priorities effectively and efficiently. It also ensures that the Council meets its legal duties.

The Constitution and its content

- 1.5 The Constitution is divided into nine parts:

Part 1 - Summary and Explanation: Provides an explanation of what the Council is and how it works.

Part 2 – Public Participation: Explains how the public can get involved in Council decision making.

Part 3 – Council: Explains what the Council is and how the full body of all elected Members meet together to make decisions.

Part 4 – Committees: Sets out the role of each of the different committees of the Council and how they make decisions.

Part 5 – Executive: Explains the role of the Executive which in West Northamptonshire is called the Leader and Cabinet. The members of Cabinet have portfolios which mean they have special areas of responsibility, but meet together to make decisions.

Part 6 – Joint Arrangements: Sets out the joint arrangements that the Council has made to work in partnership with other councils and where decision making is shared by two or more councils. Sometimes this is because there is a shared service delivered on behalf of two or more councils.

Part 7 – Overview and Scrutiny: Explains the arrangements the Council has put in place to ensure that decisions are scrutinised by other members of the Council not directly involved in the decision making.

Part 8 – Councillors: Provides more details about how councillors operate as individuals and the measures in place to ensure that councillors maintain high standards of conduct. It also shows what payments are made to councillors.

Part 9 – Officers: Explains the role of the Council's staff, what the management structure of the Council is and which officers make decisions for the Council. It also explains the measures in place to ensure that officers making decisions maintain high standards of conduct and make decisions in line with expectations set by councillors.

How the Council operates

- 1.6 The Council is made up of 93 councillors (excluding vacancies) who are elected every four years. Councillors are democratically accountable to residents of their electoral ward. The overriding duty of councillors is to the whole community of West Northamptonshire, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.
- 1.7 All councillors meet together and this is called full Council. Meetings of the Council are normally open to the public. At these meetings, the councillors decide the Council's overall policies and set the way that the budget will be spent and invested each year. The Council appoints the Executive Leader who in turn appoints councillors to the Cabinet.
- 1.8 The Council also decides on the delegation of certain functions to the Cabinet and some committees and joint committees. The Council holds the Cabinet to account through the Overview and Scrutiny function, which also provides an opportunity for pre-decision involvement in decisions and policy development for the wider membership.
- 1.9 In performing their various roles, councillors are supported by the officers who give advice and implement decisions. Some decisions are delegated to officers to ensure that the Council can act quickly and efficiently. Officers also ensure the Council acts within the law and uses resources efficiently and effectively.

Roles of councillors

- 1.10 Councillors will:
 - (a) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out several strategic and corporate management functions;
 - (b) contribute to the good governance of the Council and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making;
 - (c) effectively represent the interests of the communities and individual constituents in their own ward;
 - (d) respond to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially;
 - (e) participate in the governance and management of the Council;

- (f) maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics and observe the Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members and the other Codes and Protocols adopted by the Council and set out in Part 8 of this Constitution;
- (g) share responsibility with officers of the Council to act as effective and caring corporate parents for looked after children;
- (h) be available to represent the Council on other bodies; and attend meetings of bodies to which they are appointed.

1.11 Councillors are entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme set out in Part 8.6 of this Constitution.

The Chair of the Council

1.12 The Chair is elected by the full Council at its Annual Meeting each year, which is usually held in May. The Council also elects a Vice Chair, who acts as Chair when the Chair is not available. The Chair (and the Vice Chair) undertake civil and ceremonial roles on behalf of the Council and represent the Council at events.

1.13 Although the Chair is an elected politician and is entitled to vote, they are expected to be impartial in the way they carry out the role.

1.14 The Chair presides over meetings of the full Council to ensure that business is carried out effectively and has responsibilities for upholding and interpreting this Constitution. Their ruling about this or as to any proceedings of the Council cannot be challenged at any meeting of the Council, although their interpretation must have regard to the purposes of this Constitution and must be reasonable. Neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair can be the Leader or a member of the Cabinet.

1.15 The Chair is responsible for, and must conduct themselves in accordance with the following:

- (a) upholding and promoting the purposes of this Constitution and interpreting it with appropriate advice when necessary;
- (b) presiding over meetings of the Full Council to ensure that business is carried out efficiently, effectively and fairly between the different political groups whilst preserving the rights of councillors and the interests of members of the public;
- (c) ensuring that at Council meetings, matters of concern to local communities can be debated through the appropriate councillors;
- (d) ensuring that councillors who are not on the Cabinet or who do not hold the Chairpersonship of a main Committee are able to hold those office holders to account;
- (e) promoting public involvement in the Council's affairs and acting as a contact between members of the public, organisations and the Council; and
- (f) undertaking such other roles as may be placed upon the office from time to time by the Council.

Council Business

1.16 At its Annual Meeting (usually in May) the Council will approve its planned calendar of business and schedule of meetings but nothing prevents changes being made to the calendar of business and schedule of meetings during the following 12 months.

1.17 There are four types of Full Council meeting:

- (a) Annual meetings – take place every year (generally in May) to appoint committees etc;
- (b) Ordinary meetings – there are a minimum of five Ordinary meetings per year;
- (c) Extraordinary meetings – meetings called for specific decisions;
- (d) Special purpose meetings - e.g. for the appointment of honorary aldermen and alderwomen.

Meetings are conducted in accordance with the Meeting Procedure Rules in Part 3.2 of this Constitution.

1.18 There are some decisions that can only be taken by the full Council. The Council sets the Budget and the Policy Framework for the Council. All decisions must be taken within the Budget and in accordance with the policy set out and only Council can change them. Details of these are in Part 3.

1.19 The Council is responsible for electing (and can remove) the Leader who in turn will appoint a Deputy Leader and a Cabinet. The Council (mainly through the Overview and Scrutiny process and call-in of decisions) is ultimately responsible for holding the Cabinet to account.

How decisions are made

1.20 The Cabinet is the part of the Council responsible for most day-to-day decisions. The Cabinet is made up of a Leader appointed by the full Council and between two and nine other councillors appointed by the Leader.

1.21 When Key Decisions (these are specific significant decisions defined in Part 5) are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Council's Forward Plan and a public notice is placed on the Council's website. If these decisions are to be discussed at a meeting of the Cabinet, this will generally be open for the public to attend except where Confidential or Exempt Information (defined in Part 5) is being discussed. The Cabinet generally has to make decisions that are in line with the Council's overall policies and budget. If it wishes to make a decision that is not consistent with existing policies and budget, this must usually be referred to full Council to decide.

Principles of Decision Making

1.22 All council decisions will be made in the best interests of the communities of West Northamptonshire and in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) take into account all relevant considerations and ignore those which are irrelevant
- (b) compliance with finance, contract and all other procedure rules, statutory requirements, guidance and codes of practice
- (c) compliance with the Budget and Policy Framework, including directorate and service budgets, business plans and any other policies, arrangements, procedures, rules, practices or protocols in force from time to time

- (d) due consultation and proper advice is taken and consideration of alternative options before decisions are reached
- (e) impartiality and an absence of bias, pre-determination or conflicts of interest
- (f) any interests are properly declared
- (g) reasons are given for decisions
- (h) decisions are properly recorded and published
- (i) decisions are proportionate to the desired outcome
- (j) assessing the impact on human rights, equality, diversity and sustainability
- (k) a presumption in favour of transparency and openness
- (l) clarity of aims and desired outcomes
- (m) records are kept of decisions taken and reasons are given for them
- (n) following best practice, securing best value and making the most efficient and effective use of resources

- 1.23 The core objective is to ensure that decisions are made at the most appropriate level closest to the local or immediate point of service delivery, or at the level that is closest to those who will be affected by the decision in question.
- 1.24 The Council has set out to achieve this by putting in place a system of delegation known as a ‘cascade of powers’. Under this system its operational powers have been delegated to the fullest extent and range possible through the hierarchy of the Cabinet, committees and the officer structure. Under this system, power follows responsibility so powers ultimately rest where they need to be so that the decisions that need to be taken to deliver the authority’s objectives can be taken at the most appropriate level.
- 1.25 Officers tend to take the majority of operational day-to-day decisions because they operate at the point closest to service delivery. For this reason, the Council has decided that unless a power or function is specifically reserved by law or in this Constitution to the Council, the Cabinet or a committee, it stands delegated to officers to the fullest extent necessary to enable them to do everything that their role requires of them from time to time.
- 1.26 Any ambiguity that may arise as to whether a decision-maker is authorised to take any particular decision is to be resolved by reference back up through the hierarchy of the ‘chain of cascade’, and legal advice should be sought if necessary. There should, however, be a presumption against referring (or calling) decisions back up the chain unless it is absolutely necessary to do so.
- 1.27 Individual decision-makers may nevertheless consider it would be prudent for a decision that would otherwise fall to be taken by them to instead be taken (or ratified) by:
- (a) in the case of an officer, by their manager or another officer with equivalent authority
 - (b) in the case of a decision-maker under a bespoke delegation, by the person or body who made that delegation
- 1.28 Individual decision-makers should also have particular regard as to whether a decision should be made in conjunction with any officer or member and the need to consult and take advice as appropriate.

Overview and Scrutiny function – Part 7

- 1.29 The Council operates an Overview and Scrutiny function that undertakes a number of roles including monitoring the decisions made by the Cabinet, advising the Council on forthcoming decisions, and the development of policy. The function can call-in a decision which has been made by the Cabinet but not yet implemented. This enables consideration as to whether the decision is appropriate and the function may recommend that the Cabinet reconsiders the decision. Further details of the call-in process are set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 7.2.
- 1.30 The Overview and Scrutiny function will develop a work programme and support policy development, providing scrutiny decisions are made where appropriate, holding decision-makers to account and calling-in executive decisions to review any concerns about the making of the decision. Further details are set out in Part 7. Overview and Scrutiny contributes to the work of the Cabinet and the Council as a whole by providing:
- (a) robust arrangements for holding the Cabinet to account;
 - (b) effective scrutiny of cross-cutting issues and other public sector bodies;
 - (c) clearly defined arrangements and responsibility for scrutiny of strategic and other issues; and
 - (d) multi-agency scrutiny of local issues within communities.

Community Forums and Boards – Part 4

- 1.31 The Council may decide to establish Community Forums and Boards. These may be established to respond to a specific issue or meet on a regular basis to bring forward issues in a local area to the attention of the Council. They can also be based around specific groups or issues across the whole local authority area. The informal nature of the forums allows participation from representatives of other local bodies such as parish councillors. Community Forums do not have formal decision-making powers but they are able to make representations to the appropriate Committee, Councillor or officer.

The Council's staff – Part 9

- 1.32 The Council has employed staff working in many different ways to deliver services. Staff are referred to in this Constitution as officers. They give advice, implement decisions and manage the day-to-day delivery of services, ensuring that they operate impartially and work with all elected members. The most senior of these is the Chief Executive who is also the Head of Paid Service. All officers are required to ensure that the Council operates within the law and uses its resources wisely. The Protocol which governs the relationships between officers and Members of the Council is in Part 8.4.

Public Participation – Part 2

- 1.33 Participation arrangements for members of the public, residents of the area, businesses, community organisations, visitors and the Council's customers are set

out in Part 2. Some of these are legal rights, whilst others depend on the Council's own processes.

- 1.34 Where members of the public use specific Council services, for example as a parent of a school pupil, they have additional rights. These are not covered in this Constitution.

2.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 2.1 In West Northamptonshire, residents, community organisations, businesses and visitors are able to get involved in the management of the area. The Council encourages and actively supports people getting involved. Our governance is designed to make it easy for people to give us their views to help influence decision making and the actions the Council takes. To encourage involvement this section has gathered together the key ways in which the public and others outside the Council can get involved.

Councillors

- 2.2 The area of West Northamptonshire Council is divided into 31 administrative areas, called wards. Each ward has three elected councillors who are elected every four years. There is more information about elections and how to register to vote on the Council's website. Although they have responsibility for the whole of the Council area, councillors also have a particular responsibility to the residents of their ward. Details of who your local councillor is, and how to get in touch with them are available on the Council's website. A councillor may also hold scheduled sessions where residents can meet them face to face to talk about issues and to get advice and ask their councillor to raise matters with the Council on their behalf.

Cabinet

- 2.3 The Cabinet consists of the Leader and Cabinet Members who are responsible for particular services and activities. You can check who the Cabinet Member is for a particular matter on the Council's website. The Cabinet has developed a Forward Plan which is also published on the Council's website. It indicates the most important decisions (known as Key Decisions) which the Cabinet will be taking in the future and when this is likely to be done, so that anyone can attend the public meetings considering those decisions.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees

- 2.4 The Council has three Overview and Scrutiny committees which deal with separate parts of the Council's work. These committees help the Council to develop new policy and act as a "critical friend" to hold decision makers to account. Overview and Scrutiny committees also carry out investigations and reviews, and welcome suggestions from residents and businesses as to areas they could investigate.

Community Forums and Boards

- 2.5 Community Forums and Boards may take place on specific topics and/or in local areas. They are not formal meetings and this gives them a more relaxed way of working. A Forum or Board can be made up of residents (including sections of residents such as young people), community and voluntary groups, public sector bodies and local businesses.

Can I attend meetings?

- 2.6 Meetings of the Council, the Cabinet and the committees are open to the public. You can also usually watch them live through our website ([West Northamptonshire Council - YouTube](#)).
- 2.7 There are some occasions when we need to discuss confidential details. We can only do this when there are legal reasons such as personal information being discussed, which means meetings have to go into private session. When this happens, a formal decision is made to exclude the press and public from the meeting while these issues are discussed. As soon as the item has been dealt with, the public can return to the meeting unless there are other confidential items. If an agenda item is to be considered in private, this will be clearly marked on the agenda for the meeting.
- 2.8 The dates and times of our meetings are published on our website and agendas are made available at least five days ahead of the meeting, so you can see what items will be discussed.

Can I speak at meetings?

- 2.9 You can speak at Council, Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings. Statements must be relevant to a matter that is on the agenda for the particular meeting.
- 2.10 If you wish to make a statement, you must register to do so by 12 noon on the day of the meeting by contacting Democratic Services (democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk). You will normally be expected to attend the meeting to read out your statement. You will have a maximum of 3 minutes in which to make your statement, which will be taken into account during the subsequent debate on the matter.
- 2.11 Up to three speakers are permitted to speak on any agenda item although this may be extended at the Chair's discretion.
- 2.12 You can also put questions (up to a maximum of two) to the Chair of the Council, members of Cabinet and Chairs of committees. Questions are not generally read out because they are circulated prior to the meeting; but if they are, they must be no longer than 3 minutes.
- 2.13 You will need to submit the question in writing which must be received by 10.00am, three clear working days before the meeting of the Council at which it is to be asked. Questions need to be framed so as to elicit information rather than make a statement.
- 2.14 The total time allowed for questions is a maximum of 30 minutes, but there is a discretion of the Chair who, in exercising their discretion, will have regard to the business to be transacted at the meeting and the objective of ensuring that the meeting is managed efficiently.

Petitions

- 2.15 The Council welcomes petitions and recognises that petitions are one way that people express their concerns about issues affecting communities within the West Northamptonshire area.

- 2.16 Details of the Council's Petition Scheme can be found on the website ([Petition the council | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk)) or can be requested by post from Democratic Services, West Northamptonshire Council, One Angel Square, 4 Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED.

Budget and Policy Development

- 2.17 The Council is particularly keen to encourage public participation in the preparation of the Council's budget and in the development of policies so that our residents are able to directly influence the framework of decisions. When setting the Budget or agreeing policy we will consider options to ensure the maximum opportunity for contribution before a decision is finally made by all the councillors sitting in full Council.

Public Consultation

- 2.18 We try to consult as widely and as fairly as possible. Sometimes, with matters such as planning and licensing applications, there are specific statutory consultation processes that the Council must follow. Other than this, we will try to consult on important decisions as widely as possible and give feedback about the outcome of the consultations.
- 2.19 We follow principles of good consultation (called Gunning Principles) when we consult. This means that we make sure:
- (a) consultation is carried out at a stage when the Council has not made up its mind on any proposals;
 - (b) we give enough information and reasons for any proposals to enable you to understand their impact and respond;
 - (c) we give you enough time to consider our proposals and respond to them; and
 - (d) we will consider all responses to the consultation when finalising the decision.

Wider Engagement

- 2.20 The Council is keen to engage more generally with the public and in particular with those who are seeking British Citizenship and young people about citizenship and the role of Local Government in the structure of British Democracy. To do this we may run specific engagement sessions or support schools and others in the conduct of their own elections. Details of any sessions will be available on the Council and Democracy Section of our Website or you can contact Democratic Services to request specific involvement.

Social Media

- 2.21 You can also get updates from West Northamptonshire Council on social media and by following the Council's social media.
- 2.22 Many local councillors have their own social media accounts too.

Community Rights

- 2.23 The Localism Act 2011 introduced rights and powers for individuals and communities to take over public services, community assets and influence planning and development.
- 2.24 The community rights are a set of powers that give local people a greater say over how their community develops. They give local people the chance to decide what is built and how their area should develop. Groups of people have the chance to deliver local services and develop them into community enterprises. More details can be found on the website or by contacting Democratic Services by email (democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk) or by post or in person (1 Angel Square, Angel St, Northampton NN1 1ED).
- 2.25 There are five Community Rights:
- (a) **Community Right to Bid** - allows communities and parish councils to nominate buildings or land for listing by the local authority as an 'asset of community value'. If the asset comes up for sale, the community can 'pause' the sale and take up to six months to find the funding required to buy the asset.
 - (b) **Community Right to Build** - gives communities the power to build new shops, housing or community facilities without going through the normal planning process. It gives local organisations the right to bring forward small-scale community-led developments.
 - (c) **Community Right to Challenge** - gives local groups the opportunity to express their interest in taking over a local service where they think they can do it differently and better.
 - (d) **Community Right to Reclaim Land** - allows communities to challenge councils and some other public bodies to release their unused and underused land so that it can be brought back into use.
 - (e) **Community Asset Transfer** - the transfer of management and/or ownership of appropriate land or buildings from a public body to a community-based organisation, at less than market value, in order to promote social, economic or environmental well-being.

Museums

- 2.26 The Council has powers to operate a museum service for public benefit according to the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and the Local Government Act 1972. The museum holds collections of objects, artworks and archives for public benefit, which should not be distributed for private gain or profit. The museum is a permanent institution in the service of the public, which acquires, cares for, researches, and makes accessible the collections in its care for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. It is operated by statutory regulation and judicial process and is part of the Arts Council England Museum Accreditation scheme, or where this is not possible, follows Museum Accreditation practice.

3.0 FULL COUNCIL

3.1 Role

3.1.1 The full Council (or the Council) is the term for the assembly of all of the elected members who sit on the Council. There are 93 members on the West Northamptonshire Council and they make some decisions together, including:

- (a) Setting the Council’s budget;
- (b) Agreeing the overarching policy of the Council – called the Policy Framework;
- (c) Electing the Executive Leader;
- (d) Appointing the Council’s non-executive committees.

3.2 Executive and Non-Executive Functions

3.2.1 Decisions taken by the Council are divided by law into two types: Executive and Non-Executive.

3.2.2 The law¹ specifies which functions are the responsibility of the Council, which are the responsibility of the Executive (Cabinet), and which may (but need not) be the responsibility of the Executive (Local Choice functions). All other functions not specified are the responsibility of the Executive.

3.2.3 The Council operates a Leader and Council form of Executive. References to ‘the Executive’ means the Leader and Cabinet, with Executive decisions being taken by the Leader, Cabinet, Cabinet committees, Cabinet Members or officers under delegated authority in accordance with, and in order to implement, the Budget and Policy Framework.

3.2.4 Non-Executive functions are either reserved to the Council or delegated by the Council to committees, sub-committees, officers or another local authority.

3.3 Local Choice Functions

3.3.1 The law² describes the decisions that are a matter of local choice. It is up to the Council to decide whether or not these functions should be the responsibility of the Executive. Having regard to government guidance, the Council has decided that Local Choice functions will be Executive or Non-Executive as set out in the table below:

LOCAL CHOICE FUNCTION	STATUS OF FUNCTION	DELEGATION TO OFFICERS	DELEGATION TO NON-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
1. Any function under a local Act other than a function specified or referred to in regulation 2 or Schedule 1.	Executive	The relevant member of the Executive Leadership Team and where this is not clear to be	-

¹ The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and subsequent regulations giving effect to section 13 of the Local Government Act 2000

² Schedule 2 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000

LOCAL CHOICE FUNCTION	STATUS OF FUNCTION	DELEGATION TO OFFICERS	DELEGATION TO NON-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
		determined by the Chief Executive	
2. Other than those reserved to a Non-Executive committee, the determination of appeals against any decision made by or on behalf of the authority.	Executive	The Leader in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services	-
3. The appointment of review boards under regulations under section 34(4) (determination of claims and reviews) of the Social Security Act 1998	Non-Executive	-	Education Appeals Committee
4. The making of arrangements pursuant to section 67(1) of, and Schedule 18 to, the 1998 Act (reviews of exclusion of pupils). This is now s.51A of the Education Act 2002	Non-Executive	-	Education Appeals Committee
5. The making of arrangements pursuant to section 94(1) and (4) of, and Schedule 24 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Act (admission appeals)	Non-Executive	-	Education Appeals Committee
6. The making of arrangements pursuant to section 95(2) of, and Schedule 25 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Act (children to whom section 87 applies: appeals by governing bodies)	Non-Executive	-	Education Appeals Committee
7. Any function relating to contaminated land.	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
8. The discharge of any function relating to the control of pollution or the management of air quality	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
9. The service of an abatement notice in respect of a statutory nuisance	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
10. The passing of a resolution that Schedule 2 to the Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the authority's area	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
11. The inspection of the authority's area to detect any statutory nuisance	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-

LOCAL CHOICE FUNCTION	STATUS OF FUNCTION	DELEGATION TO OFFICERS	DELEGATION TO NON-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
12. The investigation of any complaint as to the existence of a statutory nuisance	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
13. The obtaining of information under section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as to interests in land	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
14. The making of agreements for the execution of highways works	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
15. The obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976	Executive	Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment	-
16. The appointment of any individual - (a) to any office other than an office in which they are employed by the authority (b) to any body other than (i) the authority; (ii) a joint committee of two or more authorities; or (c) to any committee or sub-committee of such a body	Executive/Non-Executive	The Chief Executive where the appointment relates to Non-Executive functions. The Leader where the appointment relates to Executive powers.	-
17. The making of agreements with other local authorities for the placing of staff at the disposal of those other authorities	Executive/Non-Executive	The Leader where the appointment relates to Executive powers. The Council where the appointment relates to Non-Executive functions.	-

3.4 Budget and Policy Framework

The Council is responsible for setting the Budget and Policy Framework. This sets out the broad financial envelope and the Policy Framework for the individual decisions made by the Executive.

1. Budget

1.1 The Budget is the identification and allocation of financial resources by the Council, including:

- (a) Revenue expenditure
- (b) Contingency and reserve funds
- (c) Council Tax
- (d) Borrowing requirements and limits
- (e) Capital expenditure

- (f) Medium Term Financial Plan
- (g) Any limitations to, conditions on or rules governing the management of budgets, virement between budgets, treatment of underspends, windfall income or reserves contained within the Finance and Contract Procedure Rules

2. Policy Framework

2.1 The Council has agreed that the following list of plans and strategies relevant to its functions will sit within the Policy Framework, some of which are required by law³ to be decided by Full Council, usually on the recommendation of Cabinet:

- (a) Children and Young People’s Plan
- (b) Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy
- (c) Plans, documents and alterations that together comprise the Local Plan
- (d) Licensing Authority Policy Statement
- (e) Local Transport Plan
- (f) Youth Justice Plan
- (g) The Corporate Plan
- (h) Minerals and Waste Development Framework, comprising the following Local Development Documents:
 - (i) Minerals and Waste Core Strategy;
 - (ii) Locations for Minerals Development;
 - (iii) Locations for Waste Development;
 - (iv) Control and Management of (Minerals and Waste) Development;
 - (v) Development and Implementation Principles for Minerals and Waste Development (Supplementary Planning Document).

3.5 Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

1. The framework for Executive decisions

1.1 The Council will be responsible for the adoption of its Budget and Policy Framework as set out in 3.4 above. Once the Budget and Policy Framework is in place, it will be the Cabinet’s responsibility to take implementation decisions in accordance with it.

2. Process for developing the Policy Framework

2.1 The process by which the Budget and Policy Framework shall be developed is:

- (a) The Cabinet will publicise by including in the Forward Plan a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of any plan, strategy or budget that forms part of the Budget and Policy Framework, and its arrangements for consultation after publication of those initial proposals. The Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny committees will also be notified.

^{3 3} Regulation 4 and Schedule 3 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000

- (b) If the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee wishes to respond to the Cabinet through that consultation process, then it may do so. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may investigate, research or report in detail with policy recommendations before the end of the consultation period. The Cabinet will take any response from an Overview and Scrutiny Committee into account in drawing up firm proposals for submission to the Council, and its report to Council will reflect the comments made by consultees and the Cabinet's response.
- (c) Once the Cabinet has approved firm proposals, the Monitoring Officer will refer them at the earliest opportunity to the Council for decision.
- (d) In reaching a decision, the Council may adopt the Cabinet's proposals. But if the Council has any objections to the Cabinet's proposals, then before it amends, approves or adopts any plan, strategy or budget, it must inform the Leader of those objections and require the Cabinet to reconsider. The Cabinet may, within such reasonable period as the Monitoring Officer may determine (but which shall not be less than 5 working days), submit revised proposals or inform the Council of the Cabinet's disagreement with the Council's objections and the reasons for this. Once that period has expired, the Council in amending, approving or adopting any plan, strategy or budget, must take into account any revised proposals and the views of the Cabinet.
- (e) In the case of budget proposals submitted to the Council after 8 February in any financial year and any budget proposals submitted following designation or nomination by the Secretary of State, then the Council may amend, approve or adopt the Cabinet's proposals and need not require the Cabinet to reconsider.
- (f) In approving the Budget and Policy Framework, the Council will also specify the extent of virement within the Budget and degree of in-year changes to the Policy Framework which may be undertaken by the Cabinet, in accordance with Rules 5 and 6 (virement and in-year adjustments). Any other changes to the Budget and Policy Framework are reserved to the Council.

3. Decisions outside the Budget and Policy Framework

- (a) Subject to the provisions of Rule 5 (virement) the Cabinet, committees of the Cabinet and any officers, or joint arrangements discharging Executive functions may only take decisions which are in line with the Policy Framework. If any of these bodies or persons wish to make a decision which is contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework, or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the Budget approved by full Council, then that decision may only be taken by the Council, subject to Rule 4 (urgent decisions outside the Budget and Policy Framework) below.
- (b) If the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet or any officers, or joint arrangements discharging Executive functions want to make such a decision, they shall take advice from the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer as to whether the decision they want to make would be contrary to the Policy Framework, or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget. If the advice of either of those officers is that the decision would not be in line with the existing budget and/or Policy Framework, then the decision must be referred by that body or person to the Council for decision, unless the decision

is a matter of urgency - in which case the provisions in Rule 4 (urgent decisions outside the Budget and Policy Framework) shall apply.

4. Urgent decisions outside the Budget and Policy Framework

- (a) The Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet, specified officers acting under urgency provisions, or joint arrangements discharging executive functions may take a decision which is contrary to the Council's Policy Framework or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with, the Budget approved by full Council if the decision is a matter of urgency. However, the decision may only be taken:
 - (i) if it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the full Council; and
 - (ii) if the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees that the decision is a matter of urgency.
- (b) The reasons why it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of full Council and the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consent to the decision being taken as a matter of urgency must be noted on the record of the decision. In the absence of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the consent of the Chair of the Council, shall be obtained - and in the absence of both, the consent of the Vice Chair of the Council shall be obtained.
- (c) Following the decision, the decision taker will provide a full report to the next available Council meeting explaining the decision, the reasons for it and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.

5. Virement

The scheme of virement is set out in the Financial Procedure Rules in Part 9.7 below.

6. In-year changes to Policy Framework

The responsibility for agreeing the Budget and Policy Framework lies with the Council, and decisions by the Cabinet, or officers, or joint arrangements discharging executive functions must be in line with it. No changes to any policy and strategy which make up the policy and budget framework may be made by those bodies or individuals except those changes:

- (a) necessary to ensure compliance with the law, or ministerial direction; or
- (b) in relation to the Policy Framework in respect of a policy which would normally be agreed annually by the Council following consultation, but where the existing policy document is silent on the matter under consideration.

7. Call-in of decisions outside the Budget and Policy Framework

- (a) Council can only consider call-in decisions or proposed decisions which relate to an executive decision which is contrary to the Policy Framework, or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget. Where councillors are of the opinion that this is the case they shall seek advice from the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer.

- (b) In respect of functions which are the responsibility of the Cabinet, the Monitoring Officer's report and/or Chief Finance Officer's report shall be to the Cabinet with a copy to every member of the Council. Regardless of whether the decision is delegated or not, the Cabinet must meet to decide what action to take in respect of the Monitoring Officer's report and/or Chief Finance Officer's report and to prepare a report to Council in the event that the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer conclude that the decision was a departure; and to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee if the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer conclude that the decision was not a departure.
- (c) If the decision has yet to be made, or has been made but not yet implemented, and the advice from the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer is that the decision is or would be contrary to the Policy Framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget, councillors may, in accordance with the call-in procedure set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, refer the matter to Council. In such cases, no further action will be taken in respect of the decision or its implementation until the Council has met and considered the matter. The Council shall meet within 10 working days of the request by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee unless the Executive Leader, or in their absence the Deputy Leader, agrees that the Council need not necessarily meet within the specified period. At the meeting it will receive a report of the decision or proposals and the advice of the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer.
- (d) The Council may either:
 - (i) endorse a decision or proposal of the executive decision taker as falling within the existing budget and Policy Framework. In this case no further action is required, save that the decision of the Council be minuted and circulated to all councillors in the normal way; or
 - (ii) amend the Council's financial regulations or policy concerned to encompass the decision or proposal of the body responsible for that executive function and agree to the decision with immediate effect. In this case, no further action is required save that the decision of the Council be minuted and circulated to all councillors in the normal way; or
 - (iii) where the Council accepts that the decision or proposal is contrary to the Policy Framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget, and does not amend the existing framework to accommodate it, require the Cabinet to reconsider the matter in accordance with the advice of either the Monitoring Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer.

3.6 Council Meeting Procedure Rules

1. Full Council meetings

Time and place of meetings

- 1.1 All Full Council meetings shall start at 6.00pm or, where it is impracticable to hold the meeting at the usual time, such other time as the Chair or the Monitoring Officer shall direct. The place of the meeting will be notified on the agenda for the meeting.

2. Annual Meeting of the Council

Timing

- 2.1 In a year when there is an Ordinary Election of Members, the Annual Meeting shall take place within 21 days from the retirement of the outgoing Members. In any other year, the Annual Meeting shall take place on such a day in the month of May or June as the Council may fix.

Business

- 2.2 At the Annual Meeting the Council will:

- (a) Elect the Chair of the Council who will then preside;
- (b) Appoint the Vice Chair of Council;
- (c) Approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (d) Receive any declarations of interest from councillors;
- (e) Receive any apologies for absence from councillors;
- (f) Receive any announcements from the Chair;
- (g) Elect the Executive Leader in any year in which the Leader's term of office expires (for a four-year term), or if the office of Leader becomes vacant (for the remainder of the four-year term of councillors). The term of office of the Leader shall, subject to earlier removal, end on the day of the Annual Meeting following the ordinary election of councillors;
- (h) Note the appointments to the role of Deputy Leader and to the Cabinet;
- (i) Receive any announcements from the Leader;
- (j) Appoint at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a Standards Committee, an Audit Committee and such other committees as required;
- (k) Approve a programme of ordinary meetings of the Council for the year;
- (l) Approve the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules;
- (m) Delegate to the Monitoring Officer the power to appoint councillors to committees and sub-committees in accordance with the wishes of the Group Leaders except where appointments to those bodies is exercisable only by the Cabinet.

3. Ordinary Meetings of the Council

- 3.1 Ordinary meetings of the Council shall take place in accordance with a programme decided at the Council's Annual Meeting. Ordinary meetings will:

- (a) Elect a person to preside if both the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Council are not present;
- (b) Approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (c) Receive any declarations of interest from Members;
- (d) Receive any announcements from the Chair and Leader;
- (e) Provide for 30 minutes in total to respond to any questions relating to West Northamptonshire Council from members of the public who are residents of, or working in West Northamptonshire;
- (f) Provide 15 minutes in total to receive Priority Opposition Business to be notified by the Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration.
- (g) Provide 60 minutes in total to receive written reports from Portfolio Holders and provide responses to questions from Members;
- (h) Deal with any business adjourned from the last Council meeting;
- (i) Receive a report from the Audit Committee, ordinarily in June and other than in a year of ordinary elections, detailing their activities during the past year and proposed work programme for the following year for approval by the Council;
- (j) Consider motions; and
- (k) Consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, including consideration of proposals from the Cabinet in relation to the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

4. Extraordinary Meetings

Calling Extraordinary Meetings

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer may call, and those listed below may require the Monitoring Officer to call, extraordinary Council meetings in addition to ordinary meetings:
- (a) The Council by resolution;
 - (b) The Chair of the Council;
 - (c) Any five councillors with a signed request to the Chair of the Council; or
 - (d) The Executive Leader.

Items of Business at Extraordinary Meetings

- 4.2 Only business specified in the summons may be transacted at an extraordinary meeting of the Council.

Motion to remove the Leader

- 4.3 A motion to remove the Leader from office may only be:
- (a) Made at an extraordinary meeting convened specifically for that purpose not less than 21 days from the submission of the motion;
 - (b) Submitted in the form of a requisition signed by a majority of the Leading Group where that group holds a majority of seats on the Council.
- 4.4 Where there is no majority on the Council, the requisition must be signed by not less than one third of the members of the Council with members from at least two political groups; and

- 4.5 Where the Council passes a resolution to remove the Leader, a new Leader is to be elected at the meeting at which the Leader is removed from office.

5. Budget meetings of the Council

5.1 Budget meetings shall:

- (a) Appoint a person to preside if the Chair and Vice Chair are not present;
- (b) Approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (c) Receive any declarations of interest from councillors;
- (d) Receive announcements from the Chair;
- (e) Receive any statements from members of the public who are residents of, or working in, West Northamptonshire relating to an item of business on the public part of the agenda of that meeting;
- (f) Receive and consider the Council plan, budget and associated reports; and
- (g) Any other urgent business as agreed by the Chair.

6. Chair and Vice Chair of the Council

- 6.1 The Chair of the Council, or in their absence the Vice Chair (who will have the same powers and duties as the Chair), will preside at meetings of the Council. Where both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent, the Council will appoint another councillor, other than a member of the Cabinet, to chair the meeting, who will have the same powers and duties as the Chair.

Out of Order

- 6.2 The Chair may at any time rule out of order and reject any motion, amendment, statement, question, representation, answer or written statement which, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer:

- (a) Does not relate to a matter for which the Council has responsibility;
- (b) Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, vexatious, unlawful or otherwise improper or irrelevant;
- (c) Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information;
- (d) Names or identifies individual service users, members of staff or members of staff of partner agencies; or
- (e) Is otherwise contrary to the law or would place the Council at risk of litigation.

7. Quorum

- 7.1 The quorum of meetings of the Council will be one quarter (rounded up) of the total membership. During any meeting, if the Chair counts the number of councillors present and declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chair. If the Chair does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

8. What the Council can decide

8.1 The Council can decide Non-Executive matters and those matters reserved to full Council. The Council has no power to decide Executive matters. The Council sets the Budget and Policy Framework within which Executive decisions are made.

9. Order of business

9.1 Business shall be dealt with in the order in which it is set out in the agenda unless the person presiding at the meeting of the Council decides otherwise.

10. Extension of the meeting

10.1 If the business of a Council meeting has not been concluded by 9.45pm, the Chair will draw the attention of the meeting to the time and to this Rule.

10.2 In the case of any motions or recommendations on the agenda that have not been dealt with by 9.45 pm the Chair will decide whether to end the meeting or to deal with the outstanding matters provided that those matters can reasonably be dealt with by 10.00pm.

10.3 Where the outstanding matters cannot be dealt with by that time, each item will be put to the vote without further debate and an unrecorded vote will be taken on whether the item should be accepted, referred, deferred or withdrawn.

10.4 Any proposal to refer, defer or withdraw an item that has not yet been dealt with must be moved and seconded before any vote is taken in accordance with paragraph 10.3 above. If such a proposal is made, it shall be voted on without debate.

11. Urgent business

11.1 Business cannot be normally dealt with at a Council meeting unless it is included in the Summons. The Chair may allow business which is not specified in the Summons to be dealt with if it is required by law to be dealt with by a certain date or is brought before the Council as a matter of urgency.

12. Confirmation of minutes

12.1 Minutes of the last Council meeting shall be confirmed at the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

12.2 Only matters relating to the accuracy of the minutes can be raised, which must be done by way of a motion which is proposed, seconded and voted upon. Where no issues are raised, or after the motion has been dealt with, the Chair shall initial each page and sign the minutes.

13. Record of Executive Decisions

13.1 The Record of Executive Decisions, as well as the reports prepared by the Executive for the Council will be submitted to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

13.2 These will be noted and received by a decision of the Council.

13.3 Any question about the accuracy of any matter before the Council from the Executive must be considered and determined by the Executive. It is not a matter for the Council. The Leader is able to make changes on behalf of the Executive but may choose to do so only with the agreement of Cabinet.

14. Matters for decision by the Council

- 14.1 All matters for decision by the Council shall be included with the agenda, other than items of urgency under Rule 11 above.
- 14.2 When the item is reached on the agenda, the Leader, the relevant Portfolio Holder, the Chair of the relevant Committee or another councillor will, where appropriate, move the recommendation or advice of the Cabinet or Committee, or endorsement of a Cabinet or a committee decision. Another councillor may second the motion and may reserve the right to speak until later in the debate.
- 14.3 The Chair cannot ask the Council to agree to withdraw a recommendation of the Cabinet or a committee unless new and relevant information has become available after the decision of the body concerned. The information must be disclosed to the Council.

15. Procedural Motions that may be moved without notice

- 15.1 The following motions and amendments may be moved at a Council meeting without notice.
- (a) Appointment of a Chair of the meeting at which the motion is made;
 - (b) Motions relating to the accuracy of the minutes of the Council, a committee or sub-committee;
 - (c) That an item of business specified in the summons should have precedence;
 - (d) Reference to the Council, a committee, sub-committee or the Cabinet;
 - (e) Appointment of or appointment to committees, sub-committees or the Cabinet occasioned by an item mentioned in the summons to the meeting;
 - (f) Receipt of Records of Executive Decisions;
 - (g) Adoption of recommendations of the Cabinet, committees and Sub- committees and any consequent resolutions;
 - (h) That leave is given to withdraw a motion;
 - (i) That leave is given to alter a motion by the mover of that motion;
 - (j) Receipt of reports of officers and any consequent resolutions;
 - (k) Extending the time limit for speeches;
 - (l) Amendment to reports of which notification has been included within the summons of the meeting but where the reports were circulated at a later date than the summons;
 - (m) That the Council proceeds to the next business;
 - (n) That the question be now put;
 - (o) That the debate be now adjourned;
 - (p) That the Council do now adjourn;
 - (q) Authorising the sealing of documents;
 - (r) Suspending Meeting Procedure Rules, in accordance with Procedure Rule 50;
 - (s) Motion under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) to exclude the press and public;
 - (t) That a councillor named under Procedure Rule 47 should not be heard further or should leave the meeting; and
 - (u) Giving consent of the Council where consent of the Council is required by these Meeting Procedure Rules.

16. Public participation at Council meetings

- 16.1 The Council welcomes public participation from anyone who lives, works or studies in West Northamptonshire, or who has a direct connection to a service provided by the

Council. Public participation can take the form of presenting petitions, making statements or asking questions.

16.2 Questions may also be asked at Cabinet and shall be dealt with as set out in the Cabinet Meeting Procedure Rules.

17. Petitions

17.1 The Council has adopted a Petitions Scheme and details of this such as: the purpose of a petition, the eligibility criteria and relevant thresholds for making petitions, the procedure and review mechanisms can be found on the Council's website ([Petition the council | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/Petition-the-council)).

18. Statements

18.1 Up to three members of the public are permitted to speak for up to three minutes each on any agenda item although this may be extended at the Chair's discretion.

18.2 Those wishing to make a statement must register to do so at least 24 hours prior to the meeting by contacting Democratic Services by email (democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk) or by post or in person (1 Angel Square, Angel St, Northampton NN1 1ED).

18.3 Statements must be relevant to the powers and duties of the Council and be clear and concise. A statement may be ruled out of order in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.2.

19. Public Questions

19.1 At ordinary meetings of Full Council, questions can be asked by members of the public of the Chair of Council, members of Cabinet and Chair of committees.

19.2 The total time set aside for such questions and answers will be limited to 30 minutes which can be extended at the Chair's discretion.

20. Notice of public questions

20.1 No person may submit more than two questions at any one meeting.

20.2 No question may be sub-divided into more than two related parts.

20.3 Questions must be delivered in writing or by email to Democratic Services no later than 10am, three clear working days before the meeting. The period of notice is to allow sufficient time for a response to be formulated.

20.4 In exceptional circumstances and in cases of urgency, the Chair may allow questions without the full period of notice having been given where they are satisfied there is sufficient justification. In these circumstances, there is no guarantee that a full reply will be given at the meeting.

20.5 Notice of each question must include the name and address of the questioner, (in respect of an organisation, the name of the organisation and the questioner's position within the organisation) and to whom the question is to be put.

21. Scope of public questions

21.1 The question must be relevant to the powers and duties of the Council and be clear, succinct and concise.

21.2 A question will be rejected where it:

- (a) Has been ruled out of order in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.2;
- (b) Is considered by the Chair to be inappropriate for the particular meeting.

21.3 The Chair's ruling on rejection of a question will be final, following consultation with the Monitoring Officer.

21.4 Where a question is rejected on the above grounds, the questioner shall be advised of the reasons for rejection.

22. At the meeting

22.1 Public questions will be dealt with in order of receipt, subject to the Chair's discretion to group together questions on the same or similar subject.

22.2 Questions will be taken as read. However, if a questioner wishes to ask their question at the meeting, they will be given up to three minutes to ask the question.

22.3 Subject to time constraints, questions which are submitted by the deadline will be answered at the meeting.

22.4 Clear, concise and succinct written replies will be given to public questions by the relevant Cabinet member or committee chair or their nominee, but shall not be the subject of any further debate.

22.5 Any public questions which cannot be dealt with during the time allocated for questions will be dealt with by a written response, sent to the questioner where possible within five working days of the meeting. A copy of the response will be provided to all Members.

23. Supplementary public questions

23.1 For each question submitted, the questioner will be permitted to ask one supplementary question without notice which must be relevant to the original question or arise from the response given.

23.2 The Chair may reject the supplementary question on the grounds listed in Rule 6.2 above.

23.3 The person to whom the question has been put or another Member on their behalf, shall answer the supplementary question if they are able to do so at the time. If this is not possible, a written response will be provided to the questioner where possible within five working days of the meeting.

24. Form of response

24.1 A response may take the following forms:

- (a) A direct oral answer;
- (b) Where the answer is contained within a publication of the Council or in any report or minutes by reference to those documents;
- (c) A written reply.

25. No debate on public questions

25.1 Ordinarily, no debate shall be allowed on questions presented or responses given. In exceptional circumstances only, the Chair may allow discussion. No decision can be made arising from a question other than to refer it to Full Council, Cabinet or a

committee by way of a motion which shall be moved, seconded and voted on without discussion.

26. Priority Opposition Business

- 26.1 A member nominated by the Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration (subject to 26.3 below) may speak to a single item of priority opposition business. The total time allowed for the item will be 15 minutes.
- 26.2 The member referred to in paragraph 26.1 may speak for up to five minutes. The member responding on behalf of the Administration may speak for up to five minutes. The Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration may exercise a right of reply for up to five minutes. The matter under discussion shall not be put to the vote and no other questions or debate shall be allowed.
- 26.3 The second largest political group not forming part of the administration shall be allocated one item of priority opposition business per year. The meeting at which this is allocated shall be determined by the Leader of the largest political group not forming part of the Administration.

27. Questions relating to Portfolio Holder reports

- 27.1 Cabinet overviews will be circulated to all Members before the start of the meeting.
- 27.2 A period of up to 60 minutes in total will be allowed at Council meetings during which Portfolio Holders will be able to give any update required on their report (with a time limit of 2 minutes per speaker).
- 27.3 Members may then ask the relevant Portfolio Holders questions without notice (with a time limit of 2 minutes per speaker). The names of those members wishing to ask questions shall be provided to the Chair before the meeting.
- 27.4 Each Portfolio Holder will then have a single opportunity to reply to all questions.
- 27.5 In order to keep to the 60 minute limit and/or maintain fairness between Members, the Chair may limit the number of questions (or further questions) to be asked, either in total or by any one Member.

28. Notices of Motion

Procedure

- 28.1 Notice of every motion (other than a motion which may be moved without notice under Procedure Rule 15) shall be given in writing, signed by the Member(s) giving the notice, and delivered at least seven clear days before the next meeting of the Council, to the Monitoring Officer by whom it shall be dated, in the order in which it is received.
- 28.2 Motions that have been received and not ruled Out of Order will be shared with the leader of each political group (and/or their nominee) prior to the publication of the summons, where possible.
- 28.3 The number of motions on notice at any one meeting shall not exceed five (not including the Priority Opposition Motion) except where they relate to a report on the agenda.
- 28.4 The largest political group not forming part of the Administration may move up to two motions on notice at each Council meeting. Other opposition political groups may move a maximum of two motions on notice in total between them. The number of motions on notice submitted by the political group(s) forming the Administration shall be limited to one.

28.5 Motions shall be taken in the order of receipt of notice; and the consideration of motions shall not take longer than 60 minutes in total.

Scope

28.6 Motions must be about matters for which the Council has direct responsibility or influence.

28.7 Motions must be capable of being passed as a formal resolution.

28.8 The Chair, following consultation with the Monitoring Officer, may rule a motion Out of Order under Rule 6.2,

28.9 A motion will not be accepted if it is substantially the same as a question which has been put or an address made by some other person at the same meeting of the Council or at another meeting of the Council in the preceding six months.

Motions to be set out in summons

28.10 The summons for every ordinary meeting of the Council will set out all motions of which notice has been duly given, unless the Member giving the notice has intimated in writing, when giving it, that they proposed to move it at some later meeting, or has since withdrawn it. The motions will be listed in the summons in the order in which they have been received.

Withdrawal of Motion which is before the Council

28.11 Where a notice of motion is before the Council having been formally moved and seconded and the mover wishes subsequently to withdraw it, they may do so with the consent of the seconder.

Motions not moved

28.12 If a motion set out in the summons is not moved either by a councillor who gave notice of it or by some other councillor on their behalf it shall, unless postponed by consent of the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

Deferment of a Notice of Motion

28.13 Where a notice of motion has been moved and seconded, and referred for advice, the consideration of the motion may be deferred where the mover and seconder signify in writing their agreement to the deferral and the Chair of the Council indicates, in writing, their agreement on behalf of the Council. The matter would then come to a subsequent meeting of the Council for report and decision.

29. Rules of Debate

29.1 The rules of debate to be followed at Council meetings are set out below.

Motions and Amendments

29.2 No motion or amendment shall be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded. Where required by the Chair, motions or amendments shall be put in writing and handed to the Chair before they are further discussed or put to the meeting. At meetings other than those of the full Council, the Chair of that meeting may, at their discretion, allow a motion or amendment to be put which is not in writing, provided that the Chair has concluded that the wording of the motion or amendment is understood by all members of the body concerned. This requirement does not apply to motions which do not require notice.

Seconders' Speech

29.3 When seconding a motion or amendment, a councillor may advise the Chair that they will reserve their right to speak until a later period in the debate.

Only one councillor to stand at a time

29.4 When speaking at a Council meeting a councillor shall, if possible, stand and address the Chair. While a councillor is speaking the other councillors will remain seated, unless rising, if possible, on a point of order or in personal explanation.

Content and length of speeches

29.5 A councillor will confine their speech to the question under discussion, a personal explanation or a point of order. The speech of the mover of a motion shall not exceed five minutes and all other speeches shall not exceed three minutes.

When a councillor may speak again

29.6 At a Council meeting a councillor who has spoken on any motion shall not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

- (a) To speak once on an amendment moved by another councillor;
- (b) If the motion has been amended since they last spoke, to move a further amendment;
- (c) If their first speech was on an amendment moved by another councillor, to speak on the main issue, whether or not the amendment on which they spoke was carried;
- (d) In exercise of a right of reply under these rules;
- (e) On a point of order referring to a specific Procedure Rule (which must be cited on rising);
- (f) By way of personal explanation; or
- (g) To move one of the motions specified as being able to be moved without notice, when the procedure for moving a motion without notice must be followed.

29.7 At committees or sub-committees, councillors may, at the discretion of the Chair, speak more than once.

Amendments

29.8 An amendment to a motion must:

- (a) Be relevant to the motion;
- (b) Add and/or delete a word or words;
- (c) Not introduce a new topic;
- (d) Not negate the motion;
- (e) Be worded so that, if it is agreed by the council, it can be passed as a valid resolution.

29.9 The Chair, following consultation with the Monitoring Officer, may rule an amendment Out of Order under Rule 6.3. An amendment will not be accepted if it is substantially the same as a motion or amendment which has already been submitted to the same meeting of the Council.

Notice of Amendments

29.10 Amendments to the Budget and Policy Framework at Budget council meetings must be received by the Executive Director Finance at least five clear working days before the meeting. A councillor who wishes to propose an amendment to any other report included with the summons or a motion submitted on the summons shall be required to submit the amendment in writing to the Monitoring Officer before the start of the meeting.

Number of Amendments

29.11 Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at a time. No further amendment shall be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.

Status of Amendments

29.12 If an amendment is lost, another amendment may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

Alterations to Motions or Amendments

29.13 A councillor may alter a motion or amendment of which they have given notice and may also, with the consent of the seconder, alter a motion or amendment which they have moved. In both cases, the consent of the meeting is required. There should be no discussion on whether consent should or should not be given.

Withdrawal of Motion

29.14 A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover provided the seconder and the meeting, without discussion, agree. Once the mover has asked for permission to withdraw, there should be no further discussion, unless the meeting refuses to agree to the request.

Right of Reply

29.15 The mover of the motion shall have a right to reply at the close of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote. If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment but shall not otherwise speak on it. The mover of the amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on their amendment.

Motions which may be moved during debate

29.16 When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:

- (a) To amend the motion (subject to Rule 30.8);
- (b) To adjourn the meeting;
- (c) To adjourn the debate;
- (d) To proceed to the next business;
- (e) To suspend Procedure Rules;
- (f) To refer a matter to the Council, Cabinet, a committee or sub-committee for consideration or reconsideration;
- (g) That the question be now put;
- (h) That a councillor be not further heard;
- (i) By the Chair under Procedure Rule 46 that a councillor do leave the meeting;
- (j) A motion under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) to exclude the public.

Closure Motions

29.17 A councillor may move, without comment, at the conclusion of a speech of another councillor, "That the Council proceed to the next business", "That the question be now put", "That the debate be now adjourned", or "That the Council do now adjourn". When one of these Motions has been seconded the Chair shall proceed as follows:

- (a) On a motion to proceed to next business - unless in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, they shall first give the mover of the original motion the right of reply, and then put to the vote the motion to proceed to next business;
- (b) On a motion that the question be now put - unless in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, they shall put to the vote the motion that the question be now put and, if it is passed, give the mover of the original motion the right of reply before putting the motion to the vote;
- (c) On a motion to adjourn the debate or the meeting - if in their opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed on that occasion they shall put the adjournment motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion the right of reply on that occasion.

Points of Order

29.18 A councillor may rise (or where necessary, instead raise their hand) on a point of order or in personal explanation and shall be entitled to be heard immediately. A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of a Procedure Rule or statutory provision and the councillor shall specify the Procedure Rule or statutory provision and the way in which they consider it has been breached. A personal explanation shall be

confined to some material part of a former speech by them which may appear to have been misunderstood or misquoted in the current debate.

Ruling of Chair on a Point of Order/Personal Explanation

29.19 The ruling of the Chair of the meeting on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be open to discussion and shall be final. The Chair shall consult on any question of interpretation with the Monitoring Officer or their designated nominee prior to making a ruling.

Respect for the Chair

29.20 At the Council meeting whenever the Chair rises (or where necessary, instead raises their hand) during a debate a councillor then standing shall sit down and the Council shall be silent.

30. Rules of Debate at Budget meetings

30.1 The following rules of debate apply to Budget meetings as defined in Rule 5 above.

Order, Content and Length of Speeches

30.2 At a budget meeting of the Council, the following rules shall apply to debate on the annual budget.

30.3 The exact length of speeches for each proposer and management of the debate is at the discretion of the Chair and will be announced before the start of the meeting.

- (a) The Chair will call the Executive Leader, or their nominee, to propose the Budget. The proposer will move the Budget. The seconder will have up to three minutes to second the Budget.
- (b) Once the Budget has been seconded, the Chair will call the other group leaders, or their nominees, to speak. Each will be called in order of precedence according to the number of councillors in each group. Where two groups have the same number of members, the Chair shall exercise their discretion.
- (c) The Leader of the principal opposition group, or their nominee, may make a statement or propose an alternative budget or amendment. If an alternative budget or amendment has been proposed, the seconder will have up to three minutes to speak.
- (d) The Leaders of each of the minor opposition groups, or their nominees, may make a statement or propose an alternative budget or amendment. If an alternative budget or amendment has been proposed, the seconder will have up to three minutes to speak.
- (e) If an opposition group proposes an alternative budget or amendment, then after each amendment has been seconded it shall be debated. The normal rules of debate shall apply. The proposer of the amendment has a right of reply. The proposer of the Administration's budget also has a right of reply prior to the vote. Each alternative budget or amendment will be debated and voted in the order they were proposed. Each vote must be a recorded vote.

- (f) After each opposition group alternative budget or amendment has been voted on, the debate will return to the substantive motion - the Administration's Budget - which may or may not have been amended.
- (g) Prior to the debate on the substantive motion, the mover of the Administration's budget shall be permitted to propose an amendment that is minor in nature. A minor amendment is an amendment with a financial impact equal to or below the key decision threshold. The normal rules of debate shall apply to the debate on a minor amendment. The normal deadlines for the submission of such an amendment shall not apply. The mover of the Administration's budget has a right of reply prior to the vote. The vote must be a recorded vote.
- (h) Once the vote has been taken on a minor amendment, or if no such amendment has been proposed, the debate on the substantive motion will take place. All members of the Council are allowed to contribute to the debate, except the mover or seconder of original motion (unless the seconder has reserved their right to speak).
- (i) No further amendments are allowed at this stage by any of the members of the Council.
- (j) After the debate on the substantive motion, the mover of the Administration's budget has a right of reply (up to 5 minutes). A recorded vote must then be taken on the substantive budget (which may have been amended) and the debate is concluded.

Alternative Budgets and Amendments to the Budget

- 30.4 In order to be approved, all alternative Budget proposals that any political group or member wishes to be considered must be provided in final form, following prior consultation and written approval of the Chief Finance Officer, five clear working days in advance of the Budget meeting.
- 30.5 Any submissions not received within five clear working days of the Budget council meeting will not be allowed.
- 30.6 Any submissions not prepared in a form acceptable to the Chief Finance Officer as being capable of being adopted by the council as a lawful budget will not be allowed. The text of all alternative budgets or proposed amendments to the Budget must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer by 5pm, five clear working days before the meeting. The Monitoring Officer shall comply with the wishes of the Leader of the relevant political group in determining when to make the documents available to other councillors, the press and public, subject to this being no later than the start of the meeting at which the Budget is to be discussed.
- 30.7 Alternative budgets or proposed amendments to the Budget will be considered in the order set out above. Only one alternative budget or proposed amendments to the Budget may be moved and discussed at any one time unless the Chair decides otherwise.
- 30.8 No further amendment may be moved until the alternative budget or amendment to the Budget under discussion has been dealt with.
- 30.9 If an alternative budget or proposed amendments to the Budget are carried, the motion as amended takes the place of the original motion. This becomes the substantive motion to which any further amendments which have already been notified are moved.

31. Rescission of earlier resolution

- 31.1 At a meeting of the Council, no motion or amendment shall be moved to rescind any resolution of the Council which was passed within the preceding six months or which is to the same effect as one which has been rejected within that period.
- 31.2 Such a motion may be moved if:
- (a) It is recommended by the Cabinet or a committee; or
 - (b) Notice of such motion has been given under Rule 29 and signed by at least one third of the total number of councillors (31) who include members from more than one political group.

32. Voting

- 32.1 Each Councillor has one vote.
- 32.2 Voting will be by a show of hands or, where practical and the means are available to those present, by suitable electronic means.
- 32.3 When a councillor asks for a recorded vote to be taken, and 10 members of the Council (or one quarter of a committee) stand in their places to support the request, the vote will be recorded to show whether each Councillor voted for or against the motion or abstained. If necessary, a councillor may raise their hand instead of standing in order to indicate their support for a request for a recorded vote.
- 32.4 A recorded vote will not be taken if the vote has already begun to be taken by a show of hands.
- 32.5 A councillor may require, after a vote is completed, that the minutes of the meeting record how they voted or abstained.
- 32.6 A councillor may, immediately after the item of business is voted upon, request that a lost motion or amendment be recorded in the minutes.
- 32.7 Where there are equal votes cast for a motion or amendment the Chair or the person presiding may exercise a second or casting vote.

33. Offices and Appointments

- 33.1 If on a vote no person receives more than half of the votes cast, the name of the person with the least number of votes will be withdrawn. Further votes will be held until one person receives a clear majority.

34. Election of Chair of committees and sub-committees

- 34.1 The Chair of every committee and sub-committee excluding the Cabinet will be elected at the annual meeting of the Council where possible.
- 34.2 The councillor elected to each office must be a member of the relevant committee or sub-committee.
- 34.3 Where a vacancy occurs in any office, an election will be held at the next ordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee concerned.
- 34.4 Unless the Council decides otherwise, the election will be conducted by a show of hands and may relate to a number of offices.

35. Urgent business – Non-Executive Matters

- 35.1 An item of urgent business which has to be decided before the next meeting of the Council and which does not fall within the Executive's functions and responsibility can be determined by the Head of Paid Service, subject to the procedure set out below.

- 35.2 Where any matter is urgent and cannot await the next meeting, the Head of Paid Service may take the necessary action, provided that they have first consulted the relevant Chair (or Vice Chair if the Chair is not available).
- 35.3 A copy of the consultation document shall be sent to the appropriate Cabinet Member, the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the group leaders and the councillors for the area concerned, if the matter particularly affects one or more electoral areas.
- 35.4 Any such action shall be recorded in writing, consideration being given after consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
- 35.5 The Monitoring Officer shall supply details of any decision or action taken by the Head of Paid Service under these provisions to the next meeting of the committee or sub-committee that would have taken the decision if it had not been urgent.
- 35.6 A report of any action under this Procedure Rule shall be made available by electronic means to all councillors.

3.7 Committee and Sub-Committee Meeting Procedure Rules

1. Programme of meetings

- 1.1 Meetings of committees and sub-committees will be set out in the calendar of meetings approved by the Council under Rule 1.16 above. Alterations to the date, time and/or venue for meetings, as well as the inclusion of additional meetings, shall only be where it is impracticable to hold the meeting at the usual time and shall be matters for the Chair of each committee to determine as set out in Rule 1.2 below.
- 1.2 When it is necessary to alter the date, time and/or venue of a meeting, or to arrange a special meeting, the Monitoring Officer will consult the Chair of the relevant committee or sub-committee before any action is taken. The Chair of the committee or sub-committee will then determine the matter.

2. Chairing

- 2.1 Where a Chair and Vice Chair are absent from a meeting of the relevant body, a Chair will be appointed from those members of the body present, provided the meeting is quorate and subject to any restrictions on the eligibility of Executive members for appointment.
- 2.2 In committee or sub-committee meetings, whenever the Chair rises from their seat (or where necessary, instead raises their hand), the councillors should remain in their seats and the committee or sub-committee shall be silent.

3. Quorum at committees and sub-committees

- 3.1 No item of business will be transacted at a meeting of a committee or sub-committee unless there is at least one quarter of the members of the body present which will in each case be rounded up.
- 3.2 Any variants to Rule 39.1 will be set out in the committee or sub-committee's terms of reference.

- 3.3 In the case of the Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee and its sub-committees these Rules are subject to and applied as stated in the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005.

4. Minutes of committees and sub-committees

- 4.1 The minutes of a committee or sub-committee must be confirmed at its next meeting.
- 4.2 Only matters relating to the accuracy of the minutes can be raised. Where accuracy is questioned, this must be by a motion which is proposed, seconded and voted upon.
- 4.3 Where no issues of accuracy are raised, or after any motion has been dealt with, the Chair shall sign the minutes.
- 4.4 The minutes of any sub-committee must be submitted to the next suitable meeting of the parent committee by the sub-committee Chair.
- 4.5 Members may ask a question or comment on any minute. The Chair of the sub-committee will then reply. There will be no debate on any question or comment raised under this procedure and no further motions can be moved.
- 4.6 Where a Member has a question or comment on an exempt, private or confidential Minute, the question or comment must be given in writing to the Monitoring Officer at least one hour before the start of the meeting.
- 4.7 Any question about the accuracy of any minute of a body must be considered and determined by that body at its next suitable meeting.

5. Requests by Members for items of business to be included on agendas of a committee or sub-committee

- 5.1 This Rule sets out details of the process by which a councillor can ask for an item of business to be included on the agenda of a committee or sub-committee meeting.
- 5.2 This Rule does not apply to special meetings of committees and sub-committees or to the Cabinet.
- 5.3 A councillor may, by notice given to the Monitoring Officer no later than ten clear working days before the appropriate meeting, request that an item of business be included on the agenda of a committee or sub-committee.
- 5.4 A councillor may not give notice of more than one item of business for any one meeting. The notice shall state the nature of the business and shall include the name of that councillor. A notice may be submitted electronically provided the notice has been originated by that councillor.
- 5.5 This procedure shall not apply where the item of business, if agreed, would have the effect of rescinding or amending any resolution passed by a committee or sub-committee of the Council within the preceding 6 months.
- 5.6 Items arising from such notices shall appear on the agenda after the ordinary public or private agenda items.
- 5.7 A member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a statutory right to have an item, within the remit of that particular body, included on the agenda and discussed at the next meeting of that body. The restrictions in Rule 41.4 above on the number of items shall not apply to items submitted under this paragraph.

6. Committee and Sub-Committee Agendas - Urgent items of business

- 6.1 Generally, business will only be transacted at meetings of committees and sub-committees which appears on the agenda and which has been available for public inspection at least five clear working days before the meeting or, where the meeting is convened at short notice, from the time the meeting is convened.
- 6.2 The Chair of the committee or sub-committee may agree to deal with an item of business at the meeting if, in their opinion, the matter is urgent given the circumstances requiring a decision. The Chair's ruling and the reasons for urgency will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

7. Attendance of councillors at committees and sub-committees of which they are not members

- 7.1 Notwithstanding their rights as a member of the public, a councillor may attend any meeting of a committee or sub-committee to which they have not been appointed, for the purposes of performing their duties as a councillor, including when exempt or private and confidential business is transacted.
- 7.2 A councillor will be given, when they arrive at the meeting a copy of the agenda and relevant papers, subject to any restrictions imposed under the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- 7.3 The councillor has no right to vote but may speak with the consent of the Chair of the meeting.

8. Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Sub-Committees

- 8.1 In applying these Rules to Overview and Scrutiny committees and sub-committees, regard shall be had to the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules which are contained in Part 7 of this Constitution.

3.8 General Provisions

1. Records of attendance

- 1.1 The Monitoring Officer will keep a record of Members attending any meeting of the Council, the Cabinet, and any committee or sub-committee.

2. Disclosure of confidential/exempt matters

- 2.1 No Councillor shall disclose to any person the whole or any part of the contents of any agenda or any matter arising during the proceedings, report or other document which is marked "confidential" or "not for publication" unless and until the document has been made available to the public or the press by or on behalf of the Council, the Cabinet, a committee or sub-committee.
- 2.2 All councillors will familiarise themselves and not contravene the Access to Information Rules or the Members' Code of Conduct set out within the Constitution.

3. Substitute Members

- 3.1 Political groups may nominate some or all their councillors to be substitutes for appointed members of committees, joint committees, sub-committees, working groups and panels (and the Monitoring Officer shall have authority to

give effect to those nominations in accordance with this procedure rule), provided that in the case of the:

- (a) Regulatory committees and sub-committees, substitutes must have received suitable training
- (b) Scrutiny committees and Audit and Governance Committee, all councillors except Cabinet members are permitted to be substitutes

- 3.2 Each political group shall notify the Monitoring Officer of its substitute members and, in respect of each substitute member, which committees, joint committees, sub-committees, working groups and panels they may serve on.
- 3.3 Notice of substitution (or any cancellation) stating the name of the substitute must be given to Democratic Services before the commencement of the meeting concerned. Notification is for each meeting or until further notice.
- 3.4 If the original appointed member arrives when the meeting is in progress, the substitution will remain effective and the original appointed member will not be allowed to participate in the decision making. It is not possible to substitute for part of a meeting only unless more than 50% of members of the substantive members have declared an interest or are unable to attend and there is (in the opinion of Monitoring Officer) a risk that the meeting could become inquorate for one or more item.
- 3.5 The chair shall inform the meeting of any substitutions before the commencement of the meeting.
- 3.6 Substitute members have all the powers and duties (including compliance with any mandatory training requirements) of any appointed member, but are not able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the appointed member.

4. Disorderly conduct by Members

- 4.1 If at a meeting any councillor, in the opinion of the person presiding, misconducts themselves in any way, the person presiding or any other councillor may move "That the councillor be not further heard". The motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.
- 4.2 If the councillor continues the misconduct, the person presiding may either move "That the councillor do leave the meeting" (in which case the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion); or adjourn the meeting.
- 4.3 In the event of general disturbance at any meeting which, in the opinion of the person presiding, renders the due and orderly dispatch of business impossible, the person presiding will have the power to adjourn the meeting.

5. Disturbance by members of the public

- 5.1 If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting the person presiding shall issue a warning to them. If they continue, the person presiding shall order their removal from the meeting.
- 5.2 In cases of general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the person presiding shall order that part to be cleared or if necessary adjourn the meeting.

6. Variation and revocation of Procedure Rules

- 6.1 Any motion to vary or revoke these Rules shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

7. Suspension of Procedure Rules

- 7.1 These Procedure Rules may be suspended in respect of any business at a meeting of the Council, a committee or sub-committee where its suspension is moved except where this would be in contravention of statute.
- 7.2 A motion to suspend Procedure Rules shall not be moved without notice unless there shall be present at least one-third of the Members of the Council or that committee or sub-committee respectively.

8. Interpretation of Procedure Rules

- 8.1 The ruling of the person presiding as to the construction or application of any of these Procedure Rules, or as to any proceedings of the Council, shall not be challenged at any meeting.
- 8.2 The person presiding, shall consult with the Monitoring Officer or their nominee on any question of interpretation.

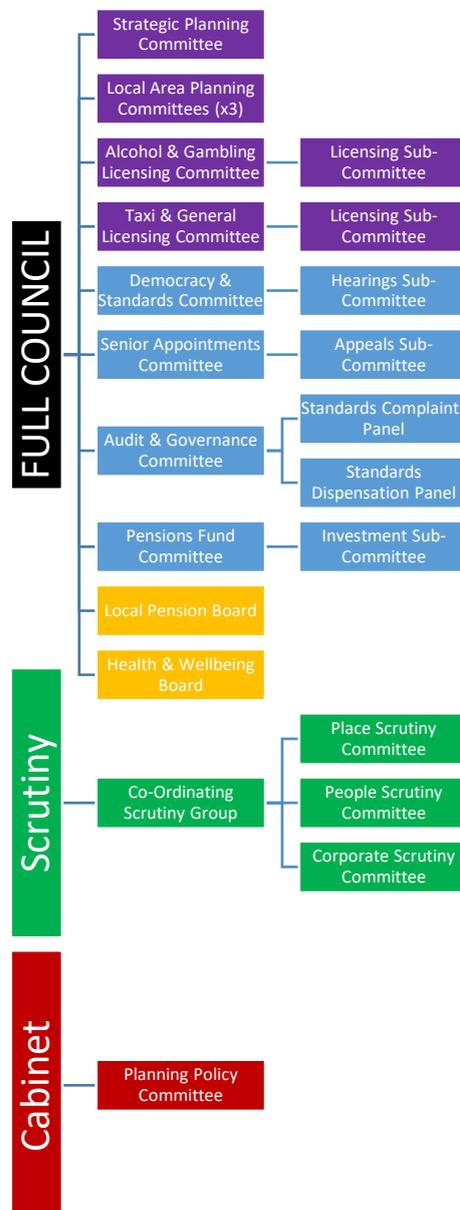
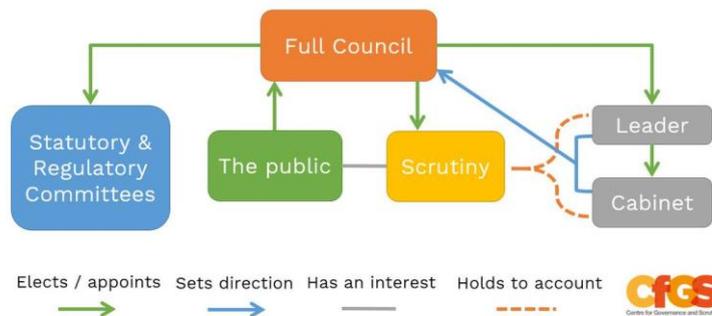
9. Submission of Notices by Members – Electronic Means

- 9.1 A councillor may communicate, by electronic means, any notice under any of the Council's Procedural Rules to initiate any process or procedure provided it is clear that the notice has been originated by that Member.

4.0 COMMITTEES

4.1 Committee Structure

Council governance & decision-making



4.2 Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee

Members 15: Quorum 5. Appointments will be made having regard to the rules on political proportionality.

- (a) The Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee is responsible for determining licensing policy and applications in accordance with its role and functions set out below.
- (b) Members shall not participate as members of the Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee or any of its sub-committees until they have received appropriate training in respect of their functions on the committee or sub-committees.

4.2.1 Role and Functions

- (a) To deal with all the licensing functions of the Council under the Licensing Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”) and the Gambling Act 2005 (“the 2005 Act”) (except such functions as cannot be delegated).
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, the Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee shall exercise an advisory role in relation to executive functions.
- (c) To approve licensing policy in compliance with the provisions of the 2003 Act, the 2005 Act and any regulations made thereunder (except matters specifically reserved by statute to Council or the Cabinet).
- (d) The Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee has the power to appoint such sub-committees as may from time to time be necessary to discharge its duties under the 2003 and 2005 Acts.
- (e) Sub-committees will have full delegated powers to determine all applications made under the 2003 and 2005 Acts.
- (f) Each sub-committee will comprise three Members drawn from the Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee.

4.2.2 Sitting as a sub-committee comprising 3 Members (drawn from the main Committee on an ad-hoc basis):

- (a) To hold hearings to determine licensing applications under the 2003 Act, where a representation has been received, except where there is a valid delegation to officers under the provisions of parts 9.2.1 and 9.2.3 of this Constitution insofar as they apply to the delegation of non-executive powers and duties set out in the 2003 Act and associated regulations;
- (b) to determine applications for a provisional statement or the grant, variation, or transfer of a premises licence under Part 8 of the 2005 Act where a representation has been received or where the Executive Director of Place and Economy proposes that the power under Section 169(1)(b) be exercised to exclude mandatory premises licence conditions;
- (c) to determine all applications for the review or summary review of a premises or club premises licence under the 2005 Act;
- (d) to determine applications for club gaming and club machine permits under the 2005 Act where objections have been received and matters relating to the cancellation of club gaming and club machine permits or licensed premises gaming machine permits; and

- (e) to determine all matters relating to temporary or occasional use notices under the 2005 Act where objections have been received.

4.3 Taxi and General Licensing Committee

Members 15: Quorum 5. Appointments will be made having regard to the rules on political proportionality.

- (a) The Taxi and General Licensing Committee is responsible for determining licensing policy and applications in accordance with its role and functions set out below.
- (b) Members shall not participate as members of the Taxi and General Licensing Committee or any of its sub-committees until they have received appropriate training in respect of their functions on the Committee or sub-committees.

4.3.1 Role and Functions

- (a) To deal with all non-executive functions relating to licensing and registration as set out in Schedule 1 of the Functions and Responsibilities Regulations.
- (b) To deal with all functions relating to health and safety under any relevant statutory provision within the meaning of Part 1 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, to the extent that those functions are discharged otherwise than in the Council's capacity as an employer.
- (c) For the avoidance of doubt, the Taxi and General Licensing Committee shall exercise an advisory role in relation to executive functions, such as the fixing of fares for hackney carriages.
- (d) To approve licensing policy relating to the licensing of private hire vehicles and Hackney carriages in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (the 1976 Act), the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (the 1847 Act) and any associated regulations; and any other policy approval matters concerning schemes of licensing administered by the Council, either on a statutory or discretionary basis (e.g. Street Trading Licenses/Consents, Scrap Metal Licenses); except matters specifically reserved by statute to Council or the Cabinet.
- (e) The Taxi and General Licensing Committee has the power to appoint such sub-committees as may from time to time be necessary to discharge its duties.
- (f) Sub-committees will have full delegated powers to determine contested applications and adjudicate over the review of licences.
- (g) Each sub-committee will comprise three Members drawn from the Taxi and General Licensing Committee.

4.3.2 Sitting as a sub-committee comprising 3 Members (drawn from the main Committee on a politically proportionate basis):

- (a) To determine all matters relating to the grant, renewal or review of taxi licences (which, for the avoidance of doubt, shall include hackney carriage and private hire vehicle driver and operator licences) and to decide whether to suspend or revoke such licences in accordance with the 1847 and 1976 Acts, except where there is a valid delegation to officers from the Taxi and

General Licensing Committee made in accordance with parts 9.2.1 and 9.2.3 of this Constitution insofar as they apply to the delegation of non-executive powers and duties set out in the 1847 and 1976 Acts, associated regulations and other statutory and discretionary licensing schemes;

- (b) in cases where the Assistant Director Regulatory Services has on public safety grounds revoked with immediate effect a taxi licence in accordance with section 61 (2B) of the 1976 Act, to determine an application for the grant of a new licence submitted by the driver/operator whose earlier licence was revoked; and
- (c) to determine all matters relating to street trading licences and consents where representation have been received.

4.4 Strategic Planning Committee

Members 13: Quorum 4. Appointments will be made having regard to the rules on political proportionality.

4.4.1 Members shall not participate as members of the Strategic Planning Committee until they have received appropriate training in respect of their functions on the committee

4.4.2 Role and Functions

- (a) Functions relating to town and country planning and development control as specified in Part A of Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities Functions and Responsibilities (England) Regulations 2000 including in relation to strategic applications meeting the thresholds set out in (i), (ii) and (iii) below
 - (i) Large-scale major developments defined (by the Government's planning application statistical returns) as those of 200 houses (or 4 hectares) or more; or
 - (ii) commercial developments of 10,000 square metres (or 2 hectares) or more; or
 - (iii) strategically important developments (as identified by the Assistant Director – Growth and Investment, following consultation with the Chair of the Local Planning Committee for the area in which the development is proposed).
- (b) Applications called-in that cross the boundary of two local area committees.
- (c) Any application where the Assistant Director – Growth and Investment considers it inappropriate to exercise delegated powers having regard to the public representations received and consultee responses.
- (d) There shall be no referral down of applications from Strategic Planning Committee to Local Area Planning committees.

4.5 Local Area Planning Committees

4.5.1 There are three Local Area Planning Committees in West Northamptonshire, which reflect the areas of the existing local plans for Daventry, South Northamptonshire and Northampton.

Northampton Local Area Planning Committee

Members 11: Quorum 4. Not politically balanced.

Daventry Local Area Planning Committee

Members 9: Quorum 3. Not politically balanced.

South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee

Members 9: Quorum 3. Not politically balanced.

4.5.2 The Local Area Planning Committees are not politically balanced as they fall within the political balance exemption for area committees; but should reflect the political make-up of the relevant area. The political make up of each area is determined by the wards which the committee serves. The members elected to those wards determine the political balance for the area and the committee.

4.5.3 Members shall not participate as members of a Local Area Planning Committee until they have received appropriate training in respect of their functions on the committee.

4.5.4 Functions relating to town and country planning and development control as specified in Part A of Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities Functions and Responsibilities (England) Regulations 2000 that do not fall within the responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Committee.

4.5.5 To consider planning applications not within the remit of the Strategic Planning Committee and not delegated to officers except where the Assistant Director – Growth and Investment considers it inappropriate to exercise delegated powers having considered public representations and consultee responses. These include:

- (a) Major Developments below the limits set for the Strategic Planning Committee;
- (b) Applications which do not meet the criteria for Major Development;
- (c) Change of Use;
- (d) Householder Developments;
- (e) Consent to display advertisements under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended);
- (f) Shop fronts;
- (g) Listed Building Consents;
- (h) Conservation Area Consents.

4.5.6 There shall be no referral up of applications from the Local Area Planning committees to the Strategic Planning Committee

4.5.7 The Assistant Director - Growth and Investment, after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, shall be responsible for determining whether an application falls within the remit of Strategic Planning Committee or the relevant Local Area Planning Committee.

4.6 Democracy and Standards Committee

Members 9: Quorum 3. Appointments will be made having regard to the rules on political proportionality.

4.6.1 The purpose of the Democracy and Standards Committee is:

- (a) to have overall responsibility for the Council's Constitution and decision making governance;
- (b) to make necessary decisions in relation to Elections and to have responsibility for Community Governance and Boundary Reviews on behalf of the Council.
- (c) to oversee and develop the Council's Code of Conduct and the overall standards of conduct for Council Members, co-opted Members, and Parish and Town councillors of West Northamptonshire.

The Committee will have the roles and functions set out below.

4.6.2 In relation to the Democratic functions of the Committee

- (a) Reviewing the Council's Constitution and decision-making governance, i.e. the guidance and documents that support decision making, e.g. the Forward Plan guidance and the rules on officer records, and recommending any proposed changes to the Council;
- (b) Conducting polling station reviews and other election functions which it is necessary for the Council to decide (but not the functions delegated directly by statute to the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer);
- (c) Preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in relation to the governance of the area;
- (d) Preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for England.

4.6.3 In relation to the Standards functions of the Committee

- (a) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils;
- (b) Keeping the Member Code of Conduct and, where appropriate, the Planning Code of Conduct under review and make recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the Codes;
- (c) Advising, training or arranging training for Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on matters relating to the Member Code of Conduct and the Planning Code of Conduct;
- (d) Giving general guidance and advice to Members and Co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on Member's interests and keeping under review the Registers of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer and the Register of Gifts and Hospitality;
- (e) Granting dispensations to Members and co-opted Members from requirements relating to interests;
- (f) Keeping the Council's arrangements for dealing with standards complaints under review and making recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the arrangements;

- (g) Assessing and/or referring for investigation allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils, if so requested by the Monitoring Officer;
- (h) Determining allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils;
- (i) To be a consultee in relation to the Council's Officer Code of Conduct;
- (j) Making recommendations to Council with regard to the appointment of Independent Persons;
- (k) Overseeing the Council's Protocol on Member/Officer Relations and making recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the protocol;
- (l) Receiving an annual report from the Monitoring Officer detailing complaints received, complaints dealt with and resolutions achieved;
- (m) Exercising all the Council's functions, as specified in Regulation 2 of the Local Authority (Functions and Responsibility) (England) Regulations 2000 insofar as such functions are not the responsibility of the Cabinet, Council or any other committee of the Council.

4.6.4 Hearings Sub-Committee

3 Members (drawn from the Democracy and Standards Committee on a politically proportional basis). In addition, where the subject member is a parish/town councillor, another parish or town councillor who is not connected to the subject member will be co-opted as a non-voting member of the Sub-Committee.

To determine, in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Complaints, complaints referred to the sub-committee following completion of an investigation into allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Council.

4.7 Audit and Governance Committee

Members 9: Quorum 3. Appointments will be made having regard to the rules on political proportionality.

Purpose:

4.7.1 The purpose of the Audit and Governance Committee is to:

- (a) Provide independent assurance as to the Council's governance, risk management framework and associated control environment;
- (b) Provide independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance and oversee the Council's financial reporting process;
- (c) Act as an advisory committee to the Council and the Cabinet on audit and governance issues.

Terms of Reference:

4.7.2 Audit:

- (a) To consider the annual report of the internal audit service and to consider a summary of actual and proposed internal audit activity and the levels of assurance over the Council's corporate governance arrangements;
- (b) To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested;
- (c) To consider and approve the Council's arrangements for the internal audit service;
- (d) To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale;
- (e) To consider any high priority recommendations contained in internal audit reports or 'limited assurance' audit reports;
- (f) To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance;
- (g) To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor;
- (h) To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and ensure that it gives the Council good value for money;
- (i) Through the Executive Director of Finance liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the council's external auditor;
- (j) Through the Executive Director of Finance commission specific pieces of work from internal and external audit if there is a perceived need expressed by Committee members and sufficient funding available for such work.

4.7.3 Corporate Governance:

- (a) Maintain an overview of all aspects of the Council's Constitution, including Finance Reservations in the Scheme of Delegation, contract procedure rules and financial regulations. Any proposed changes to the Constitution shall be referred to the Democracy & Standards Committee;
- (b) Review any issue referred to it within these Terms of Reference by the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer or any body of the Council;
- (c) Monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance within the Council;
- (d) Approve and monitor the Council's 'whistle-blowing', anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies;
- (e) Review and make recommendations on the Council's Annual Governance Statement;
- (f) Consider the Council's corporate governance arrangements and make recommendations to ensure compliance best practice;
- (g) Monitor the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls;
- (h) Consider reports dealing with risk management across the organisation and those reports which identify key risks the Council faces, seeking assurance of appropriate management action;
- (i) The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee shall act as the Member Risk Champion;
- (j) To have oversight the Council's Performance Management Framework so far as it relates to the Corporate Governance Functions of the committee;
- (k) Such other matters as required by law or guidance to be the proper remit of the Audit and Governance Committee;
- (l) To receive annually statistical reports and details of complaints received and investigated through the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure which have

resulted in payments or other benefits being provided by the Council in cases of maladministration;

- (m) Receive on behalf of the Council reports issued by the Local Government Ombudsman into investigations that the Council's actions have amounted to maladministration causing injustice.

4.7.4 Financial Reporting:

- (a) View the Council's annual statement of accounts and specifically consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed, and whether there are any concerns arising from the financial statements, or the audit which should be brought to the attention of the Council;
- (b) Consider reports of the external auditor to those in charge of governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

4.8 Pensions Fund Committee

1. The Pensions Fund Committee
 - a. Role and Function
 - b. Membership, Chair and Quorum
 - c. Terms of Reference
 - d. Membership breakdown
2. The Investment Sub-Committee
 - a. Role and Function
 - b. Membership, Chair and Quorum
 - c. Terms of Reference
 - d. Membership breakdown
3. The Joint Committee (of the ACCESS Asset Pool)
 - a. Role and Function
 - b. Membership, Chair and Quorum
 - c. Terms of Reference
4. The Local Pension Board

1. The Pensions Fund Committee

1.1 Role and Function

To be responsible for the Council's statutory function as administering authority under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and associated legislation under Sections 7, 12 and 24 of the Superannuation Act 1972. The Committee will be established under s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Pension Committee will be provided with full delegated powers to discharge the following functions on behalf of the Council to deal with all matters relating to the Northamptonshire Local Government Pension Scheme.

1.2 Membership, Chairing and Quorum

Number of Members	13
Chair and Vice Chair's Term of Office	<p>Term of office will be one year.</p> <p>The appointment /removal of the Chair will be a function of the Council. The appointment of the Vice Chair shall be a function of the Pension Committee.</p> <p>The Chair and Vice Chair of the Pension Committee will represent the Northamptonshire Pension Fund on the Joint Committee of the ACCESS pool.</p>
Substitute Members Permitted	Designated substitutes only due to the skills and knowledge requirements
Political balance rules apply	Yes, within West Northamptonshire Council membership
Restrictions on Membership	None
Quorum	5
Number of ordinary meetings per Council year	A minimum of 4
Voting rights	All representatives have equal voting rights
Training requirements	Members may not take part on the meetings of the Pension Committee unless they are committed to the skills and knowledge requirements set out by the Chair.

1.3 Terms of Reference

- (a) To deal with all matters relating to the Northamptonshire Pension Fund Local Government Pension Scheme.
- (b) Authority to set the Pension Fund's objectives and determine and maintain appropriate strategies, policies and procedures with ongoing monitoring in the following areas:
 - (i) Funding Strategy – ongoing monitoring and management of the liabilities including ensuring appropriate funding plans are in place for all employers in the Fund. Overseeing the triennial valuation and interim valuations and working with the actuary in determining the appropriate level of employer contributions for each employer.
 - (ii) Investment Strategy – to determine the Fund's investment objectives and to set and review the long term high level investment strategy to ensure these are aligned with the Fund's specific liability profile and risk appetite
 - (iii) Administration Strategy – the administration of the Fund including collecting payments due, calculating and paying benefits, gathering from and providing information to scheme members and employers.
 - (iv) Communications Strategy – determining the methods of communications with the various stakeholders including scheme members and employers.
 - (v) Discretions – determining how the various administering authority discretions are operated for the Fund.

- (vi) Risk Management Strategy – to include regular monitoring of the Fund’s key risks and agreeing how they are managed and/or mitigated.
 - (vii) Governance – other key governance documents concerning the management and administration of the Northamptonshire Pension Fund such as strategies, policies and procedures such as the Overpayments of Pension Policy and Reporting Breaches of the Law to the Pensions Regulator.
- (c) Authority to approve and apply the policy on, and to take decisions relating to, employers joining and leaving the Fund and bulk transfers in and out of the Fund. This includes which employers are entitled to join the Fund, any requirements relating to their entry, ongoing monitoring and the basis for leaving the Fund.
- (d) Authority to consider and agree business plans at least annually and monitor progress against them.
- (e) Authority to develop and maintain a skills and knowledge framework for all Pension Committee and Investment sub-committee members and for all officers of the Fund, including:
- (i) Determining the Fund’s knowledge and skills framework;
 - (ii) Identifying training requirements;
 - (iii) Developing training plans; and
 - (iv) Monitoring attendance at training events.
- (f) Authority to select, appoint, monitor and where necessary terminate advisers to the Fund not solely relating to investment matters.
- (g) Authority to agree the Administering Authority responses to consultations on LGPS matters and other matters where they may impact on the Fund or its stakeholders.
- (h) Authority to consider and determine where necessary, alternative investment strategies for participating employers.
- (i) Authority to oversee the work of the Investment sub-committee and consider any matters put to them by the Investment sub-committee.
- (j) Authority to set up sub-committees and task and finish groups including jointly with other LGPS Administering Authorities.
- (k) Authority to review and amend the Strategic Investment policies on an appropriate regular basis, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer.
- (l) Authority to manage any other strategic or key matters pertaining to the Fund not specifically listed above.
- (m) Production of an annual report for consideration by the Council.
- (n) Consider and review the financial accounts in advance of approval by the Audit Committee.
- (o) In relation to pooled asset arrangements under the ACCESS Joint Committee:
- (i) Providing a representative to sit on the Joint Committee to represent the interests of the Northamptonshire Pension Fund
 - (ii) Determining the requirements of the Administering Authority in relation to the provision of services by ACCESS to enable it to execute its investment strategy effectively.
 - (iii) Receiving and considering reports from the ACCESS Joint Committee in order to ensure that the Fund’s investor rights and views are represented appropriately.

- (iv) Ensuring arrangements are in place to identify and manage the risks and costs associated with investment pooling.

1.4 Membership breakdown of the Pensions Fund Committee

Representing	Number of Representatives	Term of Office	Method of Appointment
West Northamptonshire Council (the administering authority)	7	4 years from Council election	Determined by West Northamptonshire Council
North Northamptonshire Council	2	4 years	Determined by North Northamptonshire Council
All other employers	2	4 years	Nominations to be determined by eligible employers. Details of the selection process to be determined by Chair.
Active Scheme Members	1	4 years	Determined by Unison. Where Unison fails to nominate a representative for any period of 6 months or more, nominations will be requested from all eligible active members and a representative will be picked following interviews. Details of process to be agreed by the Chair.
Deferred and Pensioner Members	1	4 years	Determined by Unison. Where Unison fails to nominate a representative for any period of 6 months or more, nominations will be requested from all eligible active members and a representative will be picked following interviews. Details of process to be agreed by the Chair.
Total	13		

2. Investment Sub-Committee

2.1 Role and Function

The Investment sub-committee undertake the day to day management of the Fund's investments through implementing the investment strategy, reviewing and monitoring the asset allocation and appointing and reviewing the performance of investment managers outside of the ACCESS asset pool.

2.2 Membership, Chairing and Quorum

Number of Members	7
Chair and Vice Chair's Term of Office	The Chair and Vice Chair of the Board shall also be the Chair and Vice Chair of the Investment sub-committee
Substitute Members Permitted	Designated substitutes only due to the skills and knowledge requirements
Political balance rules apply	Yes, within West Northamptonshire membership
Restrictions on Membership	Representatives must be derived from the membership of the Pension Committee
Quorum	4
Number of ordinary meetings per Council year	A minimum of 4
Voting rights	All representatives have equal voting rights
Training requirements	Members may not take part on the meetings of the Investment sub-committee unless they are committed to the skills and knowledge requirements set out by the Chair.

2.3 Terms of Reference

- (a) Authority to implement the Fund’s investment strategy including setting benchmarks and targets for the Fund’s investment managers and reviewing performance against those benchmarks.
- (b) Authority to review and maintain the asset allocation of the Fund within parameters agreed with the Pension Committee.
- (c) Authority to appoint and terminate investment managers to the Fund, including through divestment from holdings within the ACCESS asset pool, and to monitor the performance of investment managers leading to review and decisions on termination where necessary.
- (d) Authority to appoint and monitor and where necessary terminate external advisors and service providers solely relating to investment matters, for example, the Fund Custodian, independent investment advisers, and investment consultants.
- (e) Authority to monitor the risks inherent in the Fund’s investment strategy in relation to the Fund’s funding level.
- (f) Authority to monitor and review:
 - (i) Legislative, financial and economic changes relating to investments and their potential impact on the Fund;
 - (ii) The investment management fees paid by the Fund and to implement any actions deemed necessary;
 - (iii) The transactions costs incurred by the Fund across its investment mandates and raise relevant issues and concerns with the investment providers as necessary;
 - (iv) The investment provider’s adoption of responsible investment considerations, including carbon benchmarking, corporate governance matters and a review of compliance with the UK Stewardship Code.
- (g) Authority to receive reports from investment providers.

- (h) Authority to undertake any task as delegated by the Pension Committee.
- (i) Authority to refer any matter to the Pension Committee as they consider appropriate and to provide minutes and such other information as they may request from time to time.

2.4 Membership breakdown of the Investment Sub-Committee

Representing	Number of Representatives	Term of Office	Method of Appointment
West Northamptonshire Council (the administering authority)	4	4 years from Council election	Determined by West Northamptonshire Council
North Northamptonshire Council	1	4 years from Council election	Determined by West Northamptonshire Council
All other employers	1	4 years	Determined by non-West Northamptonshire Council employer representatives on the Committee. Details of process to be agreed by the Chair.
Scheme Members	1	4 years	Determined by Unison. Where Unison fails to nominate a representative for any period of 6 months or more, nominations will be requested from all eligible active members and a representative will be picked following interviews. Details of process to be agreed by the Chair.
Total	7		

3. The Joint Committee (of the ACCESS asset pool)

3.1 Role and Function

The Joint Committee is the formal decision-making body within the ACCESS asset pool. The Joint Committee has been appointed by the 11 administering authorities under s.102 of the Local Government Act 1972, with delegated authority from the Full Council of each administering authority within the pool to be responsible for ongoing contract management and budget management in relation to the pooling of LGPS pension fund assets. The Joint Committee is supported by the officer Working Group and the ACCESS Support Unit. Each administering authority within the ACCESS asset pool has signed and is bound by the terms of an Inter-Authority Agreement.

3.2 Membership, Chairing and Quorum

The Joint Committee consists of one elected councillor appointed by each council. The member so appointed must, at the time of the appointment, be an elected councillor serving as a member of the committee of a council which discharges the duties the functions of that council as Local Government Pension Scheme administering authority.

Each council may appoint a substitute. Any substitute must meet the eligibility requirements above. The substitute may attend any meeting of the Joint Committee or any of its sub-committees in place of that authority's principal member if notice that the substitute will attend is given to the secretary of the Joint Committee by the council concerned.

The Joint Committee meet at least four times each year.

The quorum of a meeting is at least 8 members who are entitled to attend and vote.

Each elected Member has one vote.

Kent County Council provides secretariat support to the Joint Committee and publishes electronic copies of agenda and unrestricted public items on their website.

3.3 Terms of Reference (as detailed in the Inter-Authority Agreement).

Part 1 – Operating the Pool and taking advice

- (a) The Joint Committee (JC) shall consult with and consider the advice of the Section 151 Officer Group (and, where requested, the Monitoring Officers and from appropriate professional advisers) in discharging its functions, recording, if appropriate, where such advice is not followed and the rationale for not doing so. It may decide to procure such professional advisers on such terms as it thinks fit. Accordingly, any procurement of advisers must comply with the constitution of the Council designated to undertake the procurement and that Council will enter into a contract with the appointed adviser on behalf of the Councils.
- (b) The JC shall decide which functions shall be performed by the ACCESS Support Unit (ASU).
- (c) The JC shall at all times have regards to the ACCESS Pool's principles of governing and collaboration.

Part 2 – Functions in relation to the Operator(s)

- (a) Specifying Operator services – Deciding, in consultation with the Councils, the specification of Services and functions that each Operator will be required to deliver including the sub-funds and classes of investments required to enable each Council to execute its investment strategy.
- (b) Procuring an Operator – Agreeing the method and process for the procurement and selection of one or more Operators.
- (c) Appointing an Operator – Making a recommendation to the Councils as to the identity of each Operator and the terms upon which each Operator is to be appointed.
- (d) Reviewing the Performance of an Operator – Keeping the performance of each Operator under review and making arrangements to ensure that the JC is provided with regular and sufficient reports from the ASU to enable it to do so including but not limited to:

- (i) The performance of an Operator against its contractual requirements and any other performance measures such as the Service Level Agreement and Key Performance Indicators and officer recommendations on any remedial action;
 - (ii) Sub-fund investment performance;
 - (iii) Investment and operational costs including the annual review of investment manager costs;
 - (iv) Performance against the strategic business plan agreed by the Councils.
- (e) Managing the Operator(s) – the JC shall:
- (i) Make recommendations to the Councils about the termination or extension of the Operator Agreement(s)
 - (ii) Make decisions about any other action to be taken to manage an Operator Agreement including the giving of any instruction or the making of any recommendation to the relevant Operator including but not restricted to recommendations on investment managers (with any regulatory constraints that may apply); and
 - (iii) Make recommendations to the Councils about appropriate arrangements to replace an Operator Agreement on its termination.

Part 3 – Functions in relation to management of Pool Assets

- (a) The joint committee shall make recommendations to the councils on the strategic plan for transition of assets that are to become Pool Assets.

Part 4 – Functions Concerning Pool Aligned Assets

- (a) The JC shall make recommendations to the Councils about Pool Aligned Assets in accordance with this Agreement or any other delegation to the JC by the Councils.
- (b) Specifying services of Pool Aligned Assets Provider(s) – Deciding, in consultation with the Councils, the specification of Services which any Pool Aligned Assets Provider will be required to deliver including the sub-funds and classes of investments required to enable each Council to execute its investment strategy.
- (c) Procuring a Pool Aligned Assets Provider – Agreeing the method of and process for the procurement and selection of one or more Pool Aligned Assets Providers.
- (d) Appointing Pool Aligned Assets Provider – Making a recommendation to the Councils as to the identity of each Pool Aligned Assets Provider and the terms upon which each Pool Aligned Assets Provider is to be appointed.
- (e) Reviewing the Performance of a Pool Aligned Assets Provider – Keeping the performance of each Pool Aligned Assets Provider under review and making arrangements to ensure that the JC is provided with regular and sufficient reports from the ASU to enable it do so including but not limited to:
 - (i) The performance of the Pool Aligned Assets Provider against its contractual requirements and any other performance measures such as any Service Level Agreement and Key Performance Indicators and office recommendations on any remedial action;
 - (ii) Investment performance of the Pool Aligned Assets Vehicle(s) or sub-funds, as appropriate;

- (iii) Performance against the strategic business plan agreed by the Councils.

Part 5 – Functions Concerning Business Planning and Budget

- (a) Having taken account of any advice from the Section 151 Officers Group (or, where relevant, recording the rationale for not following such advice), the JC shall:
 - (i) Make recommendations to the Councils about the annual strategic business plan for the Pool;
 - (ii) Determine the Budget necessary to implement that plan and meet the expenses of undertaking the Specified Functions (insofar as they will not be met by individual transaction costs paid by the Councils to the Operator) in accordance with Schedule 5 (Cost Sharing) of the Inter-Authority Agreement.
 - (iii) Keep the structure created by this agreement under review from time to time and make recommendations to the Councils about:
 - The future of the pool
 - Any changes in Inter-Authority Agreement
 - The respective merits of continuing to procure operator services by means of a third party or by creation of an operator owned by the Councils.

Part 6 – Functions Concerning Communications

- (a) The JC may agree a protocol for communications in respect of the Pool with third parties, including the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board, other LGPS administering authorities, press and relevant Government departments.

Part 7 – Review of this Agreement

- (a) The JC is required to undertake a review of this agreement:
 - (i) To be completed 18 months before the expiry of each and every Operator Agreement, including as a result of the exercise of any option to terminate an Operator Agreement;
 - (ii) Whenever a Council gives notice of withdrawal under clause 12 (Withdrawal from Agreement) of the Inter-Authority Agreement; or
 - (iii) At such times as a Council may request under Clause 11 (Variation of Agreement) of the Inter-Authority Agreement.

4. The Local Pension Board

The administering authority (West Northamptonshire Council) as scheme manager under Section 4 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 is required to establish a Local Pension Board in accordance with Section 5 of that Act and under Regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended).

The Board is independent of the Pension Committee and is not a committee constituted under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and therefore no general duties,

responsibilities or powers assigned to this such committees, sub-committees or officers under the constitution, standing orders or scheme of delegation of the administering authority apply to the Board unless expressly stated.

a. Role and Function

The role of the Local Pension Board is to assist the administering authority (West Northamptonshire Council) in its role as scheme manager of the Northamptonshire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). This covers all aspects of governance and administration of the LGPS, including funding and investments. The Local Pension Board’s responsibilities are:

- To assist the administering authority in securing compliance with:
 - the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013;
 - other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the LGPS; and
 - the requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the LGPS; and
- To ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the LGPS.

b. Membership, Chairing and Quorum

Representatives	Number of seats	Term of appointment	Method of appointment
Scheme Employers	3	4 years	One councillor representative determined by West Northamptonshire Council. One councillor representative determined by North Northamptonshire Council. One representative of any other Scheme Employer that participates in the Northamptonshire Pension Fund appointed via an open selection process.
Scheme Members	3	4 years	Three representatives appointed via an open selection process. Any trade union members so appointed will represent Scheme Members.

All Local Pension Board members shall have the right to vote in meetings.

The Local Pension Board shall meet a minimum of four times a year. The date, hour and place of meetings shall be fixed by the Board. The Chair may call additional meetings if necessary. Quorum shall be three Local Pension Board members, provided that the employer and member sides are both represented.

No business requiring a formal resolution shall be transacted at any meeting of the Local Pension Board unless the meeting is quorate. If it arises during the course of a meeting that a quorum is no longer present, the Chair shall either suspend business until a quorum is re-established or declare the meeting at an end and arrange for the completion of the agenda

at the next meeting or at a special meeting. Only previously designated substitutes are permitted to attend due to the skills and knowledge requirements of Local Pension Board representatives.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Local Pension Board shall be elected by the Board at its annual meeting. The normal term of office for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Local Pension Board shall be one year, subject to earlier removal by vote of the Local Pension Board.

Members may not be permitted to take part in meetings of the Local Pension Board unless they have complied with the training requirements as set out in the Public Services Pensions Act and in the CIPFA Skills and Knowledge requirements for Local Pension Board representatives.

c. Terms of Reference

The first core function of the Board is to assist the administering authority in securing compliance with the Regulations, any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme, and requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the Scheme. Within this extent of this core function the Board may determine the areas it wishes to consider including but not restricted to:

- Review regular compliance monitoring reports which shall include reports to and decisions made under the Regulations by the Committee.
- Review management, administrative and governance processes and procedures in order to ensure they remain compliant with the Regulations, relevant legislation and in particular the Pension Regulator's Code of Practice.
- Review the compliance of scheme employers with their duties under the Regulations and relevant legislation.
- Assist with the development of and continually review such documentation as is required by the Regulations including the Governance Compliance Statement, Funding Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy Statement.
- Assist with the development of and continually review scheme member and employer communications as required by the Regulations and relevant legislation.
- Monitor complaints and performance on the administration and governance of the scheme.
- Review the implementation of revised policies and procedures following changes to the Scheme.
- Review the outcome of internal and external audit reports.
- Review draft accounts and Fund annual report.
- Review the compliance of particular cases, projects or process on request of the Committee.
- Any other area within the statement of purpose (i.e. assisting the Administering Authority) the Board deems appropriate.

The second core function of the Board is to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme. Within this extent of this core function the Board may determine the areas it wishes to consider including but not restricted to:

- Assist with the development of improved customer services.

- Monitor performance of administration governance and investments against key performance targets and indicators.
- Monitor internal and external audit reports.
- Review the risk register as it relates to the scheme manager function of the authority.
- Assist with the development of improved management, administration and governance structures and policies.
- Review the outcome of actuarial reporting and valuations.
- Assist in the development and monitoring of process improvements on request of Committee.
- Any other area to ensuring effective and efficient governance of the scheme the Board deems appropriate.

4.9 Health and Wellbeing Board

Terms of Reference

4.9.1 Accountability

4.9.1.1 The West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory committee of West Northamptonshire Council which:

- (a) Is established in accordance with section 194 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.
- (b) Is treated as a committee of the Council under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- (c) Will be subject to any amendment or replacement of regulation or guidance applicable to any legislation relevant to the functions, powers and duties of Health and Wellbeing Boards.

4.9.2 Role

4.9.2.1 The Board is a forum that enables leaders from across West Northamptonshire to secure better health and wellbeing outcomes for the local population, better quality of care for all patients and care users, better value for the taxpayer and reduce health inequalities by shaping the future of services through a more integrated approach to commissioning health and wellbeing related services.

4.9.2.2 The Board aims to achieve this by:

- (a) Providing a strategic lead for the local health and care system, and improving the commissioning of services across the NHS, local government and its partners.
- (b) Initiating and encouraging the integrated delivery of health, social care and other services with health and wellbeing related responsibilities (such as housing, leisure, planning community activity).
- (c) Holding the Integrated Care System to account through monitoring and assurance.
- (d) Providing a forum to increase democratic legitimacy in health, along with public and joint accountability of NHS, public health, social care for adults and children, and other commissioned services that the Board agrees are directly linked to health and wellbeing.

4.9.3 Responsibilities/duties

4.9.3.1 The statutory duties of the Board are:

- (a) The preparation of Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) which assess the current and future health and social care needs of the local population.
- (b) The preparation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWS).
- (c) To encourage the integration of health and social care services, in particular providing appropriate advice, assistance or support for the purposes of integration of services under section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006.
- (d) To encourage close working between commissioners of health-related services (such as housing and many other local government services) and commissioners of health and social care services.
- (e) Overseeing the publication of the Directors of Public Health Annual Report.
- (f) To endorse and oversee the successful implementation of local arrangements for the Better Care Fund (BCF), Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) and Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).
- (g) To review NHS Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group and West Northamptonshire Council local commissioning plans to ensure they take due regard of the JHWS and the JSNA, writing formally to the local authority leadership or NHS England as appropriate, if in its opinion the plans do not.
- (h) To advise the Care Quality Commission, NHS England, Trust Development Authority or NHS Improvement (as appropriate), where the Board has concerns about standards of service delivery or financial probity.
- (i) Publication of a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.
- (j) To undertake any additional responsibilities as delegated by the West Northamptonshire Council.

4.9.4 Authority

- 4.9.4.1 The Board may seek any information it requires from any employee of a constituent member organisation via a Member and all constituent members and Members are directed to co-operate with any reasonable request made by the Board.
- 4.9.4.2 The Board may obtain independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of outsiders with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary. The costs, if any, of obtaining such third party advice shall be shared among the constituent organisations as agreed between them.
- 4.9.4.3 The Board shall receive written and oral evidence from senior staff, and other partners, as appropriate.
- 4.9.4.4 The Board shall seek to ensure there is an acceptable balance between the value of the information it receives and the time and other costs it takes to acquire and process it.

4.9.5 Appointments

- 4.9.5.1 The Chair of the Board will be recommended by the Leader of West Northamptonshire Council. The Chair can be an independent co-opted member. Vice Chairs will be appointed by the Board.
- 4.9.5.2 The Chair and Vice Chairs' term of office shall last for a maximum of two years, where they will be appointed or replaced as approved by Full Council.

4.9.6 Membership

- 4.9.6.1 The following are statutory members of the Board as stipulated in section 194 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012:
- (a) At least one elected member of the local authority nominated by the Leader of the local authority.
 - (b) The director of adult social services for the local authority.
 - (c) The director of children's services for the local authority.
 - (d) The director of public health for the local authority.
 - (e) A representative of the Local Healthwatch organisation for the local authority.
 - (f) A representative of each relevant clinical commissioning group (a person may, with the agreement of the Health and Wellbeing Board, represent more than one clinical commissioning group on the Board).
- 4.9.6.2 The Board may appoint additional persons to become members of the Board as it thinks appropriate.
- 4.9.6.3 West Northamptonshire Council must consult the Board before appointing a non-statutory member to the Board.
- 4.9.6.4 Members of the Board shall each name a deputy who will have the authority to make decisions in the event that they are unable to attend a meeting.
- 4.9.6.5 In the absence of the Chair then one of the Vice Chairs shall preside. If all are absent the Board shall appoint, from amongst its members, an Acting Chair for the meeting in question.
- 4.9.6.6 Individuals may be listed under membership of the Board as Special Advisors by invitation for specific issues and expertise.

4.9.7 Code of Conduct

- 4.9.7.1 All members of the Board are covered by West Northamptonshire Council's Code of Conduct and must adhere to that Code of Conduct when acting in the capacity of a Board member.
- 4.9.7.2 Where any Board member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Registerable Interest, which will require them to leave the meeting for the duration of discussion on that item, they must make this known at the commencement of the meeting. They may remain and address the board on the relevant matter but must leave the room prior to any debate, voting or decision-making process.

4.9.8 Quorum

- 4.9.8.1 A quorum for any meeting shall be one-quarter of the members of the Board including at least one elected Member, one officer and one representative from a Clinical Commissioning Group. No business requiring a decision shall take place where the meeting is not quorate, if this arises during a meeting the Chair must either suspend business until the meeting is again quorate or declare the meeting closed.

4.9.9 Voting Arrangements

- 4.9.9.1 Unless the Council decides otherwise, all full members of the Health and Wellbeing Board have voting rights; only full Board members (or nominated

deputies in their absence) shall sit at the Board room table, or join virtually so that the right to vote is obvious.

- 4.9.9.2 Decisions shall be made on the basis of a show of hands of a majority of voting members present. The Chair may exercise a second or casting vote.

4.9.10 Meeting Frequency

- 4.9.10.1 The Board shall meet on a quarterly basis. The date, hour and place of meetings shall be fixed by the Board.
- 4.9.10.2 The Chair may convene an extraordinary meeting at short notice to consider matters of urgency. The notice must state the business to be transacted and no other business is to be transacted at the meeting.
- 4.9.10.3 The Chair will be required to consider convening a special meeting of the Board if they are in receipt of a written requisition to do so signed by no less than three of the constituent members of the Board. Such requisition shall specify the business to be transacted and no other business shall be transacted as such meeting. The meeting, if convened by the Chair, must be held within seven days of the Chair's receipt of the requisition.
- 4.9.10.4 The Chair of the Board, or majority of those present at a Board meeting, may adjourn meetings of the Board at any time, to be reconvened at any other day, hour and place, as the Board decides.

4.9.11 Sub-Groups

- 4.9.11.1 The Board can establish sub-groups based on the Board's priority areas which will be reviewed on an annual basis. The sub-groups will be informal officer groups, ensuring that the views of patients and service users are included. The sub-groups should provide an overview of work undertaken and any issues arising for discussion at Health and Wellbeing Board meetings to be considered by members.

4.9.12 Visitors and Speakers

- 4.9.12.1 As the Board is a public meeting, observers may attend and will be seated in a viewing area or observe via YouTube if the meetings are held virtually.
- 4.9.12.2 Presenters who are not full Board Members may attend the meeting and should sit in the viewing area. They will be invited to address the floor by the Chair when their agenda item arrives.
- 4.9.12.3 The public who wish to address the Board on matters listed on the agenda for a specific meeting may do so for a period of not exceeding 3 minutes at the commencement of that meeting, only with the agreement of the Chair, and provided they have given 48 hours' written notice of the matter to be raised to the Chair and Board secretariat.

4.9.13 Meeting Administration

- 4.9.13.1 The Board secretariat shall give at least five clear working days' notice in writing to each member for every ordinary meeting of the Board, to include any agenda of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

- 4.9.13.2 Papers for each Board meeting will be sent out five clear working days in advance. Late papers will be sent out or tabled only in exceptional circumstances, and not without the prior consent of the Chair.
- 4.9.13.3 The Board shall hold meetings, or parts of meetings, in private session when deemed appropriate in view of the nature of business to be discussed. The Board must first pass a resolution for the exclusion of press and public. The following must be stated at this time:

“In respect of the following items the Chair moves the resolution set out below, on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information (information regarded as private for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972) would be disclosed to them: The Committee is requested to resolve: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act of the descriptions against each item would be disclosed to them”.

4.10 Senior Appointments Committee

4.10.1 Membership

- 4.10.1.1 Leader, Deputy Leader, Relevant Portfolio Holder, Leader of the Opposition, and three other councillors. The Committee is required to be politically balanced.

4.10.2 Terms of Reference of the Senior Appointments Committee

- 4.10.2.1 To recommend to the Council the appointment and, where appropriate, the dismissal of the Chief Executive, the Executive Director Finance or the Director of Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), in accordance with the Staff Employment Procedure Rules (see section 9.5).
- 4.10.2.2 To make appointments or dismissals as appropriate of the following roles:
- Director of Children’s Services
 - Director of Transformation
 - Executive Director Adults, Communities and Wellbeing
 - Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment
 - Executive Director Corporate Services
 - Assistant Chief Executive
 - Director of Public Health
- 4.10.2.3 To take disciplinary action other than dismissal in respect of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer.
- 4.10.2.4 To undertake associated activities, including the interview and dismissal processes generally for the roles outlined.

5.0 EXECUTIVE

5.1 The Role of the Cabinet

- a. The Functions of a local authority are divided into two broad categories: Executive and non-Executive. The Council and its committees decide non-Executive matters and these are described in Parts 3 and 4 of the Constitution. All other decisions are made by the Executive.
- b. West Northamptonshire Council is operating a Leader and Cabinet model form of Executive Arrangements. This means that the Council will elect a Leader from among the members of the Council. The Executive will consist of the Leader and at least 2 other members and not more than 9 other members, one of whom must be appointed Deputy Leader.
- c. The function of determining Executive Portfolios sits with the Executive Leader and can be varied at the discretion of the Leader.
- d. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council may not be members of the Executive. Further details are set out in the Cabinet Procedure Rules below.

5.2 Cabinet Arrangements

Cabinet Decisions

- 5.2.1. The arrangements for the discharge of executive functions are determined by the Leader. The Leader may provide for executive functions to be discharged by:
- (a) The Leader;
 - (b) The Cabinet as a whole;
 - (c) A committee of the Cabinet;
 - (d) An individual member of the Cabinet;
 - (e) An officer;
 - (f) An Area committee;
 - (g) Joint Arrangements including the Community Networks; or
 - (h) Another Local Authority.

Delegation by the Leader

- 5.2.2. At the Annual Meeting of the Council, the Leader shall present to the Council their proposals for Cabinet delegations, to the extent that they have been formulated at that time. The Leader shall provide to the Monitoring Officer within ten working days of the Annual Meeting a written record of Cabinet delegations made by them for publication, together with notice of the Portfolios to be established. In discharging these responsibilities, the Leader shall have regard to the recommendations of the

Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive as to the scope and formation of the Portfolios.

- 5.2.3. Any subsequent 'in year' amendments shall, as they occur, be notified by the Leader in writing within one working day to the Monitoring Officer who shall notify all Members in writing of the amendment and maintain a record of them.
- 5.2.4. The document presented by the Leader shall contain the following information about executive functions in relation to the coming year:
- (a) the names, addresses and electoral divisions of the councillors appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader;
 - (b) the nature of the responsibilities attached to the Portfolios allocated to those appointed to the Cabinet;
 - (c) the extent of any authority delegated to Cabinet Members individually, including details of the limitation(s) on their authority;
 - (d) the terms of reference and Constitution of such Cabinet committees as the Leader appoints and the names of Cabinet Members appointed to them;
 - (e) the nature and extent of any delegation of executive functions to Area committees, any other authority or any joint arrangements and the names of those Cabinet Members appointed to any joint committee for the coming year; and
 - (f) the nature and extent of any delegation to officers with details of any limitation on that delegation, and the title of the officer to whom the delegation is made. This may simply be the endorsement of the Scheme of Delegation approved by Council.

Cabinet Portfolios

- 5.2.5. Cabinet portfolios showing details of portfolio holders and their key areas of responsibility can be found on the Council's website ([Document West Northamptonshire Council Executive Portfolios - 2021 - West Northamptonshire Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)) or by contacting Democratic Services.

Sub-Delegation of Executive Functions

- 5.2.6. Where the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet or an individual member of the Cabinet is responsible for an executive function, they may delegate further to an area committee, joint arrangements or an officer.
- 5.2.7. Unless the Leader directs otherwise, functions delegated to the Cabinet may be delegated further to a committee of the Cabinet or to an officer.
- 5.2.8. Unless the Leader directs otherwise, functions delegated to a committee of the Cabinet may be delegated further to an officer.

5.2.9. The delegation of Cabinet functions does not prevent the discharge of those functions by the person or body who made the delegation or a person or body with a higher right of delegation.

The Council's Scheme of Delegation and Executive Functions

5.2.10. Subject to paragraph 5.2.11 below, the Council's Scheme of Delegation shall be subject to adoption by the Council and may only be amended by the Council, save for delegations relating to executive functions which may be varied by the Leader or in accordance with the authority delegated to the Monitoring Officer. It shall comprise the details required in Part 9.2 of the Constitution, the Scheme of Delegation to officers in this Constitution and such further delegations as are made in accordance with this Constitution or other powers available to the Council.

5.2.11. If the Leader decides to delegate executive functions, they may amend the Scheme of Delegation relating to executive functions accordingly at any time during the year. To do so, the Leader must give written notice to the Monitoring Officer and to the person, body or committee concerned. The notice must set out the extent of the amendment to the Scheme of Delegation and whether it entails the withdrawal of delegation from any person, body, committee or the Cabinet as a whole. The Leader shall confirm, through their announcements any changes at the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

5.2.12. Where the Leader seeks to withdraw delegation from a sub-committee, notice shall be deemed to be served on that committee when served on its Chair.

Planning Policy Committee

Purpose

5.2.13. The purpose of the Committee is to exercise the Council's executive functions in relation to the preparation and, where applicable, approval of planning policy and neighbourhood planning documents.

Membership

5.2.14. The members of the Committee represent as far as possible the political balance of the Council as a whole but this is not a counting committee for the purposes of establishing political balance.

5.2.15. Membership shall consist of:

- (a) Three Executive Members
- (b) Seven Non-Executive Members (4 Conservative, 2 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat) to include the Chairs of the Local and Strategic Planning Committees.

5.2.16. As this is an Executive committee only the Executive members have a vote, but the aim of the committee is to try to establish broad consensus about the development of planning policy.

Terms of Reference

5.2.17. The exercise of the Council's functions, powers and duties (where not otherwise delegated to officers) in relation to the following:

- (a) To oversee the preparation of Local Plans to ensure they meet the 'tests of soundness' set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- (b) To oversee the preparation of the Local Development Scheme and Statement of Community Involvement and approve those documents.
- (c) To consider and recommend the content of the Local Plan for consideration and formal approval by full Council for either public consultation (preferred options or pre-submission versions), submissions to the Secretary of State (to be examined by a Planning Inspector), or final adoption (following receipt of the Planning Inspector's report).
- (d) To oversee the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other planning documents for public consultation and, where applicable, approve those documents for final adoption.
- (e) To approve the preparation and subsequent publication of studies, surveys and other technical documents that form part of the evidence base needed to justify the content of the Local Plan, SPDs and other planning documents.
- (f) Approve the work programme required for the committee to undertake its functions effectively and in a timely manner.
- (g) Approve non-statutory planning policy and guidance to be considered by the Council, the Planning Committees, this committee and officers in the discharge of statutory planning functions.
- (h) To carry out the Executive functions of the Council in relation to the approval of planning documents and recommendation of planning documents by the Executive to Council. Matters reserved to full Council or Non-Executive approvals fall outside the remit of this committee.
- (i) To carry out the Executive functions of the Council in relation to Neighbourhood Planning, in particular to proceed to referendum and, if successful, make neighbourhood plans within the time limits that apply.
- (j) To oversee the designation of Conservation Area designations, additions to the Local List, and making of Article 4 directions.

Meeting Times

5.2.18. The Committee will meet at 6pm on a working day and up to 12 times per year.

5.2.19. Items for Planning Policy Committee will appear on the Forward Plan and arrangements for the committee will comply with the Executive Procedure Rules set out in the Constitution.

5.3 Cabinet Procedure Rules

1 Meetings of the Cabinet

- 1.1 The Cabinet will meet as indicated in the Council's programme of meetings. The Cabinet or the Leader may agree to change the date or time of any programmed meeting subject to compliance with the requirements of Part 5.4 (Access to Information Procedure Rules) of this Constitution, to cancel a meeting where there is insufficient business to be transacted and/or to arrange additional meetings as it/they see fit. Locations of meetings will be published in the calendar of meetings.
- 1.2 The Cabinet may meet in public or in private, subject to legal requirements and the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in this Constitution.
- 1.3 The Leader will chair meetings of the Cabinet or in their absence, the Deputy Leader will chair. Where both the Leader and Deputy Leader are absent, the Members present, may appoint one member of the Cabinet to chair that meeting.
- 1.4 All members of the Cabinet shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Cabinet.
- 1.5 Attendance by other Members of the Council or the public shall be in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules, by invitation under Rule 1.6 below, or as set out in Rules 4.1 to 4.2 below.
- 1.6 The Cabinet may invite any person it considers appropriate, to its meetings to discuss matters of mutual interest or concern, or to advise. Such persons may only be given access to confidential and/or exempt information on terms to be decided by the Monitoring Officer so as to ensure that the Access to Information Procedure Rules are observed.

2 Quorum at meetings of the Cabinet

- 2.1 No business shall be transacted where at any time during the meeting of the Cabinet, or a committee or sub-committee established by the Cabinet, there are fewer than one third of members of the Cabinet, a committee or sub-committee of the Cabinet present.

3 Taking of decisions by the Cabinet

- 3.1 Cabinet decisions, including those taken under delegated powers, shall not take effect until they have been recorded in writing, as required under the Access to Information Procedure Rules, and shall not be implemented where the right of call-in has been exercised until the call-in process has been concluded. Records of Cabinet decisions must be confirmed at the next meeting.

4 Members attending and speaking at Cabinet meetings

- 4.1 The Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny committees shall be entitled to attend any formal public meeting of the Cabinet and to speak to any matter on the agenda for that meeting.

- 4.2 Other Members of the Council may also speak at such meetings, subject to the rights of the Leader (or person presiding in their absence) to ensure that the business of the Cabinet is discharged efficiently and effectively. Those members shall be required to provide no less than 30 minutes' prior notice of their wish to attend and speak.

5 Business at Cabinet meetings

- 5.1 The business to be transacted at meetings of the Cabinet will be set out in an agenda for the meeting in question, subject to any requirements or exemptions under the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- 5.2 The agenda may be supported by additional papers prepared by officers or by or on behalf of other bodies, subject to requirements in the Access to Information Procedure Rules and disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- 5.3 The Cabinet is obliged to consider matters referred to it by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or by the Full Council. A standing item shall be placed on agendas of public meetings of the Cabinet for this purpose.
- 5.4 The Access to Information Procedure Rules will apply to notice of meetings, agendas, and access to reports and background papers. Where matters are for decision, the agenda must stipulate those that are Key Decisions and those that are not, in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- 5.5 The Cabinet will, at each formal meeting, confirm the record of decisions taken at its previous meeting as a correct record.
- 5.6 The Monitoring Officer or their nominee shall be responsible for preparing and distributing the agenda for Cabinet meetings, attending meetings for the purpose of advising the Cabinet on matters relating to the application and interpretation of the constitution, and recording decisions as required under this Constitution.
- 5.7 In taking decisions, the Cabinet must satisfy itself that it has before it adequate and appropriate advice from its service, legal and financial advisers who shall be present at any meeting where a decision is being taken and that advice is taken into consideration in determining the matter. Where there is any doubt about vires or probity then advice must be obtained from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer.
- 5.8 Any member of the Cabinet may require the Monitoring Officer to place an item on the agenda for a stipulated meeting of the Cabinet.
- 5.9 The Monitoring Officer will ensure that any matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council or an Overview and Scrutiny committee are placed on the agenda for the next appropriate meeting of the Cabinet.
- 5.10 Any councillor may request the Leader to place an item on the agenda of a meeting of the Cabinet. The Leader shall have sole discretion as to whether or not to accede to such a request but shall consult the Monitoring Officer prior to making a decision. If such a request is granted, the Leader shall have sole discretion as to whether the councillor in question can speak to the item at the meeting in question.

- 5.11 The Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and/or the Section 151 Officer can include an item for consideration on the agenda of a Cabinet meeting. In pursuance of their statutory duties, they can require that a special meeting of the Cabinet be convened.
- 5.12 Business cannot be conducted at formal meetings of the Cabinet unless it is included on the agenda for the meeting. Where it is urgent, the requirements of the Access to Information Procedure Rules must be complied with.
- 5.13 The Cabinet will report to the Council as required under the Access to Information Procedure Rules on any matter which is classified as a Key Decision and is dealt with under special urgency procedures.
- 5.14 Questions can be submitted by members of the public at meetings of the Cabinet in accordance with Council Procedure Rules.

6 Voting at Cabinet meetings

- 6.1 Voting at Cabinet meetings will be by a show of hands and any Member may require, immediately after the vote is taken, that the minutes of the meeting record how they voted or abstained. Where there are equal votes cast, the Leader or, in their absence, the person chairing may exercise a second or casting vote.
- 6.2 Voting for any office or appointment, including any paid appointment, where more than one person is nominated shall be in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 34.

7 Cabinet – committees and sub-committees

- 7.1 The Cabinet may appoint such committees or sub-committees as it considers necessary and appropriate to assist in the discharge of its functions. In making such appointments, the Cabinet must specify the name of the Committee/sub-committee, its membership (including its Chair and, if appropriate, Vice Chair) and the terms of reference of the body.

8 Motion under Council Meeting Procedure Rule 29

- 8.1 A mover of a motion under Council Meeting Procedure Rule 29 which has been referred to the Cabinet for consideration may attend the meeting of the Cabinet when their motion is under consideration and explain the motion. The mover of the motion will be advised of the date and time of the meeting when the matter is to be considered and they will be sent an electronic copy of the relevant papers.

9 Resolving disputes

- 9.1 In the case of any dispute during the proceedings of the Cabinet, the relevant parts of this Constitution will apply and after considering the application of the relevant provisions, the person chairing the meeting will rule on the issue in question and their ruling will be final.

10 Reserves/substitute members

10.1 There shall be no reserve or substitute members of the Cabinet.

11 Approval of urgent business

11.1 Where any matter is urgent and cannot await the next meeting, the Head of Paid Service may take the necessary action, provided that they have first consulted the Leader (or Deputy Leader if they are not available). The decision taken shall be reported to the next public meeting of the Cabinet.

12 Conflicts of interest

12.1 Where the Leader or any Cabinet Member has a conflict of interest, they will follow the requirements of the Council's Members' Code of Conduct in relation to such interests, including any restrictions on participating in the debate or voting upon the issue in question.

12.2 If all (or a majority) of the members of the Cabinet present have a conflict of interest, then consideration will be given to applying to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation from the provisions of the Code.

12.3 If the discharge of a Cabinet function has been delegated to another body or individual and a conflict of interest arises for that body or individual, then it will fall to the body or individual who delegated the matter to take the decision.

5.4 Access to Information Procedure Rules

1 General

1.1 These rules apply to all public meetings of the Cabinet, Council, its committees and sub-committees, joint committees.

1.2 In these Rules the word "meeting" means a meeting or meetings of any of these bodies unless specified otherwise.

1.3 These rules do not affect any other specific rights to information contained elsewhere in this Constitution or the law.

1.4 Members of the public may attend all public meetings subject to the exceptions contained in these Rules.

1.5 Members of the press and public are also entitled to film, audio record and report on meetings of the Council, committees, Cabinet and Joint committees, except in circumstances where the press and public have been excluded as permitted by law. Any such filming, audio recording or reporting shall be in accordance with any guidelines published by the Council on its website or made available at the meeting.

2 Notice of meetings

2.1 The Council will give at least five clear working days' notice of any such meeting by publicising, including by electronic means, relevant details, unless Rule 13 (Special

Urgency) has been applied.

3 Agenda and supporting papers - rights of access

- 3.1 Copies of the agenda and supporting papers will be made available on the Council's website, for inspection by the public at least five clear working days before the meeting. Where an item is added to an agenda later, a supplementary agenda will be made available, with any supporting papers, to the public as soon as possible.
- 3.2 The Council will supply on request copies of any agenda and reports which are open to public inspection, and if the Monitoring Officer thinks fit, copies of any further documents supplied to councillors relating to that item.
- 3.3 The Council may require any person to make a payment in advance covering postage and costs connected to the supply of the papers in Rule 3.2 above.

4 Access to decision records, minutes, agenda and supporting papers after a meeting

- 4.1 The Council will make electronically available, for a period of six years from the date of the meeting:
 - (a) the minutes of the meeting where, under these rules or the Constitution minutes are required to be made, excluding any part of the minutes relating to the conduct of business when the public were not present or where exempt or confidential information would be disclosed;
 - (b) the records of decisions taken, together with reasons by the Cabinet excluding any part of the record relating to the conduct of business when the public were not present or where exempt or confidential information would be disclosed;
 - (c) where information relating to a decision is considered in private, a summary of the proceedings to provide a reasonably fair and coherent record, excluding any information which is of a confidential or exempt nature; and
 - (d) the agenda and supporting papers covering items which were considered when the public were entitled to be present.

5 Background documents

- 5.1 The officer, in whose name an item is to be submitted for decision, will set out in the agenda a list of the background documents which in their opinion:
 - (a) relate to the subject matter of the item in question;
 - (b) discloses any facts or matters on which the agenda item or an important part of it has been based; and
 - (c) has been relied upon to a material extent in preparing the agenda item.
- 5.2 The requirements in Rule 5.1 above do not apply to or include any published works or any document in whole or in part which would disclose confidential or exempt

information.

- 5.3 Background documents which have been made available for public inspection will continue to be available for a period of four years from the date the decision is made.

6 Definition of confidential and exempt information

- 6.1 For the purposes of these Rules the definitions of confidential and exempt information are set out below.

6.2 Confidential Information means information supplied or given to the Council by a government department on terms which forbid its disclosure to the public or is information which cannot be disclosed to the public due to a prohibition in any enactment or by Order of the Courts.

6.3 Exempt Information is information falling within any of the categories set out in Appendix 1 subject to the conditions noted in that Appendix.

7 Exclusion of the press and public from meetings

Confidential information – requirement to exclude

- 7.1 The press and public will be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the proceedings, that confidential information, as described in Rule 6.2 above will be disclosed.

Exempt information – discretion to exclude

- 7.2 In the case of exempt information, the press and public may be excluded from a meeting where Rule 6.3 and Appendix 1 applies.

8 No public right of access to agenda papers

- 8.1 The Monitoring Officer, where they consider it necessary, may refuse access by the public to any agenda or supporting papers which in their opinion relate to items during which, in accordance with Rule 7 above, the meeting is likely not to be open to the public. Any such papers will be clearly marked “Not for Publication” and will contain the category of information to be disclosed as set out in Appendix 1 to these Rules. Similar provisions apply to the disclosures of documents related to decisions of the Council, including the Cabinet.

9 The Cabinet: application of these rules

- 9.1 Rules 10 to 20 will apply to the Cabinet and any committees or sub-committees which it may establish from time to time.

9.2 Where the Cabinet, including a committee or sub-committee of the Cabinet meet to discuss a Key Decision, with an officer or officers present, within 28 days of the date according to the Forward Plan by which it is to be decided, then the Cabinet must comply with Rules 1 to 8 above unless Rule 12 (general exception) or 13 (special urgency) apply. This requirement does not apply where the sole purpose of the meeting is for officers to brief councillors.

10 Definition of Key Decision and procedure before taking a Key Decision

- 10.1 A Key Decision means an executive decision, which is likely:
- (a) to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
 - (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the Council.
- 10.2 In deciding what amounts to 'significant' in relation to paragraph 10.1a above, a guidance threshold figure of £500,000 is suggested, but discretion should be used to determine whether the amount in question is significant with regard to the particular budget area to which the decision relates.
- 10.3 Subject to Rules 12 or 13, a Key Decision cannot be taken unless:
- (a) a notice ("the Forward Plan") has been published in connection with the matter in question and made available to the public at the main office(s) of the Council;
 - (b) at least 28 clear calendar days have elapsed since publication of the Forward Plan; and
 - (c) where the decision is to be taken at a meeting of the Cabinet, including a committee or sub-committee of the Cabinet, public notice of the meeting has been given under Rule 2 above.

11 The Forward Plan

- 11.1 The Forward Plan will be prepared on behalf of the Leader on a monthly basis to cover a four-month period beginning with the first day of any month. The Forward Plan will be rolled forward and published each month to cover the four-month period beginning again with the new date of publication. There will be instances where it is not possible to include an item in the Forward Plan. In this case Rule 12 or 13 below will apply.
- 11.2 The Forward Plan will contain such matters as the Leader has reason to believe will be Key Decisions to be taken by the Leader, the Cabinet, a Portfolio Holder, a committee or sub-committee of the Cabinet or an Office Holder in the course of the discharge of a Cabinet function during the period covered by the Forward Plan.
- 11.3 The Forward Plan will describe in respect of each matter the following particulars:
- (a) that a key decision is to be made;
 - (b) the matter relating to the decision to be made;
 - (c) the name and title of the decision taker if an individual, or the name and details of the membership where the decision taker is a body;
 - (d) the date on which, or the period within which, the decision will be taken;

- (e) the identity of the principal groups whom the decision taker proposes to consult before taking the decision;
- (f) the means by which any such consultation is proposed to be undertaken;
- (g) the steps any person might take to make representations to the Cabinet or decision taker about the matter before the decision is made, and the date by which those steps must be taken;
- (h) a list of the documents submitted to the decision taker for consideration in relation to the matter;
- (i) the address from which, subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure, copies of, or extracts from, any document listed in the Forward Plan is available;
- (j) that other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision taker; and
- (k) the procedure for requesting details of those documents (if any) as they become available.

11.4 Where in relation to any matter where the public may be excluded from a public meeting under Rule 7, or documents relating to the decision need not be disclosed to the public, the Forward Plan must contain the particulars of the matter, but may not contain any confidential information, exempt information or particulars of the advice of a political adviser or assistant.

12 General exception for Key Decisions

12.1 If a matter which is likely to be a Key Decision has not been included in the Forward Plan then, subject to Rule 13, the decision may still be taken if:

- (a) the decision has to be taken by such a date that it is not possible to comply with Rules 10.3 and 11;
- (b) the Monitoring Officer has informed the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committee, or if there is no such person, each member of the Committee in writing, by notice, of the matter to which the decision is to be made;
- (c) the Monitoring Officer has made copies of that notice available to the public at the main office of the Council and published it on the Council's website; and
- (d) at least five clear working days have elapsed since the Monitoring Officer complied with their obligations under this paragraph.

12.2 As soon as practicable after complying with Rule 12.1, the Monitoring Officer shall make available at the main office of the Council and publish on the Council's website a notice setting out the reasons why compliance with Rules 10.3 and 11 is not possible.

12.3 Where such a decision is taken by the Cabinet, it must be taken in public subject to

any requirements relating to the disclosure of confidential or exempt information and the exclusion of the public.

13 Special urgency for Key Decisions

- 13.1 If by virtue of the date by which a key decision must be taken, the requirements of Rule 12 above cannot be followed, then the decision can only be taken if the decision maker (if an individual) or the Chair of the body taking the decision, obtains the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committee that the taking of the decision cannot be reasonably deferred. If there is no Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or if they are unable to act, then the agreement of the Chair of the Council, or in their absence the Vice Chair will suffice.
- 13.2 In addition to the requirement for the Chair to agree to the matter being dealt with as urgent business, the Chair and Vice Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be consulted, and may comment, on the subject matter of the decision itself.

14 Report to Council

- 14.1 If an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is of the opinion that a Key Decision has been taken which was not:

- (a) included in the Forward Plan; or
- (b) the subject of the general exception procedure under Rule 12 above; or
- (c) the subject of an agreement with an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair, or the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council under Rule 13 above;

the Committee may require the Cabinet to submit a report to the Council within such reasonable time as the Committee specifies.

- 14.2 In response to any requirement under Rule 14.1 above, the Cabinet will prepare a report for submission to the next available meeting of the Council. However, if the next meeting of the Council is within 7 days of the resolution of the Cabinet, then the report may be submitted to the subsequent meeting. The report to the Council will set out particulars of the decision, the individual or body taking the decision, and if the Cabinet is of the opinion that it was not a key decision, the reasons for that opinion.

15 Record of decisions of the Cabinet

- 15.1 After any meeting of the Cabinet or any of its committees or sub-committees, whether held in public or private, the Monitoring Officer or their nominee shall produce as soon as practicable a written statement of every decision taken at that meeting. The record will include:

- (a) a record of the decision including the date it was made;
- (b) a record of the reasons for the decision;

- (c) details of any alternative options considered and rejected;
 - (d) a record of any conflict of interest relating to the matter decided which is declared by any member of the decision-making body; and
 - (e) in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer.
- 15.2 Where an executive decision is taken by an individual member that member shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, produce or instruct the Monitoring Officer or their nominee to produce, a written statement of that decision including the matters stated in Rule 15.1 (a) to (c) and:
- (a) a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who was consulted by the member who made the decision and which relates to that decision; and
 - (b) in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer.

16 Cabinet meetings relating to matters that are not Key Decisions

- 16.1 Meetings of the Cabinet at which any decisions are to be taken shall be held in public, subject to the requirements of Rules 7 and 8 above.

17 Meeting of the Cabinet in private

- 17.1 Where a meeting of the Cabinet, including a committee or sub-committee of the Cabinet, is to be held in private under these Rules, at least 28 clear days before the meeting, the Cabinet shall make available at the main office of the Council a notice of its intention to hold a meeting in private giving reasons as to why the meeting is to be held in private.
- 17.2 At least five clear days before the meeting, the Cabinet must make available at the main office of the Council a further notice of its intention to hold a meeting in private containing: the reasons as to why the meeting is to be held in private; details of any representations received by the Cabinet about why the meeting should be open to the public; and a statement of the Cabinet's response to any such representations.
- 17.3 All members of the Cabinet shall be entitled to be given five clear working days' notice of the meeting, unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice on urgency grounds.
- 17.4 Copies of the notices required by Rules 17.1 and 17.3 shall be sent to the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny committees.
- 17.5 Where the date by which a private meeting must be held makes compliance with Rules 17.1 and 17.2 not possible, the meeting may only be held in private where the Cabinet has obtained agreement from:
- (a) the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committee; or
 - (b) if there is no such person, or if a Chair of an Overview and Scrutiny committee

is unable to act, the Chair of the Council; or

- (c) where there is no Chair of either an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or of the Council able to act, the Vice Chair of the Council;

that the meeting is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.

- 17.6 As soon as reasonably practicable after the decision-making body has obtained agreement under Rule 17.5 it must make available at the Council's main office and publish on the Council's website a notice setting out why the meeting is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.

18 Attendance at private meetings of the Cabinet

- 18.1 Any member of the Cabinet may attend a private meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the Cabinet whether they are members of that body unless the body determines otherwise.
- 18.2 Any Cabinet member who is not a member of such a committee or sub-committee shall be entitled to speak with the consent of the person presiding but not to vote.

19 Officer attendance at Cabinet meetings

- 19.1 The Head of Paid Service, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, or their nominees, are entitled to attend any meeting of the Cabinet. The Cabinet cannot meet unless the Monitoring Officer has been given reasonable notice that a meeting is to take place. This provision also applies to committees and sub-committees of the Cabinet.
- 19.2 A private meeting of the Cabinet, including a committee or sub-committee of the Cabinet, may only take place in the presence of the Monitoring Officer or their nominee, who shall have responsibility for recording and publishing any decisions.

20 Key Decisions by Portfolio Holders

- 20.1 Where an individual member of the Cabinet receives a report which they intend to take into account in making any Key Decision, then they will not make the decision until at least five clear working days after receipt of that report.
- 20.2 On giving of such a report to a Portfolio Holder, the person who prepared the report will give a copy of it to the relevant Chair of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as soon as reasonably practicable and make it publicly available at the same time.
- 20.3 As soon as reasonably practicable after a Key Decision has been taken by a Portfolio Holder, a written record of the decision must be produced in accordance with Rule 15.2 above.
- 20.4 The provisions of Rules 4 and 5 will also apply to the making of decisions by Portfolio Holders. This does not require the disclosure of exempt or confidential information or advice from a political assistant.

21 Record of Executive and Non-Executive decisions taken by officers

- 21.1 As soon as reasonably practicable after an officer has made a decision which is an Executive decision (i.e. the responsibility of the Cabinet) a written statement will be prepared including:
- (a) a record of the decision including the date it was made;
 - (b) a record of the reasons for the decision;
 - (c) details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision;
 - (d) a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the officer which relates to the decision; and
 - (e) in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer.
- 21.2 Any record prepared in accordance with Rule 21.1 and any report considered by the officer and relevant to the decision will be available for public inspection at the main office of the Council and on the Council's website.
- 21.3 Rules 21.1 to 21.2 will relate to decisions taken by officers in accordance with their powers and duties set out within the Scheme of Delegation or otherwise under an express delegation from the Cabinet, Council, its committees, sub-committees or any joint committee in which the Council is involved. Rules 21.1 to 21.2 shall not apply to day-to-day administrative or operational decisions taken by officers in connection with the discharge of functions which are the responsibility of the Cabinet.
- 21.4 As soon as reasonably practicable after an officer has made a decision under an express delegation from the Council, its committees, sub-committees or any Joint Committee in which the Council is involved, or under a general delegation from one of these bodies where the effect of the decision is to grant a permission or licence, affect the rights of an individual or award a contract or incur expenditure, which in either case materially affects the Council's position, a written statement will be prepared including:
- (a) a record of the decision including the date it was made;
 - (b) a record of the reasons for the decision;
 - (c) details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision; and
 - (d) a record of the name of any councillor who has declared an interest (for decisions taken under an express delegation).
- 21.5 Any record prepared in accordance with Rule 21.4 together with any background papers considered by the officer and relevant to the decision will be available for public inspection at the main office of the Council and on the Council's website.
- 21.6 Rules 21.4 to 21.5 do not apply to:

- (a) routine administrative and organisational decisions;
- (b) decisions on operational matters such as day to day variations in services;
- (c) decisions if the whole or part of the record contains confidential or exempt information; and
- (d) decisions that are already required to be published by other legislation, provided the record published includes the date the decision was taken and the reasons for the decision.

22 Access to documents – Overview and Scrutiny committees

- 22.1 Subject to Rule 22.4 below, any member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is entitled to copies of any document which is in the possession or control of the Leader and/or the Cabinet including its committees and sub-committees and which contains material relating to:
- (a) any business transacted at a public or private meeting of the Cabinet including any of its committees and sub-committees;
 - (b) any decision taken by an individual member of the Cabinet; or
 - (c) any executive decision taken by an officer in accordance with Part 9.2 of this Constitution.
- 22.2 Where a member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (including its sub-committees) requests a document which falls within Rule 22.1 the Leader must provide that document as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any case, no later than 10 clear working days after the Leader receives the request.
- 22.3 Subject to Rule 22.4 the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committees is entitled to see papers in relation to private decisions of the Cabinet before the decision is made.
- 22.4 Where the Leader so determines, a member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will not be entitled to:
- (a) any document that is in draft form;
 - (b) any such document or part of a document that contains exempt or confidential information, unless that information is relevant to an action or decision they are reviewing or scrutinising, or any review contained in any programme of work of the Committee.
- 22.5 The Leader must provide the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committee with a written statement setting out the reasons for their decision.

23 Additional rights of access for councillors

- 23.1 All councillors will be entitled to inspect any document which is in the possession or under the control of the Leader and or the Cabinet including its committees or sub-

committees and contains material relating to any business to be transacted at a public meeting; any business previously transacted at a private meeting; any decision made by an individual member; or an executive decision by an officer unless in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer it contains exempt information falling within the categories of exempt information as set out in Appendix 1; or it contains the advice of a political advisor.

- 23.2 All councillors will be entitled to inspect any document (except those available only in draft form) in the possession or under the control of the Leader or the Cabinet including its committees and sub-committees which relates to any Key Decision unless Rule 23.1 above applies.
- 23.3 In relation to public meetings, where a document is required to be available for inspection by all councillors under Rule 23.1 it must be available for at least 5 clear working days before the meeting except where the meeting is convened at shorter notice or an item is added to an agenda at shorter notice, in which case the document must be available for inspection when the meeting is convened or the item is added to the agenda.
- 23.4 In relation to private meetings, decisions made by an individual member or executive decisions made by an officer, where a document is required to be available for inspection by all councillors under Rule 23.1 it must be available within 24 hours of the meeting concluding, or where an executive decision is made by an individual member or an officer, within 24 hours of the decision being made.
- 23.5 These rights of a councillor are additional to any other right they may have.

Appendix 1 - Descriptions of Exempt Information

Exempt information means information falling within the following categories (subject to any qualification):

- 1) Information relating to any individual.
- 2) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
- 3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
- 4) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
- 5) Information in respect of which a claim of legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- 6) Information which reveals that the authority proposes
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which

requirements are imposed on a person; or

(b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.

- 7) Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Qualifications

Information falling within paragraph 3 above is not exempt information if it is required to be registered under:

- (a) the Companies Acts (as defined in section 2 of the Companies Act 2006);
- (b) the Friendly Societies Act 1974;
- (c) the Friendly Societies Act 1992;
- (d) the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014;
- (e) the Building Societies Act 1986; or
- (f) the Charities Act 2011

Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission or permission in principle pursuant to regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

Information which falls within any of the paragraphs 1-7 above is Exempt information if and so long as in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

There is no legal definition of 'public interest', but the following are relevant considerations in favour of disclosure:

- (a) The information would assist public understanding of an issue that is subject to current public debate.
- (b) Proper debate cannot take place without wide availability of all the relevant information.
- (c) The issue affects a wide range of individuals or companies.
- (d) Facts and analysis behind major policy decisions.
- (e) Allowing individuals to understand decisions made by public authorities affecting their lives and, in some cases, assisting individuals in challenging those decisions.
- (f) Accountability for proceeds of sale of assets in public ownership.
- (g) Openness and accountability for tender processes and prices.

- (h) Public interest in public bodies obtaining value for money.
- (i) Public health or public safety.
- (j) Damage to the environment.
- (k) Contingency plans in an emergency.
- (l) Promoting accountability and transparency for decisions taken by public authorities and the spending of public money.

A practice of applying "Exempt" status to a report without reasons being set out and consideration of the public interest is not acceptable.

6.0 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 West and North Shared Services Joint Committee

Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee

1. The Joint Committee's role is to oversee the management of those services which are provided on a Northamptonshire-wide basis on behalf of North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Councils to ensure effective delivery of such services and to provide strategic direction
2. The Joint Committee is specifically responsible for:
 - (a) Developing and agreeing the strategy for each of the services.
 - (b) Approving the Service Plans for the specified functions including targets for service quality, performance and efficiency.
 - (c) Agreeing the responsibilities of each Council to deliver the Service Plans and agreed strategy, including any specific responsibilities of the Provider Council and that the responsibilities are documented within the Service Plans.
 - (d) Ensuring that the services are provided within the policy and budget set by the councils.
 - (e) Ensuring that the arrangements ensure that each Council's statutory responsibilities are met.
 - (f) Reviewing the performance of the services and initiating additional/remedial action where appropriate.
 - (g) Ensuring that clear operational policies are in place and that these are complied with.
 - (h) Ensuring the provision of adequate funds and other resources to enable delivery.
 - (i) Agreeing the basis for apportioning cost between the two Councils and the amount to be apportioned.
 - (j) Ensuring that effective risk management arrangements are in place, that the services are subject to adequate and independent audit and that any audit recommendations are acted upon.
 - (k) Approving business cases for proposed changes and overseeing the progress of subsequent work.
 - (l) Ensuring that there are robust plans for any disaggregation of services and that there is a smooth transition to new service delivery arrangements.
 - (m) Resolving issues that are referred to the Joint Committee by relevant Chief Officers of the Service.
 - (n) Delegating functions of the Joint Committee to officers of either Council under s.101 Local Government Act 1972.
 - (o) Agreeing arrangements to place staff employed by one of the authorities at the disposal of the other authority to carry out the functions of the Joint Committee as described above under s.113 Local Government Act 1972.

- (p) Take decisions in relation to the commissioning and procurement of services either hosted or under a lead authority arrangement from a third party.
- (q) Providing an Annual Report to each of the two Councils on the performance, finances and proposed service improvements including any arrangements for disaggregation.

Procedure Rules of the Joint Committee

- (a) Each council shall appoint three Members (being Executive members of that Council) as its nominated members of the Joint Committee. The Members appointed will have full voting rights.
- (b) Each council may nominate one or more substitute Members to attend any meeting in place of an appointed Member subject to notification being given to the Monitoring Officer via the relevant Democratic Services before the start of the meeting. The Member appointed as a substitute shall have full voting rights.
- (c) Each member of the Joint Committee shall comply with the Code of Conduct of their Council when acting as a member of the Joint Committee.
- (d) Each member of the Joint Committee shall serve on the Joint Committee for as long as they are appointed to the Joint Committee by the relevant Council but a Member shall cease to be a member of the Joint Committee if they cease to be a member of the Executive appointing them or if the relevant Council removes them from the Joint Committee.
- (e) Meetings of the Joint Committee shall be carried out on a rotational basis in the North and West Council areas or by remote means where this is permitted by law.
- (f) The Council hosting the first meeting shall appoint one of its nominated members as Chair and that member shall remain Chair until the first meeting taking place after the elapse of 6 months from the time of their appointment unless they cease to be a member of the Joint Committee. On the expiry of the first Chair's term of office as Chair, the Council which did not appoint the first Chair shall appoint one of its nominated members as Chair for a period of 6 months from the time of their appointment. The same procedure shall be followed for the appointment of the Chair in subsequent years.
- (g) The Council not appointing the Chair of the Joint Committee in any year shall appoint one of its nominated members as Vice Chair.
- (h) Proposed key decisions of the Joint Committee will be published on the Forward Plan for each Council in accordance with their own Access to Information Rules.
- (i) Requirements in relation to Overview and Scrutiny will be met in each case by the Overview and Scrutiny committees of the relevant Council. The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be the closest to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee for each Council.
- (j) Meetings will be governed by the Executive Procedure Rules and the Access to Information Rules for each Council and where they differ by agreement between the Monitoring Officers of the two Councils as to which of the two sets of Rules will be applied.

- (k) The Joint Committee shall normally meet once every two months (bi-monthly) unless otherwise determined by the Joint Committee. Cancellation of meetings shall be agreed by the Joint Committee or both Leaders.
- (l) Additional meetings can be called by Monitoring Officer for the Chair by providing at least five clear days' notice to members of the Joint Committee, for the purposes of resolving urgent matters arising between the bi-monthly meetings. Additional meetings may be called if either Leader requests it.
- (m) The Democratic Services for the Chair will send out the agenda, record minutes and arrange for the sign off of minutes in accordance with the procedure rules for the relevant Council.
- (n) A meeting of the Joint Committee will require a quorum of at least two members from each Council.
- (o) The rules of the Joint Committee will otherwise be the rules of the Council associated with the Chair for the time being, and where there is any conflict or uncertainty the relevant rules will be agreed between the Monitoring Officers for each of the Councils.
- (p) Public speaking at the Joint Committee will be at the discretion of the Chair but in any event limited to one speaker for or against an item on the agenda for a maximum of two minutes.

6.2 Rainsbrook Crematorium Joint Committee

In February 2011, Daventry District Council agreed to establish a Joint Committee with Rugby Borough Council to create and operate a crematorium facility to meet the needs of both areas. Rainsbrook Crematorium based in Rugby is managed by the Rainsbrook Crematorium Joint Committee. Each council has a 50% share and appoints two elected members.

A Collaboration Agreement (March 2013) provides for the delegation of functions (crematoria and ancillary services) to the Joint Committee. Daventry District Council were responsible for the construction of the crematorium. Rugby Borough Council are responsible for the operation of the crematorium. The Joint Committee provides oversight and exercises decision-making powers.

Terms of Reference

- (a) The committee shall comprise four members in total, two being nominated by each authority. All members of the Committee shall be Members of the authority by which they are nominated.
- (b) The committee shall appoint its own Chair and Vice Chair subject to the rules that:
 - (i) each year the Chair shall be drawn from members of the committee from one authority, and the following year from members of the committee from the other authority; and
 - (ii) the Vice Chair shall be a member of the committee from the authority which is not currently providing the Chair.

- (c) The quorum of the Committee shall be two members, being at least one from each authority.
- (d) The Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair may exercise a second or casting vote.
- (e) The Committee shall exercise on behalf of the authorities the functions of providing crematoria and ancillary services under the Cremation Act 1902, section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Authorities (Land) Act 1963 and all other powers enabling the provision and operation of crematoria and related services.
- (f) The Committee shall arrange to discharge its responsibilities through officers of the authorities subject to the requirements that:
 - (iii) administration of the Committee shall be exercised through officers of Rugby Borough Council;
 - (iv) creation of the crematorium shall be exercised through officers of Daventry District Council;
 - (v) practical operation of the crematorium shall be exercised through officers of Rugby Borough Council.

6.3 PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee

Representation: one Member from each Council

Over 300 local authorities in England (outside London) and Wales who undertake civil traffic enforcement are members of the PATROL (**P**arking and **T**raffic **R**egulations **O**utside **L**ondon) Adjudication Joint Committee. Such authorities are required by statute to make provision for independent adjudication of traffic enforcement decisions.

The PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee has been established to enable all councils having Civil Enforcement Area Orders to carry out civil enforcement of parking contraventions, in exercise of their functions under Section 81 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and Regulations 16 and 17 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007.

The main function of the Joint Committee is to provide resources to support independent adjudicators and their staff, who together comprise the Traffic Penalty Tribunal. The relationship between the adjudicators and the Joint Committee is derived from and governed by the Traffic Management Act 2004 and, in the case of the Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee, the Transport Act 2000.

Additional information

Further details are available from the PATROL website: www.patrol-uk.info/patrol-joint-committee.

6.4 Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Representation: 5 Members of West Northamptonshire Council
5 Members of North Northamptonshire Council
3 independent co-opted lay members

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel is responsible for carrying out the powers and duties of the of the Police and Crime Panel as provided for within the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire (Fire and Rescue Authority) Order 2018.

6.5 Children’s Trust Joint Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire Councils have established a Joint Committee (The Children’s Trust Joint Committee) pursuant to powers under the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000.

The Joint Committee discharges functions on behalf of the two councils as follows and is convened as and when required, to:

- (a) Exercise the functions on behalf of both councils insofar as they relate to the joint ownership of, and commissioning of services from, the jointly owned local authority company ‘The Northamptonshire Children’s Trust’ (NCT)
- (b) Exercise the functions of the councils in respect of the discharge of the functions and the delivery of the support services to NCT under the Support Services Agreement;
- (c) Consider all matters arising in relation to the discharge of the functions, the delivery of the services and their financial position;
- (d) Ensure the effective, efficient discharge of the functions and delivery of the services;
- (e) Agree the responsibilities of each council required to support the discharge of the functions and the delivery of the services;
- (f) Monitor and review the performance of discharge of the functions and the delivery of the services;
- (g) Consider matters reported to the Joint Committee by the Joint Officer Boards and the Councils;
- (h) Determine those disputes or differences arising between the councils in respect of the discharge of the functions and/or delivery of the services referred to the Joint Committee by the Joint Officer Boards;
- (i) With the assistance, support and advice of the Joint Officer Boards and the councils, develop the strategies and plans for the longer-term discharge of the functions and the delivery of the services beyond the arrangements provided for in the Support Services Agreement.

The Joint Committee is not a self-standing legal entity but part of its constituent authorities. Any legal commitment entered into pursuant to a decision of the Joint Committee must be made by either of the authorities which will be indemnified appropriately.

These terms of reference govern the conduct of meetings of the Joint Committee and except, where expressly stated otherwise, take precedence over the Constitutions of each council so far as they relate to the matters for which the Joint Committee is established. The Joint Committee may vary the terms of reference rules as it considers appropriate.

Definitions

Any reference to Access to Information legislation shall mean Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).”

Functions

The Joint Committee will discharge functions on behalf of both councils.

Membership

There are 6 elected members of the Joint Committee, 3 appointed from each council. Appointments are made in line with each council’s governance arrangements. The appointments should include the Leader of each council and a Member whose portfolio areas include responsibility for Children’s Services.

Appointments will be made for a maximum period not extending beyond each Member’s remaining term of office as a councillor.

As nominees of their respective councils, members of the Joint Committee are governed by the provisions of their own council’s codes and protocols including the Members’ Code of Conduct and the rules on disclosable pecuniary interests.

Each council will utilise existing mechanisms for substitution as laid down in their own Procedure Rules.

Chair

Each council will appoint one Member as a Co-Chair each of whom, in rotation, presides over meetings of the Joint Committee.

Meeting venues shall rotate between the councils’ main offices with the Co-Chair from the council which is hosting the meeting presiding over the meeting. Where the host Co-Chair is not present, the Joint Committee shall appoint an alternate Co-Chair from amongst its number to preside over the meeting.

The Joint Committee may establish sub-committees to undertake elements of its work if required and subject to the approval of each council.

Delegation to Officers

The Joint Committee may delegate specific functions to officers of either of the councils. Any such delegation may be subject to the requirement for the officer to consult with or obtain the prior agreement of an officer (or officers) of the other council. It may also be subject to the requirement for the officer with delegated authority to consult with the Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee before exercising their delegated authority.

Administration

Organisational and clerking support for the Joint Committee will be provided for by the host authority.

Budget

The Joint Committee will not have an allocated budget.

Agenda Management

All prospective items of business for the Joint Committee shall be agreed by the Joint Officer Board in accordance with the wider NCT agreements and governance and shall be confined to the matters set out in these terms of reference.

To comply with Access to Information legislation in the publication of agendas including Forward Plan requirements, those functions delegated to the Joint Committee for determination and defined as key decisions must be included in the Forward Plan for the Joint Committee.

Meetings

The Joint Committee will meet as and when required for the purposes of fulfilling its function with regards dispute resolution.

The quorum for a meeting of the Joint Committee shall be at least two members from each council.

Access to meetings and papers of the Joint Committee by the press and public is subject to Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and Part 2 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Notice of Meetings

The host authority clerk of the Joint Committee will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the Access to Information requirements. At least five clear working days in advance of a meeting the host authority clerk of the Joint Committee will publish the agenda via the website of the host authority and distribute a copy of the papers to all members of the Joint Committee.

Member Participation

Any Member of each council who is not a member of the Joint Committee may ask a question or address the Joint Committee with the consent of the Co-Chair of the meeting at which they wish to speak.

Business to be Transacted

Standing items for each meeting of the Joint Committee will include the following:

- (a) Apologies for absence
- (b) Declarations of Interest
- (c) Minutes of the Last Meeting
- (d) Substantive items for consideration

The Co-Chair may vary the order of business and take urgent items as specified in the Access to Information Requirements at their discretion. An item of business may not be considered at a meeting unless:

- (a) A copy of the agenda included the item (or a copy of the item) is open to inspection by the public for at least five clear days before the meeting; or
- (b) Where the meeting is convened at shorter notice from the time the meeting is convened; or
- (c) By reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the minutes the Co-Chair of the meeting (following consultation with the other Co-Chair) is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency "Special Circumstances" justifying an item being considered as a matter of urgency will relate to both why the decision could not be made at a later meeting allowing the proper time for inspection of documents by the public as well as why the item or report could not have been available for inspection for five clear days before the meeting.

Cancellation of Meetings

If in the event a dispute is resolved prior to the meeting of the Joint Committee called to resolve the issue, after consultation with all three Co-chairs the meeting will be cancelled

Rules of Debate

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Debate set out within the Committee Procedure Rules of West Northamptonshire Council.

Request for Determination of Business

Any member of the Joint Committee may request at any time that the Joint Committee move to vote upon the current item of consideration.

Urgency Procedure

Where all Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee are of a view that an urgent decision is required in respect of any matter within the Joint Committee's terms of reference and it cannot wait until an Ordinary meeting of the Joint Committee has been called and notice been given under Paragraph 12 of this Schedule (Notice of Meetings), then arrangements will be made to call an urgent meeting of the Joint Committee.

Voting

With regards the Joint Committee's function in the resolution of disputes under the conflict resolution mechanism, each elected member will be entitled to one vote.

Where there is an equality of votes the Co-chair may exercise a second or casting vote. However, if the matter cannot be resolved between the councils then the dispute resolution procedure may be engaged.

Minutes

At the next suitable meeting of the Joint Committee, the Co-Chair presiding will move a motion that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record. The meeting may only consider the accuracy of the minutes. Once agreed, the Co-Chair presiding at the meeting will initial each page and sign the minutes.

Exclusion of Public and Press

Members of the public and press may only be excluded from a meeting of the Joint Committee either in accordance with the Access to Information requirements or in the event of disturbance.

A motion may be moved at any time for the exclusion of the public from the whole or any part of the proceedings. The motion shall specify by reference to Section 100(A) Local Government Act 1972 the reason for the exclusion in relation to each item of business for which it is proposed that the public be excluded.

The public must be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings that confidential information would be disclosed.

If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Co-Chair may adjourn the meeting for as long as they think is necessary.

To comply with the Executive Arrangements (Access to Information) Regulations 2012 all background papers will be published as part of the Joint Committee agenda and be made available to the public via the website of each authority.

Overview and Scrutiny

Decisions of the Joint Committee will be Executive and subject to scrutiny and call-in. For any Joint Committee meeting, including decisions, the minutes will be published within two working days. On the publication of the minutes of a meeting of the Joint Committee, 5 clear days must elapse (not including the date of publication and weekend days and bank holidays) before decisions can be implemented.

Decisions of the Joint Committee which are defined as executive decisions will be subject to the “call-in” arrangements operating in each Council as set out in its constitution. Where a decision is called in, arrangements will be made at the earliest opportunity for it to be heard.

Joint Arrangements between the NCT and West Northamptonshire Council are in accordance with the agreements made by Northamptonshire County Council prior to re-organisation. These agreements are binding on the Council and cannot be altered other than as set out below.

Nature of Decision	Council	Executive	Conditions
In relation to the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust, to approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The appointment and removal of the Chair and Chief Executive, or alterations to their terms of appointment; b. The appointment and removal of a Council Director to the Board of the Trust; c. Any changes to the membership of the Trust; d. Any changes to the Articles of Association; e. The voluntary winding up of the company (of the Trust) or its dissolution; 		X	In accordance with the limitations and consents required under the Articles of Association of the Trust and the Governance Side Agreement.

f. Any changes to governance arrangements arising from the annual review thereof.			
In relation to the Northamptonshire Children's Trust, to annually approve the Business Plan and Interim Business Plan and any in year variation to these plans.		X	In accordance with the limitations and consents required under the Articles of Association of the Trust and the Governance Side Agreement.
In relation to the company of the Children's Trust, to approve the entering into by the company (the Trust) for: any new third party contracts for the provision of services by the Company to third parties which are outside the scope of the Service Delivery Contract and/or the Business Plan or Interim Business Plan.		X	<p>a) In accordance with the limitations and consents required under the Articles of Association of the Trust and the Governance Side Agreement.</p> <p>b) Where the value exceeds £500,000.</p>
<p>In relation to the company of the Children's Trust, to approve the entering into by the company (the Trust):</p> <p>a. any borrowing, credit facility, or investment arrangements with third parties;</p> <p>b. any other contractual arrangement with the Council for the provision of other services to the Council;</p> <p>c. any proposal to form any legal entity or undertaking in which the Company would be a member, shareholder or hold any analogous position in any jurisdiction or acquiring shares in any other company;</p> <p>d. participating by the Company in any partnership or joint venture, amalgamation with another company or business undertaking;</p>		X	<p>In accordance with the limitations and consents required under the Articles of Association of the Trust and the Governance Side Agreement.</p> <p>In relation to (a) other than trade credit in the ordinary course of business.</p> <p>In relation to (b), and (d) only to the extent that any such arrangement falls outside the</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. the Company giving any guarantee, suretyship or indemnity outside the ordinary course of its business to secure the liabilities of any person or assume the obligations of any person (other than the Company or a wholly owned subsidiary of the Company); f. the selling or disposing of any part of the business (including assets) of the Company; g. dealing with any surpluses of the Company, other than those surpluses which are agreed, pursuant to the Business Plan or Service Delivery Contract, that may be retained by the Company; h. the Company acquiring, or agreeing to acquire, any freehold or leasehold interest in or licence over land; i. the Company creating any encumbrance over the whole or a significant part of its undertaking or assets; j. any changes to the company name, trading name or registered office of the Company or physically relocating the headquarters of the Company; k. the Company commencing, settling or defending any significant claim, proceedings or other litigation brought by or against it, except where they are a part of the Company's ordinary course of business and/or operations; and l. acquiring assets outside the scope of the Service Delivery Contract and/or the Business Plan or Interim Business Plan. 			<p>scope of the Service Delivery Contract and/or the Business Plan or Interim Business Plan.</p> <p>In relation to (h), except where the Council is the seller, lessor or licensor of the land in question.</p> <p>In relation to (l), where the amount is more than £100,000.</p>
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6.6 Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board

The Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is a multi-agency partnership, which provides strategic leadership for adult safeguarding across West and North Northamptonshire. It has an independent Chair and its remit is to agree objectives, set priorities and co-ordinate the strategic development of adult safeguarding.

The overarching purpose of SAB is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs. It does this by:

- (a) Assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and supporting statutory guidance

- (b) Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused
- (c) Working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible
- (d) Ensuring agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred
- (e) Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in its area

Safeguarding leads from agencies across the Health Economy, Local Authorities, Northamptonshire Police, Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service, Community Safety Partnerships, the Probation Service, and the Voluntary and Community support the activities of the Board. Without the hard work of its members, we would not learn, develop and grow.

SAB governance arrangements are undertaken by statutory partners and a number of other key officers:

- (a) Kettering General Hospital
- (b) NHS Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Groups
- (c) North Northamptonshire Council - Adult Social Care
- (d) North Northamptonshire Council - Cabinet member responsible for Adult Social Care
- (e) North Northamptonshire Council - Opposition member
- (f) Northampton General Hospital
- (g) Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
- (h) Northamptonshire Police
- (i) Principal Social Workers
- (j) West Northamptonshire Council – Adult Social Care
- (k) West Northamptonshire Council - Cabinet member responsible for Adult Social Care
- (l) West Northamptonshire Council - Opposition Member

A separate multi-agency Delivery Group supports the strategic direction of the Board.

The SAB has three core duties:

- (a) To develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how it will meet its objectives, what each member will do to implement the strategy and, in developing the plan, consult the local Healthwatch organisation and the community.
- (b) To commission safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) for any cases that meet the criteria for these and implement the findings.
- (c) To publish an annual report detailing how effective its work has been, as well as report the findings of any SARs and reference any ongoing reviews.

Full details of the LSAB can be found on its website: [Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board \(northamptonshiresab.org.uk\)](http://northamptonshiresab.org.uk)

6.7 Channel Panel

The Channel Panel is established under section 36 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which sets out the duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It is a key part of work to prevent extremism through supporting those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by assessing the nature and extent of the potential risk and, where necessary, providing an appropriate support package tailored to an individual's needs.

Channel provides a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk of being drawn into extremism. It uses existing collaboration between the adults and children's services, youth offending service, community safety partnership, police, health sectors (NHS and Clinical Commissioning Group) and probation services to:

- Identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
- Assess the nature and extent of that risk; and
- Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

As Northamptonshire is a low risk area, there is no regular standing Channel Panel. Once a referral has been made the panel meets every six weeks to provide early intervention to protect and divert the individual(s) away from extremism.

Through its Chair, the panel regularly reports to the Chief Executive of West Northamptonshire Council and to the relevant Commander in Northamptonshire Police on Channel referrals.

6.8 Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) is a statutory multi-agency partnership established in accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance. It provides arrangements under which the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to coordinate their services, identify and respond to the needs of children, commission and publish local safeguarding practice reviews and provide scrutiny to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements.

The three safeguarding partners in relation to the local authority's area are defined under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) as:

- (a) the Local Authority (West and North Northamptonshire Councils)
- (b) a Clinical Commissioning Group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area (Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups)
- (c) the Chief Officer of Police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area (Northamptonshire Police)

The purpose of the SCP is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Northamptonshire. This is done by coordinating the work of those people and all organisations working in the county ensuring that what they do is effective. It is also to support and enable local agencies to work together in a system where:

- (a) Excellent practice is the norm
- (b) Partner agencies hold one another to account effectively
- (c) There is early identification of “new” safeguarding issues
- (d) Learning is promoted and embedded
- (e) Information is shared effectively
- (f) The public can feel confident that children are protected from harm

In addition, the SCP’s values are:

- (a) A child-centred approach to safeguarding ensuring their voice is heard and understood;
- (b) Effective ways to identify and support children and families who would benefit from early help;
- (c) A culture of continuous review and learning; and
- (d) Constructive and mutual challenge between partners to keep children safe.

The SCP is not an operational body. Its role is to ensure the coordination and effectiveness of the services provided to children, young people and their families by member organisations.

Full details of the SCP can be found on its website: [Home - Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board \(northamptonshirescb.org.uk\)](http://northamptonshirescb.org.uk).

7.0 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

7.1 Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements

1 The Role of Overview and Scrutiny

- 1.1 The Council operates an Overview and Scrutiny function that undertakes a number of roles including:
- (a) monitoring the decisions of the Cabinet;
 - (b) advising the Council on forthcoming decisions;
 - (c) the development and review of policy; and
 - (d) call-in of a decision which has been made by the Cabinet but not yet implemented.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny function will develop a work plan as well as supporting policy development, providing pre-decision scrutiny where appropriate, holding decision-makers to account and exercising the formal call-in of executive decisions to review any concerns about the making of the decision.
- 1.3 Further details are set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in this Constitution.

7.2 Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

1 The Overview and Scrutiny committees

- 1.1 The Council will have 3 Overview and Scrutiny committees:
- (a) Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - (b) People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - (c) Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny committees will consult with other parts of the Council as appropriate, including the Cabinet, on the preparation of any work programme.
- 1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny committees will take into account any views expressed following consultation under Rule 1.2 above in drawing-up any work programme. They should also take into account the resources, both officer and financial, available to support its proposals.
- 1.4 A Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group, comprised of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny committees, shall be responsible for approving the work programmes prepared by the Overview and Scrutiny committees.
- 1.5 Once any programme has been approved, a copy will be sent to all Members of the Council and all relevant officers.

- 1.6 The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall respond, as soon as it may consider it is possible to do so, to requests from the Council and the Cabinet, to review particular areas of Council activities. Where it does so, it will report its findings and any recommendations back to the Cabinet and/or Council in accordance with Rule 5 below.

2 Co-optees

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny committees shall be entitled to appoint non-councillors as voting or non-voting co-optees as required or permitted by relevant legislation.
- 2.2 The People Overview and Scrutiny Committee may make provision for the appointment of voting co-optees in order to assist in fulfilling its responsibilities under the National Health Service Act 2006.
- 2.3 The People Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall appoint voting representatives in accordance with the Education Act 1996. These representatives have the right to vote on any question which relates to any education functions which are the responsibility of the Cabinet. Parent Governor Representatives will be appointed in accordance with the guidance published by the relevant government department.

3 Agenda for meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny committees

- 3.1 Matters to be considered will be set out in an agenda, together with supporting papers.
- 3.2 Any member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to request, in writing, that an item be included on the agenda of their committee. Any such item shall appear on the agenda for the next meeting of the committee in question. The committee will decide how the item should be considered and whether or not it can be included in its work programme.
- 3.3 Similarly, the Leader or an individual member of the Cabinet may give notice in writing requesting an item to appear on an agenda of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, relating to their areas of responsibility. The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee will decide how the item should be considered and whether or not it can be included in its work programme.
- 3.4 Subject to Procedure Rule 41 of the Meeting Procedure Rules, any other councillor may give notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer, requesting an item to appear on an agenda of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The item shall be included after consulting the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4 Councillor Call for Action

- 4.1 The Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) enables any member of the council to bring matters of community concern (including crime and disorder issues) within their ward to the attention of the council via the Scrutiny process. It is intended to enhance the council's Scrutiny arrangements and provide a formal mechanism to enable elected members to seek positive outcomes for the citizens they represent, provided all other means of resolution have been exhausted.

4.2 A CCfA will be included on an Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda if the Chair is satisfied that:

- (a) the member has made all reasonable efforts to resolve the matter via liaison with council officers and/or relevant partner agencies; and
- (b) the issue of concern relates to the discharge of a council function (including where this is undertaken with partners and other service providers); and
- (c) the issue of concern has a demonstrable impact on all or part of the member's ward; and
- (d) The CCfA does not relate to:
 - (i) individual complaints concerning personal grievances or commercial issues, for which the council's complaints procedure should be followed;
 - (ii) matters that have a statutory appeals process, e.g. planning and licensing applications, council tax queries, housing benefits complaints, issues under dispute in a court of law, etc;
 - (iii) matters where there is a statutory right of review or appeal (not including the right to complain to the Ombudsman), e.g. a matter relating to a housing benefit appeal;
 - (iv) matters that are vexatious, discriminatory or unreasonable;
 - (v) matters of wider council policy, i.e. if an issue affects more than one ward it may be appropriate to refer it to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee for consideration of its wider strategic or policy implications, rather than focusing on one particular ward;
 - (vi) questioning Cabinet decisions that have been taken but not yet implemented, for which the call-In procedure may be used.

4.3 Having considered a CCfA, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may take one or more of the following actions:

- (a) ask for further information to be brought to a future meeting
- (b) require the attendance of Cabinet members or senior officers to attend a future meeting to answer questions
- (c) set up a Task and Finish Group to undertake an in-depth review
- (d) make a report or recommendations to full Council, the Cabinet or partner agency and:
 - (i) publish that report
 - (ii) request full Council or Cabinet to consider and respond to the report, setting out what action it proposes to take and to publish its response
 - (iii) request a partner agency to have regard to the report when exercising its functions

4.4 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides to take any action then it will inform the member who raised the CCfA and provide them with a copy of any report or recommendations made in relation to the CCfA, together with any response received from full Council, the Cabinet or a partner agency.

4.5 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides not to consider a CCfA or on

consideration decides no further action is necessary, it will inform the member who raised the CCfA and explain the reasons why.

5 Policy review and development

- 5.1 Notwithstanding any policy review matters set out in the work programme of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the procedure set out within the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, Overview and Scrutiny has a key role in policy and budget development.
- 5.2 The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall consider any matter referred to it by the Leader/Cabinet in accordance with those procedures and, having considered the matter, shall report to the Leader/Cabinet with comments and/or proposals. In the case of cross-cutting matters, the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group may recommend a particular Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers such matters.

6 Reports from an Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 6.1 Once recommendations have been formed, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee may submit a formal report for consideration by the Cabinet (if the proposals relate to an executive function and are consistent with the existing budgetary and Policy Framework), or to the Council as appropriate (if the recommendation would require a departure from or a change to the agreed budget and Policy Framework).
- 6.2 The Council or the Cabinet shall consider the report of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the next available meeting. The Council or the Cabinet shall respond to that Overview and Scrutiny Committee within two months (or following the next available meeting in the case of the Council) of it being submitted.

7 Minority Reports

- 7.1 Where an Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot agree on a single, final report to the Cabinet then one minority report may be submitted to the Cabinet with the majority report. In order for a minority report to be produced, no fewer than three voting members of the committee must support such a proposal.
- 7.2 Procedure for dealing with Minority Reports
 - 7.3.1 At the conclusion of an inquiry and at the point of agreeing a final report detailing the Committee's conclusions and recommendations, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee may be unable to reach a general consensus. Members in the minority may wish to express a view different from that of the majority. In these circumstances, Members with a minority view may choose to submit a minority report.
 - 7.3.2 The intention to submit a minority report must be declared within the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting at the time the majority report is agreed. Such an intention must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and referred to in the final report as part of the Committee's resolutions. Where a committee has agreed its final report and there has been no declared intention to produce a minority report, a minority report cannot then be subsequently submitted.

- 7.3.3 Where the intention to produce a minority report has been recorded in the minutes, Democratic Services will contact the appropriate Member or Members to confirm submission dates. The minority report should be delivered to the Democratic Services within 5 working days after the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- 7.3.4 In order that a minority report is given the opportunity to be noted in context by the Cabinet, where it has been produced within the agreed timescale it will be attached as an appendix to the majority report.
- 7.3.5 The Monitoring Officer will determine if a minority report should be exempt from publication, in which case the usual procedures for the publication of exempt reports apply.
- 7.3.6 The drafting and submission of the minority report remains the responsibility of the councillors who have proposed it and not Democratic Services. The report will include details of the councillors who have submitted the minority report, as well as its issues and any alternative recommendations.
- 7.3.7 It is normally expected that an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have taken into account all the relevant information available and as such a minority report will be based on the same evidence as a majority report.

8 Rights of Overview and Scrutiny Committee members to documents

- 8.1 In addition to their rights as councillors, members of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the additional right of access to documents, and to notice of meetings as set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 5 of this Constitution.

9 Councillors and Officers giving account

- 9.1 An Overview and Scrutiny Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Council function. As well as reviewing the documentation, in fulfilling its scrutiny role, it may require the Leader or any Portfolio Holder, to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit:

- (a) any particular decision or series of decisions;
- (b) the extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy; and/or
- (c) their performance,

and it is the duty of those persons to attend if so required.

- 9.2 Where an Overview and Scrutiny Committee requires an officer to attend to answer questions or discuss issues, this will be agreed with the Monitoring Officer.
- 9.3 Where it is agreed that an officer should appear to answer questions, their evidence should, as far as possible, be confined to questions of fact and explanation relating to policies and decisions. Officers may explain: -

- (a) what the policies are;
 - (b) the justification and objectives of those policies as the Cabinet sees them;
 - (c) the extent to which those objectives have been met; and
 - (d) how administrative factors may have affected both the choice of policy measures and the manner of their implementation.
- 9.4 Officers may be asked to explain and justify advice they have given to the Cabinet prior to decisions being taken. They may also be asked to explain and justify decisions they have taken under delegated powers from the Cabinet.
- 9.5 Officers should not be expected and should avoid being drawn into discussions of politically contentious matters and any officer input should be consistent with the requirements for political impartiality.
- 9.6 The requirements of any protocols on Member/Officer relationships and the Code of Conduct must be adhered to where an officer is attending an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 9.7 Where any councillor or Officer is required to attend an Overview and Scrutiny Committee under this provision, the Chair of that Committee will inform the Monitoring Officer, who will inform the councillor or Officer in writing giving at least ten clear working days' notice of the meeting. The notice will state the nature of the item on which they are required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee. Where the account to be given to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will require the production of a report, then the councillor or Officer concerned will be given reasonable and sufficient notice to allow for its preparation.
- 9.8 Where, in exceptional circumstances, the councillor or Officer is unable to attend on the required date, then the Committee shall, in consultation with the councillor or Officer, arrange an alternative date for attendance.

10 Attendance by others

- 10.1 An Overview and Scrutiny Committee may invite individuals other than those referred to in Rules 8.1 and 8.2 to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions.

11 Call-in

- 11.1 Call-in is the exercise of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee's statutory power in section 21(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 to review an Executive decision that has been made but not yet implemented. Where a decision is called in and an Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides to refer it back to the Cabinet for reconsideration, it cannot be implemented until the call-in procedure is complete.
- 11.2 Any decision of the Cabinet, an individual member of the Cabinet or a committee of the Cabinet, or a Key Decision made by an officer under authority delegated by the Cabinet, is subject to call-in. A decision may be called in only once. A

recommendation by the Council may not be called in.

11.3 The call-in procedure and the powers to refer a decision back for reconsideration may only be exercised by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, within the remit of its respective terms of reference.

11.4 Call-in of decisions which may be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework shall be governed by the provisions of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out elsewhere within this Constitution.

11.5 The Call-In Procedure

11.5.1 Once made, an Executive decision shall be published, in the form of a decision note, within two working days at the Council's main offices and on its public website. The decisions digest will be sent to all members of the Council within the same timescale.

11.5.2 The decisions digest will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision will be effective on the expiry of 5 clear working days after the publication of the decision and may then be implemented, unless called in under this provision within that 5 clear working day period. The deadline for a call-in request will be specified in the decisions digest.

11.5.3 Requests for call-in may be made by the submission of a notice in accordance with paragraph 11.5.4 below. A request shall only be considered to be valid if it is signed by at least 7 members of the Council who are not members of the Cabinet. One of the requestors must identify themselves as the originator of the request and the request must specify the nature of the grounds relied upon.

11.5.4 A call-in request must be in the form of a written notice submitted to the Monitoring Officer and received before the published deadline. Either one notice containing all required signatures or up to 7 separate emails (as appropriate) will be acceptable.

11.5.5 The notice must set out (a) the resolution or resolutions that the member(s) wish to call-in; (b) the Overview & Scrutiny Committee they wish the call-in to be referred to; (c) the reasons why they wish the Overview and Scrutiny committee to consider referring it back to the Cabinet, with particular reference to the principles of decision making set out elsewhere within this Constitution; and (d) the alternative course of action or recommendations that they wish to propose.

11.5.6 The call-in request will be deemed valid unless either:

(a) The procedures set out in Procedure Rules 11.5.3 to 11.5.5 above have not been properly followed;

(b) A similar decision has been called in to the committee previously;

(c) The Executive decision has been recorded as urgent in accordance with Paragraph 12 below; or

- (d) The Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, considers the call-in to be frivolous, vexatious or clearly outside the call-in provisions;

in which case the Monitoring Officer may reject the call-in request.

11.5.7 Before deciding on its validity, the Monitoring Officer may seek clarification of the call-in request from the member(s) concerned.

11.5.8 Upon deciding on its validity, the Monitoring Officer shall forthwith notify the member(s) concerned, the Executive Leader and relevant Cabinet Member, the Chair and Vice Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Head of Paid Service.

11.6 Consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11.6.1 The Monitoring Officer will ensure that any valid call-in is reported to the next available meeting of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or will convene a special meeting if so agreed by the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

11.6.2 The originator of the request for call-in will be expected to attend the meeting of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committee to explain their reasons for the call-in and the alternative course of action or recommendations they wish to propose.

11.6.3 Having considered the call-in and the reasons given, the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee may either:

- (a) Refer it back to the decision-making person or body for reconsideration, normally in time for its next scheduled meeting, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns and any alternative recommendations;
- (b) If it considers that the decision is outside the Council's budget and Policy Framework, refer the matter to full Council after seeking the advice of the Monitoring Officer and/or Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules; or
- (c) Decide to take no further action, in which case the original Executive decision will be effective immediately.

11.7 Decisions Referred Back to the Decision-Maker

11.7.1 If a decision is referred back to the original decision maker, that person or body shall then reconsider the matter, taking into account any concerns and recommendations of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and make a final decision, amending the decision or not, and give reasons for the decision.

11.7.2 If a decision relates to an Executive function only the Cabinet can ultimately decide the matter, provided that it is in accordance with the Council's budget and Policy Framework.

12 Call-In and Urgency

- 12.1 The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken is urgent. A decision is urgent if:
- (a) A call-in would prevent the Council reaching a decision that is required by statute within a specified timescale; or
 - (b) Any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests and the reasons for urgency are reported to the decision-making body or person before the decision is taken.
- 12.2 The decision note shall state whether the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in.
- 12.3 The Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee must agree to the decision being treated as a matter of urgency. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consent shall be required. In the absence of that person, the Chair of the Council's consent shall be required. In the absence of the Chair of the Council, the Vice Chair of the Council's consent shall be required.
- 12.4 Where the Cabinet has recorded a decision as urgent, the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee may retrospectively review actions arising from that decision but cannot delay its implementation.

13 The Party Whip

- 13.1 It is generally accepted that the Party Whip should be suspended in respect of Overview and Scrutiny matters. However, when considering any matter in respect of which a member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is subject to a formal party whip, the councillor must declare the existence of the whip, and the nature of it before the commencement of the Committee's deliberations on the matter. The declaration, and the detail of the whipping arrangements, shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

14 Task and Finish Panels

- 14.1 An Overview and Scrutiny Committee may appoint such task and finish panels as it considers appropriate to undertake specific tasks on its behalf. Whilst these will be on a task and finish basis in most cases, the Committee is not precluded from establishing such Panels on a more permanent basis subject to regular review. Task and finish panel members do not have to be members of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee but may not be members of the Cabinet.
- 14.2 Where a committee establishes any Panel under Rule 14.1 above, it will set out the name of the Panel, its membership (including the Chair and, if appropriate, the Vice Chair) and the terms of reference including relevant dates for completion of the task or review.
- 14.3 Any such Task and Finish Panel shall have the powers set out in Paragraph 8 above in relation to councillors and officers giving account.

14.4 Any report prepared by a Task and Finish Panel shall be subject to review by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to being submitted for consideration by Council or the Cabinet.

15 Procedure at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings

15.1 An Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall consider the following business:

- (a) record of the last meeting;
- (b) consideration of any matter referred to the Committee by the Council or by the Cabinet;
- (c) consideration of any matter referred to the Committee for advice in relation to call-in or a decision;
- (d) responses of the Cabinet on reports of that Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- (e) the business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.

15.2 Where an Overview and Scrutiny Committee conducts investigations (e.g. with a view to policy development), the Committee may also ask people to attend to give evidence at its meetings, which are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) the investigation be conducted fairly, and all members of the Committee be given the opportunity to ask questions of attendees, and to contribute and speak;
- (b) those assisting the Committee by giving evidence be treated with respect and courtesy; and
- (c) the investigation be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the investigation or analysis.

15.3 Following any investigation or review, the relevant Committee shall prepare a report for submission to the Cabinet and/or Council as appropriate and shall, unless there are exceptional reasons, make its report and findings public.

8.0 COUNCILLORS

8.1 Roles of Councillors and Officer Holders

Part A All councillors

8.1.1 Responsibilities

1. Be at the centre of community life:
 - Spend time out and about, learning about the communities that you represent, supporting your residents, working with local organisations (such as GPs, schools, police, local businesses and voluntary organisations) developing a shared understanding of local issues and ensuring that communities make the most of all the opportunities available to them.
 - Build good working relationships and earn the trust and respect of local partners, other members and council officers
 - Be an active member of local networks and partnerships, for example by acting as a school governor.
 - Communicate regularly with your community including communicating council policy and decisions.
2. Contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the Council's policies, budgets, strategies and services.
3. Represent effectively the whole community with a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.
4. Represent the Council on outside bodies as required.
5. Participate constructively in the good governance of the Council.
6. Fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected Member of a local authority, including compliance with all relevant codes of conduct, regulations, protocols and procedures, and participation in those decisions and activities reserved for the full Council.
7. Share responsibility with officers of the council to act as effective and caring corporate parents for looked after children.

8.1.2 Key Tasks

1. Attend and participate effectively as a member of any committee to which the councillor is appointed.

2. Participate in the activities of any outside body to which the councillor is appointed, providing two-way communication between the organisations, and reporting as required to the Council. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's policies and practices in relation to that body and of the community's needs and aspirations.
3. Participate in the scrutiny or performance review of the services of the Authority including where the Council so decides, the scrutiny of policies and budget, and their effectiveness in achieving the strategic objectives of the Council.
4. Participate in any advisory group to which the councillor is appointed, as convened by the Cabinet from time to time.
5. Participate, as appropriate, in consultation with the community and with other organisations.
6. Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's services, management arrangements, organisation and activities, powers/duties, and constraints.
7. Contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal through active encouragement to the community to participate in the governance of the West Northamptonshire area.
8. Maintain professional working relationships with all Members and Officers.
9. Identify and participate in opportunities for further development and training as a councillor and keep abreast of developments in national and local government.

8.1.3 Additional Responsibilities and Tasks for Cabinet councillors

These role profiles should be read in conjunction with the role profile for all councillors.

Part B Executive Leader

8.1.4 Responsibilities

1. Ensure efficient and effective services, where they are relevant to the needs of the community and the responsibility of the West Northamptonshire Council, in the short, medium and long term.
2. Provide visible political leadership in relation to citizens, stakeholders and partners in the overall co-ordination of policies, strategies and service delivery affecting the locality.
3. Lead the Cabinet in its work to develop the Policy Framework and budget and take overall political control of the Council within the agreed Policy Framework.

4. Lead the development of local and regional strategic partnerships.
5. Ensure the appropriate representation of the Council on key outside bodies.

8.1.5 Key Tasks

1. Provide leadership to the Council and its political administration, and lead the presentation of the recommendations, plans, policies and decisions of the Cabinet and the Council.
2. Represent the Council's political and strategic decision-making in the community and in discussions with regional, national and international organisations and others in order to pursue matters of interest to the Council and its communities and to keep the Council and the Cabinet informed accordingly.
3. Appoint members of the Cabinet and allocate Cabinet portfolios.
4. Develop and maintain good working relations and effective channels of communication with the Chair of each Scrutiny Committee
5. Direct, manage and chair meetings of the Cabinet and to take responsibility, individually and/or collectively for any specific portfolio, including providing a political lead in proposing new policy, strategy, budget and service standards and reviews, as well as acting as spokesperson for the Council.
6. Direct and manage the Chief Executive, and to meet regularly (with or without the Cabinet) with the Chief Executive and other relevant senior officers to consider and recommend action within approved policies and strategies.
7. Consider the development and training needs of the Cabinet and members generally and arrange for training sessions or suitable briefings as appropriate.
8. Receive and act as appropriate upon representations from councillors, the public, organisations and senior officers.

Part C All Cabinet councillors with Portfolio

8.1.6 Responsibilities

1. Take responsibility within the Cabinet on the basis of collective decision making and such individual delegation that may apply, for a portfolio of services or functions of the Council.
2. Input into the Cabinet any information, intelligence or factors considered relevant to the issues under consideration by the Cabinet.

3. Contribute actively through the portfolio and membership of the Cabinet to the formation, implementation, monitoring and scrutiny of the Council's policies, budgets, strategies and services.

8.1.7 Key Tasks

1. Participate in the Cabinet and to implement agreed policies by taking responsibility individually and/or collectively for any portfolio allocated by the Executive Leader, including proposing new policy, strategy, programming, budget and service standards, and leading performance review.
2. Develop a clear understanding and in depth knowledge of the respective portfolio, the scope and range of the relevant services for which they are responsible and an awareness of current agreed policies and budgetary implications in respect of those services.
3. Consult and communicate with all members, council officers, key partners and the community as appropriate to ensure policies, strategies, budgets and decisions are well informed and that Council policies are widely understood and positively promoted.
4. Ensure that the Council is briefed at the appropriate time on significant issues within the respective portfolio – i.e. those which have financial or other major resource implications or which will result in a change to established policy.
5. Act as spokesperson for the Council and answer and account to the Council and the community on matters within the portfolio.
6. Work closely with the Chief Executive, Director and other senior officers responsible for the services within the portfolio and the relevant Overview Committee Chair.
7. Work with officers on the implementation of agreed plans, policies and programmes within the portfolio and inform the Cabinet of progress and performance.
8. Participate in scrutiny or performance reviews of services as requested by a Scrutiny Committee.
9. Represent the Council and the Cabinet in the community and elsewhere as required by the Leader.

8.1.8 Additional Responsibilities and Tasks for Non-Cabinet councillors

Part D Chair of the Council

8.1.9 Responsibilities

1. Uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution and to interpret the Constitution when necessary.
2. Preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community.
3. Ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members are able to hold the Cabinet to account.
4. Promote public involvement in the Council's activities.
5. Be the conscience of the Council, and act impartially.
6. Attend such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and/or they determine appropriate and take precedence at formal occasions.
7. Ensure that the dignity of the office and Council is maintained at all times.

8.1.10 Key Tasks

1. Chair all meetings of the full Council.
2. Chair major consultation meetings organised by the Council, as appropriate.
3. Set the standard of conduct to be expected from all councillors.
4. Help represent the Council in the community and in discussions with regional, national and international organisations and others.
5. Attend functions appropriate to the position of Chair of the Council.
6. Act as host to visiting Royalty, civic dignitaries and other important visitors.
7. Meet with relevant officers to ensure the receipt of appropriate advice to enable effective decisions.

8.2 Members' Code of Conduct

PART 1: THE CODE

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Members' Code of Conduct is intended to promote high standards of behaviour amongst councillors of West Northamptonshire Council.

The Code is underpinned by the following seven Nolan principles of public life, which should be adhered to when interpreting the meaning of the Code. councillors should behave with:

1. **Selflessness** – and act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not act in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
2. **Integrity** – and should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
3. **Objectivity** – in carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits; choices should be made on merit.
4. **Accountability** – and are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
5. **Openness** – and should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
6. **Honesty** – and declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
7. **Leadership** – and should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

SECTION 2: GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Introduction and Interpretation

1.1 This Code applies to all councillors and co-opted members of West Northamptonshire Council. It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.

1.2 In this Code:

- (a) "the Council" refers to West Northamptonshire Council.

(b) “Councillor” means any person being a Member of West Northamptonshire Council.

(c) “Meeting” means any meeting of:

- (i) the Council
- (ii) the Cabinet
- (iii) any of the Council’s or the Cabinet’s committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees
- (iv) any of the Council’s advisory groups and executive boards, working parties and panels.

2. Scope

2.1 This Code applies to you whenever you are acting in the capacity as a Member of the Council: not only when attending meetings. For example, it will also include Members’ dealings with officers, Members’ dealings with the public, when Members represent the Council on outside bodies, any statements made by a Member on behalf of the Council, etc.

3. General Obligations

3.1 You must treat others with respect.

3.2 You must not do anything which may cause the Council to fall foul of UK equalities legislation.

3.3 You must not bully or intimidate any person or do anything which compromises the independence of those who work for the Council.

3.4 For the purposes of this paragraph, bullying is defined as: “offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Examples of bullying include:

- (a) spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour.
- (b) copying communications that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know.
- (c) ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail.
- (d) exclusion or victimization.
- (e) unfair treatment.

- (f) overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position.
 - (g) unwelcome sexual advances – touching, standing too close, display of offensive materials, asking for sexual favours, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected.
 - (h) making threats or comments about job security without foundation.
 - (i) deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism.
 - (j) preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.
- 3.5 You must not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or may be:
- (a) a complainant;
 - (b) a witness; or
 - (c) involved in the administration of this Code.
- 3.6 You must not make trivial or malicious allegations against others.
- 3.7 You must not do anything which compromises or may compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the Council.
- 3.8 You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or the Council into disrepute.
- 3.9 You must not accept any gifts or hospitality that could be seen by the public as likely to influence your judgement in relation to any matter that you deal with in your official capacity.
- 3.10 You must not pass on information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:
- (a) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it
 - (b) you are required by law to do so
 - (c) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice, provided that they agree not to pass on the information to any other person; or
 - (d) the disclosure is:

- (i) reasonable and in the public interest; and
 - (ii) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Council.
- 3.11 You must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
- 3.12 You must not use or attempt to use your position as a councillor improperly to confer on, or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.
- 3.13 You must, when using, or authorising the use by others of, the resources of the Council:
 - (a) act in accordance with the Council's reasonable requirements
 - (b) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes).
- 3.14 You must have regard to any Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.
- 3.15 You must comply with any formal standards investigation into your conduct or the conduct of another councillor.
- 3.16 You must, when reaching decisions on any matter, have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by:
 - (a) the Council's Chief Finance Officer; or
 - (b) the Council's Monitoring Officer
- 3.17 You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by the Council.

SECTION 3: INTERESTS

1. Registration of Interests

- 1.1 Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by your Council or your election or appointment to office (where that is later) you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in Appendix A (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) and Appendix B (Other Registerable Interests).
- 1.2 You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest in Appendix A or B, or of any change to a

registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

- 1.3 The register of interests of all councillors is a public record and must be available online for members of the public to view.
- 1.4 Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, you must give the Monitoring Officer written notice of any pecuniary or other interests (and any changes), which apply to you or where it is an interest of your spouse or partner (a person with whom you are living as a husband and wife; or a person with whom you are living with as if you are civil partners) within 28 days of:
 - (a) election or appointment to office (if that is later);
 - (b) any change to the interests;
 - (c) disclosing an interest at a meeting (where not otherwise entered on the register);
 - (d) becoming aware of the interest when solely discharging a function of the authority as a member of the council's Cabinet.
- 1.5 It is a prosecutable offence to fail to notify the Monitoring Officer of your interests or knowingly/recklessly provide false or misleading information.

2. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 2.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting in which you have an interest in Appendix A, you must declare the interest (unless it is sensitive - see section 5 below), not participate, or participate further, in any discussion or vote further on the matter and must not remain in the room unless granted a dispensation.

3. Other registerable interests

- 3.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting in which you have an interest in Appendix B, you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but must not take part in any vote on the matter unless you have been granted a dispensation.

4. Non-registerable interests

- 4.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to your own financial interest (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or your own wellbeing or is otherwise to your advantage or relates to a financial interest or wellbeing or is otherwise to the advantage of a relative, friend or close associate, you must disclose the interest and not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.
- 4.2 Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or a financial interest of a relative, friend, close associate or body covered by Appendix B

you must disclose the interest;

- 4.3 Where the matter referred to in paragraph 4.2 affects the financial interest to a greater extent than if affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the area affected by the decision and a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest, you must not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

5. Sensitive Interests

- 5.1 Where you consider (and the Council's Monitoring Officer agrees) that the nature of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or other interest is such that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to you or a person connected with you being subject to intimidation or violence, it is a "sensitive interest" for the purposes of the Code. The details of the sensitive interest do not need to be disclosed to a meeting, although the fact that you have a sensitive interest must be disclosed.
- 5.2 In granting any dispensation, the overriding concern should be the safety and welfare of the councillor and their family. If the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that there is a genuine and well-founded threat of violence or intimidation to the councillor if their details were published by the Council, then such details should not be published. Receiving criticism or complaint may not amount to such and may be seen as simply part of the expected role of an elected politician. The Monitoring Officer will usually ask for evidence to substantiate the threat to hold on record.
- 5.3 It should be noted that, even if a dispensation is granted, the Register shall still show the existence of an interest with an explanatory note saying that the details have been withheld under these provisions.

6. Single Member Action

- 6.1 If you are empowered to discharge functions of the Council acting alone (for example, as a member of the Cabinet), and:
 - (a) have and are aware that you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be dealt with by you in that role, you must not take any action, or further action on the matter (except for the purposes of enabling the matter to be dealt with by other means);
 - (b) have and are aware that you have an interest in any matter dealt with by you in that role, which relates to an interest in Appendix B ('Other Registerable Interest'), you must not take any action, or further action, on the matter (except for the purposes of enabling the matter to be dealt with by other means);

- (c) the matter to be dealt with by you in that role relates to your own financial interest (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or your own wellbeing or is otherwise to your advantage or relates to a financial interest or wellbeing or is otherwise to the advantage of a relative, friend or close associate, you must not take any action or further action on the matter (except for the purposes of enabling the matter to be dealt with by other means) and you must notify the Monitoring Officer;
- (d) the matter to be dealt with by you in that role affects your own financial interest or a financial interest of a relative, friend close associate or body covered by Appendix B, you must notify the Monitoring Officer before taking any action or further action, and if the Monitoring Officer determines that the matter affects the financial interest to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the area affected by the decision and a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest, you must not take any action or further action.

APPENDIX A – DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. Breaches of the rules relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests may lead to criminal sanctions being imposed.
2. You have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest if it is of a description specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State and either:
 - 2.1 it is an interest of yours, or
 - 2.2 it is an interest of:
 - (a) your spouse or civil partner
 - (b) a person with whom you are living as husband and wife, or
 - (c) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners; and
 - (d) you are aware that that other person has the interest.
3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests are:

INTEREST	DESCRIPTION
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on by you for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a Member, or towards your election expenses.

	This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between you (or a body in which you have a beneficial interest) and the Council (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Council.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) (a) the landlord is the Council; and (b) the tenant is a body in which you have a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where: (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; and (b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) where the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

“body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest” means a firm in which the relevant person is a partner or a body corporate of which the relevant person is a director, or in the securities of which the relevant person has a beneficial interest;

“director” includes a member of the committee of management of a registered society within the meaning given by section 1(1) of the co-operative and community benefit Societies Act 2014, other than a society registered as a credit union.

“land” excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for the relevant person (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income;

“securities” means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

APPENDIX B - OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS

1. Any body of which you are in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council;
2. Any body-
 - (a) exercising functions of a public nature;
 - (b) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;
3. Any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £10 which you have received by virtue of your office, or a series of gifts or hospitality, from the same source within any 12-month period which together are worth more than an estimated value of £10.

PART 2: GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY OFFERED TO COUNCILLORS

1. General Principles

- 1.1 Councillors should treat with caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them. Whilst the person or organisation making the offer may be doing so entirely without expectation of gain, the public may see it differently if that person or organisation is doing business, or seeking to do business with the Council. Councillors should ask themselves “Would I have been given this if I was not on the Council?”
- 1.2 It is essential that any suggestion of improper influence should be avoided. When receiving offers of gifts and hospitality, councillors should be particularly sensitive as to their timing in relation to decisions which the Council may be taking. For example, hospitality must not be accepted knowingly from interested parties during the tendering period of a contract, or whilst an application for planning permission or some other kind of permission/decision is being considered by the Council.
- 1.3 Councillors may come into contact with individuals seeking to enhance the prospects of their business. Sometimes suppliers (or potential suppliers/tenderers for services) make approaches to councillors with a view to demonstrating a particular product or service. In order to avoid suspicion of unhealthy influence, councillors should ensure that such offers are advised to appropriate officers.

- 1.4 As with all other aspects of this Code, councillors should be confident that whatever they do should be seen to be an example to the community of proper conduct and behaviour.

2. Registering Gifts and Hospitality

- 2.1 This Code of Conduct sets out the requirement for councillors to register the receipt of any gift or hospitality worth £10 or over that they receive in connection with their official duties as a councillor. If in doubt as to the value, the councillor should register the offer anyway. An accumulation of gifts from the same source over a short period that adds up to £10 or more should also be registered. The Member must register the gift or hospitality and its source by completing a written declaration within 28 days of receiving it.
- 2.2 The Council will maintain a register of gifts and hospitality received by councillors where the value is £10 or more in value. The register is maintained by Democratic Services on behalf of the Monitoring Officer. Members should immediately notify Democratic Services of any such gifts or hospitality received and enter the relevant details in the register. The register will be made available to the public via the Council's website. It will be updated at least quarterly.
- 2.3 Councillors do not need to register gifts and hospitality that are not related to their role as a councillor.

8.3 Member Complaints Procedure

1. Context

- 1.1 These "Arrangements" set out how you may make a complaint that a Member of this Council has failed to comply with the Council's Members' Code of Conduct, or in the case of a Parish or Town Councillor, that Parish or Town Council's Code of Conduct, and sets out how the Council will deal with it.
- 1.2 These Arrangements include the appointment of at least two Independent Persons, whose views must be sought by the Council before it takes a decision on an allegation which it has decided warrants investigation, and whose views can be sought by the Council at any other stage, or by a Member against whom an allegation has been made.

2. The Code of Conduct

- 2.1 The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for Members, which is set out elsewhere within the constitution.

3. Making a complaint

3.1 If you wish to make a complaint, please write to:

The Monitoring Officer
West Northamptonshire Council
One Angel Square
Angel Street
Northampton
NN1 1ED

or e-mail the Monitoring Officer at: monitoringofficer@westnorthants.gov.uk.

3.2 The Monitoring Officer is a senior officer of the Council who has statutory responsibility for maintaining the Register of Members' Interests and who is responsible for administering the process in respect of complaints of alleged Member misconduct.

3.3 In order to ensure that we have all the information which we need to be able to process your complaint, please use the complaint form, which is available on request or can be downloaded from the Council's website, next to the Code of Conduct.

3.4 You are required to provide us with your name and a contact address or email address, so that we can acknowledge receipt of your complaint and keep you informed of its progress. If you want to keep your name and address confidential, please indicate this in the space provided on the complaint form, in which case we will not disclose your name and address to the Member against whom you make the complaint, without your prior consent. The Council does not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless there is a clear public interest in doing so.

3.5 The Monitoring Officer will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible after receiving it and will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint.

4. Initial Assessment of Complaints Received

4.1 The Monitoring Officer will review all complaints received by the Council and may consult with at least one of the Independent Persons (see section 13 below) at this stage. In assessing the complaint, the Monitoring Officer will apply the following 'public interest' test:

'CAN' we investigate your complaint?

(a) Is the person you are complaining about a councillor?

(b) Did the conduct occur within the last six months?

(c) Is the conduct something that is covered by the code?

- 4.2 If a complaint has been made but does not fall within the scope or intent of these arrangements, the Monitoring Officer may still decide to take informal action in order to resolve the matter.
- 4.3 If the Monitoring Officer determines the complaint can be investigated, the following test will be applied:
- ‘SHOULD’ we investigate your complaint?
- (a) Is there evidence which supports the complaint?
 - (b) Is the conduct something which it is possible to investigate?
 - (c) Would an investigation be proportionate and in the public interest?
- 4.4 If the Monitoring Officer determines the complaint should be investigated, they will then decide whether the complaint:
- (a) warrants investigation or,
 - (b) may be suitable for alternative resolution without investigation,
- 4.5 For the complaint to be admissible it must be in a legible format and relate to an existing Member of the Council.
- 4.6 In determining whether or not the complaint should be referred for investigation or to seek alternative resolution the Monitoring Officer and Independent Persons will have regard to a range of factors including the following:
- (a) Whether there is sufficient information upon which to base a decision;
 - (b) How serious is the alleged complaint;
 - (c) Is the complaint politically motivated, vexatious or tit for tat;
 - (d) Did the action complained about occur recently or not;
 - (e) Do the allegations relate to actions occurring whilst the Member was acting in their official capacity or do they relate to their private life;
 - (f) Whether the matter is considered suitable for alternative resolution and whether either the Member concerned or the complainant is not prepared to accept this as a solution.
- 4.7 The initial assessment of the complaint will be held as soon as possible after receipt of your complaint and you will be informed, in writing, of the outcome by the Monitoring Officer. You will be informed on progress throughout the process.

- 4.8 Unless exceptional circumstances exist that indicate otherwise, the Monitoring Officer will inform the Member concerned of the receipt and nature of the complaint and invite their comments.
- 4.9 Where the Monitoring Officer requires additional information in order to come to a decision, they may come back to you for such information, and may request information from the Member against whom your complaint is directed.
- 4.10 If, during the assessment of the initial complaint, it becomes clear that either the Monitoring Officer or the Independent Person have a conflict of interest in relation to the complaint, they will not play any further role in the assessment of the complaint. In order that the complaint can be assessed, steps will be taken to appoint a Monitoring Officer (or suitably qualified person) or an Independent Person from another authority to assess the complaint and take any further steps required under this procedure.

5. Alternative Resolution

- 5.1 In appropriate cases, the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. The Monitoring Officer must consult with an Independent Person about this course of action. Such informal resolution may involve the Member accepting that their conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, or other remedial action by the Council. Where the Member or the Council makes a reasonable offer of informal resolution, but you are not willing to accept that offer, the Monitoring Officer (and Independent Person) will take account of this in deciding whether the complaint warrants a formal investigation.
- 5.2 If your complaint identifies criminal conduct or breach of other regulation by any person, the Monitoring Officer has the power to call-in the Police and other regulatory agencies.

6. If the Complaint is referred for Investigation how is the investigation conducted?

- 6.1 If the Monitoring Officer decides that a complaint merits formal investigation, they will appoint an Investigating Officer, who may be another senior officer of the Council, an officer of another Council or an external investigator. The Monitoring Officer will agree an investigation plan with the Investigating Officer. The Investigating Officer will decide whether they need to meet or speak to you to understand the nature of your complaint. If so, then you can explain your understanding of events and suggest what documents the Investigating Officer needs to see and who the Investigating Officer needs to interview. The Monitoring Officer will consult with an Independent Person about the need for a formal investigation.
- 6.2 The Investigating Officer would normally write to the Member against whom you have complained and provide them with a copy of your complaint. The Member would be

asked to provide their explanation of events. The Investigating Officer will identify what documents they need to see and who they need to interview. In exceptional cases, where it is appropriate to keep your identity confidential, or disclosure of details of the complaint to the Member might prejudice the investigation, the Monitoring Officer can delete your name and address from the papers given to the Member, or delay notifying the Member until the investigation has progressed sufficiently.

6.3 At the end of their investigation, the Investigating Officer will produce a draft report and will send copies of that draft report, in confidence, to you and to the Member concerned, to give you both an opportunity to identify any matter in that draft report which you disagree with or which you consider requires further consideration.

6.4 Having received and taken account of any comments which you may make on the draft report, the Investigating Officer will send it to the Monitoring Officer.

7. What happens if the Investigating Officer concludes that there is no evidence of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct?

7.1 The Monitoring Officer will, in consultation with the Independent Persons, review the Investigating Officer's report and, if they are satisfied that the Investigating Officer's report is sufficient, the Monitoring Officer will write to you and to the Member concerned, notifying you that no further action is required.

8. What happens if the Investigating Officer concludes that there is evidence of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct?

8.1 The Monitoring Officer will, in consultation with an Independent Person, review the Investigating Officer's report and will then either send the matter for local hearing before the Hearings Sub-Committee made up of councillors from the Council's Democracy and Standards Committee or seek an alternative resolution.

8.2 Local Resolution

The Monitoring Officer and Independent Person may consider that the matter can be resolved without the need for a hearing. Such resolution may include the Member accepting that their conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, and/or other remedial action by the Council. If the Member complies with the suggested resolution, the Monitoring Officer will report the matter to the Democracy and Standards Committee for information, but will take no further action.

8.3 Local Hearing

If the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person consider that local resolution is not appropriate or it isn't possible to achieve, the Monitoring Officer will report the Investigating Officer's report to the Hearings Sub-Committee, which will conduct a

local hearing in private to decide whether the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and, if so, whether to take any action in respect of the Member.

In summary, the Monitoring Officer will conduct a “pre-hearing process”, requiring the Member to give their response to the Investigating Officer’s report. This is in order to identify what is likely to be agreed and what is likely to be contentious at the hearing. The Chair of the Hearings Sub-Committee may issue directions as to the manner in which the hearing will be conducted. At the hearing, the Investigating Officer will present their report, call such witnesses as they consider necessary and make representations to substantiate their conclusion that the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. For this purpose, the Investigating Officer may ask you as the complainant to attend and give evidence to the Hearings Sub-Committee.

The Member will then have an opportunity to give their evidence, to call witnesses and to make representations to the Hearings Sub-Committee as to why they consider that they did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The Hearings Sub-Committee, with the benefit of any advice from an Independent Person, may conclude that the Member did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct and so dismiss the complaint. Alternatively, if the Hearings sub-committee finds that the Member did fail to comply with the Code of Conduct, the Chair will inform the Member of this finding and the Hearings Sub-Committee will then consider what action, if any, the Hearings Sub-Committee should take as a result of the Member’s failure to comply with the Code of Conduct. In doing this, the Hearings Sub-Committee will give the Member an opportunity to make representations to the Panel and will consult an Independent Person.

If the Member wishes to make representations to the Panel and/or consult with an Independent Person the Hearing will adjourn, normally for one week, and reconvene to hear any representation or statement from the Member before either confirming or amending their decision. If the Member does not wish to make representations to the Panel, or consult with an Independent Person, the decision of the Panel will stand as announced.

9. What action can the Hearings Sub-Committee take where a Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct?

9.1 The Council has delegated to the Hearings Sub-Committee such of its powers to take action in respect of individual members (including town and parish council members) as may be necessary to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

9.2 If, following an investigation and hearing, it is established that a member has failed to comply with their council’s Member Code of Conduct, one or more of the following sanctions may be applied:

- (a) Publish findings in respect of the member’s conduct;

- (b) Report findings to the relevant council for information;
- (c) Recommend to the relevant council that the member be issued with a formal censure or be reprimanded;
- (d) Recommend to the member's Group Leader (or in the case of un-grouped members, recommend to the relevant Council or committees) that they be removed from any or all committees or sub-committees of the council;
- (e) Where Executive arrangements exist, recommend to the Executive Leader that the member be removed from Cabinet, or removed from particular portfolio responsibilities;
- (f) Instruct the Monitoring Officer to arrange or recommend training for the member;
- (g) Instruct the Monitoring Officer to mediate between the complainant and the Member;
- (h) Remove or recommend the removal of the member from any outside appointments to which they have been appointed or nominated by their council where the complaint relates to that appointment and for a specified period of time;
- (i) Withdraw or recommend withdrawal of facilities provided to the member by their council, such as a computer, website and/or email and internet access, which may have been abused or improperly used;
- (j) Exclude or recommend the exclusion of the member from their council's offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending full Council, committee and sub-committee meetings.
- (k) Recommend that the member concerned makes a formal written or oral apology to the full Council.

9.3 There are no powers that allow the Council to suspend or disqualify a Member or to withdraw Members' basic allowances. However, removing a Member from the Cabinet or other Committee may lead to a loss of a Special Responsibility Allowance that position was entitled to for the period of the suspension.

10. What happens at the end of the hearing?

10.1 At the end of the hearing, the Chair will state the decision of the Hearings Sub-Committee as to whether the Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any actions which the Hearings Sub-Committee resolves to take.

10.2 As soon as reasonably practicable thereafter and subject to any adjournment as set

out in 8.3 above, the Monitoring Officer shall prepare a formal decision notice in consultation with the Chair of the Hearings Sub-Committee and send a copy to you and to the Member. The decision notice will be made available for public inspection after 20 working days have elapsed from the date the decision notice was issued (provided there has not been a request for a review under paragraph 11 of these Arrangements) and the decision reported to the next convenient meetings of the Democracy and Standards Committee and of the Council.

11. Appeals and Reviews

- 11.1 There is no right of appeal for you as complainant or for the Member against a decision of the Monitoring Officer.
- 11.2 However, a review of the decision of the Hearings Sub-Committee may be sought by you or the Member concerned in the following circumstances:
- (a) where you or the Member concerned consider that the Local Hearing was not conducted in accordance with the process set out in these Arrangements or the principles of natural justice (see below); or
 - (b) where significant new evidence is available which has not been considered by the Hearings Sub-Committee.
- 11.3 Any such request for a review should be made to the Monitoring Officer in writing (by letter or e-mail) within 20 working days from the date the decision notice was issued to the parties and:
- (a) if made pursuant to paragraph 11.2a above, must set out specifically how it is considered the Local Hearing was not conducted in accordance with the process set out in these Arrangements or the principles of natural justice; or
 - (b) if made pursuant to paragraph 11.2b above, must include copies of the new evidence or explain what the evidence is.
- 11.4 The Monitoring Officer may reject the request for a review if after consultation with an Independent Person they conclude that substantive reasons have not been provided to support the request or the further evidence provided is insufficient to support a request for a review. Simply expressing disagreement with the Hearings Sub-Committee's decision or repeating the original complaint will result in the request for review being rejected. If the request for review is rejected, you and the Member will be advised in writing of the reasons for rejection.
- 11.5 If a request for a review is received (provided it is not rejected), the Monitoring Officer will notify the complainant and Member concerned and convene a meeting of the Review Panel.

- 11.6 The Review Panel will review the Hearings Sub-Committee's decision in private. The Review Panel will have the documentation considered by the Hearings Sub-Committee and the decision notice of the Hearings Sub-Committee before it. It will not conduct a re-hearing. It will only consider the request for the review, (including any new evidence presented with the request for review) together with the complainant or subject Member's response to the request for the review and response to any new evidence. The Review Panel will also have the discretion to re-hear any of the original evidence if it considers this necessary
- 11.7 The Review Panel will either:
- (a) confirm the original decision of the Hearings Sub-Committee; or
 - (b) disagree with the original decision of the Hearings Sub-Committee and substitute its own decision (which may only be a decision that was open to the Hearings Sub-Committee).
- 11.8 At the end of the review, the Chair of the Review Panel will explain the Review Panel's reasons for its decision. Within 5 working days of the decision of the Review Panel, the Monitoring Officer shall prepare a formal decision notice in consultation with the Chair of the Review Panel and send a copy to you and to the Member. The decision notice will be made available for public inspection and will be reported to the next convenient meeting of the Democracy and the Council.
- 11.9 Unless in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer in consultation with an Independent Person exceptional circumstances exist, the Review Panel must make a decision within two calendar months of the receipt of the request for a review.
- 11.10 There is no right of appeal of the decision of the Review Panel which is final.
- 11.11 If you feel that the Council has failed to deal with your complaint properly, you may make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman or take your own legal advice as to options that might be open to you.

12. What is the Hearings Sub-Committee?

- 12.1 The Hearings Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the Council's Democracy and Standards Committee. It will comprise three members of the Democracy and Standards Committee.
- 12.2 Independent Persons are invited to attend all meetings of the Hearings Sub-Committee and their views are sought and taken into consideration before the Hearings Sub-Committee takes any decision on whether the Member's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

13. What is the Review Panel?

- 13.1 The Review Panel is a sub-committee of the Council's Democracy and Standards Committee. It will comprise three members of the Democracy and Standards Committee who did not sit on the Hearings Sub-Committee, have not previously been involved in the matter concerned and who do not otherwise have any conflict of interest.
- 13.2 Independent Persons are invited to attend all meetings of the Review Panel and their views are sought and taken into consideration before the Review Panel takes any decision on whether the Member's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

14. Who are the Independent Persons?

- 14.1 The Council has five Independent Persons.
- 14.2 A person cannot be "independent" if they:
- (a) are, or have been within the past five years, a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the Council or of a parish council within the Council's area; or
 - (b) are a relative or close friend of a person involved in making or determining the complaint. For this purpose, "relative" means:
 - (i) the other person's spouse or civil partner;
 - (ii) living with the other person as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners;
 - (iii) a grandparent of the other person;
 - (iv) a lineal descendant of a grandparent of the other person;
 - (v) a parent, sibling or child of a person within paragraphs (i) or (ii);
 - (vi) the spouse or civil partner of a person within paragraph (iii), (iv) or (v); or
 - (vii) living with a person within paragraph (iii), (iv) or (v) as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners.

15. Being accompanied at a Local Hearing or Review Panel meeting

- 15.1 Both the complainant and the Member complained about may choose to bring another person with them to the Local Hearing and any Review Panel meeting (if one takes place) to support (but not represent) them. It shall be a matter for the Chair of the Hearings Sub-Committee and the Chair of the Review Panel to issue directions

as to the manner in which a supporting person may participate in the Local Hearing/Review Panel meeting, to ensure there is a balance between a party's need to be supported and the need for the Hearings Sub-Committee and/Review Panel to conduct its business fairly and efficiently.

16. Principles of Natural Justice

- 16.1 For the avoidance of doubt, it is expressly stated that the procedures in these Arrangements must be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice. In summary, this means that each party has the right to a fair hearing, the right to make their case to an impartial person/group of people, and that the decision makers in this process act without bias or apparent bias, act impartially and do not create any procedural irregularities.

17. Service

- 17.1 Where it is necessary for any documentation to be sent to a member against whom an allegation of breach of the Code has been made, those documents may be sent by recorded delivery post to that member's usual address and/or by e-mail to the e-mail address notified to the Council. Any documents sent by such a method are deemed to be served for the purpose of these arrangements.

18. Revision of these arrangements

- 18.1 The Council may by resolution agree to amend these arrangements and has delegated to the Chair of the Hearings Sub-Committee (and the Chair of the Review Panel in cases where there is a review), the right to depart from these arrangements where they consider that it is expedient to do so in order to secure the effective and fair consideration of any matter.

8.4 Member/Officer Protocol

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A good relationship between councillors and officers is characterised by mutual respect and trust and is essential to the successful working of the organisation. Councillors and officers should speak to each other openly and honestly; they are indispensable to each other. Nothing in this Protocol is intended to change that relationship.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Protocol is to help councillors and officers perform effectively by giving guidance on their respective roles and expectations and on their relationship with each other. It is intended to promote clarity and the smooth running of the Council, and ensure that impartial and objective advice is obtained.
- 1.3 The Protocol also gives guidance on what to do on the rare occasions when things go wrong. Responsibility for the operation of this Protocol lies with the Chief Executive of the Council and the Monitoring Officer.
- 1.4 The Protocol must be read and operated in the context of all relevant legislation, national and local Codes of Conduct, the Council's Codes of Conduct and other supporting procedures such as the Complaints and Whistleblowing procedures, commissioning and procedure for confidential reporting. Breach of this protocol may also constitute a breach of the councillor, and the Employee, Codes of Conduct.

2. Roles of councillors and Officers

- 2.1 Councillors and officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another. Their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and set policy and direction. They are elected to serve a term of office. Officers are employed by and responsible to the whole Council. An officer's job is to give advice to the Council, and to carry out the Council's work under the direction and control of the Council, the Cabinet, and relevant committees, etc. Mutual respect and co-operation between councillors and officers are essential to good local government.

Councillors

- 2.2 Councillors have the following main areas of responsibility:
 - (a) contributing to determining the policy of the Council and giving it leadership;
 - (b) monitoring and reviewing the performance of the Council in implementing that policy and delivering services;
 - (c) representing the Council in their local areas and externally;
 - (d) acting on behalf of their constituents.

- 2.3 All councillors must respect the impartiality of officers' information and advice, must not ask them to undertake work of a party-political nature, or to do anything that would put them in difficulty in the event of a change in the political composition of the Council.
- 2.4 Councillors must recognise that no officer should be expected to give political advice, and those that are in 'politically restricted' posts are specifically debarred from engaging in active political work.
- 2.5 When dealing with Council business, councillors must be mindful of the provisions relating to interests in the councillor Code of Conduct and avoid involvement in matters that could be deemed to be breaches of these provisions. Councillors should also be aware of legislative constraints on their behaviour. For example, they should not visit certain Council establishments without the appropriate checks having been completed.

Members of the Cabinet and Committee Chairs

- 2.6 Members of the Cabinet and Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees, Boards, Panels etc, have additional responsibilities and their relationships with officers whilst carrying out those roles may be different from, and more complex than those of councillors without those responsibilities.

Officers

- 2.7 An officer's role is:
- (a) to give advice and information to all councillors on an impartial basis, using their professional expertise and
 - (b) to implement the policies determined by the Council, provided the policies are within the law.
- 2.8 In all advice, including reports, it is the responsibility of the officer to express their own advice in an objective and professional manner, and make recommendations based on this. An officer may report the views of individual councillors on an issue. If the councillor wishes to express a view contrary to the recommendation, they must not pressure the officer to make a recommendation contrary to the officer's professional view.
- 2.9 Certain officers e.g. Chief Executive of the Council, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) have responsibilities in law over and above their obligations to the Council and to individual councillors. These obligations should be respected. These officers must not be obstructed in the discharge of these responsibilities, and/or be victimised for discharging these responsibilities.
- 2.10 Officers who are professionally qualified may be bound to observe professional

standards in giving advice and councillors must respect this. Officers will also be bound by the limits of their authority in the Council.

3. Expectations

3.1 Councillors can expect from officers:

- (a) A commitment to the Council as a whole, and not to any political group;
- (b) A working partnership;
- (c) An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- (d) Timely response to enquiries and complaints;
- (e) Objective advice, not influenced by political views or preference, which does not compromise the political neutrality of officers;
- (f) Regular, up to date information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities that they have and positions that they hold;
- (g) Awareness of and sensitivity to the political environment;
- (h) Respect, courtesy and dignified behaviour appropriate to the occasion;
- (i) Training and development in order to carry out their role effectively;
- (j) A high level of integrity and confidentiality, appropriate to the situation;
- (k) Not to have officers' personal issues raised with them outside the agreed procedures;
- (l) That they will not attempt to influence improperly any councillor to advance officers' personal interests, those of others, or influence improperly a decision;
- (m) At all times compliance with the Code of Conduct for Officers;
- (n) Support for the role of councillors as the local representatives of the Council, within any scheme of support for councillors, which may be approved by the Council.

3.2 Whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all the councillors representing the ward or wards affected should, as a matter of course, be invited to attend the meeting unless a lead Councillor has been agreed. Similarly, whenever the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise on a local issue, the ward councillors should be notified at the outset of the exercise.

3.3 Correspondence between an individual councillor and an officer should not normally be copied by the officer to any other councillor without that councillor's consent. Officers should not be copied into political group correspondence.

3.4 Officers can expect from councillors:

- (a) A working partnership;
- (b) An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures; and of officer work/life balance;
- (c) Leadership and direction;
- (d) Respect, courtesy and dignified behaviour appropriate to the occasion;
- (e) A high level of integrity and confidentiality, appropriate to the situation;
- (f) Not to be subject to intimidation, harassment or bullying;
- (g) Not to have councillors' personal issues raised with them outside the agreed procedures;
- (h) Not attempt to influence improperly any officer to advance their personal interests, or those of others, or influence improperly a decision;
- (i) That councillors will at all times comply with the Council's councillors Code of Conduct;
- (j) That councillors will not comment adversely on the conduct or capability of an individual Council employee or officer at meetings held in public;
- (k) The councillors will not ask for support other than to assist in carrying out their roles in the Council.

4. Limitations on Behaviour

4.1 The distinct roles of councillors and officers necessarily impose limitations upon behaviour. By way of illustration, and not as an exclusive list:

- (a) Close personal relationships between councillors and officers can confuse these separate roles and get in the way of the proper discharge of the Council's functions, not least in creating the perception in others that a particular councillor or officer may secure advantageous treatment for themselves, their group or otherwise. Where close personal relationships do exist, it is necessary to ensure that confidential knowledge is respected and not discussed inappropriately;
- (b) The need to maintain these separate roles means that there are limits to the matters on which officers should be expected to give advice. Officers are unlikely

to be able to give advice on personal matters and should not give advice on party political matters;

- (c) Relationships with particular individuals or party groups should not be such as to give cause for suspicion that an officer favours that councillor or group above others. The issue of officer attendance and advice to political groups is specifically covered below.

5. Political Groups

- 5.1 The operation of political groups is an integral feature of local government, and such political groups have an important part to play in the development of policy and the political management of the Council. It is in the interests of the Council to support the effective operation of political groups, but the operation of political groups can pose difficulties in terms of the impartiality of officers (note: the Cabinet is not a political group even if all members are from a single party).

6. Officer Attendance

- 6.1 Any political group may request the Statutory Officers, Executive Directors or Assistant Directors to attend a meeting of the group to advise on any particular matter relating to the Council.
- 6.2 An officer may decline a request to attend if they are of the opinion that the particular issue is of such a political nature that it would be inappropriate to attend.
- 6.3 Officers' advice to political groups will be limited to a statement of material facts and identification of options and the merits and demerits of such options for the Council. Advice will not deal with any political implications of the matter or any option, and officers will not make any political recommendation to a political group.
- 6.4 Where an officer attends a political group, the Chief Executive of the Council will advise all other groups that the officer has attended and the subject upon which they have advised and ensure that other groups are afforded the same opportunity.
- 6.5 Where officers provide information and advice to a party group meeting in relation to a matter of Council business, this cannot act as a substitute for providing all necessary information and advice to the Cabinet, relevant committee or sub-committee where the matter in question is concerned.
- 6.6 Officers will respect the confidentiality of any lawful matter, which they hear in the course of attending a political group meeting.

8. When Things go Wrong

- 7.1 From time to time the relationship between councillors and officers may break down or become strained. If this is the case, issues will be dealt with informally where

possible, or through conciliation by an appropriate senior manager or councillor.

7.2 Procedure for officers

Formal complaints against councillors must follow the Code of Conduct processes found elsewhere in the Constitution. Before an officer initiates a complaint under the Code of Conduct or the Whistleblowing Procedure, they should consider raising their concerns about the behaviour of a given councillor with the Monitoring Officer.

7.3 Procedure for councillors

- (a) In the event that a councillor remains dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of an officer, the matter should be raised with an appropriate Executive Director, usually one with authority over the officer concerned. Where the officer concerned is an Executive Director, the matter should be raised with the Chief Executive. Where the officer concerned is the Chief Executive, the matter should be raised with the Monitoring Officer.
- (b) Prior to a councillor approaching the relevant Executive Director, the councillor should consider discussing the issue informally with the Leader or Deputy Leader or another appropriate Executive Director.
- (c) If the matter cannot be resolved informally, it may be necessary to invoke the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

8.5 Planning Protocol

1 Background and Scope

- 1.1 This Planning Protocol should be read in conjunction with the terms of reference provided for the Strategic Planning Committee and the Local Area Planning committees.
- 1.2 The Planning Protocol takes into account the ethical framework introduced by the Localism Act 2011, the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant planning practice guidance, and the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by West Northamptonshire Council.
- 1.3 The aim of this Protocol is to ensure that:
 - (a) Planning decisions are made openly, impartially with sound judgement, and for justifiable planning reasons; and
 - (b) Throughout the planning process there are no grounds for suggesting that a decision has been biased, not impartial or not well founded in any way.
- 1.4 The Planning Protocol applies to members of the Planning committees and officers.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 The Planning committees operate in a quasi-judicial manner. There is recourse through the courts and the Planning Inspectorate if a decision on a regulatory planning matter is not correctly made - with possible financial penalties for the Council. This places an important responsibility on those who serve on the Planning committees.
- 2.2 The role of a Member on a Planning Committee involves balancing representing the needs and interests of the council area as a whole, with the need to maintain the ethic of impartial decision making on what can be highly controversial proposals. This Protocol has therefore been established to provide guidance for Members and officers in dealing with planning matters to avoid grounds for allegations of malpractice.
- 2.3 All Members serving on a Planning Committee are required to abide by this Protocol.

3. General Roles and Conduct

- 3.1 The basis of the planning system is the consideration of private proposals against wider public interests, with often strongly opposing views. Whilst Members should take account of those views, they should not favour any person, company, group or locality; nor put themselves in a position where they appear to do so. Decisions

should clearly be based upon the development plan and material planning considerations.

- 3.2 The role of Members at a Planning Committee is not to represent the views of their constituents, but to consider planning applications in the interests of the whole Council area. When voting on applications, Members may therefore decide to vote against the views expressed by their constituents.
- 3.3 Members who do not feel that they can act in this way should consider whether they are best suited to serving on a Planning Committee.
- 3.4 Members whose business or other interests bring them into frequent contact with the planning system should consider whether it is appropriate or practical to accept appointment to a Planning Committee: nor should other Members seek to appoint such a Member to a Planning Committee.
- 3.5 The role of officers at Planning Committee is to advise the Members on professional matters, and to assist in the smooth running of the meeting.
- 3.6 If Members have questions about a development proposal, they are encouraged to contact the case officer in advance. The officer will then provide advice and answer any questions about the report and the proposal, which will result in more efficient use of the Planning Committee's time and more transparent decision making.

4. Training

- 4.1 No Member shall attend any meeting of a Planning Committee as a committee Member or a substitute for a committee Member unless they have undergone such mandatory training in planning procedures as the Council requires.
- 4.2 Members should endeavour to attend any other specialised training or informal briefing sessions provided, to improve and keep up-to-date knowledge of planning law, regulations, procedures, Codes of Practice and the Development Plans beyond the minimum referred to above.

5. General Principles for Dealing with Planning Matters

- 5.1 A Member should consider the interests of local residents and businesses as a whole and should not favour any individuals or groups. They should also act in the interests of the whole Council area.
- 5.2 A Member shall not accept a nomination to serve on a Planning Committee unless they agree to abide by the terms of the Planning Protocol.
- 5.3 Members (and officers) should not act as paid agents or consultants on planning matters within the jurisdiction of the Council as local planning authority.

- 5.4 Planning applications will be determined in a transparent, fair and open manner and Members should have regard only to the development plan and material planning considerations and should disregard all other factors.
- 5.5 Members participating at meetings should ensure that they are present for the whole presentation by officers and subsequent debate on a particular matter. This is to ensure that they are able to hear all the relevant evidence and debate in relation to a proposal. In the event that a Member misses part of an item being discussed then they must not vote.
- 5.6 Members should retain an open mind about planning matters until they are in possession of all the relevant information to be presented.
- 5.7 Members should pay full regard to officers' professional recommendations, relevant national/regional planning statements and guidance, and relevant Development Plan Policies.
- 5.8 Members are recommended to be cautious of social contact with applicants and agents.
- 5.9 Members should not disclose to a third party information submitted to them or a committee on a confidential basis.

6. Determination of Planning Applications

- 6.1 Members determining applications will take account of all the relevant information presented before reaching a decision and should not commit themselves to a final opinion before having done so.
- 6.2 In considering the merits of planning applications Members should have regard only to relevant planning matters and should disregard all other factors and considerations.
- 6.3 Members should pay full regard to the professional officer recommendation, relevant national/regional planning guidance and relevant Development Plan Policies.
- 6.4 Members can always ask for clarification from officers. However, if there are issues which require factual clarification, preferably these should be directed to the case officer before the committee meeting, not at the meeting itself.
- 6.5 Members will then debate the application, including giving an indication of how they intend to vote.
- 6.6 After Members have debated the application, a vote will be taken.
- 6.7 Whilst officers will provide professional advice and a recommendation on every application and matter considered, it is the responsibility of Members, acting in the

interests of the whole Council, to decide what weight to attach to the advice given and to the considerations of each individual application. In this way, Members may decide to apply different weight to certain issues and may reach a decision contrary to officer advice.

- 6.8 If, in moving contrary to the advice and/or recommendation in an officer's report, Members require further advice about the details of the motion, the meeting can be adjourned for a short time to allow Members and officers to draft the motion. This may include reasons for the decision that are relevant to the planning considerations on the application, and which are capable of being supported and substantiated should an appeal be lodged.
- 6.9 Where Members propose to determine a planning matter contrary to officers' advice, full and proper reasons based on material planning considerations must be given at decision time.
- 6.10 Members may move that any vote should be recorded at any meeting of the Planning Committee. This means that a formal record is taken of how each individual Member voted (For, Against, or Abstain).

7. Officer Reports to Committee

- 7.1 Reports should be accurate and cover, among other things, the relevant planning matters of objections and the relevant planning matters raised by people who have been consulted in respect of an application.
- 7.2 Relevant points will include a clear exposition of the site or related history, the relevant Development Plan Policies and all other relevant material planning considerations.
- 7.3 Reports should include a clear written recommendation of action.
- 7.4 Reports should list the topics that will be addressed by conditions and if possible also include draft Heads of Terms (where applicable) to a legal agreement, if the recommendation is to grant planning permission.
- 7.5 Reports should contain a technical appraisal which clearly justifies the recommendation made by the officer.
- 7.6 If the recommendation in the report is contrary to the provisions of the Local Plan, the material considerations which justify this must be clearly stated.
- 7.7 Where an application is recommended for refusal the reasons will be set out in full in the officer's report.

8. Disclosable Pecuniary and Personal Interests

- 8.1 The Code of Conduct sets out requirements for Members on declaring personal and disclosable pecuniary interests and the consequences of having such interests. These must be followed scrupulously and Members should review their situation regularly.
- 8.2 Members should avoid membership of the Planning committees if it entails, or would entail, frequent declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.
- 8.3 A Member with a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of a particular planning matter must declare it and take no part in the discussion or the determination of the proposal. The Member may in their personal capacity and if registered to speak make representations and answer questions prior to any debate on the matter but thereafter should leave the room while the item is considered and determined. The responsibility for this rests with each Member and they may wish to consult with the Monitoring Officer or legal advisor to the committee at the earliest opportunity if in any doubt.
- 8.4 Ward Members who are also members of a Planning committee may participate in the committee debate on an application in their ward and subject to any disclosable pecuniary interest will normally be allowed to vote on the application.
- 8.5 A Member who has a disclosable interest in a planning matter is still able to represent the interests of their Ward constituents at committee meetings in respect of that matter, subject to the Council's rules on public participation at committees. Alternatively, the Member could advise constituents to address their representations to another ward Member or a Member of an adjacent ward who is not so affected.

9. Pre-determination and Predisposition

- 9.1 Members of the Planning Committees need to take account of the general public's expectation that a planning application will be processed and determined in a transparently open and fair manner, in which members taking the decision will take account of all the evidence presented before arriving at a decision, not take into account irrelevant evidence or representations and that to commit themselves one way or the other before hearing all the arguments and evidence makes them vulnerable to an accusation of partiality. A Member may voice their concerns publicly before a meeting but they should make it clear that they will not form a final opinion until they have considered all the information.
- 9.2 Members must not prejudice their ability to participate in planning decisions at a Planning committee by making up their mind, or clearly appearing to have made up their mind (particularly in relation to an external interest or lobby group), on how they will vote on any planning matter prior to formal consideration of the matter at the relevant Planning committee and hearing the officer's presentation and evidence and arguments on both sides.

- 9.3 Pre-determining a matter in this way and then taking part in the decision will put the Council at risk of a finding of maladministration and of legal proceedings on the grounds of there being a danger of bias or a failure to take into account all of the factors enabling the proposal to be considered on its merits.
- 9.4 If a Member has made up their mind prior to the meeting, or have made public comments which indicate that they might have done, and is not able to reconsider their previously held view, then they will not be able to participate on the matter.
- 9.5 Members who are members of a Planning committee and who in that capacity attend any ancillary meeting or committee/sub-committee need to avoid any appearance of bias or of having predetermined their views before taking a decision on a planning application or on planning policies. Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a Member should not be regarded as having a closed mind simply because they previously did or said something that, directly or indirectly, indicated what view they might take in relation to any particular meeting, provided they remain open to listening to all the arguments and changing their mind in the light of all the information presented at a relevant meeting. A Member in this position will always be judged against an objective test of whether the reasonable onlooker with knowledge of the relevant facts, would consider that the Member was biased.
- 9.6 Circumstances may also arise where a Member has had significant personal involvement with an applicant, agent or interested party, (whether or not in connection with the particular matter before the Planning Committee), which could lead an observer who knows the relevant facts to reasonably think the Member's interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest. In these circumstances the Member should declare a disclosable interest, observe the Council's rules on Public Participation at committees, and withdraw from the meeting.
- 9.7 Members must be aware that they are likely to have pre-determined a matter where the Council is the landowner, developer or applicant and they have acted as, or could be perceived as being, a chief advocate for the proposal.
- 9.8 For advice on predetermination and predisposition, Members should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

10. Lobbying of Councillors

- 10.1 Lobbying is a normal part of the planning process. It is recognised that those affected by a proposal will often seek to influence the decision by an approach to their local Member or to members of a Planning Committee. However, such lobbying can lead to the impartiality and integrity of a member being called into question. The information provided by lobbyists may represent a selective and incomplete picture of the relevant considerations in respect of a planning matter.

- 10.2 Members of a Planning committee are free to listen to any point of view about a planning proposal. Even though they may agree with a particular view, members of a Planning committee should take care not to express an opinion which may be taken by the public as indicating that they or the authority had already made up their mind on the issue before they have been exposed to all the evidence and arguments. In such situations, Members should restrict themselves to giving procedural advice, including suggesting to those who are lobbying, that they should speak or write to the relevant officer in order that their opinions can be included in the officer's report to the committee. If they do express an opinion, it should be made clear that the Member will only be in a position to take a final decision after having heard all the relevant evidence and arguments at committee.
- 10.3 Members can raise with officers issues which have been raised by their constituents, It is always good practice that they make it clear that they can only make a final decision after hearing all the relevant arguments and taking into account all relevant material and planning considerations at Planning committees.
- 10.4 If a member of a Planning committee responds to lobbying by deciding to go public in support of a particular outcome; or actively campaigns for it, they should make clear in their public comments and/or at committee when the decision is under consideration that the views expressed are/were provisional and they will come to a final view once they have weighed all the evidence and listened to all the arguments presented at the committee meeting. If a Member is of the view that they are unable to make an unbiased decision they should not participate in the decision. If they consider the public comments they have made mean the public perception is that they will be unable to make a decision without bias, they may in the interests of maintaining public confidence decide not to participate in a decision.
- 10.5 If any Member, whether or not a committee member, speaks on behalf of a lobby group at the decision making committee, they must withdraw once they have spoken in order to counter any suggestion that their presence may have some influence on the said committee in making its final decision.
- 10.6 If a Member requires advice about being lobbied, they should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible and preferably well before any meeting takes place at which they think the issue might arise.

11. Political Influence

- 11.1 Given that the point at which a decision on a planning application is made cannot occur before a Planning committee meeting, when all available information is to hand and has been duly considered, any political group meeting prior to the committee meeting should not be used to decide how Members should vote and political whips must not be used.

11.2 Members of the Planning committees should avoid organising support for or against a planning application and avoid lobbying other Members. Such actions can easily be misunderstood by parties to the application and by the general public. Where a member of a Planning committee wishes to act as a facilitator to a local group regarding a particular application, they should indicate that they will need to absent themselves from the vote on that particular application when it was being considered.

12. Pre-application Discussions

12.1 Discussions between a potential applicant and the Council prior to the submission of an application can be of considerable benefit to both parties. Such discussions should not, however, become or be seen to become, part of a lobbying process. Any such discussions should take place within clear guidelines.

12.2 Where Members are involved in pre-application discussions, at least one officer should attend any meetings and a follow-up letter is advisable, particularly when documentary material has been left with the Council. A written note should be made of all meetings.

12.3 All officers taking part in such discussions should make clear whether or not they are the decision-maker.

12.4 Any advice that is given should not be partial, nor seen to be partial, by any party involved. It should always be made clear at the outset that the discussions will not bind a Council to making a particular decision and that any views expressed are personal and provisional. Advice and observations should be based on the adopted plan and material considerations.

12.5 The following terms of engagement shall apply:

(a) Presentations by applicants should be limited to the development proposal and a question and answer session on factual matters. The understanding must be that the engagement is in order to improve understanding. Where appropriate such meetings may take place on site and incorporate a site visit. Officers of appropriate seniority should attend presentations.

(b) Members should maintain an impartial listening and questioning role and avoid expressing an opinion or giving advice beyond outlining the adopted local policies. Questions to clarify aspects of a proposal, or the expressions of policy concerns are legitimate as long as they do not develop into negotiations. It should be made clear at the outset of the meeting that discussions are not binding, and that views expressed are not part of the determination process. It should be made clear in introductory remarks that any statements should be categorised as 'without prejudice'.

- (c) If the applicant requests the views of the authority, these will be communicated subsequently and in writing by officers. In such communication, officers will make it clear that any views expressed prior to formal determination of an application are preliminary.
- (d) A written note of the proceedings should be kept - to include a record of officer attendance and follow up.
- (e) Follow up to the meeting should occur with a letter emphasising the informative nature of the meeting.
- (f) A note should also be taken of any potentially contentious telephone discussions in respect of an application.

13. Site Visits

- 13.1 When deciding whether a site visit is appropriate prior to the meeting at which the planning application is to be considered, all circumstances should be considered including whether:
- (a) Matters of judgement are involved on the context of the site such as the effect on landscape, impact on character, residential amenity, or highway considerations rather than purely on principle;
 - (b) It is a finely balanced case; or
 - (c) It is a contentious application where there are strong local views.
- 13.2 Members are expected to register their request for a site inspection in connection with a particular application or proposal with the Assistant Director: Growth, Climate & Regeneration within 25 days of notification of receipt of a planning application (by email to planning.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk (Daventry Area), planning.nbc@westnorthants.gov.uk (Northampton area) or planning.snc@westnorthants.gov.uk (South Northamptonshire area) or by post to Assistant Director: Growth, Climate & Regeneration, Place & Growth Directorate, West Northamptonshire Council, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton NN1 1ED).
- 13.3 The site visits will normally be held once the officer report has been prepared and prior to the meeting of the Planning committee.
- 13.4 Where visits are arranged, they must be undertaken in a consistent manner, and Members should not enter into any conversation with other people on site and must avoid any comment which could be construed as bias.
- 13.5 Members should not carry out unaccompanied site inspections (other than for the purpose of seeing the site), contact landowners themselves or arrange to go onto

sites without a Planning Officer present. Members need to exercise caution with regard to being lobbied on such site inspections.

- 13.6 The primary aim of a site visit is to enable Members to judge for themselves the likely impacts of the proposed development and appreciate the issues involved. All members of a Planning committee are encouraged to attend the site visits.
- 13.7 Site visits should only be attended by Members and officers. No representations will be permitted during the site visit from parishes, members of the public, applicants or agents.
- 13.8 Ward Members are welcome to attend all site visits and invited to attend the Planning committee meeting in respect of applications within or affecting their wards.
- 13.9 Where a Member proposes deferral of a planning application at a Planning committee meeting in order that a site inspection may be carried out, the planning reason for conducting such an inspection should be clearly stated.
- 13.10 Any of the Members responsible for calling an application into a Planning committee may wish to attend the site visit to explain why they called the application in to Planning committee.

14. Call-Ins

- 14.1 Planning applications can be 'called-in' to a Planning committee for determination.
- 14.2 Applications can be called in by any Member of the Council.
- 14.3 Call-in requests must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Director: Growth, Climate & Regeneration within 21 days from the beginning of the consultation period, or within 7 days from the beginning of any subsequent re-consultation period.
- 14.4 Call-ins have to be based on valid and relevant planning grounds. Any issue relating to the propriety of the specified planning grounds will be determined by the Monitoring Officer.
- 14.5 By making a call-in request, a Member is indicating that they consider the issues require debate by the Planning Committee.
- 14.6 A Member who has called-in a planning application is expected to attend the Planning Committee meeting at which the application they referred is to be discussed, to address the Planning Committee and explain their views on the application and expand on their call-in reasons.
- 14.7 The Member who has called-in an application is required to register to speak on the item in accordance with the Planning Protocol on Speaking at Planning Committees.

14.8 If a Member who has called-in an application does not register to speak on the item or having registered to speak is not present at the start of the Planning Committee meeting at which the application is to be considered, then the item will be withdrawn from the agenda and determined by an officer in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegations.

15. Where a Member Represents Two Councils

15.1 A Member is able to take part in the debate on a proposal by a consultee body (for example as a member of a parish council) provided:

- (a) The proposal does not substantially affect the wellbeing or financial standing of the consultee body;
- (b) The Member makes it clear to the consultee body that:
 - (i) Their views are expressed on the limited information before them only;
 - (ii) They must reserve judgement and the independence to make up their own mind based on their overriding duty to the whole community and not just to the people in that area, ward or parish.

15.2 Members will disclose the interest regarding their membership or role when the relevant Planning Committee comes to consider the proposal.

15.3 Members may take the opportunity to exercise their separate speaking rights as a local Member.

15.4 When exercising this right, they should:

- (a) Advise the committee that they wish to speak in this capacity in accordance with the Public Speaking Arrangements;
- (b) Remove themselves from the Member seating area for the duration of that item; and
- (c) Ensure that their actions are recorded.

16. Conduct of Ward Members (non-members of the Planning Committee)

16.1 Ward Members have an important role to play as representatives of their communities and to bring local information to the decision-making process. Ward Members may therefore become involved in discussions with officers about individual applications. However, they should remember that it is very easy to create the impression that they are using their position to influence the progress of the application. Any discussions with officers should be seen to be open and above board. Officers should make a note on the file of any such discussions.

- 16.2 Ward Members who are not members of a Planning committee can make representations on planning applications in their Ward and may attend meetings of a Planning committee and, with the Chair's agreement, may address the committee on such applications in accordance with the rules on public speaking.
- 16.3 Any representations or address should relate to the planning merits of a planning application. This will not apply if the Member is also a Parish/Town Councillor and the Parish/Town Council is the applicant. In that circumstance, if the Member wishes to address the committee directly, they should register to speak in their capacity as the applicant.
- 16.4 When making representations on behalf of their constituents, Members should make it clear that it is their constituents' views and not their own that are being expressed. Furthermore, any representations on behalf of constituents must be expressed in such a way that no individual or group feels that they have been unfairly represented.
- 16.5 If a Ward Member speaks on behalf of a lobby group at the decision-making committee, they should withdraw from the meeting once any public or Ward Member speaking opportunities have been completed.
- 16.6 A Member who has declared a prejudicial interest in a planning application, and is therefore unable to represent the interests of their Ward in respect of that application, should advise constituents to address their representations to another Member who is not so affected.
- 16.7 Being a Member of another Council that has expressed a view on an application does not prevent a Planning Committee Member reaching the same or a different view when the application is considered on its merits by the Planning committee. However, the Member should approach the decision making process afresh and not express a final view in advance of the committee meeting or act as an advocate for another Council. To do so would give an appearance of bias.

17. Development Proposals submitted by Councillors and Officers

- 17.1 A Member who acts as an agent to people pursuing a planning matter or who has submitted, or intends to submit, or is closely connected with someone (e.g. a spouse, close relative or close social acquaintance) who has submitted, or intends to submit, a planning application should play no part in the decision making process for that proposal. This includes refraining from any form of lobbying of other Members. Nor should such a Member:
- (a) Use their position to gain access to officers to pursue their interest; or
 - (b) Bring improper pressure to bear on officers.

- 17.2 They should preferably appoint an agent to act on their behalf in negotiations or discussions, particularly in respect of major or controversial developments.
- 17.3 Members should notify the Assistant Director of Economic Growth and Regeneration and/or the Monitoring Officer of any application with which they are connected directly or indirectly before it is submitted to the Council.
- 17.4 Where a Member or officer or their agent submits an application in a personal capacity (either as an individual or through a company, firm or body with which they are connected) it shall always be considered by the Planning Committee. The Monitoring Officer shall be notified of the application and confirm in the report to Committee that the application has been dealt with in accordance with this Protocol.
- 17.5 A member of a Planning Committee contemplating making a planning application for development which is clearly contrary to approved planning policies should consider whether they should resign from the committee before submitting it.
- 17.6 A Member who has received (or is closely connected with someone who has received) a planning permission should ensure that the terms of that planning permission are scrupulously observed, both in respect of compliance with the submitted documents and in respect of compliance with the conditions imposed.

18. Planning Applications by the Council

- 18.1 The Council itself requires planning permission to carry out or authorise certain types of development on land it owns. Where these are major applications, they will be determined by the relevant Planning Committee. Proposals for the Council's own development will be treated with the same transparency and impartiality as those by private developers.

19. Regular Review of Decisions

- 19.1 Members should visit a sample of implemented planning permissions on a regular basis to assess the quality of the decisions made. Such a review should be undertaken at least annually.

8.6 Protocol on Speaking at Planning Committees

This Protocol details the rules on public speaking at the Strategic Planning Committee and each of the Council’s three Local Area Planning Committees.

As an overarching, guiding principle, decisions should always be taken in a fair and transparent manner to ensure there are no grounds for suggesting that a planning decision has in any way been biased, partial, or not well founded.

The separate Planning Protocol (see above) applies to Members at all times when they are involving themselves in the planning process. The Monitoring Officer can also provide guidance to Members in relation to conduct on planning matters, as necessary.

1. Speaking at Planning Committee Meetings

1.1 The following can speak at Planning Committee Meetings

- (a) The applicant or their agent.
- (b) Up to two persons who wish to object up to two persons who wish to support an individual planning application, an enforcement recommendation or any other quasi-judicial matter on the Agenda. If there are more than two objectors/supporters, each group may organise a spokesperson to speak on their behalf.
- (c) Ward Councillors who are not members of the Planning Committee. (If Ward Councillors sit on the Planning Committee, they may nominate a substitute councillor to speak).
- (d) Members of Parliament with the whole or part of their constituency within West Northamptonshire Council’s boundaries.
- (e) A representative of a parish council in whose area the application relates.

1.2 Additional speakers may be allowed at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee.

1.3 Arrangements for Speaking

It is necessary to register with Democratic Services as soon as possible and in any event not later than midday on the last working day before the Committee. This applies to all speakers, including Ward Councillors. Speakers are required to indicate whether they will be speaking against or in support of an application.

Speakers may register by telephone, email or in writing using the following contact details:

Contact details for registration

Planning Committee	E-mail address	Tel. no.	Postal Address
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Daventry Local Area Planning Committee	MemberSupport.ddc@westnorthants.gov.uk	01327 302324 / 302236	Democratic Services, Lodge Road, Daventry NN11 4FP
Northampton Local Area Planning Committee	democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk	01604 837722	Democratic Services, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton NN1 1ED, for the attention of The Democratic Services Officer, Planning Committee.
South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee	democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk	01327 322043	Democratic Services, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD
Strategic Planning Committee	democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk	01327 322195	Democratic Services, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD

Late representations will not be heard. If there are several objectors/supporters, each group should organise a spokesperson to speak on their behalf. In the absence of agreement, the Council will operate a “first come first served” policy. In the event that more than two people have already registered, a person wishing to make their views known to the Committee may contact their Ward Councillor to request that they put across their points.

Where a member of the public has registered to speak but fails to attend the meeting, the Chair shall have discretion to reallocate that speaking place to another member of the public present who would otherwise have wished to speak. For the avoidance of doubt, such reallocation will be on a like-for-like basis, i.e. if the original registration was ‘for’, the reallocated place will also be ‘for’.

If objectors intend to speak, the applicant will be contacted to ensure that they have the opportunity to reply.

2. Procedure at the Meeting

The discussion on applications will be in the following order:

- (a) The Chair of the Committee will announce the application
- (b) the [*Head of Planning tbc*] or their representative may present the item and will add any further information relevant to the application and report
- (c) Members of the public can then speak in the following order:
 - (i) Objector
 - (ii) Parish or Town Council(s)
 - (iii) MP
 - (iv) Ward Councillor(s)
 - (v) Supporter
 - (vi) Applicant/agent
- (d) A planning officer may summarise issues before the matter is debated by the Planning Committee Members and a vote taken.

The Chair has discretion to permit questions from the Planning Committee Members to the various speakers, after the end of their allotted 3 minutes.

A planning officer may summarise issues before the matter is debated by the Planning Committee Members and a vote taken.

In the event of any dispute over these procedures or the protocol, the Chair's decision is final.

2.1 Time

All speakers either in support or against the application or speaking on behalf of the applicant will be allowed a maximum of three minutes to address the Committee. Participants addressing the Committee will be advised when they have 60 seconds of their allotted three minutes remaining and will be expected to cease talking immediately on being advised that their three minutes is up.

2.2 Notes

- (a) Any speakers who are not members of the Committee are only allowed to make statements. They may not ask questions of officers, the Committee or each other and must take no further part in the procedure once they have finished their address to the Committee.
- (b) Consideration of an application will not be delayed simply because someone who has registered to speak is unable to attend the meeting.
- (c) Addresses should only be about planning issues and should not refer to non-planning issues, such as private property rights, moral issues, loss of views or effects on property values.
- (d) Fresh material may not be circulated to the councillors, which has not first been seen by Planning officers.
- (e) Speakers may speak about material planning considerations and relevant facts pertinent to any planning application submitted to the Council that they have made a written representation on, and which is on the agenda for determination at the Committee. Some examples of material planning

considerations include:

- (i) the environmental impact of the development
- (ii) the impact of the development on the highway network
- (iii) any policy in the Council's Local Development Framework, or the relevant Local Plan for your area.
- (iv) central and regional Government planning policy guidance, circulars, orders and statutory instruments

(f) Issues that may be taken into account by the Committee include:

- (i) planning laws and previous decisions
- (ii) noise, disturbance, smells
- (iii) residential amenity
- (iv) design, appearance and layout
- (v) impact on trees, listed buildings and conservation areas
- (vi) public open space

(g) Issues that will not be taken into account by the Committee include:

- (i) boundary disputes
- (ii) private rights of way, private covenants or agreements
- (iii) the applicant's conduct, private affairs or how a business is run
- (iv) the applicant's motives (including profit)
- (v) the impact on property values
- (vi) suspected further development
- (vii) loss of views over other people's land
- (viii) land ownership

(h) The circulation of plans, photographs, or other material at the Committee meeting will not be permitted. Any such documentation should be submitted to the Assistant Director Economic Growth and Regeneration marked for the attention of the relevant Planning Officer as part of the existing consultation arrangements.

8.7 Scheme of Members' Allowances

1. Allowances for the period 11 May 2021 to 31 March 2022

Post Holder	Amount
Basic Allowance (All Members)	£13,750
Leader	£34,375
Deputy Leader	£24,063
Cabinet Members	£20,625
Lead Member for Children's Services	£22,825
Chair of the Council	£10,313
Vice Chair of the Council	£6,875
Chair of Strategic Planning Committee	£13,750
Chair of Area Planning committees	£13,750
Chair of Planning Policy Committee *	£nil
Chair of Licensing Committee	£13,750
Chair of Audit Committee	£13,750
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£13,750
Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£2,750
Chair of Pension Fund Committee *	£nil
Chair of Senior Appointments Committee *	£nil
Chair of Democracy and Standards Committee	£13,750
Party Group Leaders:	
Leader of the Largest Opposition Group	£11,000
Leader of the second largest Opposition Group	£5,500
Leader of the third largest Opposition Group	£2,750
Leader of the fourth largest Opposition Group	£1,375
Co-Optees and Independent Persons:	

Co-opted members of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£500
Co-opted members of the Northamptonshire Police and Crime Panel	£500
Independent Persons to the Democracy and Standards Committee	£500

*Cabinet members will be appointed to these roles.

2. **Limitations on Payment of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA):**

Members may not receive more than one SRA, and where a Member occupies multiple roles with an SRA they shall be entitled to receive the higher SRA from the roles they hold.

3. **Indexation**

Allowances shall be adjusted annually by an amount equivalent to the officers' annual pay award. Adjustment to the Scheme of Allowances by indexation is limited to a maximum period of four years, however Members may request the Independent Remuneration Panel to review allowances at an earlier time.

4. **Other Allowances**

Members may make claims for the following expenditure when undertaking official Council business. The approved duties are the categories contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 shown in Part 5.

4.1 **Travelling**

4.1.1 Sustainable modes of transport are encouraged where possible. The use of a Member's car, motorcycle or bicycle for approved duties (see Part 5 for list of approved duties) will be paid at the same rate as the officers, i.e. the rate published from time to time by HM Revenue and Customs: www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/travel.htm.

4.1.2 The agreed rates as at February 2021 are as follows, including electric and hybrid models:

Cars and vans* 45p per mile

Motor cycles* 24p per mile

Bicycles (includes e-bikes) 20p per mile

4.1.3 **Public Transport**

(a) Train fares for approved duties to be paid at standard fare. Officers of the Council to book train fares for the Member.

(b) Bus fares for approved duties to be paid on production of a receipt/ticket.

(c) Approved taxi fares to be paid on production of a receipt. Officers of the Council to book a taxi for the Member where possible.

(d) Parking fees to be paid upon production of a receipt/ticket.

4.2 Subsistence

Allowance	Activity	Amount
Subsistence Allowance	Breakfast (more than 4 hours away before 11am).	£6.00
	Lunch (business journeys entailing working away from normal place of work between 12 and 2pm).	£8.00
	Dinner (can be claimed when required to work outside of usual rostered requirements and away from usual place of work after 8.30pm).	£12.00
Overnight expenses	Accommodation (if a member is required to stay overnight); overnight accommodation bookings to be made by officers of the Council.	

4.3 Dependent Carers' Allowance

4.3.1 The maximum rates at which dependent care may be claimed is:

(a) Where professional care is provided, an hourly rate of £20 per hour will be paid.

(b) Where care is provided by friends or relatives an hourly rate of £10 per hour will be paid.

There is no upper limit for a claim.

5. Forgoing Allowances and Part-Year Entitlements

5.1 A councillor, co-opted member or independent person may elect to give up any part of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme by notifying Democratic Services in writing.

5.2 Where a Member ceases to be a member of West Northamptonshire Council, or ceases to occupy a role attracting an SRA, that the Member only receives pro-rata payment for the period that they are entitled to receive an allowance. The authority may require that such part of any allowance as relates to any such period be repaid to the authority where an overpayment is made.

6. Approved Duties

6.1 Members may make claims for travel, subsistence and dependant carers' allowance when undertaking official Council business in line with the approved duties categories contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out below:

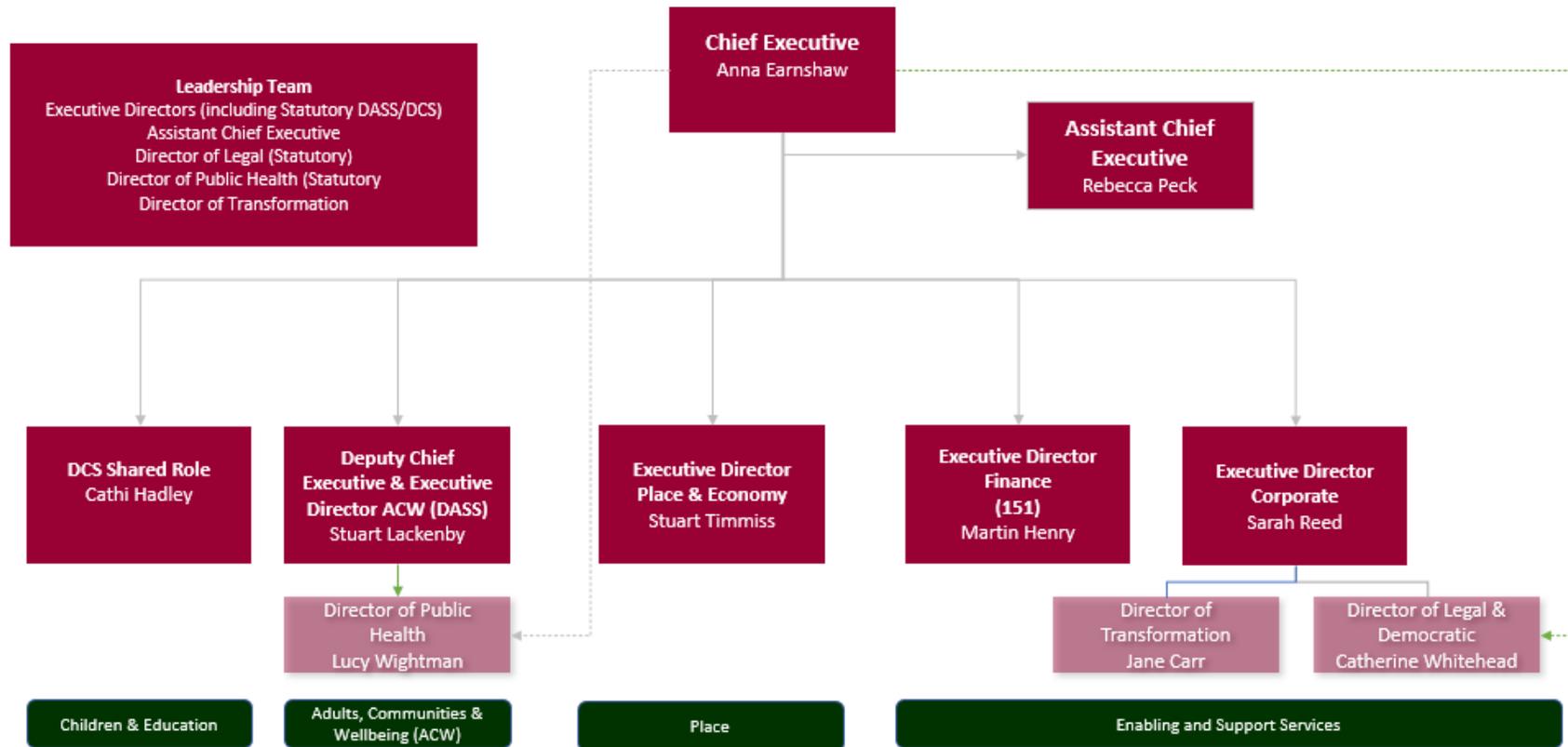
- (a) the attendance at a meeting of the authority or of any committee or subcommittee of the authority, or of any other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations, or of any committee or subcommittee of such a body;
- (b) the attendance at any other meeting, the holding of which is authorised by the authority, or a committee or sub-committee of the authority, or a joint committee of the authority and one or more local authority within the meaning of section 270(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, or a subcommittee of such a joint committee provided that:
 - (i) where the authority is divided into two or more political groups it is a meeting to which members of at least two such groups have been invited, or
 - (ii) if the authority is not so divided, it is a meeting to which at least two members of the authority have been invited;
- (c) the attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member; (d) the attendance at a meeting of the executive or a meeting of any of its committees, where the authority is operating executive arrangements;
- (d) the performance of any duty in pursuance of any standing order made under section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened;
- (e) the performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises;
- (f) the performance of any duty in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at any school approved for the purposes of section 342 (approval of non-maintained special schools) of the Education Act 1996, and
- (g) the carrying out of any other duty approved by the authority, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of any of its committees or sub-committees. The law prevents payment for:
 - (i) Members' surgeries
 - (ii) Political activities
 - (iii) School Governor meetings (Section 58 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986)

9.0 OFFICERS

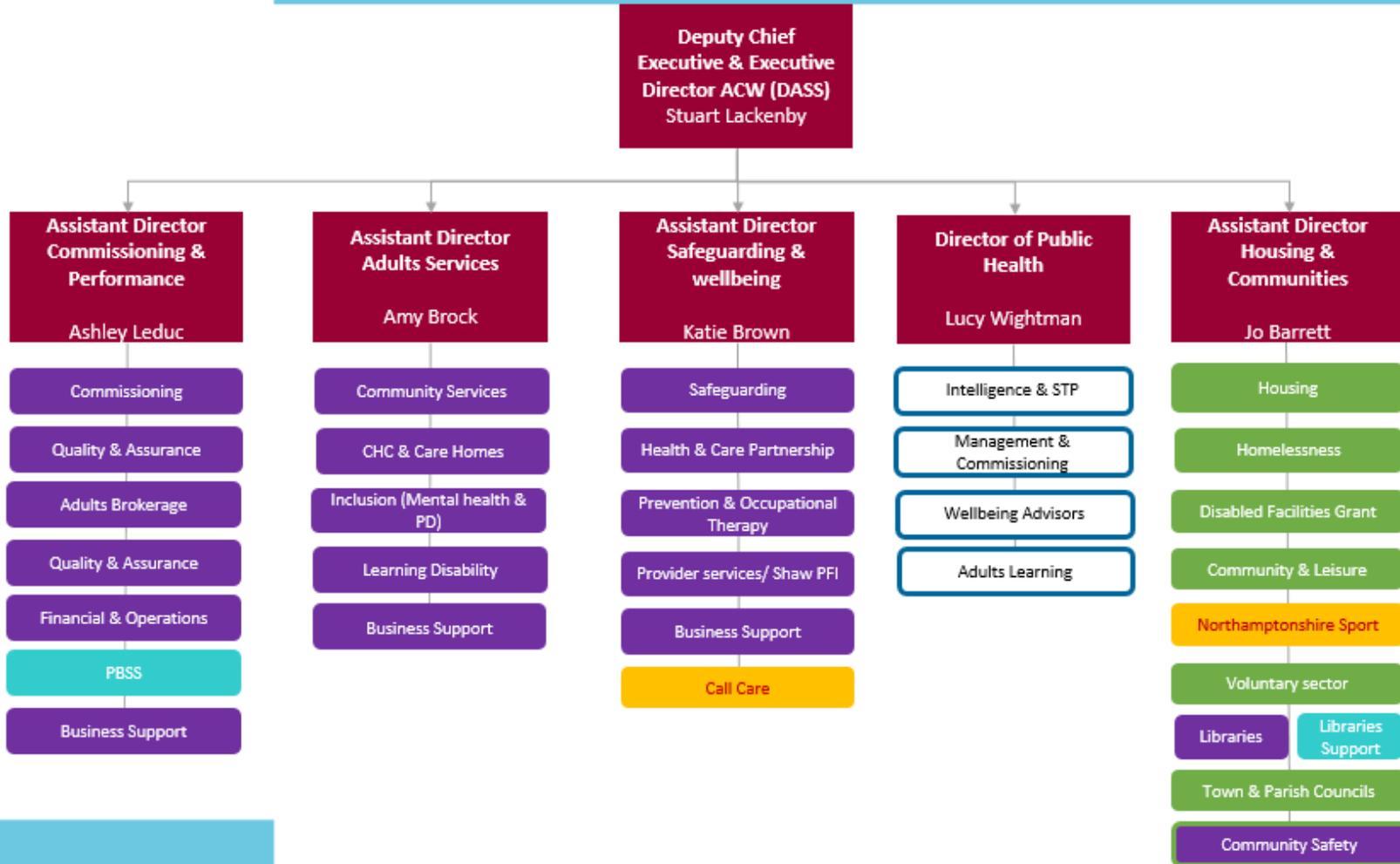
9.1 Management Structure



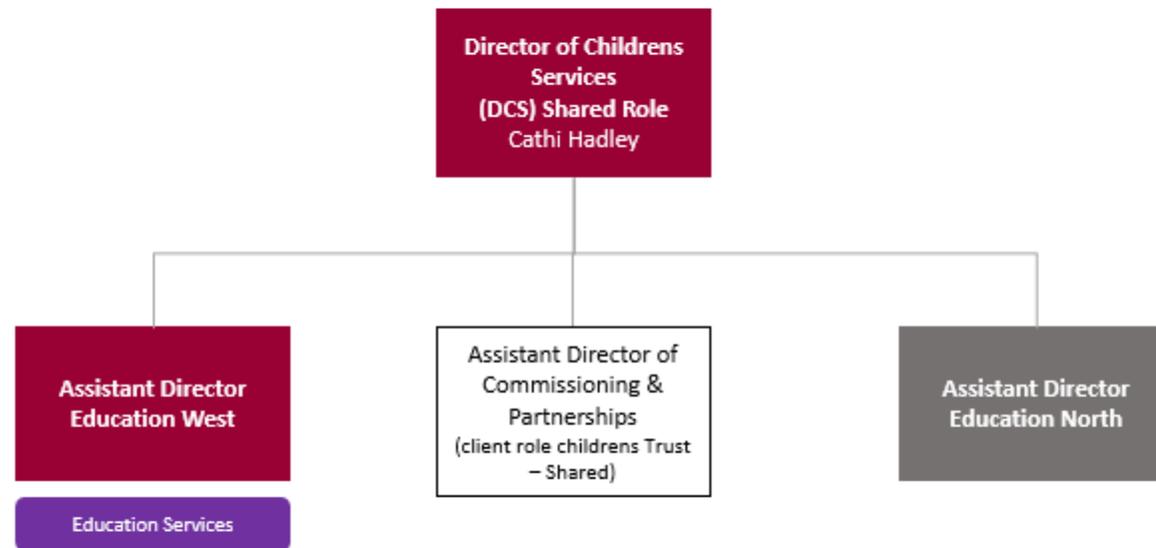
Executive Leadership team



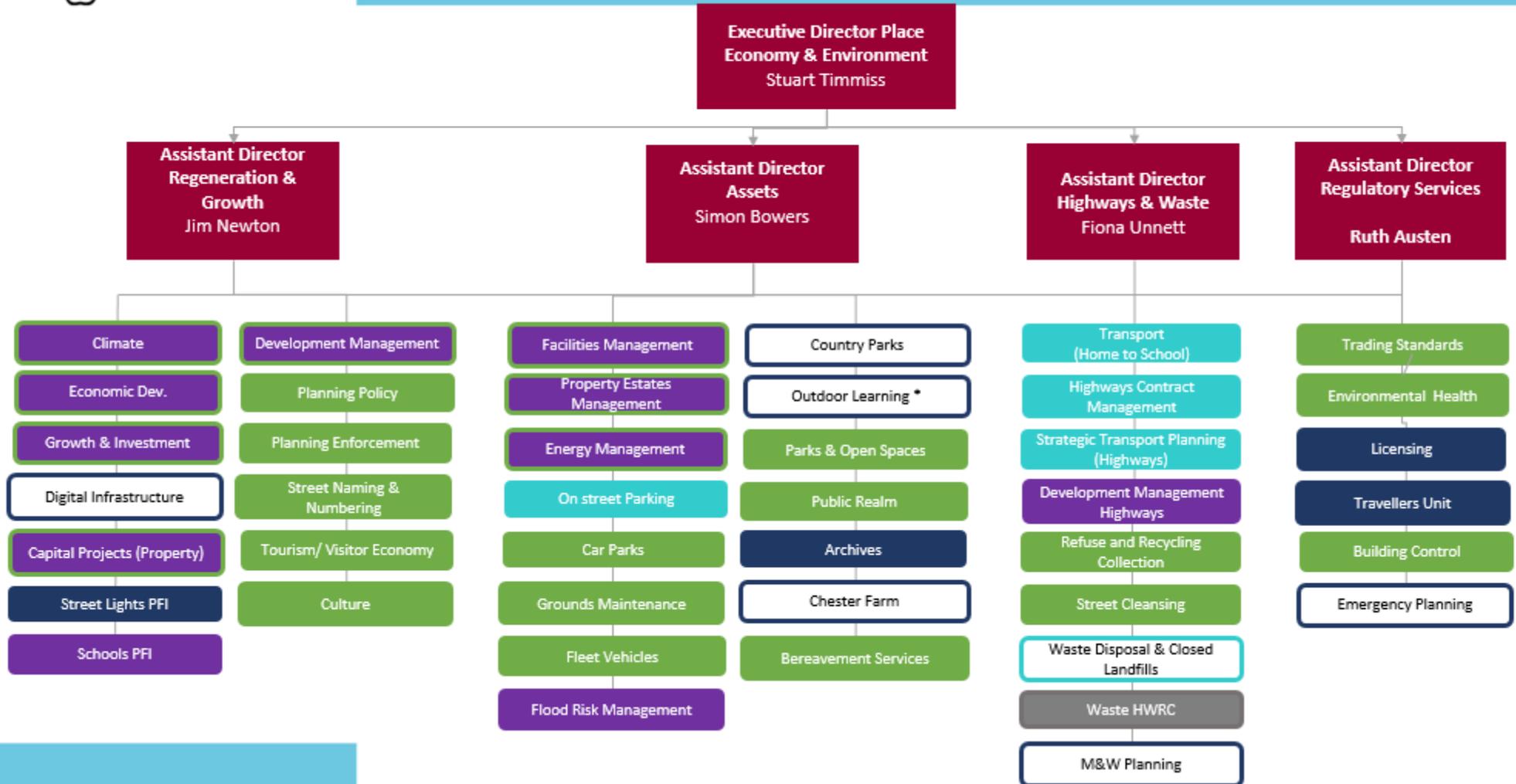
Adults, Communities & Wellbeing Directorate



Childrens Services Directorate



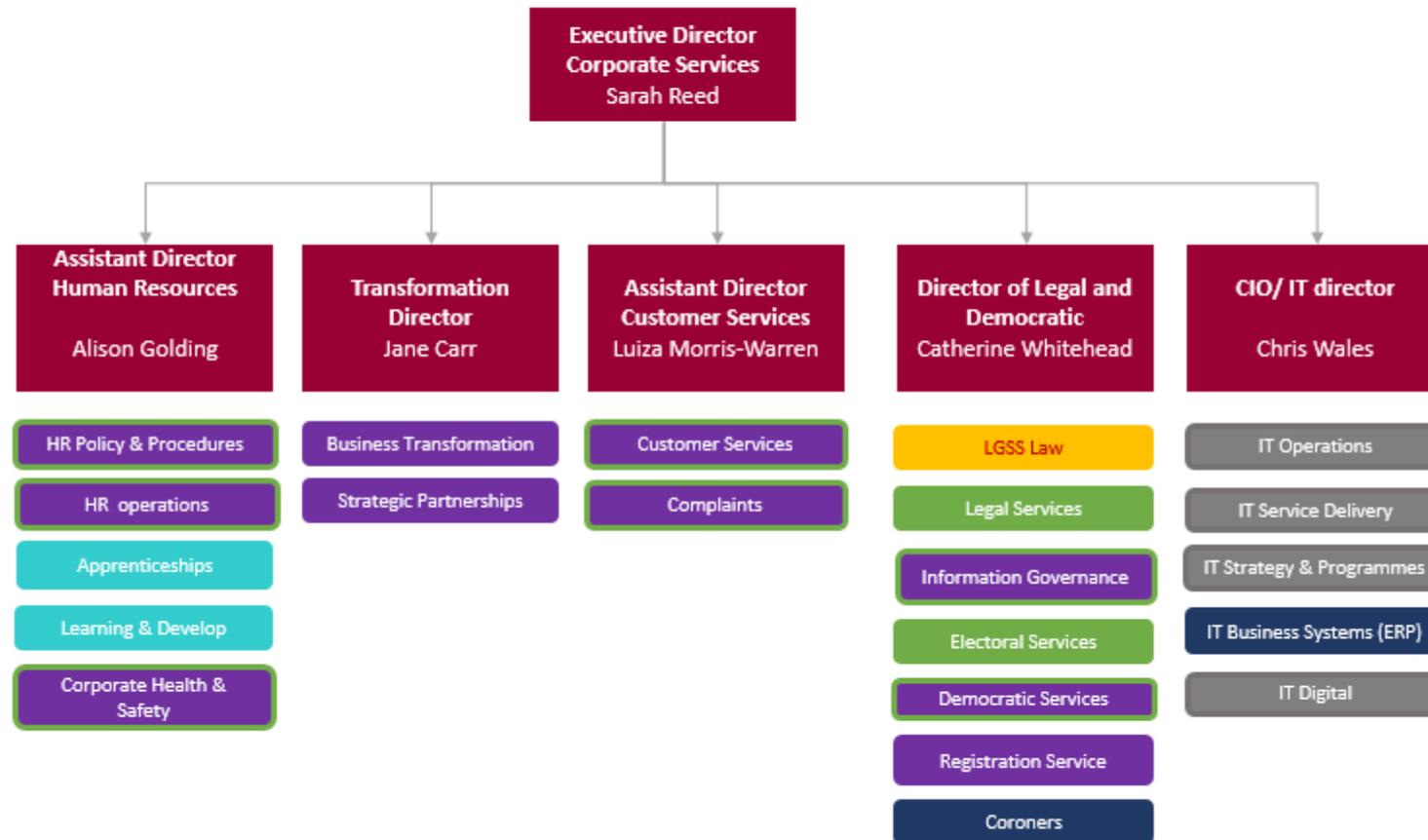
Place, Economy & Environment Directorate



Finances & Resources Directorate



Corporate Services Directorate



9.2 Scheme of Delegation to Officers

INTRODUCTIONS AND PERMISSIONS

Introduction

1. The West Northamptonshire Council has adopted vision and values supporting a Corporate Plan. To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, managerial and operational decisions are taken, within a framework of democratic accountability, at the most appropriate level, which is usually the closest point of contact to the citizen. This scheme is to be interpreted widely to give effect to this overall purpose by empowering staff to carry out their functions and deliver the Council's services within the Budget and Policy Framework set by the Council, and subject to the guidelines set by the Council, the Cabinet and the Council's management team.

Overall Limitations

2. Any exercise of delegated powers is subject to the following overriding limitations.

Member Consultation

3. Officers set out in the scheme are expected to:
 - (a) maintain a close liaison with the appropriate portfolio holder or in their absence the Leader;
 - (b) consult relevant portfolio holders when exercising temporary or project specific delegations;
 - (c) ensure the Ward Councillor(s) is/are consulted or advised of the exercise of any delegated powers that particularly affect their area ; and
 - (d) ensure that the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Executive Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of the Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer) are consulted and advised of any decisions as necessary.
4. Portfolio holders for the relevant area should be consulted on the exercise of a delegated power in all cases where:
 - (a) there is likely to be opposition from members of the public;
 - (b) where there are political sensitivities;
 - (c) there is likely to be media (including social media) interest; or
 - (d) expenditure is unusual for the Budget area.

5. Before exercising any delegated power, officers must consider whether to consult with the relevant portfolio holder on the exercise of delegated powers or not to exercise delegated powers but to refer the matter to the relevant member or member body to decide.
6. The Leader or any Cabinet Member may at any time, following consultation with the Chief Executive and relevant officer, require a particular issue or any aspect of delegated powers to be referred to the appropriate member body for a decision.
7. This does not limit the general requirements set out elsewhere in the constitution to consult with relevant ward members, scrutiny chairs and interested groups in reaching decisions.

Reservations

8. The scheme does not delegate to officers:
 - (a) any matter reserved to full Council;
 - (b) any matter which by law may not be delegated to an officer;
 - (c) any Key Decision; or
 - (d) any matter expressly withdrawn from delegation by the Council, committees, Leader or Cabinet.

Restrictions

9. Any exercise of delegated powers is subject to
 - (a) any statutory restrictions;
 - (b) the Budget and Policy Framework;
 - (c) any provision contained in this Constitution including the Procedure Rules;
 - (d) any financial limits set out in the revenue or capital budgets except as set out in the Financial Procedure Rules;
 - (e) any policy set by the Council or its committees, the Cabinet or the Chief Executive; and
 - (f) the Code of Conduct for Employees.

Permissions

10. This scheme delegates to the Assistant Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors all the powers and duties relevant to those areas of responsibility detailed within

the areas of responsibility below that rest with the Council or which have been delegated or granted to the Council, subject to the limitations, restrictions, reservations and requirements for consultation set out above. This includes all powers and duties under all legislation present and future within those descriptions and all powers and duties incidental to that legislation including but not limited to:

a. Powers in relation to staff

Take any action in accordance with the Council's agreed policies and procedures with respect to the recruitment, appointment, promotion, training, grading, discipline, determination of wages and salary scales, determination of allowances, determination and application of conditions of service, including but not limited to allocation of leave, honorariums, ill health retirement and determination of establishment except as detailed in the Staff and Employment Exceptions chart.

b. Powers in relation to contracts and property

Powers in relation to contracts and property agreements to negotiate, put out to tender, bid, submit tenders, vary, terminate, dispute, extend and renew and in relation to contracts to buy and sell and in relation to property to acquire, dispose of, let and licence except as detailed in the Contracts and Property Exceptions Charts.

c. Powers in relation to planning

Powers to determine applications, grant permission, refuse permission, to publicise applications, to comment or make representations on applications, notifications and consultations, to raise objections, to require documentation and information, to take appropriate action on enforcement, to negotiate, complete, vary, discharge or amend planning obligations and agreements, process and determine all decisions relating to neighbourhood planning under the Localism Act 2011, other than as detailed in the Legal Exceptions Chart.

d. Powers in relation to finance

Powers to incur capital and revenue expenditure, to seek recovery of amounts owed, to exercise discretion in recovery, alter or waive repayment periods, or approve exemptions in relation to repayments, agree refunds, reduce or remit payments and waive fines, except as detailed in the Finance Exceptions Chart.

e. Powers in relation to legal action

Powers to authorise, appoint or nominate officers and to investigate, prosecute, enforce, lay informations, require individuals to disclose information, serve requisitions for information, publish information, apply to a court, sign notices,

issue, serve, vary, revoke and publish notices, including fixed penalty notices and serve documents, make prohibition orders, suspend or vary a prohibition order, take emergency remedial action, carry out works in default, issue certificates, issue consents, issue and grant licenses and license applications, issue permits, refuse, vary or revoke licensing applications, issue temporary exemption notices, obtain, introduce, operate, amend, extend, vary and revoke orders, impose conditions, introduce and maintain registers, exercise powers of entry without force, apply for a warrant, make, vary or revoke and in relation to land relevant to service functions to note applications for licences, planning, consents and approvals, a declaration and grant, vary, revoke and attach conditions to consents, except as detailed in the Legal Exceptions Chart.

The Chief Executive

11. The Chief Executive may carry out the powers and duties of the Assistant Chief Executive and Executive Directors and Director of Legal and Democratic in their absence or in consultation with them and will also have the following additional powers:

- (a) to carry out the powers and duties of any of the officers in their absence or in consultation with them;
- (b) to incur expenditure in the event of a civil emergency;
- (c) in cases of emergency to take any decision which could be taken by the Council, the Cabinet or a committee, in consultation with the Leader; emergency to include cases which fall short of a declared emergency but are nevertheless situations in which there will be a risk of significant detriment to the wellbeing of residents if action is not taken.
- (d) to alter the areas of responsibility of the Assistant Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors set out in the Areas of Responsibility section of this scheme;
- (e) to make arrangements for the appointment of Chief Officer roles and to make appointments to Deputy Chief Officer roles.
- (f) to agree the Human Resources Policies following relevant consultation.
- (g) to make any changes necessary to the Employee Code of Conduct following relevant consultation.

The Monitoring Officer

12. The Monitoring Officer has delegated authority to:

- (a) grant dispensations to councillors in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 with the power to refer any request for a dispensation back to the Democracy and Standards Committee.
- (b) To make consequential amendments to the Constitution to give effect to a lawful decision; as a direct consequence of a change made outside the council e.g. a change in legislation and to correct an error or resolve an inconsistency. All such changes to be reported to Council.
- (c) To Interpret the Constitution where the meaning is uncertain or there is a dispute about its meaning.

The Section 151 Officer

13. In addition to any powers delegated under section 2.10 above the Section 151 Officer has delegated authority to carry out those responsibilities set out as delegated to them in the Financial Procedure Regulations within this Constitution.

14. The Section 151 Officer has delegated authority to:

- (a) Manage the Council's responsibilities in its capacity as Lead Authority (in conjunction with North Northamptonshire Council) in providing the following services to other councils in accordance with a Shared Services Agreement dated 16 April 2016 made between Cambridgeshire County Council, Northamptonshire County Council, and Milton Keynes Council ('the "Agreement")':
 - (i) Business Systems
 - (ii) Performance and Governance
 - (iii) HR transactions and payroll
 - (iv) Pensions
- (b) Negotiate the Shared Services Plan required by the Agreement and make recommendations to the Councils party to that Agreement as to the provision of financial and other resources.
- (c) Authorise and manage delegations to other Councils made in accordance with the Agreement, including:
 - (i) Internal Audit and Risk Management
 - (ii) Insurance Services
 - (iii) Accounts Payable and Finance Helpdesk

(iv) Debt and Income

Assistant Chief Executive and Executive Directors and Director

15. The Assistant Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors may carry out the powers and duties of any direct reports within their area of responsibility in their absence or in consultation with them.

Officer Delegation

16. West Northamptonshire Council operates an 'executive' form of governance, under which most decisions are taken by a Leader and a small Executive or Cabinet of elected members. These members take decisions on executive functions. Other decisions - non-executive decisions - are taken by full Council, committees and sub-committees. In both cases, decisions can be delegated to officers. The non-executive functions are listed in legislation, principally The Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) and includes decisions by full Council and committees on planning, licensing, staffing, audit, member conduct and other miscellaneous matters. Anything not in the list is an executive function.

17. Any delegation to an officer includes authority for any further delegation within the relevant Area of Responsibility. Officers shall devolve responsibilities for service delivery and management to those staff who represent the nearest practicable point of delivery to the service user.

Recording and Publishing Officer Decisions

18. This protocol establishes a system to document certain decisions taken by officers under delegated authority.

Types of officer decisions

19. An 'Executive decision' is one made in connection with the discharge of a function which is the responsibility of the Leader and Cabinet and which has been delegated to officers.

20. A 'Non-Executive decision' is one made in connection with the discharge of a function that is the responsibility of Full Council and its committees and which has been delegated to officers.

21. The significance of decisions taken under delegated powers will vary, and officers authorised to make delegated decisions need to exercise judgment in determining whether decisions are significant enough to require formal recording and publishing.

22. Although administrative and operational decisions are not required to be formally reported, they must be recorded within the service area so as to provide an audit trail.

23. Key Decisions, Material Decisions, Significant Decisions and Urgent Decisions are defined below:

24. **Key Decisions** are Executive decisions that are likely to:

- (a) result in expenditure or savings of £500k or more; or
- (b) have a significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

25. **Material Decisions** are Executive decisions (other than purely operational or administrative in nature) taken by officers under delegated powers by a specific resolution of the Cabinet/Cabinet Member or under the Scheme of Delegation:

- (a) That are contentious, controversial or politically sensitive; or
- (b) Where there is likely to be a strong public interest; or
- (c) Where there is significant variance in expenditure outside the agreed scope or budget for a project or issue; or
- (d) Raise new issues of policy

26. **Significant Decisions** are Non-Executive decisions (other than purely operational or administrative in nature) taken by officers under powers delegated by a specific resolution of Full Council, a committee or under the Scheme of Delegation and having wide public impact/interest; where the effect of the decision:

- (a) is to grant a permission or licence
- (b) affects the legal rights of an individual
- (c) is to award a contract or incur expenditure which 'materially' affects the authority's financial position

27. **Urgent Decisions** are decisions made in circumstances where:

- (a) a decision is required by statute or otherwise within a specified timescale; or
- (b) any delay likely to be caused by not making the decision would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests; or
- (c) any delay likely to be caused by not making the decision would be likely to expose the Council, its members or the public to a significant level of risk, loss, damage or disadvantage

28. The following types of officer decision must be formally recorded and published subject to the exceptions set out:

Type of Officer Decision	Exception	Publication
<p>Key Decisions</p> <p>Executive decisions that are likely to result in spending or savings that are 'significant':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in relation to the budget for the service or function in question or • in terms of the effect on communities living or working in two or more electoral divisions 	<p>Officers are only to take Key Decisions under the urgency provisions.</p>	<p>As soon as reasonably practicable after an officer has made a Key, Material or Significant decision, they must produce a written statement, available for inspection at County Hall and published on the Council's website, that includes details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the decision and the date it was made; • the reasons for it;
<p>Material Decisions</p> <p>Executive decisions under powers delegated by a specific resolution of the Cabinet/Cabinet Member or under the Scheme of Delegation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That are contentious, controversial or politically sensitive; or • Where there is likely to be a strong public interest; or • Where there is significant variance in expenditure outside the agreed scope or budget for a project or issue; or • That raise new issues of policy. 	<p>Does not apply:</p> <p>(i) To routine operational, organisational or administrative decisions;</p> <p>(ii) Where the expenditure or saving has already been approved by Cabinet or Cabinet Member and the decision has been published;</p> <p>(iii) Confidential or Exempt Information; or</p> <p>(iv) Where the expenditure or saving is already recorded and published under separate statutory requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any alternative options considered and rejected; • any conflicts of interests declared by any Cabinet Member consulted by the officer and any dispensations granted by the Chief Executive in respect of any declared conflict; • the report considered by the decision-maker; • any background documents disclosing facts or matters on which the decision was based and which were relied on to a material extent in making the decision.
<p>Significant Decisions</p>	<p>Does not apply:</p>	<p>The decision record must be kept for inspection for 6 years and the background papers for 4 years.</p>

<p>Non-Executive decisions under powers delegated by a specific resolution of Full Council, a committee or under the Scheme of Delegation and having wide public impact/ interest; where the effect of the decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is to grant a permission or licence • affects the legal rights of an individual • is to award a contract or incur expenditure which 'materially' affects the authority's financial position 	<p>(i) To routine operational, organisational or administrative decisions;</p> <p>(ii) Confidential or Exempt information;</p> <p>(iii) Where the date, details of and reasons for the decision are already required to be produced under a statutory requirement;</p> <p>(iv) If only the rights of an individual or business are affected, unless there is a wider public impact/ interest in the action.</p>	
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AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

See Management Structure charts above for a detailed list of functions. Further details of the contents of each heading is in the list held by the Chief Executive, which they have authority to change and responsibility for keeping up to date.

Chief Officer	Main Functions and Areas of Responsibility
Assistant Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and Engagement • Policy and Performance • Business Intelligence • Executive Support • Lord Lieutenant Support
Executive Director Adults, Communities and Wellbeing (DASS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning and Performance • Adults Services • Safeguarding and Wellbeing • Public Health
Director of Children's Services (DCS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Social Care • Education • Commissioning and Partnerships
Executive Director of Corporate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources • Programme Management Office • Customer and Emergency Planning • Digital, Technology and Innovation • Legal and Democratic

Executive Director Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Accountancy • Finance and Strategy • Audit and Risk • Revenues and Benefits • Procurement • Pensions
Executive Director Place Economy and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory Services • Highways and Waste • Assets and Environment • Growth, Climate & Regeneration • Housing and Communities
Director of Legal and Democratic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths • Coroners • Elections Administration • Legal and Democratic Services • Information Governance
Director of Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health • Intelligence and Local Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships • Management & Commissioning • Wellbeing Advisors • Adults Learning
Director of Communities and Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partnerships • Housing, Communities, Sport & Leisure • Adult Learning • Regeneration & Economic Development • Libraries • Culture

A. EXCEPTIONS – CONTRACTING

(In exercising delegated powers, officers are reminded to take account of the overall limitations of the scheme, as detailed in the introduction to the scheme)

All contracts and procurement must be in accordance with the Contract Rules in Part 9.6

***Contract value is over the whole contract and any extension provision not the annual spend**

Process	Over the Regulations Threshold	£100,000 to Regulations Threshold	£25,000 - £100,000	Over £5,000 - £25,000
1. Pre-Procurement Authorisation	Officer and Procurement Team. PGG Group. Executive Process if Key Decision	Officer and Procurement Team. Executive Process if Key Decision	Officer. Executive Process if Key Decision.	Officer. Executive Process if Key Decision.

2. Advertising	Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team	Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team	None	None
3. Procurement Process	Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team must be consulted	Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team must be consulted	Officer	Officer
4. Contract Execution	Written contract signed/sealed . Terms approved by Director of Legal and Democratic.	Written contract signed/sealed . Terms approved by Director of Legal and Democratic.	Written contract signed by one (1) Chief Officer or Officer with appropriate authority to enter into a Contract. Standard terms approved by Director of Legal and Democratic.	Officer Contract terms issued via purchase order.
5. Contract Register	Officer or Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team if leading procurement.	Officer or Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team if leading procurement.	Officer	Officer
6. Framework Agreements or DPSs	Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team. Executive Process if Key Decision	Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team. Executive Process if Key Decision	Officer. Executive Process if Key Decision	Officer. Executive Process if Key Decision

7. Waive Contract Procedure Rules	Chief Officer, Head of Procurement, s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. Executive Process if Key Decision	Chief Officer, Head of Procurement, s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. Executive Process if Key Decision	Chief Officer, Head of Procurement, s.151 Officer. Executive Process if Key Decision	Chief Officer Approval. Executive Process if Key Decision
8. Emergencies	Chief Officer on advice of Head of Procurement, s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. If Key Decision Executive Process.	Chief Officer on advice of Head of Procurement, s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. If Key Decision Executive Process.	Chief Officer on advice of Head of Procurement, s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. If Key Decision Executive Process.	Chief Officer on advice of Head of Procurement , s.151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. If Key Decision Executive Process.
9. Apply an exemption – use of negotiated procedure	Officer on advice of Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team and if Key Decision Cabinet	Officer on advice of Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team and if Key Decision Cabinet	Officer on advice of Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team	Officer on advice of Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team
10. Notification of Award	Officer on advice of Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team	Officer on advice of Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team	Officer	Officer
11. Contract Variations (material change)	Not permitted. A new Procurement is required.	Officer with the agreement of Director of Legal and Democratic	Officer with the agreement of Director of Legal and Democratic	Officer with the agreement of Director of Legal and Democratic
12. Non recovery of liquidated damages/settlement of formal claims	Director of Legal and Democratic and with the approval of s.151 Officer.	Director of Legal and Democratic and with the approval of s.151 Officer.	Officer with the approval of s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.	With the agreement of the Executive Director

13. Extension of Fixed Term Contracts with option to extend	With the agreement of Head of Procurement and Director of Legal and Democratic. If over the Key Decision threshold, Cabinet approval may be required.	With the agreement of Head of Procurement and Director of Legal and Democratic.	With the agreement of Head of Procurement and Director of Legal and Democratic.	With the agreement of Head of Procurement and Director of Legal and Democratic.
14. Termination of Contract	Termination prior to its expiry date without first obtaining advice from Head of Procurement and Director of Legal and Democratic.	Authorised Officer in consultation with Director of Legal and Democratic.	Authorised Officer in consultation with Director of Legal and Democratic.	Authorised Officer in consultation with Director of Legal and Democratic.
15. Execution of Contracts		£1,000,000 or over shall be in writing sealed by affixing the Common Seal of the Council and attested by the Director of Legal and Democratic.	Over £250,000 but less than £1,000,000 shall be in writing and signed by the appropriate Chief Officer and the s.151 Officer or their nominated representative	Up to £250,000 shall be in writing signed by the Chief Officer.

B. EXCEPTIONS – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(In exercising delegated powers, officers are reminded to take account of the overall limitations of the scheme, as detailed in the introduction to the scheme)

All contracts and procurement must be in accordance with the Contract Rules in Part 9.6

***Contract value is over the whole contract and any extension provision not the annual spend**

Process	Over £100,000	£5,000 - £100,000	Under £5,000
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<p>1. IT Hardware Any devices which store or process personal data and their associated peripherals. Including, but not limited to: printers, laptops, mobile phones, monitors, tablets, etc</p>	<p>Chief Information Officer and Head of Procurement through the Procurement Team.</p>	<p>Chief Information Officer acting on the advice of the relevant officer from the service in question, and via the CIO's delegated team and ordering processes</p>	<p>Requests authorised by the Chief Information Officer and via the CIO's delegated team and ordering processes</p>
<p>2. Enterprise Application and Systems Any digital system, whether hosted internally or software-as-a-service (SaaS) that stores and uses council data; whether purchased directly as a system or outsourced to a third-party to run.</p>	<p>Executive Process if Key Decision</p>		

C. EXCEPTIONS PROPERTY

(In exercising delegated powers, officers are reminded to take account of the overall limitations of the scheme, as detailed in the introduction to the scheme). NB The term Property/Land includes all interests in Land including (wayleaves, easements, buildings). Values relate to 'the interest disposed of value' not 'the unrestricted value' of the land).

Process	Officer Delegation	Cabinet Approval	Council Approval	Secretary of State Approval
Disposal and Acquisition of Land				
1. Asset Management Plan	No	Yes	No	No
2. Acquisition over £500,000	No	Yes and a key decision	Where it exceeds the Capital or Revenue Budget	No
3. Acquisition under £500,000	Assistant Director Assets and Environment in consultation with the s151 Officer and Portfolio Holder	Not unless required by the Portfolio Holder	No	No
4. Disposal where the estimated value of the combined	No	Yes and a key decision	No	No unless required by law

properties is over £500,000				
5. Disposal at an undervalue	No (unless already set out in agreed policy)	Yes and a key decision	No	No unless required by law
6. Disposal of or allowing the occupation of or sharing the use of any property under £500,000	Assistant Director Assets and Environment in consultation with s151 Officer over £100k	No	No	No
7. Leases	Grant of leases up to 10 years or with discretion to break not exceeding 10 years	Grant of leases over 10 years	No	No
8. Non-Land Based Asset Disposal	Yes in accordance with the Finance Procedure Rules	No	No	No

D. EXCEPTIONS FINANCE

(In exercising delegated powers, officers are reminded to take account of the overall limitations of the scheme, as detailed in the introduction to the scheme.)

Exception	Over £500k	Up to £500k	Up to £100k	Up to £25k	Up to £1k
1. Capital Expenditure outside the Capital Programme	Council	Cabinet	CFO	Cabinet	Cabinet
2. Unbudgeted Revenue Expenditure	Council	Cabinet	CFO	Budget Manager	Budget Manager
3. Virements	Cabinet	CFO in consultation with Cabinet Portfolio	CFO	CFO	CFO
4. Ex gratia payments	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	CFO
5. Write off debts	Cabinet	Cabinet	Cabinet	CFO	CFO
6. Negotiate and Approve Borrowing Limits	Council	Cabinet	Cabinet	Cabinet	Cabinet
7. Submit bids for funding to	Executive Director in	Executive Director in	Executive Director in	Executive Director in	Executive Director in

the relevant body	consultation with CFO	Consultation with CFO	Consultation with CFO	Consultation with CFO	Consultation with CFO
8. To agree conditions and approve agreements in relation to grant funding to be received by the Council	CFO	CFO	CFO	CFO	CFO
9. Write off any surplus or deficiencies in respect of items of stock	Cabinet	CFO	CFO	CFO	Budget Manager
10. Negotiate leasing arrangements	Executive Director Place and Economy in Consultation with CFO	Executive Director Place and Economy in Consultation with CFO	Executive Director Place and Economy in Consultation with CFO	Executive Director Place and Economy	Executive Director Place and Economy
11. Invest any temporary surplus of monies until such monies are required	CFO in accordance with Treasury Management Statement	CFO in accordance with Treasury Management Statement	CFO in accordance with Treasury Management Statement	CFO in accordance with Treasury Management Statement	CFO in accordance with Treasury Management Statement
12. Effect necessary insurances	CFO	CFO	CFO	CFO	CFO
13. Settle insurance claims	CFO and MO	CFO and MO	CFO and MO	CFO and MO	CFO
14. To vary the scale of fees and charges within year to reflect market conditions	Budget Manager and CFO	Budget Manager and CFO	Budget Manager and CFO	Budget Manager and CFO	Budget Manager
15. To set new fees and charges within year	Council (except where delegated)	Cabinet	Cabinet	CFO	CFO

E. EXCEPTIONS – STAFF AND EMPLOYMENT

NB This element of the scheme is dictated by 2 LGHA 1989 and the Standing Orders Regulations

	Officer Delegation	Statutory Cabinet Member Consultation	Member Decision	Council Decision
1. Appointment of Chief Executive	No (cannot be carried out by officers.	Yes, through the MO	Yes must be made by Full Council	On recommendation from Senior Appointments Committee
2. Appointment of Chief Officers (Executive Directors)	No (possible exception where there is change management and the appointment is internal)	Yes, through the MO	Senior Appointments Committee	Only if required by Council
3. Appointment of Deputy Chief Officers (Service Directors)	Yes	No	No	No
4. Appointment below Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)	Yes	Members cannot be involved in the appointments below DCO	Members cannot be involved in the appointments below DCO	Members cannot be involved in the appointments below DCO
5. Dismissal of Chief Executive (as Head of Paid Service)	Cannot be delegated to officers	Yes	An independent report must be prepared before a decision can be made	Special Meeting of Council must be convened
6. Dismissal of Statutory Chief Officers	Cannot be delegated solely to officers	No	In accordance with prescribed procedure	In accordance with prescribed procedure
7. Dismissal of non-Statutory Chief Officer	Not delegated solely to officers	No	In accordance with prescribed procedure	In accordance with prescribed procedure
8. Dismissal by way of redundancy or voluntary redundancy for Chief Officers	No	No	In accordance with prescribed procedure	In accordance with prescribed procedure

9. Dismissal of staff below Chief Officer	Chief Executive for DCOs, and Executive Directors below DCO	No	No	No
10. Determine Appeals against final written warnings below DCO	Relevant authorised managers.	No	No	No
11. Issue HR1 notices in respect of potential redundancies	Assistant Director HR	No	No	No
12. To carry out powers and duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act	Chief Executive	No	No	No
13. Issue 'certificates of opinion' as to whether or not the duties of a post fall within the criteria of political sensitivity	Assistant Director HR	No	No	No

F. EXCEPTIONS - LEGAL

In exercising delegated powers, officers are reminded to take account of the overall limitations of the scheme, as detailed in the introduction to the scheme.

Function	Officer
1. Determine all applications made under powers and duties of the local planning authority and planning legislation in relation to applications and enforcement	Executive Director Place and Economy except where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The decision would lead to a significant departure from the local plan b) Where called in by at least 1 member c) Major applications to develop the Council's own land

	<p>d) Applications by relevant officers employed by the Council</p> <p>Applications deemed by the Executive Director to require a member decision.</p>
2. Make applications to the Court of Protection for Receivership Orders in relation to clients lacking mental capacity to carry out their financial affairs	Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing
3. Apply to become an appointee in relation to clients lacking capacity to carry out their financial affairs	Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing
4. Carry out the health functions delegated to the Authority by an NHS body under arrangements between NHS bodies and local authorities pursuant to section 31 Health Act 1999	Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing
5. Determine liability, demand payment, make arrangements for collection and take action for recovery of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates	Executive Director of Finance
6. Defend and/or settle all claims made against the Council up to £100,000	Director Legal and Democratic
7. Determine details required by conditions imposed on any permission.	Executive Director of Place and Economy
8. Determine minor amendments to approved plans where these do not materially alter the form of the approved development	Executive Director of Place and Economy
9. All powers and functions of the Authority in respect hackney carriage and private hire licensing matters	Executive Director of Place and Economy, except where an applicant has relevant convictions/cautions or a current licence holder is similarly convicted/cautioned and/or where an applicant for, or the current holder of a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire drivers licence has nine or more points on their DVLA driving licence
10. All powers and functions in respect of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.	Executive Director of Place and Economy
11. To approve Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs), unless they are likely to be considered to be sensitive or significant.	Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing
12. To attest the seal of the Council (and to authorise any other Solicitor of the Council to attest the seal) and hold a book kept for the purpose that contains a consecutively numbered entry of	Director of Legal and Democratic

every sealing initialled by the person who has attested the seal.	
13. To sign any document on behalf of the Council for any purpose unless signing the document has otherwise been delegated to an Executive Director, the Chief Executive, the Assistant Chief Executive, Director or Proper Officer within this constitution or by law.	Director of Legal and Democratic
14. Under section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972 to appoint by order persons to fill vacancies in the office of parish [or community] councillor.	Director of Legal and Democratic
15. Issue proceedings, prosecute, defend, conduct, withdraw, settle or appeal any legal proceedings or process on behalf of the Council unless otherwise delegated.	Director Legal and Democratic
16. Institute criminal proceedings in respect of offences against any legislation (including byelaws) which the Council is allowed to enforce.	Director Legal and Democratic
17. Exercise the powers and functions of the local authority under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 or any variation or amendment thereof or regulations made thereunder.	Director of Legal and Democratic.
18. Authorise any officer of the Council to prosecute, or defend on its behalf, or to appear on its behalf in, proceedings before a Magistrates Court, in accordance with Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972	Director Legal and Democratic
19. Make orders or take any other steps in relation to any legislation when instructed by the officer with the relevant area of responsibility	Director Legal and Democratic
20. Appoint Education Appeal Panel members, in accordance with the provisions of the Education (Admission Appeals Arrangements) (England) (Regulations 2002), as amended, such appointments to last for a period of three years then membership be re-assessed and re-appointments made as appropriate	Director Legal and Democratic
21. Determining applications affecting the registers of commons and village	Director of Legal and Democratic

greens (under the Commons Act 2006 and any subsequent legislation).	In the case of contested matters, or Matters which require oral representation or an inquiry, an Independent Inspector shall be appointed to determine the application.
22. To carry out powers in relation to assets of community value under Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011.	<p>Powers to determine whether an asset should be placed on the list – Executive Director of Place and Economy</p> <p>Powers to determine reviews – Director of Legal and Democratic</p>

G. EXCEPTIONS - PENSIONS

(In exercising delegated powers, officers are reminded to take account of the overall limitations of the scheme, as detailed in the introduction to the scheme)

Officer	Function
<p>Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) (Further delegations to Head of Pensions can be found in the administering authority's discretions or within individual policy or strategy documents published on the Pension Fund's website as approved by the Pension Committee).</p>	<p>Management and administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme Authority to maintain West Northamptonshire Council's responsibility for the management and administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations with regard to overriding legislation and guidance including statutory guidance, including the exercise of the administering authority's discretions.</p> <p>Membership of the ACCESS Asset Pool Section 151 Officers Group In relation to the Joint Committee (JC), a s102 committee of the Local Government Act 1972, of the ACCESS Asset Pool, the Section 151 Officer shall be bound by the terms of reference for the Section 151 Officer Group as detailed in the Inter-Authority Agreement:</p> <p>Part 1 – Governing Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Section 151 Officers will co-operate to support the activities of the Pool in providing advice to or in consultation with the JC and they shall always act in line with the Governing Principle and Principles of Collaboration as set out in the Inter-Authority Agreement except to the extent that it is inconsistent with the discharge of their personal statutory duties. <p>Part 2 - Functions in relation to the Pool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to decisions made by the JC, the Section 151 Officers shall (in addition and without prejudice to their existing statutory responsibilities in relation to the proper

administration of the financial affairs of their own Councils) ensure the appropriate resourcing, support, advice and facilitation to the JC including, without limitation, in the following ways:

Discharging Section 151 Officer Functions

- **Staffing and Resourcing:** in relation to the provision of staff and resources to assist the JC in the exercise of its functions under this Agreement.
- **Cost Sharing:** in accordance with any local arrangements within their Councils, ensuring that their Councils' share of costs is provided to the relevant parties, whether under the business plan, budget or otherwise under Schedule 5 from time to time.
- **Pool Aligned Assets:** providing the JC, the ASU (ACCESS Support Unit) and any other relevant staff resources with such support as is reasonably required to engage with Pool Aligned Assets Providers.

Advising the Joint Committee

- **Budget and Business Planning:** making recommendations to the JC on budget and business plan matters, following input from the ASU in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Inter-Authority Agreement (Cost Sharing).
- Reviewing and advising on budget variations throughout each financial year.
- **Risk and Performance:** advising the JC on the identification of, and mitigation of any risk to the operation or success of the Pool.
- **Host Authority and Procurement Lead Authority Roles:** making recommendations to the JC regarding the Host Authority and Procurement Lead Authority roles from time to time as necessary.
- **Amendments to the Inter-Authority Agreement:** reviewing, in consultation with their respective Councils' Monitoring Officers, any material changes to the Inter-Authority Agreement, in accordance with provisions of clause 11 of the Inter-Authority Agreement (Variation of Agreement).

H. EXCEPTIONS – NORTHAMPTON PARTNERSHIP HOMES LTD

Function	Delegated to Northampton Partnership Homes Ltd	Retained by the Council	Shared	Comments
1. Repairs and Maintenance	Y			Planned, cyclical and responsive.
2. Tenancy Management	Y			Housing management (including successions and exchanges), tenancy management, leaseholder management
3. Lettings			Y	Via choice-based lettings scheme in accordance with Council's lettings policy.
4. Supporting Tenants	Y			Sheltered accommodation, supported living and related advice.
5. Ecton Lane Travellers Site	Y			Details included within Schedule 1 of Service Specification
6. Consultation			Y	Council has statutory duties here and may wish to consult direct; generally expected that NPH would carry out consultations whether for itself or the Council.
7. Estate Management	Y			Details included within Schedule 1 of the service specification
8. Right to buys			Y	NPH to deal with applications, Council (via Pathfinder) to process legal work.
9. Management of non-housing assets on estates			Y	Council or deal with the commercial elements; shared where buildings contain both housing and commercial elements.
10. Housing advice and homelessness		Y		Council retains statutory functions – NPH to provide advice to tenants and homelessness prevention
11. Private sector initiatives		Y		Including private sector empty homes

12. Community initiatives			Y	Council to retain community safety and rough sleepers functions; parties to co-operate on community initiatives generally
13. Regeneration			Y	Parties to work together on regeneration plans to the housing estates
14. Policy development			Y	NPH will be required to comply with relevant new policies developed by the Council.
15. Stock surveys	Y			As per the Housing Asset Management Strategy
16. Aids and adaptations			Y	For all council homes – DFGs for private sector homes remains with Council
17. Insurance		Y		Subject to the provisions of clause 30 of the Agreement.
18. Management of HRA			Y	Council's statutory responsibility.
19. Empty Homes			Y	Details included within Schedule 1 service specification.
20. Housing litigation (conduct)		Y		Local Practice Direction dated 18 August 20201 from HHJ Hedley - Permitted rights of audience before District Judges and Deputy District Judges in the County Court at Northampton at rent possession claims and claims for the recovery rent, mesne profits, damages or any other sum claimed in respect of the occupation of a residential property belonging to and for claims brought by West Northamptonshire Council provided that they have written authorisation from West Northamptonshire
21. Housing litigation (representation)	Y			

				Council to appear before the court.
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9.3 List of Proper Officers

SCHEDULE OF APPOINTMENTS

PURPOSE OF APPOINTMENT	PROPER OFFICER
Any reference to the Clerk of a council which, by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, is to be construed as a reference to the Proper Officer of the Council	Director of Legal and Democratic
Any reference to the Treasurer of a council which, by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, is to be construed as reference to the Proper Officer of the Council	Director of Finance

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 1936

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
85(2)	Serving a notice requiring action to deal with verminous people and things	Director of Public Health

REGISTRATION SERVICE ACT 1953

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
9(1) and (2)	Appointment of interim superintendent registrars and registrars	Director of Legal and Democratic
13(2)(h) and 3(b)	Powers under the local scheme of organisation	Director of Legal and Democratic
20	Proper officer to be subject to regulations made by the Registrar General	Director of Legal and Democratic

AGRICULTURE ACT 1970

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
67(3)	Appointment as Agricultural Analyst	Assistant Director: Regulatory Services

LOCAL AUTHORITY SOCIAL SERVICES ACT 1970

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
6(A1)	Director of Adult Social Services	Executive Director: Adults, Communities and Wellbeing

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
54(4)	Appointment as clerk of the local planning authority	Director of Legal and Democratic

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
13 (3)	Parish Trustee where no Parish Council	Director of Legal and Democratic
All appointments under sections 83, 84, 86, 88(2), 89(1)(b), 99 and Sch.12, 100A to F	To witness and receive declarations of acceptance of office of Chair, Vice Chair or councillor, resignations of councillors, vacancy in office, convening meetings to declare a vacancy, receipt of notice from electors regarding a vacancy, to issue a summons for a council meeting, all matters concerning agenda, papers and reports and minutes of meetings	Director of Legal and Democratic
115 (2)	Person to whom all officers shall pay monies received by them and due to Council	Executive Director of Finance
137(a)	Gives the Proper Officer power to require a voluntary organisation or similar body to supply information to them, where a local authority uses its powers under Section 137 to give financial assistance to that voluntary organisation or similar body above a relevant minimum	Executive Director of Finance
146(1)(a)	Statutory declarations and issue any certificate in relation to securities on change of name of authority or change of area	Executive Director of Finance
151	To be responsible for the administration of the financial affairs of the Council	Executive Director of Finance
All appointments 191, 204(3), 210(6) and (7), 223, 225(1), 228(3), 229(5), 233, 234, 236(9)-(10), 238, 248(2), Sch.12 para 4(2)(b) and 4(3) and Sch.14 para 25(7)	Receipt of notices from Ordnance Survey in relation to boundaries, powers in respect of charities, authorising officers to attend court, receipt of documents to be deposited, certification of photographic copies, receipt of service, signing of notice order or other document required by law, certifying copies of byelaws and keeping the roll of freemen. Provisions in relation to summons for meetings and copy resolutions	Director of Legal and Democratic
Sch.29, Para 4	Undertake duties at council elections which, under the Representation of the People Acts, are required to be undertaken not by the Returning Officer but by the Proper Officer	Director of Legal and Democratic
Sch.29 Pt.I Para.4(1)(b)	Adaptation, modification and amendment of enactments	Director of Legal and Democratic
Sch.29 Para 41	Proper Officer for Births, Marriages and Deaths	Director of Legal and Democratic

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1974

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
30(5)	Provides that the Proper Officer must give public notice of the ombudsman's reports	Director of Legal and Democratic

LOCAL ELECTIONS (PRINCIPAL AREA) RULES

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	Retention and public inspection of documents after an election	Returning Officer (Chief Executive)

LOCAL LAND CHARGES ACT 1975

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
3	Requires each registering authority to maintain a local land charges register. This duty falls on the local authority itself and not on the "Proper Officer"	Executive Director of Place and Economy
19	The officer to act as Local Registrar as defined in Section 3	Executive Director of Place and Economy

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
16	Notices requiring details of interest in land	Any Chief Officer of the Council
41(1)	The officer to certify copies of any resolution, order, report or minutes of proceedings of the Authority as evidence in any legal proceedings	Director of Legal and Democratic

LOCAL AUTHORITIES CEMETERIES ORDER 1977

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
10	To sign exclusive rights of burial	Executive Director of Place and Economy

RENT ACT 1977

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Officer
63	Appointment of rent officers under a scheme	Assistant Director Housing and Communities
Schedule 15, Part IV, para 7	Certification of provision of suitable alternative accommodation	Assistant Director Housing and Communities

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
59(1)	Certify that extraordinary expenses have been incurred in maintaining the highway by reason of damage caused by excessive weight	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste
193 (1)	Certify that additional expenses have been incurred in the execution of wider than normal street works	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste
205 (3)-(5)	Undertake duties as specified in the schedules in relation to private street works	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste
210(2)	Certify amendments to estimated costs and provisional apportionment of costs under the private street works code	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste
211(1), 212(4), 216(2)-(3)	Make final apportionment of costs as detailed in the schedules under the private street works code	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste
295(1)	Issue notice requiring removal of materials from non - maintainable streets in which works are due to take place	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste
321	Authenticate notices and other documents	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste
Sch.9 para 4	Sign plans showing proposed prescribed improvement or building lines	Assistant Director: Highways and Waste

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT 1983

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
8(1) and (2)(a)	Appointment as Electoral Registration Officer	Chief Executive
35(1)	Appointment as Returning Officer	Chief Executive
67(7)(b)	Receipt of notice of an election agent for local elections	Returning Officer
82 and 89	Receipt of election expense declarations and returns and the holding of those documents for public inspection	Returning Officer
128	Provides that a copy of any petition questioning a local government election shall be sent to proper officer who shall publish it in the local authority area	Returning Officer

131	Providing accommodation for holding election count	Chief Executive
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BUILDING ACT 1984

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
61	Provides that the proper officer or any other authorised officer to be given free access to works or repairs to an underground drain	Executive Director of Place and Economy
78	To take action in relation to dangerous buildings and structures	Executive Director of Place and Economy
93	Provides that notices and other documents under this Act may be signed by the Proper Officer or by an officer authorised by them in writing	Executive Director of Place and Economy

PUBLIC HEALTH (CONTROL OF DISEASES) ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE ACT 2008 AND THE MILK AND DAIRIES (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 1959

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
48	Preparation of certificate to Justice of Peace for removal of body to mortuary and for burial within a prescribed time or immediately	Director of Public Health
59	Authentication of documents	Director of Public Health
61-62	Right to enter premises to ascertain whether there has been a contravention of a provision of the 1984 Act or a Part 2A order made pursuant to the 1984 Act	Director of Public Health
	Requirement to appoint a suitably qualified person as the Council's Medical Advisor on Environmental Health and Proper Officer for notifiable diseases	Director of Public Health
74	To act for such of the functions relating to notification, investigations, prevention and control of notifiable diseases and food poisoning.	Director of Public Health

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT 1985

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
72(1)(a)	Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures	Assistant Director: Regulatory Services

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1988

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
114, 115, 115A and 115B	Responsibility for Chief Financial Officer Reports	Executive Director of Finance
116	Notification to auditor of date, time and place of meeting to consider Section 114 report and of decision of such meeting	Executive Director of Finance

139A	Provision of information to the Secretary of State in relation to the exercise of their powers under this Act as and when required	Executive Director of Finance
Sch.4 (10)(1) Paragraphs 6 – 8 (10)(1) Paragraph 9	Where notice has to be served on the Council concerning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The acquisition of way leaves over Council-owned land The felling and lopping of trees, etc 	Executive Director of Place and Economy
Sch. 8, 36(8) Para 1, 36(8) Para 2	Where applications have to be made for consent to construct generating stations on Council-owned land Where applications for consent have to be served on the local planning authority	Executive Director of Place and Economy

PUBLIC HEALTH (INFECTIOUS DISEASES) REGULATIONS 1988

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
6	Reporting of infectious diseases to the Chief Medical Officer	Director of Public Health
8	Submission of weekly or quarterly returns to the Registrar General	Director of Public Health
10	Arrangements for immunisation and vaccination	Director of Public Health
Sch.3 and 4	Reporting and issuing notices to prevent the spread of infection	Director of Public Health

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
2(4), 3A, 15 - 17	Officer with whom the list of politically restricted posts shall be deposited; to grant exemptions from political restriction and matters relating to the establishment of political groups. Any responsibilities under the Local Government (committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990	Director of Legal and Democratic
4	Designation as Head of Paid Service	Chief Executive
5(1)	Designation as Monitoring Officer	Director of Legal and Democratic
18	Receipt of notice in writing that a councillor wishes to forego any part of entitlement to an allowance	Director of Legal and Democratic
19(1) and (4)	Receipt of notice of direct and indirect pecuniary interests	Director of Legal and Democratic

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
149	Discharging the functions in this section for	Assistant

	dealing with stray dogs	Director Regulatory Services
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FOOD SAFETY ACT 1990

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
5	Authorised officer to act in matters arising under the Act	Assistant Director Regulatory Services
27(1)	Appointment of Public Analyst	Assistant Director Regulatory Services
49(3)	Any document which a food authority are authorised or required by or under this Act to give, make or issue may be signed on behalf of the authority (a) by the proper officer of the authority as respects documents relating to matters within their province; or (b) by any officer of the authority authorised by them in writing to sign documents of the particular kind, or, as the case may be, the particular document	Assistant Director Regulatory Services

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COMMITTEES AND POLITICAL GROUPS) REGULATIONS 1990

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
8(1), 8(5), 9(b), 10, 13(1), 14, 15 and 17	Notifications to and by the Proper Officer Give effect to the wishes of political groups in making appointments of members to committees	Director of Legal and Democratic

CIVIL EVIDENCE ACT 1995

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
9	To certify Council records for the purposes of admitting the document in evidence in civil proceedings	Director of Legal and Democratic

PARTY WALL ETC. ACT 1996

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	To select a third surveyor, if required, during a neighbour dispute about building projects	Executive Director of Place and Economy

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CONTRACTS) ACT 1997

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
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**CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 SECTION 115
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 SECTIONS 9B, 9GA AND 22**

	Certification of relevant powers to enter into contracts	Executive Director of Finance
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CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
12	To apply for the discharge or variation of a Child Safety Order	Director of Children's Services
17 and 37	To have regard to effect of the exercise of any function on the need to prevent crime and disorder and offending by children and young persons	Director of Children's Services

CRIME AND DISORDER (FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY) REGULATIONS 2007/1830

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
4(3)	Primary Designated Officer for information sharing	Director of Legal and Democratic

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
3	Producing a written statement of Executive decisions made at meetings	Director of Legal and Democratic
5	Making a copy of written statements of Executive decisions and associated reports available for inspection by the public	Director of Legal and Democratic
6	Making available for inspection a list of background papers	Director of Legal and Democratic
9FB	Designation as Scrutiny Officer	Executive Director Corporate Services
11(2)	Exclusion of whole or part of any report to the Cabinet where meeting is likely not to be open to the public	Director of Legal and Democratic
11(7)(c)	Provision to the press of other documents supplied to members of the Cabinet in connection with the item discussed	Director of Legal and Democratic
81	Establish and maintain a Register of Interests	Director of Legal and Democratic

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS) (MEETINGS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 SECTION 30

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
7	Exclusion of whole or part of any reports to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member where they relate only to items during which the meeting is likely not to be open to the public	Director of Legal and Democratic
9FB	Designation as Scrutiny Officer	Executive Director Corporate Services
10	Inform the relevant Select Committee Chair or the committee members by notice in writing of decisions to be made, where it has been not possible to comply with the publicity requirements (in the "Key Decisions Plan") and make available for public inspection notices relating to this	Director of Legal and Democratic
12	Produce a written statement of Cabinet decisions made at meetings	Director of Legal and Democratic
13	Produce a written statement of decisions made by individual Cabinet Members	Director of Legal and Democratic
14	Make a copy of written statements of Cabinet and Cabinet Member and officer executive decisions and associated reports available for inspection by the public	Director of Legal and Democratic
15 and 2	Make available for inspection a list of background papers	Director of Legal and Democratic
16(5)	Determine whether certain documents contain exempt information	Director of Legal and Democratic
16(7)	Determine whether certain documents contain advice provided by a political adviser or assistant	Director of Legal and Democratic
20	Determine whether documents contain confidential information, exempt information or the advice of a political adviser or assistant	Director of Legal and Democratic

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (REFERENDUMS) (PETITIONS AND DIRECTIONS) REGULATIONS 2000

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
34	Publishing the verification number of local government electors for the purpose of petitions under the Local Government Act 2000	Director of Legal and Democratic

THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (PRESCRIPTION OF OFFICES, RANKS AND POSITION) ORDER 2000

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
2	Authorise the carrying out of directed surveillance of the conduct of a covert human intelligence source	Executive Directors, Director of Legal

		and Democratic, Chief Executive in accordance with Council's RIPA policy
21, 22, 27, 28 and 29	The Senior Responsible Officer for RIPA	Director of Legal and Democratic

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000, SECTIONS 22(2)(B) AND 25(2)

THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (COMMUNICATIONS DATA) ORDER 2010 THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (COVERT SURVEILLANCE AND PROPERTY INTERFERENCE: CODE OF PRACTICE) ORDER 2010

THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (COVERT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES: CODE OF PRACTICE) ORDER 2010

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
-	Designated Senior Responsible Officer for the use of surveillance and the acquisition and disclosure of communications data	Director of Legal and Democratic
Sch. 2 Part 2	Grant authorisation or give notice to obtain or disclose communications data for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder	Director of Legal and Democratic

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
36	Person to confirm or deny whether the disclosure of information is likely to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs	Director of Legal and Democratic

ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE (MAPS IN DRAFT FORM) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2001

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
9-11	Authorised officer to receive deposit of reduced scale maps	Executive Director Place and Economy

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (STANDING ORDERS) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2001

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
Sch.1 Part II paras 5 and 6	Functions in relation to notifying Executive appointments, dismissals etc .	Director of Legal and Democratic

MONEY LAUNDERING REGULATIONS 2003

Regulation	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
7(1)(a)	Nominated officer to receive disclosures of suspected money laundering	Executive Director of Finance

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
25	When the annual budget report is considered by Cabinet or by the County Council, the Chief Financial Officer must make a report on the robustness of the estimates made in determining the budget requirement and on the adequacy of the proposed level of financial reserves	Executive Director of Finance

CHILDREN ACT 2004

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
18	To carry out the role of the proper officer function of Director of Children's Services	Director of Children's Services

THE HOUSING ACT 2004

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
4(2) and 249	In relation to the inspection of premises and endorsing of a certificate of evidence.	Assistant Director of Housing & Communities

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ACT 2004

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
17	Appointment as Traffic Manager to perform such tasks as the authority considers will assist it to perform its network management duty	Executive Director Place and Economy

MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS (APPROVED PREMISES) REGULATIONS 2005 (AS AMENDED)

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	Proper Officer for the purposes of the Registration Act 1953, the Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the	Director Legal and Democratic

	Marriage Act 1994), the Civil Partnership Act 2004, the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 as amended and receive applications, set fees and offer discounts, where applicable	
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NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT 2006

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
73A	Appointment as Director of Public Health	Director of Public Health

HEALTH ACT 2006

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
10(3)	Duty of an enforcement authority to enforce, as respects the premises, places and vehicles in relation to which it has enforcement functions, the provisions of this Chapter (smoke free premises) and regulations made under it	Assistant Director: Regulatory Services
10(5)	In this Chapter, "authorised officer", in relation to an enforcement authority, means any person (whether or not an officer of the authority) who is authorised by it in writing, either generally or specially, to act in matters arising under this Chapter	Authorised Officers
10(7)	Refers to Schedule 2 which lists the powers of entry, etc.	Assistant Director: Regulatory Services
10(9)(1)	An authorised officer of an enforcement authority (see section 10) who has reason to believe that a person has committed an offence under section 6(5) or 7(2) on premises, or in a place or vehicle, in relation to which the authorised officer has functions may give them a penalty notice in respect of the offence	Authorised Officer

SMOKE-FREE (PREMISES AND ENFORCEMENT) REGULATIONS 2006

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
3	To carry out the functions of an enforcement authority under Regulation 3	Assistant Director: Regulatory Services

LOCAL ELECTIONS (PARISHES AND COMMUNITIES) RULES 2006

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	Retention and public inspection of documents after	Returning Officer

	an election	
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THE LOCAL ELECTIONS (PRINCIPAL AREAS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) RULES 2006

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
Rule 50 and Sch.2	Receipt from Returning Officer of the names and persons elected to the Council	Director of Legal and Democratic
54	Registration officer for the retention and destruction of documents following an election	Director of Legal and Democratic

CRIME AND DISORDER (FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY) REGULATIONS 2007/1830

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
4(3)	Nominated officer to facilitate the sharing of information under an information sharing protocol	Assistant Director Housing and Communities

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN: A GUIDE TO INTER-AGENCY WORKING TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN (DFE GUIDANCE, MARCH 2010)

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
-	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Executive Director Adults Communities and Wellbeing
-	Caldicott Guardian	Executive Director Adults Communities and Wellbeing

THE HEALTH PROTECTION (NOTIFICATION) REGULATIONS 2010

Regulation	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
2, 3 and 6	Receipt and disclosure of notification of suspected notifiable disease, infection or contamination in patients and dead persons	Director of Public Health

LOCALISM ACT 2011

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
29	Establish, maintain and publish a Register of Interests	Director Legal and Democratic
31	Receipt of notice of members' disclosable pecuniary	Director Legal

	interests and entering such interests in the authority's register	and Democratic
32	Consideration of whether a member's interest is a sensitive interest	Director Legal and Democratic
33(1)	Receiving applications for dispensations	Director Legal and Democratic
33(2)	Grant dispensations to members to speak only or to speak and vote on matters where they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Director Legal and Democratic
Sch.2, Pt1, Para.9FB	Designation as Scrutiny Officer	Executive Director Corporate Services

THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (REFERENDUMS) (PETITIONS) REGULATIONS 2011

Regulation	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
7, 8, 11 and 13	Various steps relating to petitions	Director Legal and Democratic

THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS) (MEETINGS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012

Regulation	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
2, 7, 10, 12, 13-16, 20	Functions relating to the recording and publication of information relating to Executive decisions, including exclusion of information from agenda and reports relating to private meeting matters	Director Legal and Democratic
12-13	Grant dispensations in respect of conflicts of interest declared by an Executive member making a decision, or declared by an Executive member consulted by a member or officer taking such a decision	Director Legal and Democratic
12-14	Recording of executive decisions and by individual members and making documents available for inspection by members of the public	Director Legal and Democratic

NHS BODIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES (PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS, CARE TRUSTS, PUBLIC HEALTH AND LOCAL HEALTHWATCH) REGULATIONS 2012

Regulation	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
22(4)	Designated as Responsible Person for ensuring compliance with the regulations	Executive Director Adults Communities and Wellbeing
22(5)	Designated as Complaints Manager for managing	Executive

	the procedures for handling complaints	Director Adults Communities and Wellbeing
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HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE ACT 2012

Regulation	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	Responsible person for ensuring that the Council complies with statutory requirements relating to complaints made to the Council about its public health functions and, where necessary, action is taken in light of the outcome of such complaints	Director of Legal and Democratic
73A(1)(a)	The exercise by the authority of its functions under section 2B, 111 or 249 or Schedule 1 – health improvement duties to take steps to improve the health of the people in the area	Director of Public Health
73A(1)(b)	The exercise by the authority of its functions by virtue of section 6C(1) or (3) – The exercise of the Secretary of State’s public health protection or health improvement functions that they delegate to local authorities, either by arrangement or under regulations – these include services mandated by regulations	Director of Public Health
73A(1)(c)	Anything done by the authority in pursuance or arrangements under section 7A – Any public health activity undertaken by the local authority under arrangements with the Secretary of State	Director of Public Health
73A(1)(d)	The exercise by the authority of any of its functions that relate to planning for, or responding to, emergencies involving a risk to public health	Director of Public Health
73A(1)(e)	The functions of the authority under section 325 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 - the local authority’s role in co-ordinating with the police, the probation service and the prison service to assess the risks posed by violent and sex offenders	Director of Public Health
73A(1)(f)	Other public health functions that the Secretary of State may specify in regulations	Director of Public Health

COUNTER-TERRORISM AND SECURITY ACT 2015

Regulation	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	The officer responsible for ensuring that the Council, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people vulnerable from being drawn into terrorism	Executive Director Adults, Communities and Wellbeing

DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
69, 70 and 71	The designated Data Protection Officer to discharge functions associated with the Data Protection Act 2018	Data Protection Officer and Information Manager

LANDLORD AND TENANTS ACTS

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	To be the Proper Officer to serve and receive notices on behalf of the Council for the purposes of s.23 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1927 and s.66 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954	Executive Director of Place and Economy

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS PROPER OFFICER FUNCTIONS

Section	Brief Details of Responsibility	Proper Officer
	Any other miscellaneous proper or statutory officer functions not otherwise delegated by the Authority	Chief Executive or their nominee

IN THE ABSENCE OF THE DESIGNATED PROPER OFFICER:

- In the event of the Head of the Paid Service not being available to deal with matters for which they have been designated the proper officer, an Executive Director may be authorised by them to act as proper officer in their absence.
- In the event of any other designated officer being unable to fulfil their duties as proper officer, their deputy may be authorised to undertake such duties.
- Notwithstanding the above, a proper officer may at any time delegate or authorise other officers to perform the designated duties on their behalf.

9.4 Employee Code of Conduct

Code of conduct

The Council Code of Conduct sets out the general standards expected of all employees; these are in addition to any rules which apply in Service areas. The Code is not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with other Council policies.

It is your responsibility to read this Code and to make sure your conduct meets its provisions at all times.

Some service areas will have their own service specific rules about behaviour, usually in relation to their service users. Employees must ensure that they understand the service specific rules, and discuss them with their line manager if they do not understand how they apply.

1. What are the principles?

The public have the right to expect the highest standards of integrity from our employees.

Employees should:

- (a) always conduct themselves in a proper manner
- (b) not allow personal or private interests to influence their conduct
- (c) not do anything as an employee which they could not justify to the Council
- (d) tell management of any breach of standards or procedure without fear of recrimination. If appropriate employees should use the Whistleblowing policy
- (e) engage in any investigations about actual or potential breaches of this code

If employees fail to follow this code they may be liable to disciplinary action which could lead to termination of employment.

2. What are the rules about gifts and hospitality?

There are no hard and fast rules about accepting hospitality or gifts offered on a personal basis. However, employees should treat any offers with extreme caution. The person or organisation making the offer may be:

- (a) doing, or hoping to do, business with the Council; or
- (b) applying to the Council for some kind of decision

In some cases, accepting the offer may constitute a criminal offence.

Employees should seek permission before any offers of gifts or hospitality above the value of £25 are accepted.

It is important that such offers of a gift or hospitality are recorded, even where the employee or their line manager, has decided to decline the offer. As a public service there is a need

to demonstrate impartiality and merit in remaining totally open about anything received and understand the perception of the general public regarding offers of gifts or hospitality. Please note that if there have been separate or previous offers from the same organisation or individual within the past three months which combined would total over £25.00 it is appropriate to declare the cumulative total.

If employees have any doubts about whether to accept a gift below £25, they should talk to their line manager. Guidance is provided in the Gifts and Hospitality Form. Managers should maintain a record of gifts and hospitalities received by their staff.

Hospitality or Gifts over the value of £25 should be declared through the Gifts and Hospitality form.

3. What are the rules about use of Council facilities?

Employees should only use Council premises, facilities or other resources for Council business, unless you have been given prior approval through your line manager. This includes:

- transport
- stationery
- secretarial services

4. What are the rules about the use of Information Technology?

Employees should use information technology in compliance with the Council's relevant Use of IT Policy. In addition to this policy, employees should make sure they understand and comply with the Council's guidance on Information Technology.

5. What are the rules about confidential and private information?

Employees may come into contact with confidential information during the course of their work and have a responsibility to maintain confidentiality and ensure their actions comply with the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Confidential information includes any information regarding other employees, service users, financial information, information regarding business plans or other commercially sensitive information and any information or matter which relates to the affairs and/or services of the Council that should not be in the public domain.

Employees must never:

- disclose or share such information (oral, written or electronic) given in confidence or, information acquired during the course of their work to other people without a clear, legal basis for doing so e.g. safeguarding or crime prevention, and only when the identity of the individual requesting has been verified.
- access or use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or, to disadvantage or discredit the Council or anyone else.

The Council has specific rules on data security, outlined in the relevant Information Security Policy which you need to read and familiarise yourself with. You are required to comply with these rules when handling information. There are set procedures for releasing personal information and guidance for relevant Information Sharing. It is essential that employees follow these procedures and must seek advice from their line manager if unsure before releasing information or personal data.

6. What are the rules about financial conduct?

Employees must ensure that they use funds and resources entrusted to them for the purpose intended, and in a responsible and lawful manner. They should seek to safeguard such funds and resources from abuse, theft or waste and should strive to ensure value for money for the Council, service users and any public or charitable funds.

Employees should be aware that it is a serious criminal and disciplinary offence to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or other advantage in return for doing (or not doing) anything, or showing favour (or disfavour) to any person or organisation. If an allegation of corrupt behaviour is made, this will be fully investigated.

Any form of bribery, either direct or indirect, is prohibited. Allegations of bribery or wrongdoing can be reported confidentially through the Whistleblowing policy. See also the Anti-Fraud policy.

Employees should manage the organisation's finances in compliance with the Council's financial procedure rules. This sets out individual financial responsibilities and provides more information on the Whistleblowing and Anti-Fraud policy.

7. What are the rules about declaring financial/personal interests in other organisations Which deal with the Council?

Employees must declare any financial/personal interest that they or their partner have or may have in any contract or proposed contract with the Council or its partners, including any interest they may have in tendering for a contract from the Service Area/Group – this interest may be direct or indirect.

Employees should also consider declaring non-financial interests. For example, they may do voluntary work for an organisation in receipt of grant aid from the Council.

An employee wishing to make a declaration should complete the Declaration of Conflict of Interest form providing as much detail as possible and submit this to their line manager.

See section 21 – Making a Declaration.

8. What are the rules about buying goods for personal use?

Employee should not use an official order, or the Council's name to buy goods for their personal use. To do so could lead to prosecution under the Theft Act and disciplinary action being taken which could result in termination of employment.

9. What are the rules about discount schemes offered to employees?

Employees should take care before accepting discounts or special terms from someone:

- (a) who normally supplies the Council and,
- (b) who is not offering this discount to members of the public

This does not apply if the supplier has an agreement with the Unions or the Council to supply goods or services on special terms. If an employee has doubts as to how to proceed, they should refer to their line manager in the first instance who will then discuss with their Executive Director who may refer to Legal Services where necessary.

10. What are the rules about equality issues?

Employees must ensure that they follow the Council's Equality, Inclusion and Diversity policies and conduct themselves in accordance with expected practice.

Managers must ensure that employees are aware of these policies, expected practice and how this applies to the work that the employee undertakes.

11. What are the rules about employees having other jobs?

Some contracts specify that an employee cannot undertake other jobs without written permission or, there are service specific or other circumstances that would prevent undertaking other jobs.

Where this does not apply, employees should make sure that any additional work they undertake does not:

- (a) relate to their duties as an employee
- (b) impact or affect the hours of work in their role with the Council and does not contravene any provisions under the Working Time Regulations or, their health and safety
- (c) impact on their duties and effectiveness
- (d) conflict with the interests of the Council (are they a competitor organisation, engaged in similar business or a customer of the Council. Do they provide or receive goods or services from the Council and is there any contractual arrangement with the Council)
- (e) weaken public confidence in the Council

If you have any doubt as to whether a conflict exists you should complete a Declaration of conflict of interest form and submit this to your line manager.

In order to sustain service delivery and core functions, employees may be asked to curtail any other private work they have been carrying out when the Critical Incident Policy is invoked.

See section 21 – Making a Declaration

12. What are the rules about employee conduct outside work?

Generally, what employees do outside work is their own concern. However, they should avoid doing anything which might adversely affect the reputation of the Council, this includes comments on social media.

Further information and guidance is provided in the Council's relevant Use of IT Policy which covers Facebook, Social Media and use of mobile devices.

13. What are the rules about political impartiality?

Employees must be politically neutral when carrying out their work. This does not affect their right to be a member of a political party, unless they work within a specified politically restricted post.

Politically restricted posts fall into two categories - 'specified posts', and 'sensitive posts'. Specified posts include Tier 2 and above, and Political Assistants. Sensitive posts apply in Democratic Services and the Communications and Marketing team, based on their link to journalists and broadcasters. Further information and guidance is provided in the Council's document Politically restricted posts.

Employees can stand for election to local authorities, other than Northamptonshire County Council. They should complete a Declaration of conflict of interest form and submit this to their line manager to resolve any potential conflicts of interest and consideration of any requirements for time off.

See section 21 – Making a Declaration.

If an employee holds a politically restricted post, they can only be a member of a parish council.

14. What are the rules about employment of people who are relatives, partners, or have a close relationship?

Employees should not be involved in taking significant decisions where it involves a relative, partner or close friend.

This includes:

- (a) recruitment or appointment
- (b) disciplinary situations
- (c) promotional opportunities
- (d) pay related adjustments

Employees are expected to maintain professional relationships with colleagues. The general principle is that an outsider should not be able to detect any difference in the professional working relationship of people who have a close relationship to those who are not.

15. What are the rules about how employees interact with customers?

Employees should never allow any personal relationship with a customer to conflict with the duties of their employment, or the best interests of any customer or service user. They

must never allow themselves to be compromised by, or take advantage of, their relationship with a customer.

Some service areas will have their own service specific rules about behaviour in relation to their service users. This may be underpinned by professional Codes of Conduct or Guidance in relation to client group needs. Employees must ensure that they understand such service specific rules, and discuss them with their line manager if they do not understand how they apply.

16. What are the rules about employees' relationships with colleagues or Elected Members?

Mutual respect and trust between employees and councillors is essential to the effective operation of the Council. Any close personal familiarity can damage the relationship. It can also prove embarrassing to other employees and therefore, such familiarity should be avoided.

Any personal relationships that develop, which may conflict with the impartial performance of your duties, should be declared by completing a Declaration of conflict of interest form and submitting this to your line manager for consideration.

See section 21 – Making a Declaration.

17. What are the rules about media activities?

If an employee is contacted by the media, they should not respond individually, as media inquiries need to be directed immediately to the communications team.

Media includes any kind of published or broadcast material, including items published on the internet. Employees should contact the Communications Team for clarification if they are unsure about the rules regarding speaking to the media or sharing information externally.

In addition, employees should be aware of relevant Guidance on Social Networking Sites and Personal Internet Presence. The aim of this Guidance is:

- (a) to protect the reputation of the Council and its employees from intended or unintended abuse via personal employee usage of social networking and personal internet sites, and:
- (b) ensure that employees are aware of the potential legal implications of material which could be considered abusive or defamatory.

18. What are the rules about smoking?

In order to help support the health of our staff, deliver our services and maintain legal compliance the Council has a Smoke-free policy. For reputational and health reasons, smoking is prohibited within, or on Council controlled sites, including areas outside and around buildings where smokers should not be visible to the public and customers visiting council buildings, or be identifiable by their lanyards or ID badges. More information is provided in the relevant Smoke-free policy.

19. What are the rules about clothing and appearance?

Employees are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate to the job role they undertake, and the environment in which they work. All employees are ambassadors for the organisation and therefore need to maintain a professional appearance, appropriate to their role. There are a variety of settings and roles within the organisation; for some areas health and safety issues will determine what constitutes appropriate dress, therefore employees should refer to any service specific rules, including those on personal protective clothing where relevant.

Managers are responsible for applying this in their specific setting; should an employee wear clothing that is inappropriate for the role they are undertaking, they can reasonably expect their manager to point this out to them. Managers can get support from the HR Advisory Team on what constitutes inappropriate clothing.

20. What are my responsibilities as a line manager?

As a line manager it is your responsibility to read this Code and to make sure you and your employees conduct meets its provision at all times. You are responsible for:

- (a) making sure that your staff are aware of the Code of Conduct
- (b) abide by the Code and thereby set your staff an example
- ~~(c)~~ taking appropriate action if any member of staff fails to follow this Code
- (d) seeking the advice of your HR Advisor if you have any doubt about how to proceed
- (e) keeping a record of gifts or hospitality received by your staff
- (f) reviewing any Declaration of conflict of interest form (whether at recruitment stage or following employment), escalating to your Executive Director
- (g) advising the employee of the outcome and retaining the information

It is also the line manager's responsibility to review the information and ensure:

- (a) where circumstances have changed and no longer relevant for the role the employee is undertaking or their involvement has ceased - the form should no longer be retained
- (b) If the employee moves to another role or service area, the information should be reviewed to ensure no conflict exists and where this remains relevant it is transferred and retained within that new role/service area
- (c) If the line manager leaves or moves to another role or service area, the information must be provided to the new manager where this remains relevant

For employees working in a social care setting – please also refer to the Adult Social Care and Healthcare Support Workers Code of Conduct – Skills for Care.

21. Making a Declaration

There are two instances in which a Declaration can be made;

- (a) New recruits – as part of the recruitment process and,
- (b) Where a conflict or potential conflict has been identified by an existing employee

Declarations will normally be made in circumstances of;

- (a) Financial/personal interests in other organisations which deal with the Council
- (b) Undertaking other jobs or engaging in other jobs or business
- (c) Political impartiality
- (d) Personal relationships

Conflict identified by existing employee

Where a conflict or potential conflict has been identified by an existing employee they should complete a Declaration of conflict of interest form and submit this to their line manager.

The employee’s line manager will assess the contents of the form to ensure that sufficient information has been provided in order to determine whether the request is likely to be in conflict with or have a detrimental impact on the employee’s or the Council’s work.

The line manager may seek to consult their HR Advisor as required and then refer to the Executive Director for consideration. In circumstances that relate to financial/personal interests in other organisations the Executive Director will refer this to the Council’s Monitoring Officer.

Declaration and levels of approval

Officer	Form submitted to:	Decision maker:
Employees	Line Manager	Executive Director (and Monitoring Officer if involves Financial/Personal interests)
Assistant Director or Head of Service	Line Manager	Executive Director (and Monitoring Officer if involves Financial/Personal interests)
Director/Executive appointment	HR Assistant Director	Monitoring Officer

Failure to disclose a Conflict of Interest

If you fail to inform the Council of a possible conflict of interest could result in disciplinary action being taken and your employment being terminated.

22. Potential outcome of a Declaration

Any outcome as a result of a declaration being made must be advised and discussed with the employee to ensure they understand any implications and agreed actions where necessary.

Where it is found that the employees' involvement or actions are deemed unacceptable to continue, the employee may be asked to withdraw from that interest or the responsibilities may need to be changed.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest Form

Subject	Make a Declaration	Responsibility
Gifts & Hospitality	Record on Gifts & Hospitality form	Line Manager
Council facilities	No	Line Manager
Confidential & private information	No	Line Manager
Financial/Personal interests	Yes	Line Manager, Executive Director and Monitoring Officer
Buying Goods	No	Line Manager
Discount Schemes	No	Line Manager
Equality	No	Line Manager
Other jobs	Yes	Line Manager, Executive Director
Conduct outside work	No	Line Manager
Political Impartiality	Yes	Line Manager, Executive Director
Employment of relatives	No	Line Manager
Personal relationships	Yes	Line Manager, Executive Director

9.5 Staff Employment Procedure Rules

1. Definitions

In these Rules:

“The 1989 Act” means the Local Government and Housing Act 1989; “the 2000 Act” means the Local Government Act 2000;

“The 2001 Regulations” means the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 2001;

“The 2015 Regulations” means the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015;

“Head of Paid Service”, “Chief Finance Officer”, “Monitoring Officer” and “disciplinary action” have the same meanings as set out in regulation 2 of the 2001 Regulations;

“Member of staff” means a person appointed to or holding paid office or employment to the Council;

“Independent Person” means a person appointed by the Council under section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 or, where there are fewer than two such persons, such independent persons as have been appointed by another authority or authorities as the Council considers appropriate;

“Independent Persons Panel” means a committee appointed by the Council under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the purposes of advising the authority on matters relating to the dismissal of relevant officers in accordance with Schedule 3 of the 2001 Regulations, including or comprising at least two Independent Persons who have accepted an invitation to be considered for appointment to the Panel and who have been appointed to it in accordance with the following priority order:

- (a) an independent person who has been appointed by the Council and who is a local government elector in the Council’s area;
- (b) any other independent person who has been appointed by the Council;
- (c) an independent person who has been appointed by another council or councils.

“Statutory Chief Officer” has the same meaning as set out in section 2(6) of the 1989 Act and for this council will be:

- (a) Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- (b) Executive Director Finance (Chief Finance Officer)
- (c) Director of Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)
- (d) Executive Director Adults, Communities and Wellbeing and Deputy Chief Executive (Director of Adult Services)
- (e) Director of Children’s Services

(f) Director of Public Health;

“Non-Statutory Chief Officer” means a person who reports or who is directly accountable to the Head of Paid Service, to the Council, or any committee or sub-committee of the Council as set out in section 2(7) of the 1989 Act (other than persons whose duties are solely secretarial or clerical or are otherwise in the nature of support services) and for this council will be any other Executive Director, Director or Assistant Chief Executive appointed by the Council who are not Statutory Chief Officers;

“Deputy Chief Officer” are people who report directly or are directly accountable to one or more of the Statutory or Non-Statutory Chief Officers (other than persons whose duties are solely secretarial or clerical or are otherwise in the nature of support services) as set out in section 2(8) of the 1989 Act, and for this council will be its Assistant Directors.

2. Responsibility for Appointing, Dismissing and Disciplining Employees

- 2.1 Staff are employed, appointed, designated or engaged on behalf of the whole council and not by parts of the organisation or individuals.
- 2.2 The employment, appointment, designation or engagement of all staff will be in compliance with the law and any policies and practices of the Council.
- 2.3 The appointment or dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Executive, the Executive Director Finance and the Director of Legal and Democratic may only be made by a meeting of the Full Council, which may either be direct or as confirmation of a recommendation from the Senior Appointments Committee.
- 2.4 The Senior Appointments Committee is responsible for the appointment and dismissal of Chief Officers apart from the Chief Executive, the Executive Director Finance and the Director of Legal and Democratic and for this purpose the Senior Appointments Committee must include at least one member of the Cabinet.
- 2.5 The Chief Executive or by an officer nominated by them is responsible for all appointments and dismissals in respect of staff positions that are not Chief Officers.
- 2.6 The procedures for such appointments and dismissals are set out in paragraphs 3 to 6 of these Rules. It should be noted that the designation of statutory officers such as the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer must be authorised by full Council before the offer of employment is made.
- 2.7 The Senior Appointments Committee is responsible for the function of taking disciplinary action other than dismissal in respect of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer.
- 2.8 With regard to recruitment, the Council will draw up a statement requiring any candidate for appointment as an officer to state in writing whether they are the parent, grandparent, partner, child, stepchild, adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle,

aunt, nephew, niece of an existing councillor or officer of the Council, or the partner of such persons. A candidate who deliberately fails to disclose such a relationship shall be disqualified from appointment and if appointed shall be liable to dismissal.

- 2.9 The Assistant Director HR shall ensure that the provisions contained in Clause 2.8 are reflected in application forms or in any accompanying detailed procedures for any post advertised.
- 2.10 The Assistant Director HR in consultation with the Leader shall be responsible for the suspension of the Head of Paid Service. The Head of Paid Service shall be responsible for the suspension of any Chief Officer. The appropriate Chief Officer (statutory or non-statutory) shall be responsible for the suspension of any Deputy Chief Officer.

3. Appointment of the Head of Paid Service

- 3.1 Where the Council proposes to appoint the Head of Paid Service, the Senior Appointments Committee will oversee the arrangements for filling the vacancy.
- 3.2 The Senior Appointments Committee shall:
- (a) draw up a statement specifying the duties and salary of the post of the Head of Paid Service and any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed;
 - (b) make arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it;
 - (c) make arrangements for a copy of the statement mentioned above to be sent to any person on request;
 - (d) select from the applications a short list of qualified candidates and interview those included in the short list.
- 3.3 Following the interview of candidates, the committee will come to a view as to the most suitable person for the position.
- 3.4 The committee must advise the Assistant Director HR of:
- (a) the name of the person in question:
 - (b) any other particulars that the committee consider are relevant to the appointment.
- 3.5 Within five clear working days of receiving the notification in 3.4 above, the Assistant Director HR will notify each member of the Cabinet of:
- (a) the information notified in paragraph 3.4 above;

- (b) the period within which any objection to the making of the offer is to be made by the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet to the Assistant Director HR; such period shall not exceed five clear working days.

3.6 An offer of appointment must wait until:

- (a) the Leader has, within the period of the notice under paragraph 3.5 above, notified the committee through the Assistant Director HR that neither they nor any member of the Cabinet has any objection to the making of the offer;
- (b) the Assistant Director HR has notified the committee that no objections have been received by them within the period of notice under 3.5 above;
- (c) the committee is satisfied that any objection received from the Leader within the notice period is not well founded. In this regard, where necessary the advice of the Director of Legal and Democratic (or if appropriate an alternative legal adviser) should be sought.

3.7 Where following the above procedure there are no objections to the proposed appointment or any objections are not upheld, the committee will recommend that person for appointment at the next meeting of the Full Council or at a specially convened meeting of the Council. If Full Council approves the recommendation, then a formal appointment can be made.

3.8 Where following interviews the committee is of the view that there is no suitable candidate, it will re-advertise the post.

3.9 Where Full Council does not approve the recommendation of the committee, it shall indicate how it wishes to proceed.

4. Appointment of Chief Officers (Statutory or Non-Statutory) and Deputy Chief Officers

4.1 Where the Council proposes to appoint a Chief Officer (statutory or non-statutory) or a Deputy Chief Officer, then:

- (a) the Senior Appointments Committee shall oversee the arrangements for filling the vacancy of a Chief Officer;
- (b) the appropriate Chief Officer (statutory or non-statutory) shall be responsible for the appointment of a Deputy Chief Officer.

4.2 The Senior Appointments Committee or the Chief Officer shall:

- (a) draw up a statement specifying the duties and salary of the officer concerned and any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed;
- (b) make arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it;

- (c) make arrangements for a copy of the statement mentioned in (a) above to be sent to any person on request;
 - (d) select from the applications a short list of qualified candidates and interview those included in the short list.
- 4.3 Following the interview of candidates, the Senior Appointments Committee or the Chief Officer will come to a view as to the most suitable person for the position.
- 4.4 The Senior Appointments Committee or the Chief Officer must advise the Assistant Director HR of:
 - (a) the name of the person in question;
 - (b) any other particulars that the committee or Chief Officer consider are relevant to the appointment.
- 4.5 Within five clear working days of receiving notification in 4.4 above, the Assistant Director HR will notify each member of the Cabinet of:
 - (a) the information notified under paragraph 4.4 above;
 - (b) the period in which any objection to the making of the offer is to be made by the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet to the Assistant Director HR; such period not to exceed five clear working days.
- 4.6 An offer of appointment must wait until:
 - (a) the Leader has within the period of notice under paragraph 4.5 above, notified the Senior Appointments Committee or the Chief Officer through the Assistant Director HR that neither they nor any member of the Cabinet has any objection to the making of the offer; or
 - (b) the Assistant Director HR has notified the Senior Appointments Committee or the Chief Officer that no objections have been received by them within the period of notice set out in 4.5 above; or
 - (c) the Senior Appointments Committee or the Chief Officer is satisfied that any objection received from the Leader within the notice period is not material or not well founded. In this regard, where necessary, the advice of the Director of Legal and Democratic (or if appropriate an alternative legal adviser) should be sought; or
 - (d) In respect of the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, until Full Council has approved the statutory designation.
- 4.7 Once the conditions in 4.6 above have been satisfied, a formal offer of appointment may be made to the successful candidate.
- 4.8 Where following interviews the Senior Appointments Committee or the Chief Officer is of the view that there is no suitable candidate the post must be re-advertised.

5. Dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer

5.1 The Senior Appointments Committee is designated as the committee discharging, on behalf of the Council, the function of dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer. Full Council must, however, approve that dismissal before notice of dismissal is given to them.

5.2 Notice of dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer must not be given until:

(a) the Senior Appointments Committee has notified the Assistant Director HR that it wishes to dismiss the officer and any other particulars that the Senior Appointments Committee considers are relevant to the dismissal;

(b) the Assistant Director HR has notified every member of the Cabinet of:

(i) the fact that it wishes to dismiss the officer;

(ii) any other particulars relevant to the dismissal which the Senior Appointments Committee has notified to the Assistant Director HR;

(iii) the period within which any objection to the dismissal is to be made by the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet to the Assistant Director HR; and

(c) either:

(i) the Leader has within the period specified in the notice under subparagraph (b)(iii), notified the Assistant Director HR that neither they nor any member of the Cabinet has any objection to the dismissal;

(ii) the Assistant Director HR has notified the Senior Appointments Committee that no objection was received by them within that period from the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet;

(iii) the Senior Appointments Committee is satisfied that any objection received from the Leader within that period is not well founded or material. In this regard, where necessary, the advice of the Director of Legal and Democratic (or if appropriate an alternative legal adviser) should be sought.

5.3 Where following the above procedure there are no objections to the proposed dismissal or the objections are not upheld, the Senior Appointments Committee will:

(a) follow the procedure set out in paragraph 5.5; and

(b) recommend the dismissal to a meeting of Full Council

5.4 (a) This procedure applies if the Senior Appointments Committee proposes disciplinary action involving the dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer.

(b) Where this procedure applies, the Senior Appointments Committee will provide the Independent Persons Panel with the matters provided to members of the Cabinet and any other particulars relevant to the dismissal that the Senior Appointments Committee considers appropriate or that the Panel may reasonably require.

(c) The Independent Persons Panel will meet to consider what, if any, advice, views or recommendations to give to Full Council.

(d) The Council may pay such remuneration, allowances or fees to an Independent Person appointed to the Panel as it thinks appropriate but the payment must not exceed the level of remuneration, allowances or fees payable to that Independent Person in respect of their role as an independent person under the Localism Act 2011.

(e) Full Council will not meet to consider whether or not to approve the proposal of the Senior Appointments Committee to dismiss the officer until a period of at least 20 working days has elapsed from the appointment of the Independent Persons Panel.

(f) Before Full Council takes a vote at a meeting on whether or not to approve such a dismissal, they must take into account, in particular:

- (i) any advice, views or recommendations of the Independent Persons Panel;
- (ii) the conclusions of any investigation into the proposed dismissal; and
- (iii) any representations from the officer.

5.5 If Full Council approves the recommendation of the Senior Appointments Committee, then notice of dismissal can be issued. Where Full Council does not approve the recommendation, it shall indicate how it wishes to proceed.

6. Dismissal of Chief Officers (Statutory and Non-Statutory) and Deputy Chief Officers

6.1 Subject to the rules relating to the dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer, the Senior Appointments Committee is designated as the committee discharging, on behalf of the Council, the function of dismissal of Chief Officers (statutory and non-statutory) and the appropriate Chief Officer (statutory and non-statutory) is responsible for the dismissal of a Deputy Chief Officer.

6.2 Notice of dismissal of any such Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officer must not be given until:

- (a) the Senior Appointments Committee or Chief Officer has notified the Assistant Director HR of the name of the person they wish to dismiss;
- (b) any other particulars which the Senior Appointments Committee or Chief Officer considers are relevant to the dismissal;
- (c) The Assistant Director HR has notified every member of the Cabinet of:

- (i) the name of the person the Senior Appointments Committee or Chief Officer wishes to dismiss;
 - (ii) any other particulars relevant to the dismissal which the Senior Appointments Committee or Chief Officer has notified to the Assistant Director HR;
 - (iii) the period within which any objection to the dismissal is to be made by the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet to the Assistant Director HR; and
- (d) either:
- (i) the Leader has within the period specified in the notice under subparagraph (b)(iii), notified the Assistant Director HR that neither they nor any member of the Cabinet has any objection to the dismissal;
 - (ii) the Assistant Director HR has notified the Senior Appointments Committee or Chief Officer that no objection was received by them within that period from the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet;
 - (iii) the Senior Appointments Committee or Chief Officer is satisfied that any objection received from the Leader within that period is not well founded or material. In this regard, where necessary, the advice of the Director of Legal and Democratic (or if appropriate an alternative legal adviser) should be sought.

6.3 Where following the above procedure there are no objections to the proposed dismissal or the objections are not upheld, the Senior Appointments Committee or Chief Officer may issue the notice of dismissal.

7. Saving Regarding the Hearing of Appeals

- 7.1 Nothing in these rules shall prevent a person from serving as a member of any committee or sub-committee established by the Council to consider an appeal by:
- (a) another person against any decision relating to the appointment of that other person as a member of staff of the authority; or
 - (b) a member of staff of the authority against any decision relating to the dismissal of, or taking disciplinary action against, that member of staff.

8. Director of Public Health

- 8.1 The appointment of the Director of Public Health who is appointed in pursuance of section 73A(7) of the National Health Service Act 2006 (inserted by section 30 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012) is the responsibility of the Senior Appointments Committee, subject to the approval of the appointment by the Secretary of State for Health.

8.2 The Senior Appointments Committee may terminate the appointment of the Director of Public Health having followed the relevant procedures and following prior consultation with the Secretary of State for Health.

9. Policies and Procedures

9.1 The Council's suite of HR procedures (as updated from time to time) set out in more detail the procedures for managing Disciplinary; Capability; Health and Attendance; Redundancy and the expiry of Fixed Term Contract matters in compliance with the 2001 & 2015 Regulations, which set out some particular matters with relation to employment processes for Chief Officers.

9.6 Contract Procedure Rules

Part 1 – Introduction, Scope and Responsibilities

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These Rules are part of the Council's Constitution and apply to all procurement activities (the purchase of goods, services and works) undertaken by the Council. They must be read in conjunction with any other relevant laws, regulations, policies and/or procedures.
- 1.2. Anyone making procurement decisions on behalf of the Council must be familiar with these Rules.
- 1.3. These Rules are required by law and failure to comply with them could lead to disciplinary action. Officers have a duty to report breaches of these Rules to their line manager and/or the Monitoring Officer.
- 1.4. If there is any conflict between these Rules and relevant law, the legislation shall take precedence. The Council also reserves the right to consider the application of intervening government guidance when making decisions about the application of these Rules.

2. Basic Principles

- 2.1. Whether or not a procurement is subject to the UK Procurement Regulations, it must be conducted in accordance with the Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA). This means all procurements must be carried out in a fair, open and transparent way.
- 2.2. These Rules are designed to ensure that procurements:
 - (a) Achieve Value for Money for public money spent;
 - (b) Are consistent with the highest standards of integrity;
 - (c) Ensure fairness and transparency;
 - (d) Ensure that the Council complies with all legal requirements and established government and commercial codes of conduct;
 - (e) Comply with the Council's associated policies;
 - (f) Manage the Council's risk effectively;
 - (g) Are proportionate in regard to value and risk; and
 - (h) Ensure that Non-Commercial Considerations e.g. prior knowledge of contractors do not influence any contracting decision.

3. Advice and Guidance

- 3.1. Advice and guidance on all procurement activities equal to and above £100,000 must be sought in the first instance from the Purchasing Gateway Group (PGG).
- 3.2. Notwithstanding 3.1 above, advice and guidance can be obtained from the PGG by any officer who wishes to participate in a procurement activity of any value.
- 3.3. Advice on compliance with legislative requirements may be obtained from Legal Services, who will liaise with the Head of Procurement as necessary.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. Chief Officers

- (a) Chief Officers are responsible for all procurement activity in their Directorates. They must ensure sufficient oversight and governance is in place to satisfy themselves of compliance with these Rules;
- (b) Chief Officers must ensure that procurement activities are undertaken by authorised Officers who can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of these Rules and have the skills appropriate to the task.
- (c) Chief Officers must ensure that:
 - (i) Staff within their Directorates are adequately trained and that their procurements are in compliance with these Rules;
 - (ii) They have in place and keep up to date a scheme of delegation that records in writing what action officers in their Directorates are authorised to take under these Rules;
 - (iii) There is full budgetary provision for the contract and that the sources of funding are fully detailed before starting the procurement process;
 - (iv) Value for Money is achieved in all procurements within their Directorates;
 - (v) They keep a register of contracts completed by signature (rather than by the Council's Seal) within their Directorate and arrange for their safe keeping; and
 - (vi) They maintain records of all waivers or exemptions of these Rules.

4.2. Officers

- (a) The officer responsible for the procurement must comply with these Rules, the Financial Regulations and relevant legislation (including any treaties incorporated into UK law);

- (b) The officer is responsible for ensuring that agents acting on behalf of the Council must comply with these Rules;
- (c) Officers must keep records of all quotations, tender documentation and contracts, including those documents relating to unsuccessful bids and quotes in accordance with the relevant legislation and the Council's policy on the retention of documents;
- (d) Officers must ensure that the contracts for which they are responsible are effectively managed and monitored to ensure that they deliver the requirement as intended;
- (e) When any employee of the Council or of an external service provider may be affected by a transfer arrangement, the officer must ensure that TUPE issues are considered and obtain advice from Legal Services before proceeding with any procurement;
- (f) Where an officer has a potential conflict of interest with a supplier from whom a quotation/tender is being sought, the officer must declare this immediately to the Monitoring Officer. The officer may be required to withdraw from the procurement process;
- (g) Any officer who fails to declare a conflict of interest may be subject to disciplinary proceedings and sanctions and risks being prosecuted under the Bribery Act 2010;
- (h) Officers must ensure that no contract commences without a purchase order being raised for the goods, services and/or works in accordance with the provisions detailed in the Financial Procedure Rules.

5. Amendments to these Rules

- 5.1. The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Head of Procurement shall have the power to make incidental amendments from time to time to these Rules, to ensure that they remain consistent with legislation, the Council's organisational structure and generally with best practice.

6. Exemptions to the Rules

- 6.1. These Rules do not apply to the following transactions:

- (a) Any contracts entered through collaboration with another contracting authority and/or public body, where the person awarding the contract (the lead authority) can demonstrate the arrangements comply with the requirements for Value for Money and applicable legislation, including where relevant UK Procurement Regulations;

- (b) Employment contracts;
- (c) Land transactions to acquire or dispose of some interest in land, even if these also contain provisions relating to works, goods or services;
- (d) Lending or borrowing of money;
- (e) For existing goods, services or works where there is no genuine satisfactory alternative available such as public utility infrastructure providers, e.g. gas mains, sewerage and water supply.

7. Exceptions for Care Placements

7.1. Exceptions are granted for Adult Social Care and Children Care Placements when underpinned by the following tiered placing of contractual arrangements. This must be approved by the Chief Officer of the relevant Directorate:

- (a) Tier 1: Placements from Block Contracts – when a supplier is procured with guaranteed service levels and pre-agreed prices;
- (b) Tier 2: Placements made from a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) or Framework Agreement – must contain fixed or average rates. Tier 2 is utilised only when Tier 1 is unable to meet the required needs; or
- (c) Tier 3: Spot Placements – may be awarded when the required needs cannot be met by Tier 1 or Tier 2 and if the placement is urgent, complex and unique to the receiver of the care. Tier 3 Placements must be reviewed by the Chief Officer and will form part of a quarterly report to the relevant Member detailing the following:
 - (i) The nature, extent and value of spot contracts entered into in the previous quarter;
 - (ii) The specific rationale for utilising Rule 7.1; and
 - (iii) Append a summary of the previous instances where this Rule is used in the current financial year.

8. Requesting A Waiver from these Rules

8.1. Subject to the UK Procurement Regulations and any other relevant legislation, an officer may seek a waiver where they are unable to comply with these Rules.

8.2. Officers must follow the procedure for obtaining a waiver detailed in Appendix 3.

- 8.3. A waiver will only be granted in exceptional or unavoidable circumstances. Lack of appropriate planning will not be considered as sufficient justification to be granted a waiver.
- 8.4. In cases of emergency and where there is a significant risk of danger to life, or damage to property or a major impact on the Council or its service users, the Monitoring Officer or their nominee may choose to waive these Rules.
- 8.5. Where a waiver is to be used, the waiver must be formally completed and signed prior to entering into any contract for goods, services and/or works.

9. Prevention of Corruption and Conflicts of Interest

- 9.1. The officer responsible for the procurement must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct and must not invite or accept any gift or reward in respect of the award or performance of any contract.
- 9.2. Officers must have regard to and comply with the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy when undertaking a procurement exercise.
- 9.3. Officers are advised that any inappropriate behaviour that is deemed contrary to the Bribery Act 2010 could result in dismissal and the matter may be reported to the police.

10. Grants

- 10.1. Where a grant is received or issued please refer to the Council's policy on Grants.

11. Recommended Reading

- 11.1. It is strongly recommended that Officers and Chief Officers read the following documents in conjunction with these Rules:
- (a) Financial Procedure Rules;
 - (b) Procurement Best Practice Guide;
 - (c) The Council's policies and processes relevant to the procurement;
 - (d) Contract Register guidance, system instructions and protocol.

Part 2 – Pre-Procurement

1. Competition Requirements

- 1.1. Officers must establish the Total Value of the procurement for the life of the contract, including any potential extension periods which may be awarded.
- 1.2. Officers shall not sub-divide goods, services and/or works that could reasonably be treated as a single contract to avoid these Rules, thresholds, or any legal requirements.
- 1.3. Based on the Total Value, Quotations or Tenders must then be invited in line with the financial thresholds detailed in Appendix 2.

2. Steps Prior to Procurement

- 2.1. Where a procurement is required, the officer must establish:
 - (a) The contract term: this must not exceed four years in total (including any optional extension period(s)) unless otherwise agreed by the PGG.
 - (b) The size, scope, term and specification of the goods, services and/or works required;
 - (c) The duration of the contract that will provide the most economically advantageous outcome for the Council. This decision must be made in advance of the procurement process and done in accordance with these Rules;
 - (d) That they have the appropriate authority to start the procurement activity under the scheme of delegation;
 - (e) That they have the relevant budget approval to cover the Total Value of the contract; and
 - (f) A project plan to allow sufficient time for Bidders to prepare and submit Tenders or Quotations to maximise the opportunity for Value for Money to be achieved.
- 2.2. The officer must consult the PGG where the procurement is of an innovative or specialist nature or poses a new potential material risk to the Council, to discuss the potential risks to ensure they are adequately mitigated.

3. Pre-Tender Market Research and Consultation

- 3.1. The officer responsible for the procurement may consult potential Suppliers in general terms about the nature, level and standard of the contract packaging and other relevant matters, provided this does not prejudice any potential Bidder.
- 3.2. The officer must not adopt any technical advice in the preparation of an Invitation to Tender or Quotations from anyone where this may prejudice the equal treatment of all potential Bidders or otherwise distort competition.

- 3.3. Pre-tender consultation with service users on what is being procured is encouraged and is considered good practice to ensure the Specification correctly addresses what is required.
- 3.4. When considering undertaking any of these activities, the officer must seek advice from the Procurement Team.

4. Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

- 4.1. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires the Council to consider at the pre-procurement stage:
 - (a) How the proposed procurement might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area;
 - (b) How the Council may act with a view to securing that improvement in conducting the process of the procurement; and
 - (c) Whether it should undertake any community consultation on the above.
- 4.3. Officers must consult the Procurement Team for advice on specifying requirements under Social Value and how to evaluate this as a part of any bids received.

5. Corporate Contracts and Corporate Frameworks

- 5.1. The Council has a selection of Corporate Contracts, Frameworks and DPSs created by the Procurement Team for goods, services and works where the prices and terms have been negotiated to achieve Value for Money for the Council as a whole.
- 5.2. Before undertaking a procurement exercise, officers must check if a Corporate Contract, Framework or DPS exists and, where they do, the officer must use the relevant Corporate Contract, Framework or DPS.
- 5.3. Where the officer is conducting a collaborative procurement, the Council's financial value alone will be the amount the officer must use to determine the Key Decision threshold.

6. Framework Agreements and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS)

- 6.1. Any officer intending to use an externally-let Framework Agreement or DPS must ensure that they have approval from the Procurement Team before they call-off any goods, services and/or works from the Framework or DPS.

7. Contracts Reserved for Social Enterprises and Mutuals

- 7.1. Officers must contact the Procurement Team and Legal Services for advice where they are considering using this procedure.

8. Consultants, Temporary Agency and/or External Subject Matter Experts

8.1. Officers must follow the Council's Consultants Policy and Agency Worker Policy published on the Council's intranet when considering the appointment of consultants or external subject matter experts to assist in the preparation of procurement documents and/or providing advice throughout the procurement process. The procurement of consultants and/or external subject matter experts must be conducted in accordance with the appropriate procurement rules, as determined by cost threshold.

9. Setting up a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

9.1. Officers must contact the Procurement Team and Legal Services for support and advice if they intend to create a DPS.

10. Electronic Auctions

10.1. Officers must contact the Procurement Team and Legal Services for support and advice if they intend to enter into an Electronic Auction.

11. Concession Contracts

11.1. The Council may wish to enter into contracts where the Supplier receives payment from a third party, or where the Supplier receives non-monetary benefits. Such contracts must be let in accordance with these Rules and where relevant the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016.

11.2. Officers must contact Legal Services for advice if they intend to enter into such contracts.

Part 3 – Procurement Thresholds

1. General Requirements

1.1. Please see Appendix 2 for the procurement thresholds and the process to be followed.

2. Purchases over the Regulation Threshold

2.1. All goods, services and/or works over the Regulation Threshold are covered by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. These Regulations govern the processes for advertising, timetabling and Supplier selection.

2.2. The latest thresholds and regulations can be found at the following site:
<https://www.ojec.com/Thresholds.aspx>.

- 2.3. Officers must consult with the Procurement Team and Legal Services before commencing the procurement or any soft market testing over the Regulation Threshold.
- 2.4. The officer, in collaboration with the Procurement Team, shall decide the procurement process which is most appropriate (e.g. quotation or another compliant competitive model) where the procurement is identified as falling in the scope of the Light Touch Regime in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and is under the Light Touch Regime threshold.

Part 4 – Procurement Documents

1. Invitations to Tender and Quotations

1.1. All Invitations to Tender or Quote must:

- (a) Clearly specify the goods, services or works that are required. The specification must describe the requirements in sufficient detail to ensure the submission of competitive bids which may easily be compared;
- (b) Include evaluation methodology, such as the selection and award criteria which details the cost and quality split;
- (c) Clearly and unambiguously specify the award procedure on which Tenders or Quotations will be evaluated, such as on the most economically advantageous tender;
- (d) Attach a copy of the contract terms and conditions that will apply;
- (e) Ensure that the same information is issued or made available to Bidders at the same time and on the same terms;
- (f) Any additional information or amendments must be provided to the Bidders on the same basis; and
- (g) Quotations sought over £25,000 must follow the Council's formal Request For Quotation (RFQ) quotation process as per guidance in the Procurement Best Practice Guide or the procurement pages of the intranet for quotations.

2. Local Providers

- 2.1. For requirements up to £100,000, the officer must obtain at least one quote from a local provider.

3. Advertising Requirements

- 3.1. Under these Rules it is not mandatory for procurements valued below £100,000 to be advertised unless the officer decides that the procurement would benefit from this. If the opportunity is advertised anywhere, it must also be advertised on Contracts Finder.
- 3.2. Procurements over £100,000 must be advertised on Contracts Finder and any other relevant media portal.
- 3.3. Procurements above the Regulation Threshold must be advertised in accordance with the UK Procurement Regulations.
- 3.4. Contracts valued over £5,000 must be recorded on the Contract Register.

4. Submission of Tenders or Quotations

- 4.1. Bidders must be given sufficient time to prepare and submit a proper Tender or Quotation, consistent with the urgency and complexity of the contract requirements.

5. Late Tenders

- 5.1. Late Tenders or Tenders that are not submitted in accordance with these Rules will be disqualified unless approved by the Monitoring Officer.

6. Evaluation

- 6.1. Tenders and Quotations must be evaluated in accordance with the pre-determined evaluation criteria set out in the procurement documents.
- 6.2. The evaluation must be carried out by a panel consisting of the officer and at least one other officer of appropriate seniority, supported and moderated by the Procurement Team.
- 6.3. If, despite all reasonable efforts having been made to obtain the required minimum number of responses, fewer respond to the Council's requirement, then the procurement may progress with the Bidders who have provided a valid response.
- 6.4. The officer must keep a record of the efforts made to obtain the minimum number of responses.
- 6.5. The officer must retain the results of the Tender evaluation.
- 6.6. Officers shall ensure the successful Bidder has any required insurance cover in place before performance of the contract begins and shall further ensure, at appropriate intervals, that such cover is maintained by the Supplier throughout the contract period.

7. Clarification Procedures

- 7.1. Officers may ask Bidders for clarifications to any of the details submitted as part of their bid. However, such clarifications must not result in a significant change to the bid or related documentation.
- 7.2. Prior to making any request for clarifications from a Bidder, the officer must discuss this with the Procurement Team, where the requirement is over £100,000.
- 7.3. Full written records of all clarification decisions must be made and retained by the officer. These records must be provided to the Procurement Team, where the Procurement Team have led the procurement.

8. Notification of Award

- 8.1. Following contract award the officer must inform successful and unsuccessful Bidders simultaneously in writing whether or not their bid was successful.
- 8.2. Where the value of the contract is over £25,000, the officer must also publish an award notice on Contracts Finder.
- 8.3. Where a Tender is subject to the UK Procurement Regulations, the Procurement Team will adhere to the relevant Standstill Period.
- 8.4. If a Bidder requests in writing a further debrief in relation to the award, the lead officer is responsible for providing the appropriate response.
- 8.5. Any complaints from unsuccessful Bidders must be provided in writing. Officers must submit these to the Procurement Team for review, in order that appropriate action may be taken.

9. Legal Challenge

- 9.1. If there is a formal legal challenge to the award of a contract, then the officer must immediately notify their Chief Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Head of Procurement.

Part 5 – Contract Formalities

1. Principles Relevant to Contracts at all Values

- 1.1. Every contract must be in writing and must clearly state:
 - (a) The goods, services and/or works to be provided;
 - (b) The start and end date or the means by which these are to be ascertained;
 - (c) The agreed programme of delivery;

- (d) The price and terms of payment;
- (e) All other terms that are agreed, e.g. insurance;
- (f) Exit procedures, for when the contract comes to its natural end; and
- (g) Termination procedures for early termination of the contract, including when the Supplier has not fulfilled its contractual obligations.

2. Execution of Contracts

- 2.1. Contracts let under the UK Procurement Regulations may only be signed/sealed after the mandatory standstill period has elapsed without any challenge being received.
- 2.2. Contracts may only be executed by officers with delegated powers, as detailed below:
 - (a) Up to £250,000 shall be in writing signed by the Chief Officer;
 - (b) Over £250,000 but less than £1,000,000 shall be in writing and signed by the appropriate Chief Officer and the s.151 Officer or their nominee;
 - (c) £1,000,000 or over shall be in writing sealed by affixing the Common Seal of the Council and attested by the Director of Legal and Democratic or their nominee.
- 2.3. If, after acceptance of its Tender or Quotation, a Supplier fails within a reasonable period of time and without reasonable justification to sign or otherwise enter into a formal written contract, the Council shall reserve the right to withdraw the contract from the Supplier. This decision shall be made by the relevant Chief Officer in consultation with Legal Services.

3. Commencement of Contracts

- 3.1. No supply of goods, services or works shall commence until all contract documents have been completed.

4. Social Impact Bonds

- 4.1. Details of Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) are available in the Financial Regulations.

5. Contract Register

- 5.1. The Procurement Team will provide access to the Contract Register of current contracts and framework agreements. The Contract Register will be published on the Council's website in accordance with Local Government Transparency Code 2015.
- 5.2. The Procurement Team will enter any contracts they have led the procurement process for on the Contract Register. However, it is the officer's responsibility to ensure these details are correct and updated with any changes and/or extensions.

6. Letters of Intent

- 6.1. Letters of Intent shall only be used in exceptional circumstances and where approved by the Chief Officer in consultation with Legal Services.

7. Bonds and Parent Company Guarantees

- 7.1. Performance bonds or parent company guarantees may be required:
- (a) Where the Total Value of the contract exceeds £500,000; and
 - (b) Where it is proposed to make stage or other payments in advance of receiving the whole of the subject matter of the Contract; and
 - (c) Where there is concern about the stability of the Supplier, regardless of value.
- 7.2. Where a performance bond or parent company guarantee is required, this must be clearly stated in the Invitation to Tender or Quotation and must be in place before the contract is completed by the Council.
- 7.3. Where a bidder or bidders appeal the Councils request for a performance bond or parent company guarantee, an exception can be made if agreed in writing with the Chief Officer and s.151 Officer.

8. General Requirements

- 8.1. During the contract period, the officer must monitor the overall performance of the contract closely to ensure any issues of under-performance are addressed as soon as possible and that the contract remains in-budget.

9. Contract Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 9.1. The Procurement Team will provide a high-level contract governance function that can offer a helicopter view of the Councils' contract management to ensure better strategic procurement delivery across the organisation. This is not a substitute for sound contract management and governance by the relevant officer, but seeks to nurture, support and enhance that function.
- 9.2. The Procurement Team must have sight of the final contract and everything that has been agreed between the officer and the Supplier, including:
- (a) Service Level Agreements; and
 - (b) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and/or Key Milestones.
- 9.3. Where the Supplier defaults on the Contract it shall be the duty of the officer to take appropriate action and, in the case of a significant default, to report any such action to the Chief Officer and Legal Services.

9.4. Officers shall ensure that Suppliers maintain adequate insurance for the duration of the contract period and shall verify this at appropriate intervals throughout the term.

10. Variations

10.1. Where a variation means that the value of a contract would exceed the relevant Regulation Threshold, or where there is any material change to the contract, the contract must be treated as a new procurement under these Rules.

10.2. A change will not be deemed material if the value of the modification is both below the Regulation Threshold and below 10% of the original contract value (15% for works) after any contract indexation.

10.3. Officers must consult with and gain the approval of Legal Services if they intend to make variations to their contracts.

10.4. All variations must be kept with the officer's signed copy of the contract and, once agreed, all variations on contracts with a Total Value of £5,000 or more must be noted on the Contract Register.

10.5. Officers must be satisfied that they have sufficient budget to cover any variation and that the variation will achieve Value for Money and be reasonable in all the relevant circumstances.

11. Assignments and Novations

11.1. Officers must contact Legal Services where it is proposed that an assignment or novation should take place.

12. Termination of Contract

12.1. Officers must consult with Legal Services if they are considering the early termination of their contracts.

Appendix 1 – Definitions, Abbreviations and Glossary

Term	Definition
Bidder	A potential Supplier, vendor or organisation who responds to an invitation to Tender or Quote or any person who asks or is invited to submit a Quotation or Tender.
Chief Officer	An officer(s) as defined in the Constitution.
Contract Register	A register managed by the Procurement Team that stores details of the Council's Contracts such as duration and expiry dates. The register is published on the Council's intranet.

Corporate Contract and/or Corporate Framework	Contract let by a central team in the Council (such as Procurement).
Financial Regulations	The financial regulations outlining officer responsibilities for financial matters issued by the Chief Finance Officer in accordance with the Constitution.
Framework Agreement	A formal tendered arrangement which sets out terms and conditions under which specific purchases can be made from the successful Bidders in unpredicted quantities at different times during the term of the Framework Agreement.
Invitation	Invitation to Tender or Quote in the form required by these Rules.
Light Touch Regime	Refers to social and other specific services covered by Part 2 Chapter 3, Section 7 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
Local	Areas within the West Northamptonshire boundary.
Non-Commercial Considerations	Those that are listed in section 17(5) of the Local Government Act 1988.
Officer	An officer of the Council designated by the Chief Officer to be responsible for undertaking the procurement exercise and for the administration of the contract to include ensuring compliance with its terms and conditions and implementation of any required variations.
Parent Company Guarantee	A Contract which binds the parent of a subsidiary company as follows: If the subsidiary company fails to do what it has promised under a Contract with the Council, they can require the parent company to do so instead.
Performance Bond	An agreement that if the Supplier does not do what it has promised under a contract with the Council, the Council can claim from the Bondsman the sum of money specified in the Bond (usually 10% of the contract sum). It is intended to protect the Council against a level of cost arising from the Suppliers failure to comply with the terms of the contract.
Procurement Best Practice Guidance	The relevant procurement guidance document issued by the Procurement Team.
UK Procurement Regulations	The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and any successor public regulations which specify in detail the procedures by which public authorities shall undertake their procurements.
Purchasing Gateway Group (PGG)	An identified group of officers, comprising the Head of Procurement, the Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer or their duly appointed representatives, that is responsible for reviewing, approving and advising on proposed procurements and procurement issues.
Quotation	A quotation of price and any other relevant matter (without the formal issue of an Invitation to Tender).
Regulation Threshold	The Total Value threshold at which PCR2015 public procurement directives must be applied. The current procurement thresholds and regulations can be found at the following site https://www.ojec.com/Thresholds.aspx

Request for Quotation	A formal quotation of price and any other relevant matter (without the formal issue of an Invitation to Tender).
Rules	These Contract Procedure Rules
Supplier	Any person or organisation, including companies or other bodies of persons providing, or seeking to provide, goods, services or works to the Council,
Tender	A Bidder's proposal submitted in response to an Invitation to Tender.
Total Value	<p>The whole of the value or estimated value (in terms of money or equivalent value) for a single purchase, whether or not the purchase comprises several lots or stages across the Council as a whole and whether or not it is to be paid or received by the Council or a discrete operational unit within the Council.</p> <p>The Total Value shall be calculated as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where the contract is for a fixed period, by taking the total price to be paid or which might be paid during the whole of the proposed contract period; 2. Where the contract is for an uncertain duration, by multiplying the monthly payment by forty-eight or the maximum permitted duration in months if less; 3. For nominated Suppliers and sub-contractors, the Total Value shall be the value of that part of the main contract to be fulfilled by the nominated Supplier or sub-contractor; 4. Where an in-house service provider is involved, by taking into account redundancy and similar/associated costs; and/or 5. In the case of a Framework Agreement, the estimated call off during the period of the contract.
TUPE	The Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.
Value for Money (VfM)	The most advantageous combination of cost, quality and sustainability to meet customer requirements, in accordance with the principles of the National Audit Office; Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness.

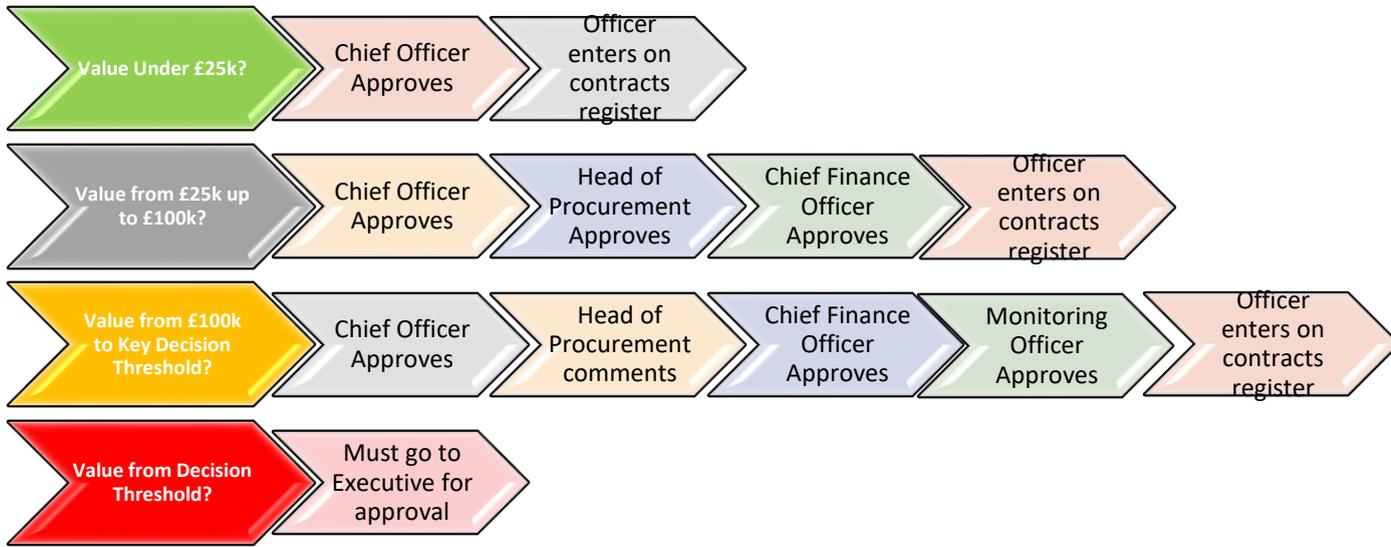
Appendix 2 – Summary of Procurement Thresholds

Value of Contract	Pre-Procurement Authorisation	Advertising	Procurement Process	Contract Execution
Under £5,000	Officer. If Key Decision, relevant Officer and Cabinet/Committee approval.	No requirement to advertise.	At least one written quotation required. Officers should ensure they achieve value for money	Contract terms issued via purchase order.

£5,000 to £25,000	Officer. If Key Decision, relevant Officer and Cabinet/Committee approval.	No requirement to advertise.	Seek to obtain at least three written Quotations (at least one from a Local provider).	Contract terms issued via purchase order. Contract must be published on the Contract Register.
£25,000 to £100,000	Officer. If Key Decision, relevant Officer and Cabinet/Committee approval.	No requirement to advertise.	Seek to obtain at least three formal quotations from the Council's RFQ process (at least one from a Local provider).	Written contract signed by one Chief Officer or Officer with appropriate authority to enter into a Contract. Standard terms approved by Legal Services. Contract must be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder
£100,000 to Threshold	Officer and the Procurement Team. If Key Decision, relevant Officer and Cabinet/Committee approval. Requirement to present requirement to PGG.	Advertising on Contracts Finder is mandatory.	Seek to obtain at least three formal quotations from the Council's RFQ process.	Written contract signed/sealed. Standard terms approved and contract prepared by Legal Services. Contract must be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder.
Above Threshold	Officer and Procurement Team.	All procurement Notices must	Procurement must be run in	Written contract signed/sealed.

	If Key Decision, relevant Officer and Cabinet/Committee approval. Requirement to present requirement to PGG.	be issued by the Procurement Team.	accordance with the Regulations.	Standard terms approved and contract prepared by Legal Services. Contract must be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder.
Framework Agreements	Officer (and Council's Procurement Team if over £100,000). If Key Decision, relevant Officer and Cabinet/Committee approval.	Not applicable	Follow call-off procedure within Framework Agreement. The number of Tenders will be determined by the Framework.	Written Contract created from Framework Agreement. Sign-off as per above thresholds. Contract must be published on the Contract Register and Contracts Finder.

Appendix 3 – Procurement Waiver Process Flowchart



9.7 Financial Procedure Rules

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In order to conduct its business efficiently, this council recognises the need to ensure that it has sound financial management policies in place and that they are strictly adhered to.
- 1.2 The Financial Procedure Rules provide the framework for managing the Council's financial affairs, in order to ensure that they are conducted in a sound and proper manner, constitute value for money and minimise the risk of legal challenge to the Council. They are an integral part of the Council's Constitution and must be used in conjunction with those sections of the Constitution that apply generally to the management of the Council's business and affairs
- 1.3 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that "every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs". The officer designated by the Council as having the statutory responsibility set out in Section 151 of the 1972 Act is the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).
- 1.4 The Financial Procedure Rules apply to every councillor, officer, person acting on the Council's behalf in undertaking Council business, and any employee of a commissioned service within any organisation partly or wholly owned by the Council.
- 1.5 The term 'officer' in this document refers to Council employees and employees within a commissioned organisation partly or wholly owned by the Council. The term 'Council' in this document refers to the Council and all commissioned organisations partly or wholly owned by the Council.
- 1.6 Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that all staff in their Service are aware of the existence, location and content of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and other internal regulatory documents and that they comply with them.
- 1.7 All financial decisions and decisions with financial implications must have regard to proper financial control. Any doubt as to the appropriateness of a financial proposal or correctness of a financial action must be clarified in advance of the decision or action with the CFO.
- 1.8 The CFO is responsible for reporting, where appropriate, breaches of the Financial Procedure Rules to the Chief Executive and to the Cabinet.
- 1.9 The Financial Procedure Rules shall only be suspended on the resolution of the full Council, or as varied by any part of the Scheme of Delegation approved by the Council or Executive as appropriate. A written record shall be kept if this was to occur.
- 1.10 The CFO is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Procedure Rules and submitting any additions or changes necessary to the full Council for approval.

2 Financial Management

- 2.1 Financial management covers all financial accountabilities in relation to the running of the council, including the Budget and Policy Framework. The process of financial management involves:
 - 2.1.1 Complying with statutory requirements
 - 2.1.2 Development and approval of policy and management frameworks, the Constitution and financial plans including the revenue and capital budgets
 - 2.1.3 Establishing protocols and standards
 - 2.1.4 Implementing policies, protocols and standards
 - 2.1.5 Monitoring compliance
 - 2.1.6 Maintaining records
 - 2.1.7 Reporting and providing advice
 - 2.1.8 Specific financial techniques and functions e.g. virements, year end balances, statements of account.

3 Responsibilities

- 3.1 This section of the Financial Procedure Rules provides an overview of the responsibility and accountability of officers and councillors in respect of financial management, governance and the use of Council resources.
- 3.2 All officers and councillors are responsible for ensuring that they use Council resources and assets entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. Consideration of value for money needs to be embedded in every financial decision made. These responsibilities apply equally to councillors and officers when representing the Council on outside bodies.
- 3.3 Failure to comply with these Regulations and associated policies, instructions and processes may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct, depending on the circumstances of the case in question and may well result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedures.
- 3.4 Any person charged with the use or care of the Council's resources and assets is responsible for reading the requirements within the Financial Procedure Rules. If anyone is unsure as to their obligations, they should seek advice from the CFO.
- 3.5 The financial instructions and processes that support these Regulations, as approved by the Chief Financial Officer, must be followed and carry the same weight as the Financial Regulations.
- 3.6 Any employee must report immediately to their manager, supervisor or other responsible officer any illegality, impropriety, serious breach of procedure or serious deficiency in the provision of service they suspect or become aware of. Employees are able to do this without fear or recrimination providing they act in good faith via

the Council's Whistle Blowing Policy. In such circumstances managers must record and investigate such reports and take appropriate action.

- 3.7 Compliance with any Anti-Fraud and Corruption policy, Code of Conduct for councillors or Employees which the council has in place is mandatory.

4 Head of Paid Service

- 4.1 The Head of Paid Service is the Chief Executive. They have responsibilities set out s.4 Local Government and Housing Act 1989. These include providing members with a report about the staffing resources that are required for the delivery of the Council's plans. The Chief Executive is also responsible for the corporate and overall strategic management of the Council as a whole. They must report to and provide information for the Cabinet, the full Council, Scrutiny committees and other committees.
- 4.2 They are responsible for establishing a framework for management direction, style and standards and for monitoring the performance of the organisation.

5 Monitoring Officer

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of financial conduct. They are also responsible for reporting any actual or potential breaches of the law or maladministration to the full Council and/or to the Cabinet.
- 5.2 They are also responsible for ensuring that procedures for recording and reporting key decisions are operating effectively. They must also ensure that Council Members are aware of decisions made by the Cabinet
- 5.3 The Monitoring Officer must ensure that executive decisions and the reasons for them are made public. They must also ensure that Council Members are aware of decisions made by Officers who have delegated executive responsibility.
- 5.4 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for advising all officers and councillors regarding where the authority to take a particular decision resides.
- 5.5 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for advising the Cabinet or full Council about whether a decision is likely to be considered contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Policy Framework.

6 Chief Finance Officer (CFO) (Section 151 Officer)

- 6.1 The responsibilities of this post are described in Part 9.2 of the Constitution. It has specific statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the council. This statutory responsibility cannot be overridden.
- 6.2 The CFO is responsible for the proper administration of the council's financial affairs and reports to Council and committees on the discharge of this responsibility. This includes:
- 6.2.1 Maintaining strong financial management underpinned by effective financial controls

- 6.2.2 Contribute to corporate management and leadership
 - 6.2.3 Providing financial information and advice
 - 6.2.4 Setting and monitoring compliance with financial management standards
 - 6.2.5 Advising on the corporate financial position
 - 6.2.6 Advising on the key financial controls necessary to secure sound financial management
 - 6.2.7 Preparing the revenue budget and capital programme
 - 6.2.8 Treasury management
 - 6.2.9 Leading and managing an effective and responsive financial service.
- 6.3 The CFO has a statutory responsibility for ensuring that adequate systems and procedures exist to account for all income due and expenditure made on behalf of the council and that controls operate to protect the council's assets from loss, waste, fraud or other impropriety. The CFO shall discharge that responsibility in part by the issue and maintenance of Financial Procedures and Operational Procedures with which all councillors and staff of the council shall comply.
- 6.4 The CFO is the 'responsible financial officer' for the purposes of Sections 114 and 114A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003.
- 6.5 Section 114 requires the CFO to make a report and inform the External Auditor if it appears that (full) Council, a committee or officers:
- 6.5.1 Has made, or is about to make, a decision which involves incurring unlawful expenditure;
 - 6.5.2 Has taken, or is about to take, an unlawful action which has resulted or would result in a loss or deficiency to the council; or
 - 6.5.3 Is about to make an unlawful entry in the council's accounts
- 6.6 Section 114A makes equivalent provision in respect of actions taken by or on behalf of the council. Under both sections the report must be sent to every Councillor as well as the External Auditor.
- 6.7 Section 114 also requires:
- 6.7.1 The CFO to nominate a properly qualified member of staff to deputise should they be unable to perform the duties under Section 114 personally.
 - 6.7.2 The council provide the CFO with sufficient staff, accommodation and other resources, including legal advice where necessary, to carry out the duties under Section 114 and make similar arrangements for the purposes of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006

- 6.8 The CFO will have overall responsibility for the operation of internal audit throughout the authority. Internal Auditors will operate as a management control by examining, evaluating and reporting upon the effective of internal financial and operational controls and the efficient use of the Authority's resources.
- 6.9 The CFO and Internal Audit shall have full and unrestricted access to all council assets, systems, accounts, contracts, documents, information, officers, and councillors.
- 6.10 The CFO is responsible for providing appropriate financial information to enable budgets to be monitored effectively. They must monitor and control the net expenditure of the council against budget allocations and report to the Cabinet on the overall position as appropriate.
- 6.11 The CFO is responsible for monitoring compliance with the virement scheme to ensure the scheme operates effectively and in accordance with the agreed budgetary and Policy Framework.
- 6.12 The CFO will consider and approve reports requesting virements between £10,000 and £500,000, in accordance with the scheme of virement (see section 9). Decisions on virements over £50,000 will be made in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.
- 6.13 Reference to the CFO within the Finance Procedure Rules includes those authorised by them to undertake the various functions concerned.

7.0 Chief Officers

- 7.1 Chief Officers are individually responsible to ensure that all staff in their Service are aware of the existence of the Council's Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules, and have systems of control in place to monitor compliance, with any non-compliance by either officers, or partners reported to the CFO.
- 7.2 They are accountable for the overall financial stewardship of all Council resources allocated to them, and must seek approval from the Cabinet for any actions likely to materially affect the Council's finances by virtue of being a key decision. In such instances, consultation with the CFO will also be necessary.
- 7.3 They must ensure that the CFO is supplied with all information they feel is necessary to meet their statutory obligations.
- 7.4 Chief Officers must ensure that the relevant Cabinet members are advised of the financial implications of all significant budget proposals and service changes, which have been previously agreed by the CFO and Chief Executive.
- 7.5 They are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and deliverability of all budget estimates, which should be congruent with the strategic priorities set out in their annual Business Plans submitted as part of the annual budget. These estimates are to be prepared in line with guidance and timelines issued by the CFO.
- 7.6 With regard to the in-year financial monitoring against budget, it is the Chief Officer's responsibility to ensure that there are suitably competent Budget Managers in place

within their Service who are aware of their budget allocation, including any savings requirement, as defined in the annual budget. These budget managers are also required to operate a robust system of control in order to monitor and report commitments and actuals throughout the year. This process will also ensure value for money decisions are made and that risk is minimised. Any non-compliance must be escalated to the CFO in a timely manner.

- 7.7 Each Chief Officer is responsible for ensuring that the CFO is consulted about any information provided to councillors, external partners or members of the public which concerns the finances of the Council and that they are to be given adequate time to comment in advance of the agenda / deadline date.
- 7.8 Committee reports shall only be submitted once the CFO has validated and agreed the financial aspects of the report. The onus is on the report sponsor to obtain the agreement of the CFO.
- 7.9 If a Chief Officer, having regard to the CFO's views, does not wish to amend a committee report, the CFO may require inclusion of their comments within the report before it is finalised.
- 7.10 Chief Officers may delegate decision making powers relating to financial management to their Deputy Chief Officer or below. A record of all such delegations must be kept by the officers concerned.
- 7.11 All Chief Officer Functions are described in the Scheme of Delegation, Part 9 of the Constitution.

8 Councillors and Officers

- 8.1 All officers and councillors will contribute to the general stewardship, honesty and integrity in the council's financial affairs and comply with these regulations and any system, financial procedure or policy relating to the financial management of the council.
- 8.2 Before making any decision or voting on any decision the person responsible shall consider the financial implications and the effect on the council's financial position.
- 8.3 councillors or officers shall bring to the attention of the CFO any act or omission that is contrary to the financial regulations and/or the financial procedures.
- 8.4 councillors and officers should maintain the highest standards of financial probity and provide information or explanations on matters within their responsibility to the Monitoring Officer, the Governance and Audit Committee, the CFO, and the council's internal and external auditors.
- 8.5 Any Chief Officer, Head of Service or councillor who is involved in, or who has an interest in, a transaction between the council and a third party shall declare the nature and extent of this interest to the CFO. These will be reported in the council's accounts in accordance with the Accountancy Standards Board (ASB) Reporting Standards and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Accounting Practice.

- 8.6 A Budget Manager is an officer with the overall responsibility of managing the commissioning of direct service or externalised service(s) for an area. This responsibility is specifically delegated to this Officer, using any document required by the Section 151 Officer or under the Part 9 Scheme of Delegation to Officers. A Budget Manager cannot delegate the overall responsibility for managing budgets under their jurisdiction. A Budget Manager must be an employee of the Authority.
- 8.7 A Project Manager, in relation to capital, is the Budget manager responsible for delivering a capital project.

9 The Full Council

- 9.1 Full Council is responsible for adopting and approving the principles of financial governance and approving the council's budgetary and Policy Framework within which committees and the Executive operate
- 9.2 The full Council is also responsible for monitoring compliance with related executive decisions and is responsible for approving procedures for recording and reporting decisions taken. This includes those key decisions delegated and decisions taken by the Council and its committees.

10 The Cabinet

- 10.1 West Northamptonshire Council operates a Leader and Cabinet model of Executive arrangements. The majority of financial decisions are taken by the Executive. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) the Leader can take all Executive decisions alone or with Cabinet in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules set out in part 5 of the Constitution. The Executive can take all decisions not specifically identified as non-executive within the Budget and Policy Framework as described in Part 3 of the Constitution.
- 10.2 The Cabinet also:
- (a) monitors revenue and capital spending against agreed limits
 - (b) agrees externally funded initiatives
 - (c) approves the commencement of tender processes where the value of the proposed contract is in excess of £500,000 or is otherwise a key decision
 - (d) approves the termination of contracts where the value is in excess of £500,000
 - (e) approves the introduction of charges, or changes to charges for services
 - (f) approves the acquisition, retention or disposal of assets with a value in excess of £500,000
 - (g) approves the write-off of individual debts deemed to be uncollectable over £25,000
 - (h) approves virements in excess of £500,000
- 10.3 Executive decisions can be exercised by the Leader, by the Leader and Cabinet, delegated to a committee of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet Portfolio Holder, an officer or joint committee.

11 The Audit and Governance Committee

- 11.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is charged with ensuring correct governance of the council.
- 11.2 The Committee will contribute to the development of and review of the effectiveness of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the annual budget and capital programme.
- 11.3 The Committee will consider reports from the internal and external auditors in respect of performance issues in relation to the Medium Term Financial Strategy or financial processes, where considered appropriate by the CFO.
- 11.4 The Committee is also responsible for approving the council's risk management policy statement and strategy and for reviewing the effectiveness of risk management.
- 11.5 The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for approving the Annual Statement of Accounts in accordance with the Account and Audit Regulations.

12 Regulatory committees

- 12.1 Regulatory committees include:

- 12.1.1 Licensing Committee

- 12.1.2 Planning Management Committee

- 12.2 Regulatory committees do not have delegated to them specific financial management responsibilities but due consideration must be given to the general stewardship, integrity and confidence in the council's financial affairs.

- 12.3 Decisions made by these committees could materially affect the council's financial position and/or expose the council to financial risk. The committees, and individual councillors, should ensure that proper consideration has been given to any exposure to risk in determining matters delegated to the committee.

13 Other committees

- 13.1 The Overview and Scrutiny committees has responsibility for the oversight of financial matters for the Council and for holding the Cabinet to account.
- 13.2 The Pension Committee sets the Pension Funds objectives and determines the appropriate strategies, policies and procedures for funding, investment, administration, communication, discretions, governance and risk management. This committee also has the power to manage any key matter pertaining to the Pension Fund.
- 13.3 Pensions Investment sub-committee implements the Pension Funds investment strategy and monitors fund performance against target.
- 13.4 West/North Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board has the responsibility for preparing the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

- 13.5 All Council, Cabinet and Committee functions and powers are described in the relevant section of the Constitution for the decision maker or in Scheme of Delegation to officers in Part 9 of the Constitution. All delegated functions within the Scheme of Delegation must be exercised within approved budgetary provision and abide by the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules.
- 13.6 The CFO is responsible for reviewing and monitoring all financial aspects of the Council's decision making.

14 Urgency Procedure

- 14.1 The Urgency Procedure is designed to deal with unexpected events which cannot be dealt with under the other clauses contained within Constitution, including these Financial Regulations and which require such urgent attention that they do not allow for referral to the next available committee meeting. Examples include significant financial expense following an accident or disaster, protecting the council against any legal challenge and the ability seek advantage from an opportunity which would otherwise disappear if immediate action is not taken.
- 14.2 The urgency procedure is only designed to deal with items costing in excess of £100,000, which are within our existing Policy Framework but which are not covered by the approved budget.
- 14.3 Items greater than £100,000 but less than £500,000 can be approved by the CFO (or Deputy CFO in their absence) after consultation with the Portfolio Member for Finance.
- 14.4 For sums over £500,000, the Chief Executive who has wider responsibilities for Emergencies as set out in the scheme of delegation in Part 9 of the Constitution will be responsible for deciding on applying the Urgency Procedure and will do so only on the advice of the CFO and in consultation with the Leader of Council and Portfolio Member for Finance (or in their absence their deputies). Expenditure over £500,000 outside the Budget should be reported to the next available ordinary Council meeting.
- 14.5 Under the above provisions, authorisation to approve such items will require a written report from the Chief Executive, countersigned by the CFO.
- 14.6 Reports approved under this scheme shall include not only the details under consideration but also the reasons why they need to be dealt with under the urgency procedure.
- 14.7 The introduction of new systems could fundamentally change the systems of control in some areas. The Council recognises that this may require a variation to the Regulations that cannot be achieved with Cabinet approval, due to time constraints. Therefore, the Chief Finance Officer may, in consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer approve temporary dispensation / amendment.
- 14.8 This scheme shall not be used for expenditure on items outside the council's existing Policy Framework or where, in the opinion of the CFO, the decision will result in significant ongoing expenditure.

15 Financial Strategies and Guidance

- 15.1 The CFO is responsible for developing/approving the Council's financial strategies, issuing advice, guidance and policies to underpin the Financial Procedure Rules that councillors, officers and others acting on behalf of the Council are required to follow.
- 15.2 The Council will have a number of key financial strategies and policies some of which are listed below, but this is not an exhaustive list;
 - 15.2.1 Contract Procedure Rules
 - 15.2.2 Medium Term Financial Plan
 - 15.2.3 Medium Term Capital Plan
 - 15.2.4 Risk Management Policy and Strategy
 - 15.2.5 Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
 - 15.2.6 Whistleblowing Policy
 - 15.2.7 Anti Money Laundering Policy
 - 15.2.8 Treasury Management Strategy (including the Investment Strategy, Prudential Indicators and MRP Policy)
 - 15.2.9 Financial procedures for schools (note: this is a collection of documents).
 - 15.2.10 Security and control of assets.

16 Medium Term Financial Planning and the Annual Budget

- 16.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) provides a four year overview of the Council's anticipated resources, expenditure commitments, and resulting savings requirement. The MTFP allows resources to be prioritised to achieve the vision set out in the Council Plan, which is underpinned by the Council's priority objectives included within individual Service Business Plans.
- 16.2 The MTFP, therefore, is the financial framework that informs the annual Budget setting process and is integral within the Council's business planning.
- 16.3 Various internal and external factors will influence the planning assumptions underpinning the MTFP and these include the following variables:
 - 16.3.1 corporate priorities
 - 16.3.2 levels of Council Tax
 - 16.3.3 likely impact on inflation in the current and future economic climate
 - 16.3.4 future Spending Reviews and funding allocations to councils
- 16.4 The Medium Term Financial Plan considers the following key underlying principles;

- 16.4.1 spending is aligned to the priority objectives set out in the Council Plan and each Service Business Plan
- 16.4.2 emerging pressures are managed within existing approved resources in the first instance
- 16.4.3 future liabilities are anticipated
- 16.4.4 savings proposals are supported by project plans and the impact on service delivery is clear
- 16.4.5 funding forecasts are prudent
- 16.4.6 exit plans are formulated for specific grant funded areas to ensure that funding withdrawal does not lead to revenue budget pressures
- 16.4.7 capital and revenue planning is integrated to ensure implications are fully anticipated
- 16.4.8 earmarked reserves are sufficient to address risks identified in future years
- 16.5 The CFO will set an annual timetable to enable the development of the MTFP, Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for the consideration of Cabinet and approval by the full Council.
- 16.6 The integrated process of business planning and the development of budget proposals shall be prepared by Chief Officers in the form required by the CFO, in accordance within the agreed timetable, so information can be examined and challenged before submission to the Cabinet.
- 16.7 Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring;
 - 16.7.1 the completion of integrated business and financial plans
 - 16.7.2 the development of sufficient budget proposals as instructed by the CFO, to ensure the Council can set a balanced Budget
 - 16.7.3 that all budget proposals are lawful and that the necessary consultation has taken place, subject to approval with the relevant Portfolio Holder
 - 16.7.4 that all existing services and all new budget proposals demonstrate value for money
 - 16.7.5 external funding opportunities are fully explored
 - 16.7.6 the availability of an annually updated list of fees and charges
- 16.8 The MTFP will cover the annual budget year, plus at least three future years. These documents will be developed and approved in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework set out at Part 4 (c) of the constitution.

17 Medium Term Capital Strategy

- 17.1 Investment in capital assets shapes future service delivery and creates future financial commitments. The Medium Term Capital Programme is laid out within the Council's Capital Strategy and is at least a four-year programme of estimated capital expenditure and associated funding.
- 17.2 The Cabinet will receive proposals for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme and will submit a proposed programme (including block provisions where appropriate) to the full Council for approval. The programme will include all capital schemes including those proposed to be financed from revenue resources or external funding sources.
- 17.3 In year, the CFO may approve new schemes estimated to cost less than £100,000, and the Cabinet may approve new schemes estimated to cost less than £500,000, which have not previously been included in the Capital Programme. New schemes estimated to cost more than £500,000 must be approved by full Council.
- 17.4 Before a scheme in the Medium Term Capital Programme receives final approval from the Cabinet to proceed, Chief Officers must put forward to Cabinet their recommendation based on a Capital Programme Board project appraisal covering the following elements as a minimum requirement:
- 16.13.1 Description
 - 16.13.2 Justification
 - 16.13.3 Deliverable outcomes
 - 16.13.4 Feasibility study/options appraisal
 - 16.13.5 Financial analysis including revenue implications and appropriate measures of investment appraisal
 - 16.13.6 Budget including life cycle cost
 - 16.13.7 Project plan
 - 16.13.8 Risk evaluation
 - 16.13.9 Source of funding
- 17.5 Capital Programme Board approval must include sign off by the CFO, the Chief Officer for Capital and Proper, or delegated officers as directed.
- 17.6 Any officer proposing to award or vary a contract for works, goods or services in connection with a scheme must refer to the Contract Procedure Rules.

18 Forecasting and Monitoring

18.1 Revenue

- 18.1.1 The financial management and budgetary control of each Service budget is the overall responsibility of the appropriate Chief Officer.

18.1.2 Each Chief Officer must ensure that there is a designated Budget Manager who is accountable to the Assistant Director for the detailed management and financial monitoring of all budgets. The CFO should be notified of any changes to Budget Managers, so that all budgets continue to have a named manager at all times.

18.1.3 Chief Officers need to ensure that expenditure is contained within approved budget allocations, there is a robust control environment and that accurate financial forecasting is completed on a monthly basis within the Council's financial system.

18.1.4 The CFO will take budget monitoring reports to Cabinet and the relevant Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis. These reports will contain updates on both revenue and capital budgets as well as any management actions being taken where variances have been identified from these reports.

18.2 Capital

18.2.1 The financial management and budgetary control of each Capital Scheme is the overall responsibility of the appropriate Chief Officer.

18.2.2 Each Chief Officer must ensure that there is a designated Budget Manager who is accountable to their Assistant Director for the detailed management and financial monitoring of all Capital Schemes. The CFO should be notified of any changes to Budget Managers, so that all capital budgets continue to have a named manager at all times.

18.2.3 Budget Managers must submit regular monitoring returns in line with their Budget Management responsibilities and make the CFO aware of slippage in scheme costs between financial years at the earliest point possible, in order to support the Council's Treasury Management.

18.2.4 There is no authority for any officer to overspend their allocated budget and if there are variations in contract costs when compared with the provision in the Medium Term Capital Programme, the relevant Officer must alert the CFO.

18.2.5 Chief Officers must seek cabinet approval, following consultation with the CFO, for any proposed amendment to an approved capital scheme.

18.2.6 The CFO will report to the Cabinet on the monitoring of the Council's approved Capital schemes, including projected expenditure and income.

18.2.7 Officers must ensure that no contracts or commitments are entered into without project approval or scheme of delegation's authority provided.

18.2.8 Where the replacement of capital assets is financed by insurance monies, Chief Officers may authorise additional capital expenditure subject to subsequent report to the Cabinet and amendment to the Medium Term Capital Programme.

19 Virements (Revenue & Capital)

19.1 A virement is the balanced transfer of spending power [or budget] from one place to another, i.e. the overall budget does not change. Virements should support the Council's policies and not result in enhanced service levels or budget commitments beyond the base budget. A virement should not be used for cosmetic purposes within the same budget code. Virements can be revenue or capital in nature.

19.2 Virements will only apply to a current year's revenue or capital budget, and should not involve:

- a. a new policy or policy change
- b. an increasing commitment in future years that cannot be contained within existing approved budget allocations.

19.3 Virements will not be permitted from:

- a. Capital to revenue, capital charges and financing costs
- b. Interest earnings and income generated from investments
- c. Government grants and grant related expenditure to other payments
- d. Inter-authority payments
- e. Ring fenced grants

19.4 Transfers from a capital project should not materially limit the approach or scope of the capital project, but should arise from cost reductions in progressing the scheme e.g. arising through the tendering process, also a capital virement may only apply to a scheme which has been admitted to the approved capital programme.

19.5 Where it is intended that the virement will affect future years then this must be built into the base budget through the Medium Term Financial Planning process.

19.6 Virements up to £100,000 cumulative require CFO approval.

19.7 Virements between £100,000 to £500,000 require agreement with the CFO in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder.

19.8 Virements in excess of £500,000 require Cabinet approval.

20 Carry Forward of Budget between Financial Years

20.1 Revenue budget not utilised by the end of the financial year will not normally be transferred to the following year, except in exceptional circumstances approved by the CFO.

21 Maintenance of Reserves

21.1 The Council must determine the level of general reserves it wishes to maintain when setting the Budget. Reserves must be sufficient to meet unexpected events and protect the Council from over spends should they occur. Earmarked reserves may also be established for specific purposes.

21.2 The CFO will advise the Council on the levels of reserves that it is prudent to maintain, and will account for the Council's reserves in accordance with the Reserves Policy and relevant Codes of Practice, ensuring the purpose and usage of reserves is clearly identified.

22 Closure of Accounts

22.1 The CFO is responsible for the timely production and publication of the Council's final accounts in accordance with the relevant accounting policies, standards and statute.

22.2 The CFO shall produce and circulate to all relevant officers of the Council a set of guidance notes for the production of final accounts. These notes shall detail the timetable for the final accounts production, the information and action required from Services and any other details necessary to ensure that the responsibilities under this paragraph are properly discharged. Chief Officers must comply with accounting guidance provided, and supply information when required.

22.3 The CFO is responsible for establishing a good professional working relationships with the Council's external auditors and must satisfy any reasonable requests for information with regard to the Councils financial affairs.

22.4 The Local Audit and Accountability Act grants the Council's external auditors the right to inspect any document that they deem necessary for the purpose of performing their duties.

22.5 The CFO shall present the Statement of Accounts for the year to the Council's external auditor and Audit and Governance Committee within the agreed timescales.

22.6 The CFO and the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee are responsible for signing the annual accounts to confirm that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position.

22.7 The CFO will hold copies of the Council's audited Statement of Accounts, including the external auditors signed certificate and opinion.

23 Banking

23.1 The CFO will be responsible for the opening of all bank accounts in the name of, and on behalf of, the Council. No employee of the Council shall open any bank (or equivalent) account on the Council's behalf or in its name without the express agreement of the CFO.

23.2 The CFO will ensure that sound, adequate arrangements are in place for the safe and efficient operation of all its bank accounts, and will effect, or cause to be effected, proper and timely reconciliations.

23.3 All investments of money under its control shall be made in the name of the Authority unless otherwise approved by the CFO.

23.4 All securities, being the property of, or in the name, of the Authority, or its nominees, and the title deeds of all property in its ownership, shall be held in the custody of the CFO or under arrangements agreed by them.

23.5 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Authority.

24 Financial Accounting and Systems

24.1 The Council's financial accounting systems is required to provide data that is accurate and adequate for the published final accounts and for the provision of management information for the Council to conduct its business affairs in an efficient and effective manner; as such all officers are responsible for ensuring that financial information is accurate, consistent and delivered in a timely manner.

24.2 The CFO is responsible for keeping the principal accounting records for all services of the Council.

24.3 The CFO will;

24.3.1 determine accounting policies, systems and procedures and the form of financial records and statements in accordance with statute and best practice, informed by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs); and International Accounting Standards (IAS)

24.3.2 provide guidance and advice on all accounting matters

24.3.3 monitor accounting performance to ensure an adequate standard for all services

24.3.4 certify all financial returns, grant funding applications and claims and other periodic financial reports required of the Council

24.3.5 be required to approve the development, acquisition and implementation of all financial IT systems

24.4 Each Chief Officer is required to;

24.4.1 implement accounting procedures and adopt the form of financial records and statements as determined by the Chief Financial Officer

24.4.2 obtain the approval of the Chief Financial Officer prior to introducing or changing the form or method of existing accounting systems and procedures, financial records or statements.

24.4.3 complete and pass to the Chief Financial Officer financial returns and other financial reports requiring certification in good time

24.4.4 keep a proper segregation of duties for staff with financial responsibilities.

24.4.5 ensuring that their staff receive relevant financial training and guidance that has been approved by the CFO.

24.4.6 ensuring that systems which provide a feed into financial systems and reporting are maintained on an accurate and timely basis.

24.4.7 ensuring a complete management/audit trail is maintained, to ensure financial transactions can be traced from the accounting records to the original document, and vice versa.

25 Procurement Arrangements

25.1 All Council procurement activity and contract/supplier management must adhere to the Contract Procedure Rules set out in Part 9.6 of the Constitution and any associated guidance to officers which set out the rules and procurement thresholds for buying, renting, and leasing of goods, services and works for the Council.

26 Orders for Goods and Services

26.1 Each Chief Officer shall be responsible for all orders issued from their Service for goods or for services rendered. Official orders must be issued for all work, goods or services to be supplied to the Council, except periodical payments, petty cash purchases, acceptable purchases under the Corporate Credit Card (GPC) policy or such other exceptions as may be approved. Before orders are made the authorised officer must ensure:

26.1.1 that there is adequate budget provision before committing expenditure;

26.1.2 any necessary Chief Officer or Cabinet approvals have been obtained as set out in the Council's Contract Procedure Rules or these financial procedure rules

26.2 If goods are to be ordered on behalf of another Service then a written requisition must be received from the Chief Officer of that Directorate, authorised by them or one of their nominated officers.

26.3 Official orders shall be in a form approved by the CFO and are to be approved only by nominated officers authorised by the Chief Officer.

26.4 Each order shall conform to the policies of the Council with respect to procurement and any standardisation of supplies and materials.

27 Payment of Account

27.1 The Chief Officers are responsible to ensure that all payments made by the Council are:

27.1.1 lawful;

27.1.2 properly authorised by an appropriate officer

27.1.3 within the amount provided in the Council's budget

27.2 All invoices shall be retained for at least 6 years. In the case of invoices relating to grant claims these must be kept until after the grant claim has been audited even if this exceeds 6 years.

- 27.3 Each designated Officer shall as soon as possible after 31st March in each year notify the CFO of all outstanding expenditure relating to the previous financial year which has not been accrued for within the financial ledger.
- 27.4 Where grants can be claimed on expenditure incurred, Chief Officers must be aware of the appropriate grant conditions and ensure that payments meet these conditions with regard to types of expenditure, payment date, etc.
- 27.5 The CFO is responsible for approving and reviewing the allocation of individual employee's financial limits for GPC usage, Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable transactions.
- 27.6 Each Chief Officer is responsible for ensuring that the list of GPC holders and purchase approvers is updated in a timely manner and that all users and approvers are aware of the GPC User Guide, which sets out the rules of usage. The GPC holders, their individual approval limits and the GPC approvers should be subject to an annual review by each Chief Officer and the CFO.
- 27.7 The Accounts Payable and Receivable transactional approval limits are administered by the Council's financial system (ERP Gold) which assigns a financial approval limit to an individual employee based on the seniority of their job role.
- 27.8 Any change to these limits requires the agreement of the Chief Officer and CFO.
- 27.9 The table below sets out the Council's Accounts Payable and Receivable approval limits. These are distinct from the limits of financial delegation set out in Part 9 of the constitution and the key decision threshold set out in Part 5 of the constitution.

Transaction Type	Budget Support TIER4	Budget Manager (Proj Mger for Capital) TIER4	Head of Service TIER3	Assistant Director TIER2	Corporate Director TIER1	Chief Executive TIER0	Section 151 Officer
Official order for procurement of goods, services, grants, benefits	Up to £5k	Up to £200k	Up to £500k	Up to £1m	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Sales order invoices	Up to £5k	Up to £200k	Up to £500k	Up to £1m	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Credit Note Approval	Up to £5k	Up to £200k	Up to £500k	Up to £1m	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Write Off Authority - Non Adult Social Care Debt	n/a	Up to £2k	Up to £5k	Up to £5k	Up to £5k	Up to £5k	Up to £25k

Write Off Authority - Adult Social Care Debt Only	n/a	Up to £2k	Up to £2k	Up to £2k	Up to £5k	Up to £5k	Up to £25k
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27.10 Where operational approval to manage the establishment and associated reimbursement of staff travel and subsistence is required at a potentially lower level than a Budget Manager, this will be approved using the HR position approval hierarchy within ERP Gold.

27.11 All approvers are responsible to ensure they have undertaken the necessary financial due diligence required, before approving any transactions with a financial consideration.

28 Payments to Employees and councillors

28.1 All staff must be appointed in accordance with the Council's recruitment policies.

28.2 The CFO is responsible for the arrangements for salary and pension payments to all current, former staff and for payment of allowances to councillors. The key areas of responsibility are:

28.2.1 arranging and controlling the secure and reliable payment of salaries, compensation, other emoluments and allowances to existing and former employees.

28.2.2 recording and making arrangements for the accurate and timely payment of tax, pension contributions and other deductions.

28.2.3 ensuring there are adequate arrangements for administering pensions matters on a day-to-day basis.

28.2.4 advising Chief Officers, in the light of guidance issued by appropriate bodies and relevant legislation, on all taxation issues that affect the Council.

28.3 Chief Officers are responsible for:

28.3.1 ensuring appointments are made in accordance with the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy

28.3.2 notifying the CFO of all appointments, terminations or variations which may affect the pay or pension of an employee or former employee, in the form and to the timescale required by the CFO

28.3.3 ensuring that adequate and effective systems and procedures are operated to ensure that payments to staff are made accurately, timely and to bona fide employees

28.3.4 ensuring that payroll transactions are processed only through the payroll system. Chief Officers should give careful consideration to the employment status of individuals employed on a self-employed consultant or subcontract basis.

29 Income

- 29.1 All budget managers are responsible for raising and collecting income in a timely and accurate manner.
- 29.2 Wherever possible services should be billed and paid for in advance and no service delivered until payment has been received.
- 29.3 There are two types of income, income and un-invoiced income, the requirements of these income streams are set out below:

30 Cash/Uninvoiced income

- 30.1 Where monies are received for a service at the point of delivery this income should be treated as un-invoiced income.
- 30.2 A record should be maintained of all individual payments, including the amount, time and date of the receipt. This should be compared to the income held, with appropriate segregation of duties, to ensure all income is banked and verified. Verification of records should be by an appropriate second officer.
- 30.3 Cash handling should be kept to a minimum. Officers should only collect income as cash when other payment routes are not available, and must put in place additional controls if any income is to be collected as cash, to ensure that;
 - 30.3.1 officers are appropriately trained in income collection, accounting and cash handling arrangements
 - 30.3.2 sufficient separation of duties is in place, in particular between billing income, processing payments and banking payments
 - 30.3.3 official receipts are available on request for payments made in person
 - 30.3.4 proper records are kept
 - 30.3.5 all money received is banked as soon as practicable. All insurance limits on safes shall be adhered to and all cash/cheques shall be banked no later than one week after receipt
 - 30.3.6 VAT is properly accounted for
 - 30.3.7 where it is necessary for cash to be held prior to it being paid into the Council's bank account, it should be recorded and kept in an appropriate secure environment
 - 30.3.8 security of staff shall be maintained when cash collections are involved
- 30.4 Personal cheques must not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

31 Invoiced Income

- 31.1 Invoiced income falls into two categories, payments in advance and payments in arrears. Wherever possible, users of services should be billed in advance of the provision of the service.
- 31.2 For all billed income it is the responsibility of the Budget Manager to ensure that any debts raised are accurate, appropriate and due to the authority.
- 31.3 Chief Officers have responsibility for ensuring their Service has suitable controls in place with regards to its income generation, and their officers are compliant with these rules.

32 Bad Debts/ Write- Offs/ Loss of Income

- 32.1 The Authority has a duty to maximise revenue collection. However, circumstances may arise in which amounts due must, for all practical purposes, be deemed uncollectable.
- 32.2 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that, in such circumstances, a decision to write-off an amount must be taken with the authority of the CFO, whether exercised personally or properly delegated by them to a member of their staff. The amounts involved, and approval granted, should be recorded in the accounting records.
- 32.3 No such provisions apply where debts are “cancelled” i.e. because they were incorrectly raised (e.g. wrong amount, wrong debtor) or “waived” i.e. because an authorised policy decision was taken not to charge or to reduce the charge of an amount otherwise properly payable by a debtor.
- 32.4 The Cabinet is responsible for approving write-offs over £25,000. The delegated write-off limits to officers is set out in the table within paragraph 27 of these rules.

33 Taxation

- 33.1 The CFO is responsible for maintaining the Council’s Tax records, ensuring all tax payments are made, the receipt of all tax credits and the submission of tax returns by their due date as appropriate.
- 33.2 The CFO, or their delegated representative will issue mandatory guidance on Value Added Tax (VAT) matters.

34 Treasury Management:

- 34.1 The Council has adopted CIPFA’s Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities.
- 34.2 The CFO is responsible for making all decisions on borrowing, investment or financing (including finance leasing) in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy and CIPFA’s Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities
- 34.3 The Council will approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the matters detailed in CIPFA’s Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local

Authorities. The Policy Statement is proposed annually. The CFO has delegated responsibility for implementing and monitoring the statement.

- 34.4 This policy will be reviewed whenever legislative, regulatory or best practice changes materially affect the effectiveness of the current policy. The Council will approve on an annual basis an Annual Treasury Management Strategy, which includes a statement on Prudential Indicators, the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Investment Strategy.
- 34.5 The CFO is responsible for reporting to the Cabinet a proposed treasury management strategy for the coming financial year at or before the start of each financial year and will report to the Cabinet at least quarterly on the activities of treasury management and the exercise of their delegated powers. One such report will comprise an annual report on treasury management for presentation by 30 September of the succeeding financial year.
- 34.6 All money in the hands of the authority is controlled by the CFO as the officer designated for the purposes of Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. They are responsible for authorising and operating the Council's banking arrangements including determining arrangements for the signing and security of cheques. All Chief Officers will comply with the detailed rules set for the banking of income and operation of bank accounts.

35 Internal Audit

- 35.1 The Council is required to maintain an adequate and effective Internal Audit Service in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government and Professional Auditing Standards. Consequently, it is the responsibility of Internal Audit to review, arrange and report upon:
- 35.1.1 whether operations are being carried out as planned and objectives and goals are being met.
- 35.1.2 the adequacy of systems established to ensure compliance with policies, plans, procedures, laws and regulations, i.e. rules established by the management of the organisation, or externally
- 35.1.3 the completeness, reliability and integrity of information, both financial and operational
- 35.1.4 the extent to which the Council's assets, data and interests are properly accounted for and safeguarded from losses of all kinds, including fraud and corruption, waste, extravagance, abuse, ineffective management and poor value for money
- 35.1.5 the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are employed
- 35.1.6 the effectiveness of its system of internal control, and prepare an Annual Governance Statement

- 35.2 Internal Audit has an unrestricted range of coverage of the Council's operations and, therefore, has authority to:
- 35.2.1 enter council premises or land at any time, subject to any statutory or contractual restrictions that may apply, e.g. health and safety
 - 35.2.2 access all records, documents, correspondence, information and data relating to all areas of the Council regardless of how the information is held and to remove any such records as is necessary for the purposes of their work (including that of the Council's agents and contractors)
 - 35.2.3 require and receive such explanations as are necessary concerning any matter under examination
 - 35.2.4 require any employee or agent of the Council to produce cash, stores or any other Council property under their control
- 35.3 This access also applies to:
- 35.3.1 organisations which are wholly or partly owned by the Council
 - 35.3.2 organisations to whom the Council has given grants;
 - 35.3.3 organisations with whom the Council contracts and
 - 35.3.4 partner organisations in any scheme for which the Council has responsibility as lead body.
- 35.4 Internal Audit has direct access and the right of report to the Chief Executive, Chief Officers, Heads of Service, the Monitoring Officer, the Council's External Auditors, the Cabinet, the Leader, the Cabinet member with responsibility for Audit and the Chair of the Audit Committee.

36 Annual Governance Statement

- 36.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 established requirements related to the systems of internal control and the review and reporting of those systems. CIPFA has issued guidance to assist authorities to establish proper practices and procedures to satisfy these requirements.
- 36.2 The council's objectives, its internal organisation and the environment in which it operates are continually evolving and, as a result, the risks faced are continually changing. A sound system of internal control, therefore, depends on a thorough and regular evaluation of the nature and extent of the risks to which the council is exposed.
- 36.3 The CFO is responsible for ensuring that the financial management of the council is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

- 36.4 The CFO will conduct a review, at least annually, of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control and include a statement that outlines the outcome of that review within the Annual Governance Statement.
- 36.5 The Council's Annual Governance Statement will be signed by the Chief Executive and the Executive Leader. The Audit Committee shall oversee its production and recommend its adoption as part of the Annual Accounts.

37 Risk Management

- 37.1 The CFO is responsible for the development, monitoring and review of the Council's risk management policy, which will be approved by Cabinet, and is the Council's principal risk management adviser and co-ordinator.
- 37.2 Each Chief Officer is responsible for identifying, assessing, controlling and recording risks on a quarterly basis within their Service.
- 37.3 The Head of Internal Audit, working with each Chief Officer, will review Service risks on an annual basis.

38 Preventing Fraud and Corruption

- 38.1 All Council officers, councillors, agents, contractors and strategic partners have responsibilities to protect the funds they administer on behalf of the Council. Council resources must be administered to the benefit of the taxpayer and not for the inappropriate personal benefit of any of the above.
- 38.2 The CFO will be consulted by the chief internal auditor on the development and review of any Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy.
- 38.3 Officers, councillors, agents or contractors of the Council have a responsibility to bring any suspected fraud, corruption or to the attention of the chief internal auditor, the CFO or any Chief Officer as set out in any Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which the Council has in place.
- 38.4 Chief Officers will notify the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer, and the CFO of any suspected fraud, theft, irregularity, improper use or misappropriation of council property or resources. Any suspected fraud, bribery, corruption or loss will be investigated in accordance with the Council's Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy.

39 Insurance

- 39.1 The Council arranges and manages insurance cover for specific risks and determines what is the most appropriate package of internal (self-funded) and external insurance. This statement must be qualified by noting that School Governing Bodies are able to exercise choice over how they purchase insurance (subject to meeting minimum standards and limits of indemnity laid down by the Council) and are not bound to remain within the centrally arranged insurance policies or self-funded provisions if they wish to effect separate arrangements. The Council's rights and interests must be named on all insurance policies held, irrespective of who has made the original arrangements.

- 39.2 The Council purchases insurance for the following classes of insurable risk;
- 39.2.1 fire and associated risks for all buildings which the Council owns, or for which it has accepted legal responsibility by way of a lease or licence
 - 39.2.2 all public and employers' liabilities, including libel and slander, professional indemnity, officials' indemnity and land charges
 - 39.2.3 personal accident cover for risk of assault on employees of the Council and for injury to Council Members and authorised volunteers
 - 39.2.4 motor vehicles – comprehensive cover on all Council vehicles, together with contingent liability cover for use of privately owned vehicles used on official business
 - 39.2.5 pecuniary loss (money, fidelity guarantee and cheques indemnity)
 - 39.2.6 costs of reinstatement and recovery of ICT infrastructure and systems
- 39.3 Under the direction of the Chief Financial Officer, the Insurance Section is responsible for preparing specifications, obtaining quotations, procuring cover, negotiating claims and maintaining the necessary records in line with the insurance strategy and for ensuring that the contracting process is conducted in accordance with the prescribed requirements. A register of all insurance policies held and a full record of what property and risks are covered is held within the insurance service.
- 39.4 Chief Officers must ensure that prompt notification is provided to the Insurance Manager of all new risks, property, vehicles and other assets or contractual obligations which require to be insured and alterations that may affect existing insured risks (including closure of buildings, sale of vehicles or disposals of other insured assets).
- 39.5 Chief Officers are responsible for reporting any event, loss, liability or damage that may result in an insurance claim and give full and timely assistance with the conduct of any investigation that may follow.
- 39.6 Advice must be sought immediately from Insurance Team if there is a suspicion that a civil legal action is in prospect. Civil procedure rules and protocols must be strictly adhered to in order to avoid cost penalties or unnecessary litigation expenses. Employees and other persons must not attempt to negotiate a settlement, give interviews, make statements or offer to pay compensation in any way that may prejudice any subsequent civil legal action that may be brought against the Council.

40 Asset Management

- 40.1 The responsible Chief Officer will produce a five-year Corporate Asset Management Plan for the purpose of the overall strategic management of the Council's assets. This will be updated on an annual basis.
- 40.2 The responsible Chief Officer will ensure that procedures are put in place for the safeguarding and security of the Council's assets, including the keeping of asset

registers; a terrier of land and property; inventories of furniture, fittings and equipment; and stores records.

- 40.3 Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring the proper use and safeguarding of assets owned by the Council or for which the Council has responsibility. This requirement applies to all assets, including stocks, stores, furniture, equipment, vehicles, cash, land and buildings, software and information that are owned by, or are in the possession of the Council and for which the Council is responsible.
- 40.4 The responsible Chief Officer will ensure that detailed arrangements are put in place for the disposal of assets. All sales or purchases of land and buildings will be undertaken in accordance with the scheme of delegation.
- 40.5 Valuation of Assets will be in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. Sale of Assets will be at market value unless special circumstances have been agreed.
- 40.6 The relevant Chief Officer must consult with the CFO before the purchase of land and buildings, which is then subject to relevant member approval.
- 40.7 Officers with access to the Councils Assets will undertake the following:
 - 40.7.1 ensure no assets are subject to personal use without proper authority
 - 40.7.2 ensure cash holdings or valuable items on premises is kept to a minimum and held securely
 - 40.7.3 where safes or similar are in place keys should be kept on the responsible person and any loss reported as soon as possible

41 Disposal of Land, Property and Surplus Assets

- 41.1 All land and property except for former Council houses sold to tenants, or other property likely to exceed £5,000 in value, which have been declared surplus to requirements must be sold either by auction with a reserve price, or by competitive tender, unless the Council specifically determines otherwise.
- 41.2 Before inviting tenders or instructing an auctioneer for the sale of land or property, a valuation shall be obtained from the Estates function or an independent qualified Valuer, and in the case of a sale by auction, this valuation shall be the reserve price.
- 41.3 Competitive tender shall normally dispose of all other surplus assets unless the CFO determines otherwise in a particular case.

42 External Arrangements

- 42.1 Local authorities provide an important leadership role for the community and bring together the contributions of the various stakeholders. They must also act to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their respective areas.

- 42.2 The Cabinet is the focus for forming partnerships with other local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs.
- 42.3 Cabinet functions including those related to partnerships can be delegated to officers. These are set out in the scheme of delegation that forms part of the Constitution. Where functions are delegated, the Cabinet remains accountable for them to full council.

43 Work for Third Parties

- 43.1 The CFO or their nominee must be advised of all work for third parties opportunities available to the Council and of the lead officer in each circumstance.
- 43.2 The lead officer must provide such information as requested by the CFO, including copies of proposed agreements and conditions and any financial implications (including match funding requirements or ongoing revenue costs).
- 43.3 All work for third parties must be authorised by the CFO, or their nominee prior to agreement to undertake this work by the Council. Approvals for this work must be in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules in Part 9.6 Constitution.
- 43.4 The CFO or their nominee must be notified of the outcome of any bids to work for third parties at the earliest opportunity and successful bids to work for third parties will be reported to Cabinet as part of the normal monitoring reports.
- 43.5 The CFO is responsible for ensuring that all income receivable from third parties is received and properly recorded in the Council's accounts.
- 43.6 The Chief Officer responsible for the lead officer must ensure that all contractual conditions are met.

44 Significant Partnerships

- 44.1 A significant partnership is one that is material in terms of the amount of money involved and/or the level or nature of service delivery concerned and/or the level of control exercised.
- 44.2 The purpose of this protocol is to enable the council, with its Partners, to ensure that the partnerships it works in are appropriate and have good governance.
- 44.3 This protocol identifies:
- 44.3.1 how the Council defines a partnership
 - 44.3.2 why the Council enters and engages in partnerships
 - 44.3.3 definition of a partnership and what constitutes a significant partnership
 - 44.3.4 tools for identifying, managing and supporting partnerships arrangements including good governance

44.4 Where the Council is the lead authority for a partnership the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules will apply to operation of the business of that partnership.

44.5 The CFO will ensure that:

42.5.1 the accounting arrangements for partnerships and joint ventures are satisfactory, that the governance and legal issues have been satisfactorily addressed, and that the risks have been fully appraised

42.5.2 the Partnership Agreements contain details of how resources will be pooled and what controls will be operated in respect of partnership spending to avoid waste

42.5.3 that the Council's budgets contain sufficient provision for its match funding obligations and that all external funding due to the Council is received and properly recorded

44.6 Chief Officers are responsible and accountable for the governance arrangements, performance and financial monitoring of each partnership and will ensure that:

44.6.1 a record of the partnership arrangement is produced

44.6.2 all necessary approvals have been secured before concluding any negotiations with external parties

44.6.3 Any financial relationship must be documented and approved along with a risk assessment

44.6.4 that conditions attached to any external funding are properly complied with, that such conditions have been agreed with the CFO or Cabinet as appropriate, and that claims are processed by the due date

44.6.5 the CFO has access to the accounts and records, and has the right to seek explanations in order to monitor deployment of the Council's funding

44.6.6 Internal Audit has access rights to all officers, buildings, information in order to fulfil its role

44.6.7 a register is maintained of all contracts entered into

44.7 Prior to any appointments being made to any third party organisation (whether as a member, trustee, shareholder, director or similar position), advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer and the CFO.

45 Stores & Inventories

45.1 Each Chief Officer or Head of Service of each department shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores in their department and shall have all such stores checked independently of the storekeeper at least on one occasion in each financial year.

- 45.2 Stores shall not be held in excess of reasonable requirements.
- 45.3 Adjustments to write-off deficiencies over £1,000 in value shall be subject to the approval of the CFO. Cabinet will be required to write-off sums over £25,000.
- 45.4 Competitive tender shall dispose of surplus or obsolete stores unless the Chief Executive decides otherwise in a particular case.
- 45.5 Inventories of the Council's furniture, fittings, equipment and machinery shall be kept and checked on at least one occasion in each financial year by the member of the Corporate Management Team responsible for the service concerned. (Individual items with a value of £1,000 or less need not be included therein).

46 External Funding

- 46.1 Before committing the Council to any externally funded projects, Chief Officers must consult with the CFO on the anticipated financial, risk and probity implications of the projects and ensure adherence to any subsequent terms laid down by the CFO.
- 46.2 The Chief Officer is responsible for ensuring that all necessary approvals are obtained before external funding agreements are concluded, and that subsequent grant claims submitted to external funders are lawful, accurate, in accordance with the funders eligibility criteria and submitted with due regard to the Council's continuing commitment to the project.
- 46.3 Where the use of external funding for projects requires a financial commitment from the Council and budget provision is not available, or where the acceptance of external funding would lead to a financial commitment beyond the current year, the Chief Officer, in conjunction with the CFO, will provide a written report to the Cabinet giving a full appraisal of the financial implications for the Council of the scheme both in the current year and beyond. This report should also set out the ways that the external funding sought supports the Council's service priorities.
- 46.4 Once agreed, written approval must be obtained from the funder which clearly shows the approved allocation, the purpose of the grant and the financial period to which it relates.
- 46.5 Each Chief Officer will nominate a named responsible officer to be accountable for the performance and financial monitoring of each project. The named responsible officer will ensure that, prior to submission of a grant claim, all expenditure declared is eligible in accordance with the relevant funder's criteria, including purposes and deadlines and there is sufficient time for the CFO to certify the grant claim.
- 46.6 Where funding is used to support additional service provision or contributes to existing service provision then the Chief Officer responsible should have an exit strategy in place to deal with the expiry of the grant.
- 46.7 Grant claim working papers should be maintained in a form agreed by the CFO.

47 Organisations Partly or Wholly Owned by the Council (trusts, not-for-profit organisations, charities)

- 47.1 This requirement applies to the development and ongoing business undertakings of an organisation which is to be partly or wholly owned by the Council, and includes company structures such as a Limited Liability Partnership, Private Company limited by Guarantee, Community Interest Company, Not-for-profit Entity and Charity.
- 47.2 When developing any organisation which is partly or wholly owned by the Council, the relevant Chief Officer, Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer will need to satisfy themselves that the constitution of the relevant body is adequate to safeguard the interests of the Council, and that councillors and officers are constrained in their decision making powers while participating in such bodies by Part 9 of the Constitution, or any other formal delegation.
- 47.3 The relevant Chief Officer must ensure a full business case is prepared in the development any new organisation partly or wholly owned by the Council, which must consider all short term and medium term financial aspects of operation.
- 47.4 Before the Business Case is submitted for approval by Cabinet, the CFO must be satisfied that the new organisation will be affordable, offers value for money, has suitable tax planning arrangements, and manages risk appropriately.
- 47.5 Prior to any appointments being made to any third party organisation (whether as a member, trustee, shareholder, director or similar position), advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer and the CFO.
- 47.6 Once operational, these organisations are required to follow these key financial principles:
- 47.6.1 compliance with the Councils Constitution and Finance Procedure Rules
 - 47.6.2 compliance with the Council's MTFP, Capital Strategy and Budget setting process as instructed by the form and timetable set out from the Council's CFO
 - 47.6.3 the appointment of a Finance Director reporting to the Council's CFO.
 - 47.6.4 an annual agreement with the Council's CFO on any matters relating to risk share, earmarked reserve policy and distribution of dividends
 - 47.6.5 supporting the Council through its commissioning arrangements when necessary to identify ways to reduce costs and become more efficient
 - 47.6.6 to be both aware and compliant with the Council's statutory and financial duties where relevant and applicable to their various service functions and obligations.
- 47.7 Where these organisations are separate legal entities and the Council is required to purchase services from these entities. Transactions should therefore be undertaken in the same way as with an external provider.
- 47.8 The contract value and ongoing services relating to these organisations will be set out in service level agreements. Any services to be purchased from the Council will be delivered in accordance with the service level agreements.

- 47.9 Additional services may be requested either by the Council or the organisation outside of these service agreements. Additional services will require payments to be made between the Council and the organisation, and work should always reflect value for money and be approved by the Chief Officer and CFO and be approved by the relevant Chief Officer and the Chief Financial Officer of the Council.
- 47.10 The CFO and Monitoring Officer will have unfettered access to all financial information requested required to fulfil their statutory obligations.

48 Voluntary Funds and Trustees

- 48.1 The CFO is responsible for trust funds and ensures that funds are only drawn down for the purposes intended by the Trustees and that accounts are prepared and audited each year.
- 48.2 All trust funds, funds held for third parties and other voluntary (unofficial) funds must be approved by the CFO. A voluntary fund is defined as any fund, other than an official fund for the Council, which is controlled wholly or in part by an officer by reason of their employment by the Council. Such funds should be separately identified but held, where possible, in the name of the Council.

49 Schools

- 49.1 The Financial Procedure Rules for Schools applies to maintained schools within West Northamptonshire and these schools should conduct their financial affairs in accordance with the Financial Procedures for Schools.

50 Business Continuity & Emergency Planning

- 50.1 Chief Officers through their managers are responsible for ensuring the continuity of their services and providing guidance on the appropriate service priorities to aid planning and recovery of services, if a critical incident was to occur.
- 50.2 All officers should follow the council's requirements in relation to Emergency Planning which set out the minimum standards required to help deliver and maintain Emergency Planning and Business Continuity within the Council, with the objective to effectively and efficiently mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from any critical incident.
- 50.3 Nothing in these Rules or financial procedures shall prevent expenditure being incurred where an emergency or disaster involving destruction of, or danger to, life or property occurs or is imminent.
- 50.4 Where the relevant Chief Officer considers, where possible following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, Chief Executive and the CFO, the urgency of the situation will not permit delay, necessary expenditure may be incurred. Action under this paragraph shall be reported at the next available meeting of the Chief Officers, Cabinet, and Audit Committee.

GLOSSARY

This glossary explains key terms used in the Council's Constitution but is not part of the Constitution.

Adjourned

To suspend (i.e. a meeting) with the intention to resume it later.

Annual Governance Statement

A public statement which reviews how well the Council has kept to its governance rules.

Annual Statement of Accounts

See Statement of Accounts.

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy

The Council's strategy for protecting its valuable resources which describes the expectations and practices to avoid their loss.

Asset Management Strategy

The Council's approach to getting the best possible value and revenue from things it owns (assets), such as buildings, land, roads and technology.

Approved Supplier List

A list of suppliers which have met specific criteria to enable them to provide particular goods or services to the Council.

Balance Sheet

A statement of the Council's assets, liabilities and capital at a particular point in time which details the balance of the Council's income and expenditure over the preceding period.

Budget

Every year the Council puts a financial plan in place which describes how and where the Council will spend money to provide services and deliver the aims which it set out in its Corporate Plan. It also sets the level of council tax which it will charge in the next financial year. The Budget sets out the money which the Council intends to spend during the year against the money available which has been received in council tax, income and grants.

Cabinet

Also known as the Executive, the Cabinet is the Council's decision-making body responsible for making the majority of decisions. The Cabinet makes decisions within a Policy Framework and budget set by the whole Council. The Cabinet is made up of the Leader and up to nine other Members, including a Deputy Leader.

Cabinet Member

An elected Member appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader. Some Cabinet Members are assigned responsibility for a specific portfolio and are sometimes referred to as Portfolio

Holders. Cabinet Members can also make decisions when powers to do so are delegated to them by the Cabinet or Leader.

Capital and Investment Strategy

The Council's medium to long term plan for investing in its asset base.

Capital Programme

Part of the Medium Term Financial Plan which sets out capital projects approved by full Council over a medium term, multi-year period.

Chair of the Council

The Chair of the Council is an elected Member who chairs meetings of the Council and carries out a variety of civic and ceremonial duties. The Chair is elected to be the Chair by the other Members, usually at the Council's Annual Meeting. The Chair cannot be a Cabinet Member and is assisted in their work by the Vice Chair. The term Chair or Chairman may be used in this constitution and relevant documents to describe the role referred to as Chairman in s3 Local Government Act 1972. As such the holder may express a preference for how they wish to be addressed and described during their term of office.

Chief Executive

The Council's most senior Officer who is responsible for the management and direction of the Council's staff. The Chief Executive is accountable to the Executive Leader, the Cabinet and the Council as a whole. The Chief Executive is also generally designated as the Council's Head of Paid Service - a statutory role. The postholder has powers set out in law as well as the powers given to them by this Constitution.

Chief Finance Officer

The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is a Statutory Officer and the powers held by the CFO are set out in statute. The CFO is also referred to as the Section 151 Officer – this is because the role is given powers by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Every Council must appoint a CFO. The CFO is responsible for managing the Council's finances and providing expert financial advice to the Council. The CFO must be a qualified accountant and must ensure that the Council does not intend to spend more money than it has to carry out its plans (this is called a balanced budget).

Clear Days

Does not include the starting or finishing day. Example: for 5 clear days' notice: do not include the day when notice was given. If this was on a Tuesday, time starts to run on Wednesday. Notice would not be completed until 12.01am the following Wednesday. Saturday, Sunday or bank holidays are not counted.

Code of Conduct (Councillor Code of Conduct / Officer Code of Conduct)

A set of rules which elected and co-opted councillors and officers must follow.

Commercial Agreement

A type of contract for goods or services in exchange for something in return, usually money.

Commissioning

Within the Council, the process of buying services from outside the Council and monitoring and managing the purchase and carrying out of those services.

Committee

A Committee is a formal group of elected Members whose remit, terms of reference and operating rules are set out in the Council's Constitution. There are many different committees. Each one makes decisions about a specific area of responsibility – for example planning or licensing.

Confidential Information

In relation to meetings and reports this is information which the Council has received from a Government department on terms which cannot be disclosed publicly.

It can also be information which (i) the Council cannot disclose due to a court order or legislation or (ii) is not public, or (iii) is information which was given to the Council in such a way that made it clear it was meant to be kept confidential.

Constitution

This governance document, or 'rule book', which sets out how the Council will make decisions and who will make those decisions. It also sets out how residents and others can participate.

Contract

An agreement which: may be oral, written, partly oral and partly written or implied from conduct between the Council and another person; gives rise to obligations which are enforceable or recognised by law (i.e. legally binding) and commits the Council to paying or doing something.

A reference to a contract may also include a contract to which the Contract Procedure Rules apply and a "call off contract" means an order made or call off contract entered into under a Framework Agreement.

Contractors

See suppliers.

Contract Management

The process of ensuring the contract results in the benefits and outcomes envisaged and that the advantages secured during the tendering phase are realised and improved through further proactive performance management during its term.

Contract Management System

The IT system and associated processes used to support supplier and contract management, providing visibility and a single view of all Council contracts. It is also the Council's contract register.

Contract Procedure Rules

The part of the Constitution that sets out the procedures to be followed when seeking to establish a contract with an external supplier.

Council

The term often used to refer to the whole organisation (i.e. councillors and officers); but see full Council below. West Northamptonshire Council is led by councillors who are elected by the public. They set the priorities and the Budget for the organisation. Staff working for the Council (officers) deliver the day to day operations. The word Council is used to refer both to the organisation as a whole and specifically to the decision-making body.

Council Body

May include any Committee, Board, Panel or informal working group.

Council Tax

The income collected from residents based on banded property values and which funds a significant proportion of council services.

Councillor

A councillor is elected and is a member of the Council. councillors stand for election normally every four years and are accountable to the residents of a specific area (their electoral ward) but are responsible for making decisions for the entire council area. councillors do not have to be a member of a political party, but most are. Those who are not, are known as 'un-grouped' or 'independent' councillors.

Councillor Call for Action

The councillor Call for Action allows councillors to refer matters of concern within the community to the relevant Board or Committee. The aim is to provide councillors with additional powers that enable them to respond to local community concerns which have proved difficult to resolve.

Debt Management Strategy

The Council's strategy to manage and recover the sums of money it is owed.

Decisions

The choices and agreements made on a particular issue. The Council's Constitution sets out the rules on how formal decisions are to be taken in compliance with the law (see also Key Decisions). The Constitution also sets out how decisions are to be recorded and published.

Development Plan

Means the Council's local plans and other documents that set out the policies and proposals for the development and use of land within the administrative area of West Northamptonshire Council.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

A disclosable interest means something which an elected Member must declare in a meeting relating to their role outside the Council which could impact on their decisions for the Council. A pecuniary interest is a financial interest as defined in 'The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Elected Member

See Councillor.

Executive

See Cabinet.

Executive Director

The Council's most senior officers report directly to the Chief Executive and are accountable to Members and the Cabinet. These posts include the statutory Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) and the Director of Children's Services (DCS).

Exempt Information

In relation to meetings and reports this means information which can be withheld from the public. It must pass one of seven tests in order for it to be exempt and it must also be in the public interest to do so. If an item is deemed to be exempt during a public meeting, then members of the public and any press have to leave the meeting while exempt information is being discussed. We set out the rules in the Access to Information Procedure Rules at Part 5 Section 4 of this Constitution.

EU Procurement Regulations

The Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) entered into under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation, the European Community Treaty (EU Treaty)* and any relevant regulations, directives or decisions of the European Community*; any Acts of Parliament or statutory instruments implementing the above for the time being in force in the United Kingdom; and any relevant judgments of the European Court of Justice* or UK courts.

**These will continue to be followed at the present time even though the United Kingdom has left the European Union.*

External Auditors

An independent auditor appointed to review the Council's financial and management arrangements.

Financial Year

The financial year for the Council is not the same as the calendar year. Our financial year starts on 1 April and ends on 31 March.

Financial Procedure Rules

The rules which set out how the Council will manage its financial affairs (in Part 9 Section 7 of this Constitution).

Financial Scheme of Delegation

The financial limits on spend set up by service area. More details are in Part 9 Section 7.

Follow On Decisions

Means a decision on consequential matters following a decision to approve a Planning Application. These include, but are not limited to: approval or discharge of planning conditions, legal agreements and non-material amendments.

Forward Plan

A list of the 'key decisions' the Council will make over the next one to four months. The Forward Plan also includes a summary of any reports which will be presented to the Cabinet. You can view the Forward Plan for West Northamptonshire Council on its website.

Framework

A term used in different ways which refers to the way that the Council operates - for example, Policy Framework, commissioning framework, governance framework.

Full Council

The full Council is all the Members who make up West Northamptonshire Council. Full Council meets throughout the year with the meeting being chaired by the Chair. Full Council takes specific decisions, including setting the Budget. It also appoints committees to make decisions about specific issues such as planning and licensing.

Function

Within the Council, a function is a service which the Council provides or an activity which it undertakes; or which it has a duty to deliver - for example housing and education.

Head of Paid Service

The Head of Paid Service is a Statutory Officer with overall responsibility for the employment of Council officers (generally the Chief Executive).

Impracticable

This is not practically possible to achieve, e.g. there is insufficient staffing to support the proposal, or the proposal would incur additional unbudgeted costs that cannot reasonably be justified.

Independent Person

The Council has to have at least one designated independent person who is not a councillor or a member of staff. The independent person is consulted about complaints made against councillors and also about the dismissal of any of the Council's statutory officers.

Key Decision

Key decisions are executive decisions (not those made by committee) and are defined in the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) (Regulations) 2012 and are decisions which:-

- Result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or making savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- Are deemed significant in terms of their effect on communities living or working within the area of the Council.

The Council has decided that other significant decisions will be treated as key decisions. There are rules that set out how key decisions must be taken which are in Part 5. Key decisions are taken by the Cabinet or a Cabinet Member under delegated authority.

Leader (of the Council)

Members elect a person who will be the Executive Leader. Usually this is the leader of the largest political group on the whole Council. The Executive Leader is also the Leader of the Cabinet and will appoint up to nine other Members to form the Cabinet to take Executive decisions on behalf of the Council. The Leader can appoint up to two Deputy Leaders from the Members appointed to the Cabinet.

Legal Professional Privilege

Confidential communications between lawyers and their clients can be withheld from a court or from a third party using legal professional privilege.

Legislation

The Law which can be made by Parliament which takes the form of an Act of Parliament (a Statute) or Statutory Regulations or By-laws which can be made by the Council.

Light Touch Rules

A more relaxed set of rules for awarding contracts for certain services in relation to health and social care.

Local Provider

A provider from within the boundaries of West Northamptonshire.

Medium Term Financial Plan

Sets out the Council's budget (revenue and capital) over a period of more than one year and is linked to the Corporate Plan and Service Plans.

Member

See Councillor.

Minutes

The formal written record of a meeting. minutes of West Northamptonshire Council meetings are available on the Council's website.

Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer is a Statutory Officer responsible for the lawful and good governance of the Council, in particular the Constitution, decision-making and the conduct of councillors (including Town and Parish councillors) and officers.

Motion

A proposal for a discussion or debate.

Municipal Year

The period between annual meetings of the Council. The municipal year is not the same as the Council's financial year, which starts on 1 April. The municipal year usually starts in May but is not a fixed date and as such the number of days in a municipal year varies slightly.

Natural Justice

The right of all parties in proceedings to a fair hearing before an impartial tribunal.

Officer

Someone employed by the Council.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Specialist committees which support and challenge the work of the Cabinet and help hold it to account. Overview and Scrutiny committees are made up of Members who are not part of the Cabinet.

Permission in Principle (PIP)

Means an application by a developer to the Council to determine whether a housing development is acceptable in principle only and does not include technical details. A Permission in Principle is not a grant of planning consent.

Planning Applications

Means planning applications for full and outline consent as well as applications for reserved matters approvals and, for the avoidance of doubt, excludes Permission in Principle (PIP) and Related Matters.

Planning Officer

Means an employee of the Council tasked with processing and evaluating planning applications.

Policy

A policy sets out a strategic objective for the Council and provides a framework of principles and guidelines which must be followed to achieve those objectives.

Policy Framework

Refers to the Council's strategies and policies as set out in Part 3 of this Constitution.

Point of Order

Where a Member considers that a breach of the Procedure Rules or legislation has occurred within a debate.

Portfolio

Within the Council, a portfolio is a specific area of responsibility - for example housing. You can view the portfolios and which Councillor is responsible for each area (the Portfolio Holders) in Part 5 of the Constitution and on the website.

Procedure

The means by which a strategy or policy will be implemented or a process which must be followed.

Procurement

How the Council identifies, sources, selects and manages the resources it needs to buy in to deliver services or meet its strategic objectives.

Proper Officer

A term used to refer to the Council's lead Officer for a particular function. The list of Proper Officers is in Part 9 of this Constitution.

Quorum

The minimum number of attendees who have to be present at a meeting of the Council, a committee or sub-committee etc to conduct its business.

Regulation Threshold

The Total Value threshold at which public procurement directives must be applied. The current procurement thresholds and regulations are the EU thresholds available from the OJEC website.

Related matters

Means applications for permitted development, prior approvals, advertisement consent, tree preservation orders, high hedges and listed building consent.

Representations

Members of the public can give their views on any Cabinet or Cabinet Member reports or on any proposed decision by informing Democratic Services by the deadline outlined on the meeting agenda.

Reserves

Sums of money set aside on the Council's balance sheet. The Council has 'general reserves', and 'earmarked reserves' which are set aside for a specific purpose.

Scheme of Delegation

The Scheme of Delegation sets out how the Council and the Cabinet have delegated authority to a committee or another body, or to an individual Member or officer to exercise their powers or perform their functions. The officer Scheme of Delegation concerns those

powers and functions delegated to officers. The Scheme of Delegation will also specify any limits on the delegated authority.

Section 151 Officer (s.151 Officer)

See Chief Finance Officer.

Standards Complaint

Refers to a complaint made against an elected or co-opted councillor, or Town or Parish councillor, that the councillor concerned has failed to comply with the relevant Councillor Code of Conduct.

Statement of Accounts

A document required by law which sets out the Council's financial position at 31 March each year and includes the Council's income and expenditure for a given financial year.

Statute

An Act of Parliament – the law.

Statutory

Required by law. Councils have statutory duties including preventing homelessness, managing community safety and determining planning applications.

Statutory Officers

The Council is required by law to appoint officers in certain key roles. The Statutory Officers are the Head of Paid Service; the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer. The Council must also appoint other officers including a Director for Children's Services, a Director for Adult Social Services, a Director of Public Health and a Scrutiny Officer.

Sub-committee

A group of elected Members from the committee in question convened to undertake a particular task or perform a particular function. The sub-committee then reports back and is accountable to the committee.

Suppliers

Also known as contractors, suppliers are those parties which enter into a contract with the Council to provide goods or services.

Trading Account

Services which are funded by generating income from internal and external sources.

Treasury Management Strategy

The way in which the Council manages its cash, borrowing, lending and investments, and associated risks.

Virement

The movement of money from one budget heading to another.

Vires (intra vires/ultra vires)

A Latin phrase which means 'powers'. Within the Council, vires concerns the power or lawful authority to make a decision, perform a function or undertake an action. A decision made, function performed or action undertaken will be 'intra vires' if the Council has the power and lawful authority to do it and 'ultra vires' if it does not.

Ward

A ward is an electoral area. West Northamptonshire Council has 31 wards.

Ward Councillor

One of the councillors representing a specific ward.



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE FULL COUNCIL

30 June 2022

CLLr Daniel Lister – Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth

Report Title Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub

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Communications Lead/Head of Communications	Becky Huston	16/06/2022

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub Feasibility Study

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report is to update Council on the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing project, informing Council of the project background, strategic context, benefits and challenges.
- 1.2. To seek approval from Council to fund £25.1m towards the costs for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project, subject to the project being successful in its Levelling Up Fund (LUF) application for £20m, with the final decision being delegated to the Executive Director of Finance in consultation with the Executive Director of Place, Economy and Environment; the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub proposes to redevelop a series of dated public and health facilities that are no longer fit for purpose, by knocking down existing properties to create a new integrated centre delivering leisure, learning, adult, children's and healthcare services in a more coordinated and efficient manner to promote improved health and wellbeing outcomes for a local community facing a range of poor health indicators.
- 2.2 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing hub aims to bring together a number of key services into one building to deliver more integrated, customer focused services for the local community as well as creating economic growth through the delivery of new homes and jobs but also generating efficiencies, through capital receipts and reduced running costs.
- 2.3 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will serve some of the most deprived areas in West Northamptonshire and the wider region, the local community is considered in the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country and surrounding wards such as Riverside is considered in the top 10% of deprived neighbourhoods in the country.
- 2.4 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will have new, modern and advanced facilities which will provide affordable activities which can improve the health and wellbeing of those communities from a lower socio-economic background and provide them with the new opportunities to be active and access community health and wellbeing facilities.
- 2.5 The current facilities at Weston Favell include Lings Forum Leisure Centre, Weston Favell Health Centre, Olympus House (adult services), the Forum (children's services), and Weston Favell Library. The site will also look to accommodate a police presence with the local police station closing.
- 2.6 The Council have the opportunity to bid for £20m for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project through the LUF. The LUF is designed to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK. The £4.8 billion government fund will support town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets.

- 2.7 For submissions into the LUF, projects need to have a full funding package identified. Any gaps in the funding must be clearly identified and evidence provided of any wider public or private sector co-funding commitments (such as letters, contractual agreements.) To provide Government with confidence, where there is a shortfall in the funding package there needs to be an unambiguous commitment from the council that this will be met.
- 2.8 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project does not have a complete funding package. The project is being led by the council and the estimated cost of the project is to be £45.1m. If successful in being awarded £20m from the Levelling Up Fund this would leave a funding gap of £25.1m. In order to seek funding from the LUF, Government require confidence that the £25.1m funding gap will be met by the council.
- 2.9 There are significant costs that the Council face through the running of the services at the current facilities at Weston Favell if the new hub is not developed. The new Health and Wellbeing Hub will also mean reduced running costs for the Council as well as an increased income from health and police partners.
- 2.10 The designs for the Health and Wellbeing Hub are currently only in the early stages of development and for the project to be able to meet the funding requirement of having the LUF grant spent by 31st March 2025 work needs to continue ahead of the funding announcement that is expected in late autumn 2022. Due to the complexity of the project and that it is in early development, the figures presented in this report are a best estimate of project costs and benefits and these will be firmed up as the project progresses.
- 2.11 The approved 22/23 revenue general fund budget includes one off funding of £0.5m for developing a portfolio of pipeline projects to help secure external funding and grants when the opportunities arise. The council propose to utilise approximately £0.25m of this in order to continue to progress this project to fund the undertaking of further studies on the site location and appointing the professional team, including architects, to develop the designs ahead of the funding announcement.
- 2.12 The project has been assessed by Avison Young and has scored highly against the strategic aim of the fund. Given the high levels of deprivation surrounding Weston Favell, the project meets many of the missions of the Levelling Up Government policy through improving wellbeing and narrowing the gap between areas with the highest and lowest levels and improving perceptions of their local community by strengthening “pride in place.”

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that Council:
- a) note the progress made to date on the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub.
 - b) To approve in principle West Northamptonshire Council capital funding of £25.1m (for the financial year 23/24) for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub, subject
 - to the bid to the Levelling Up Fund being successful and;

- to a final delegated decision by the Executive Director of Finance with the benefit of a full business case in consultation with the Executive Director of Place, Economy and Environment; the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth.
- c) note the use of £0.25m pipeline projects one off revenue budget to continue to develop the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project ahead of the announcement of the Levelling Up Fund in late 2022.

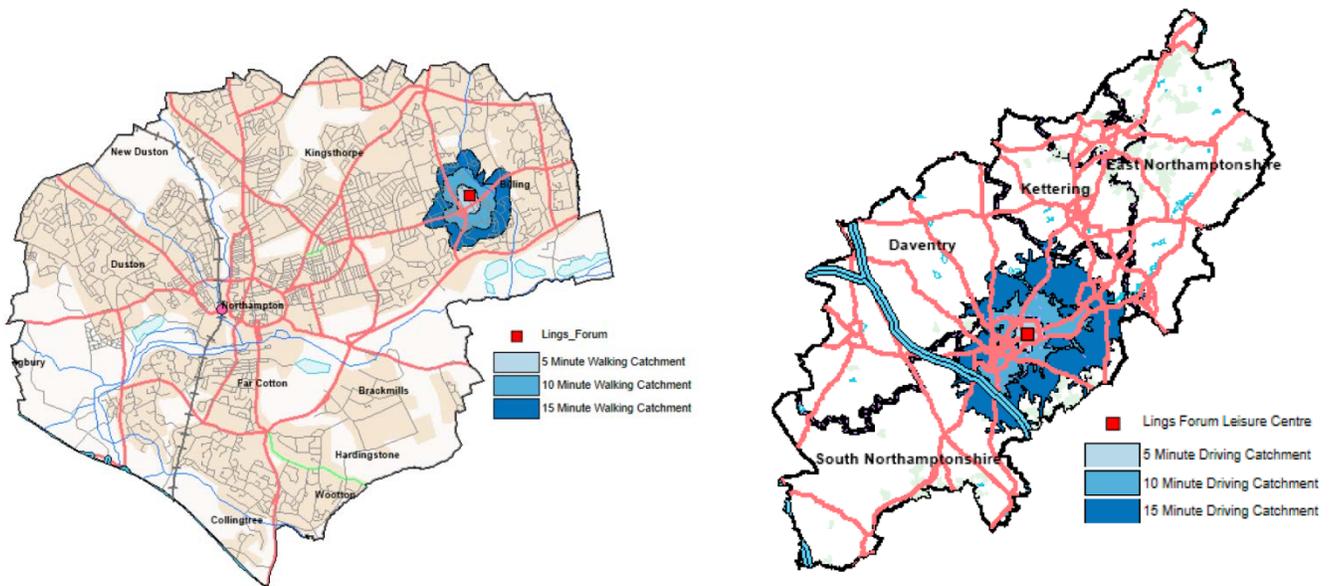
4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendation is being made to enable the council to bid for the benefit of £20m of Government funding to improve infrastructure and services at Weston Favell through the delivery of new integrated Health and Wellbeing Hub. Failure to secure the £25.1 million of match funding from the council for the project will result in the council not being able to bid for the grant.
- 4.2 The new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will be a transformational asset to the communities and catchment area it serves as well as delivering wider savings and benefits across the health system and West Northamptonshire.
- 4.3 In order to meet the Government's requirement of having all LUF monies spent by March 2025, work on progressing the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project needs to start now at risk with activities such as design development, planning, technical studies and planning of procurement. Unless the project continues to be progressed ahead of the funding announcement, this will substantially increase the risk of not being able to meet the Government's requirement of spending all the LUF funding, if successful, by March 2025.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 The second round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) was announced on the 23 March 2022, the LUF is designed to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK. The £4.8 billion fund will support town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets.
- 5.2 Bids are up to £20 million per area with the exception that large transport bids can be made up to £50m (must be at least 90 per cent transport focused) and Government will fund two large cultural and heritage investments that can be made up to £50m (must be at least 90 per cent culture focused). These projects must be flagship projects that focus on highly visible interventions that boost local pride in place. Bids can either be for one project up to £20m or a "package bid" of up to three projects up to £20m. All bids must be submitted by noon on Wednesday 6 July.
- 5.3 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project has been assessed by consultants Avison Young Ltd against the criteria of the LUF and has scored the project strongly against the strategic fit of the fund and has been recommended to proceed into applying for £20m from the LUF. The LUF process was set out in the Cabinet Report dated 14 June 2022.

- 5.4 A requirement of the LUF is that for all projects proposed the whole funding package has to be identified. Any gaps in the funding must be clearly identified and evidence provided of any wider public or private sector co-funding commitments (such as letters, contractual agreements.) To provide Government with confidence, where there is a gap in the funding package there needs to be an unambiguous commitment from the council that this will be met.
- 5.5 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project does not have a complete funding package. The project is being led by the council and the estimated cost of the project is £45.1m. If successful in being awarded £20m from the Levelling Up Fund this would leave a funding gap of £25.1m. In order to seek funding from the LUF, Government require commitment that the £25.1m funding gap will be met by the council.
- 5.6 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub proposes to redevelop a series of dated public and health facilities that are no longer fit for purpose to create a new integrated centre delivering leisure, learning, adult, children’s and healthcare services in a more coordinated and efficient manner to promote improved health and wellbeing outcomes for a local community facing a range of poor health indicators.
- 5.7 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub aims to bring together a number of key services into one building to deliver more integrated, customer focused services for the local community as well as creating economic growth through the delivery of new homes and jobs.
- 5.8 The current facilities at Weston Favell include Lings Forum leisure centre, Weston Favell health centre, Olympus House (adult services), the Forum (children’s services), Weston Favell Library and Weston Favell Police Station.
- 5.9 The current facilities at Weston Favell, located in the Talavera Ward, serve a large catchment area which covers most of Northampton. The below graphs show the walking catchment and driving catchment of the area and estimated population that the new Health and Wellbeing Hub will serve is 90,000.



- 5.10 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub has received two rounds of One Public Estate (OPE) funding in 2019 and 2021 to undertake feasibility studies for the project undertaken by Continuum Sport and Leisure Ltd and Avison Young Ltd. OPE funding is capacity funding for councils to support the consolidation of public services focusing on emergency services and health as well as creating the opportunity for housing development. The funding has allowed for the Stage One Feasibility Study (Appendix A) and a Stage Two Outcomes Report to be produced.
- 5.11 Lings Forum leisure centre was built in 1972 and is owned by the council and managed by Unity Leisure (trading as Northampton Leisure Trust) Lings Forum provides an important leisure service for the local community of Weston Favell including a gym, sports hall, fitness studios, squash courts, swimming pool as well as cinema. Due to the age of the building, there are considerable constraints and problems with the structure of the building. A condition report undertaken by Northampton Leisure Trust stated that the leisure centre is “extremely inefficient in terms of energy consumption, all plant and equipment is beyond its useful life and the facility does not meet the needs of its customers now and in the future.” The leisure centre is also uninspiring and fails to promote participation and showcase activities as well as failing to deliver a quality environmental control and user experience.
- 5.12 Weston Favell Health Centre comprises of two GP surgeries (Favell Plus Surgery and Mayfield Surgery) with a combined patient list of c20,000 and a dental practice (Weston Favell Dental Surgery) and a range of community health services provided by Northamptonshire Health Foundation Trust, including physiotherapy, podiatry and speech and language therapy. The site is owned by NHS Property Services and provides important health and wellbeing services for the local community. However, the building itself is no longer fit for purpose, with a less than optimal design.
- 5.13 Olympus House is currently used by Northampton’s Adult Social Services (NASS) and owned by the council. NASS support those who need more help for certain physical, cognitive or age-related conditions; in carrying out personal care or domestic routine and to sustain involvement in work, education, learning, leisure and other social support systems in building social relationships and participating fully in society. Further space to continue delivering the services is required and Olympus House also highlights the poor and dated environment for both its users and its staff.
- 5.14 The Forum Centre is a dedicated contact centre for Northamptonshire Children’s Trust and owned by the council. It provides children’s services for adoption and fostering, help and protection for children, early years support, schools and education, special educational needs and disability support and youth offending service. The Forum accounts for 60% of all contact care in Northampton but the building is dated and is need for reconfiguring and improving to ensure it delivers for the needs of Northampton.
- 5.15 Weston Favell library has been serving Northampton’s eastern district for over 40 years and is operated by the council and is based within Weston Favell Shopping Centre. The library currently pays higher than most libraries given its location and is the most expensive library to operate in the county. The current library is very tired and there is a lack of repairs, leaking roofs and no natural light. The inclusion of the library in the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub provides

a number of opportunities including working with health partners to support the health and wellbeing agenda for the local communities.

5.16 The Police have expressed an interest in keeping a police presence in Weston Favell through the neighbourhood policing team with provision within the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub. The commissioner is keen to have a better-quality environment to prevent crime and help reduce anti-social behaviour within the local community.

5.17 Extensive consultation and feasibility has been undertaken to identify the facilities within the new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub, the facilities include:

- Leisure centre with a new swimming pool, learner pool, gym, exercise studios, sports hall, changing rooms and ancillary accommodation
- Library with quiet study areas, exhibition space, meetings rooms and staff areas
- One screen cinema
- Community hub with a lobby area, public seating, café, meeting and consultation rooms
- Adult services with office space, activity rooms, sensory rooms, function space and ancillary accommodation
- Children services with contact and family rooms, babies rooms, meetings and interview rooms, outdoor play area and ancillary accommodation
- GP practices with access to additional clinical space and minor operations room
- Dental practice
- Opportunity for additional services such as maternity and physiotherapy services.

5.18 The build cost of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub has been estimated to be £45.1 million. The development costs have considered demolition and external works, hub build costs, contingency, preliminaries and professional fees which are included within this sum. The costs also account for the recent cost in raw materials and inflation.

5.19 It is important to note that greater detail over the costs will emerge at the detailed design and costing stage but the total build cost of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing will not exceed £45.1m. If there were cost pressures then the project would be reviewed and value engineered to look at potential savings to ensure the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub could be delivered within budget.

5.20 81% of floorspace in the new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub (excluding communal areas) relates to council services – including leisure provision, adult services, children services and housing and community services. 18% of the floor area is for health services including GP services, sessional and dental services, community midwives, pharmacy and physiotherapy clinic services. 1% of floor space is for the Police and Crime Commissioner as local community services.

5.21 The principles of the scheme are:

- A community entrance and lobby with a café and community rooms for hire will form a central hub space at the core of the scheme
- Leisure centre, library and cinema will form the largest element of the scheme
- Adult and children services will occupy a self-contained space

- Healthcare centre will occupy a self-contained space, paying rent and service charge and hiring space within the hub
- Local police will occupy a small space within the hub
- Service charges will cover the cost of communal areas and the central hub, as well as any insurance and maintenance costs

5.22 It is important to note that as the council will be borrowing up to £25.1m for the build of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub. It is anticipated that these borrowing costs will be shared proportionately between partners in the calculation of the annual revenue costs of the scheme.

Hub Build Capital Cost	£45.1m
Funded By:	
Levelling Up Fund Grant Assumed	£20m
Assumed Sum Borrowed by WNC	£25.1m

5.23 Partners have indicated that capital funding will not be available and they would occupy the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub on a revenue basis. Partners would then pay an annual payment to the council. This would cover their share of the borrowing costs and the operating costs. There has been considerable engagement with partners during the course of the project. Partners are committed to the project and have re-affirmed that this project aligns with their strategic priorities, however Heads of Terms or financial commitments have not yet been secured. Due to the wide range of partners involved, there are different processes to go through within each organisation to achieve sign off for the project. This will be the focus of the next stage, however it is a risk that health partners may not be able to secure the permissions for the project or approvals are not as quick as anticipated. Permissions will be sought from partners ahead of project delivery to reduce the risk on the council.

5.24 The partners will also be liable for running costs associated with their occupation and use of the new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub.

5.25 In addition, the partners will also incur room booking charges. These cannot be predicted at this stage as the extent to which partners will wish to utilise the facilities in the central hub are unknown but will provide rental income to the hub.

5.26 Northampton's health indicators perform poorly in comparison with national averages on factors such as deprivation, obese children, physically active adults, life expectancy and under 75 mortalities. Northampton has also been ranked at the 105th most deprived Local Authority in the UK, putting it within the top third of the country. The Weston Favell ward is considered in the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country and surrounding wards such as Riverside is considered in the top 10% of deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

5.27 Physical activity has been shown to significantly improve people's mental, physical and social wellbeing and it is vitally important that the local communities of Weston Favell have access to high quality sport and physical activity and health facilities. The introduction of a health and

wellbeing hub will create a place where residents of Weston Favell and Northampton are encouraged to be physically active, lead healthy lifestyles and have access to high quality community facilities. The new facilities will also continue to provide affordable activities which can improve the health and wellbeing of those communities from a lower socio-economic background and provide them with the new opportunities to be active and access community health and wellbeing facilities.

5.28 There has been detailed analysis of supply and demand of key facilities within Northampton, undertaken as part of the stage one feasibility in 2020, to better establish the facility mix of the new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub this has taken into consideration the current and future needs of the population. Through the assessment, there is a clear need to maintain and expand the existing offer most notably for swimming provision, enhanced health and fitness facilities, retention of a small, localised cinema offer, and creation of additional activities that will draw people, particularly families and young people into the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub.

5.29 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project also has strong alignment with local, regional and national policies. The proposed facilities deliver a number of outcomes across a wide range of agendas including sport and physical activity, health, education and community cohesion. The project has strong strategic alignment with the following:

- Sport England – Uniting the Movement (2020)
This strategy sets a clear vision for the next ten years for Sport England and partners which is to have a nation of more equal, inclusive and connected communities and a country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives.” The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project will create an active environment where people have the opportunities to be physically active. This project sits within the strategic objectives of Sport England who are also advocates of the project.
- West Northamptonshire Council Corporate Plan
This strategy sets out the collective vision for making West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive. This project directly links into the “Improved Life Chances” priority by joined up working with health partners and support healthy, safe children and adults. It also links to the “Green and Clean” and “Thriving Villages and Towns” priorities by providing a vibrant community space and working to deliver safer communities with less anti-social behaviour.
- The Northamptonshire Care Partnership (ICS)
The ICS has developed the following key partnership themes of “Choose well, stay well, live well.” This project presents an opportunity to have a collective health and care estates solution for Weston Favell to deliver the themes of the ICS. Weston Favell has been identified as a priority area by the ICS for a community hub.
- West Northamptonshire Council Anti Poverty Strategy
The Strategy for 2022-2025 has three key priorities:

- Supporting people who are struggling in poverty now

- Preventing people from falling into poverty in the first place
- Influencing the Government and other national organisations to get a better deal for the communities in West Northants

Outcomes of the strategy will include, an improvement in population health and wellbeing and fewer households living in poverty.

- 5.30 The location of the new Health and Wellbeing Hub will be located on the former Lings Upper site, this site has been vacant for a number of years. The site is within the council's ownership and is in close proximity to the shopping centre and able to benefit from its footfall. The size of the site also ensures there is sufficient space for car-parking adjacent to the facilities as well as an opportunity to provide high quality landscaping and external leisure uses. The site is also able to accommodate potential residential developments to the north and south. The development of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub unlocks the wider site and allows for future housing developments to be considered at a later stage.
- 5.31 The delivery of the construction element of the project is proposed to be in phases, this allows for the continuation of the vital services delivered at Weston Favell. During the build of the new facilities, the existing properties will remain open and services will continue ensuring minimal disruption is caused. The different services and partners will occupy the new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub in stages which when the existing properties will be demolished once vacated.
- 5.32 The development of an integrated health and wellbeing hub offering a wide range of leisure, learning, healthcare, children's and adult services would bring huge benefits to the local community in terms of physical activity, learning, wellbeing and healthcare provision.
- 5.33 The project will provide enhanced leisure provision offering a much wider range of physical and leisure activities in a more modern setting, allowing more people to lead active lives, especially those from lower rates of participation. The new library, children's and adult services facilities would provide the community with a better customer-focused user experience. This project however is unlikely to happen without public sector intervention and the strength of the partnerships built up to deliver this.
- 5.34 The new health centre will allow a more extensive range of health care services to be offered in a more efficient and convenient local setting, reducing costs to the NHS. It will also facilitate closer working between partners to offer more integrated health and wellbeing services that would encourage people to lead more active and healthier lives. All new spaces would be better configured to ensure optimum use of space.
- 5.35 The central hub will be the focal point of the building from which residents can access all other services in the building, in addition to a café and area for meeting and relaxation it will house the following:
- Small meeting rooms that can be booked by partner organisations and the community. This will enable social prescribing and other integrated care interactions.

- Large meeting rooms for group consultations, events and community activities. These will also be able to be booked by partner organisations and the community.
- Clinical rooms within the central hub which can be access by any organisation and are separate to the health centre. These will be particularly appropriate for mental health consultations and remove the stigma that some people associate with going to a “healthcare” building.
- Digital technology is a key enabler for the central hub so that data systems can be shared by all partners, virtual consultations can take place, residents can use it as an information point, and it can provide a source of data inclusion to the community.

5.36 There are key health needs and wider determinants of health needs within the Weston Favell area. The new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub is ideally placed to address these needs, as follows:

- Obesity and smoking – linking a health centre with both a leisure centre and library is the ideal way to tackle primary prevention. The centre will provide the opportunity to engage residents in a wide range of physical activity and within the central hub and the library, there will be the capacity to have health prevention events, activities and interventions that engage people coming to the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub
- Long term conditions – this site will provide both the capacity to run long term condition clinics but will also provide the environment to support people with long term conditions to improve their health: through information and advice at the library, through the leisure facilities and being able to access integrated, holistic care, including social prescribing
- Mental health and social isolation – the new site has been specifically deigned to house mental health services in a way that reduces the stigma of accessing these services, but it will allow professionals to refer to other services on site that will have significant mental health benefits such as physical activity, leisure, information, advice and social connection. Having a café on site will enable a range of community activities to take place which can address social isolation in the community
- Social care utilisation in children – having the children’s contact centre on site will allow a facility that is currently separate, to be integrated into normal, everyday activities. This will enhance the experience for families and support the service in progressing families beyond the statutory sector

5.37 The development of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub is an investment into buying greater capacity and integrated service capability which will have the following benefits:

- Enabling delivery of appropriate services out of hospital
- Enabling a population health management approach through the primary care networks
- Providing a site for integrated care, not just between health and social care but those services addressing the wider determinants of health, including leisure, library, other advice services such as housing and Citizens Advice Bureau
- Enabling the Northamptonshire model of social prescribing with its significant aims to address frequent attendance to primary and secondary health care, long term conditions, mental health and support carers

5.38 The outcomes of this way of delivering care are expected to be:

- Improving the population’s physical health, mental health and wellbeing, impacting on the use of services but also wider impacts such as increasing employment rates
 - Building more resilient communities
 - Reducing reliance on NHS services and releasing capacity through a prevention-focused approach
- 5.39 The economic impact of the Weston Favell Hub is very closely linked to the wider social prescribing interventions in Northamptonshire. The new building will provide an ideal environment in which to undertake social prescribing given the co-location of all the services.
- 5.40 Economic benefit assumptions have been used from the Northamptonshire social prescribing programme and analysed at a local level. Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub is a key social prescribing solution within the Weston Favell area and it is assumed that it will serve a population of 90,000 who live in the East Northampton area surrounding Weston Favell.
- 5.41 The social prescribing programme is expected to have a broader impact beyond reductions in the use of health and care services, including benefits to the central Government departments and local authority social care.
- 5.42 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) states that 59% of people with long-term conditions are in work in the UK, compared to 72% of the general population (when this report was written) for some beneficiaries, the improvement of their wellbeing will allow them to enter into employment. The avoidance or delay of benefit claims will be an immediate saving to the DWP.
- 5.43 Social care – for some beneficiaries of the intervention, an improvement in their physical and mental health and wellbeing and an increased engagement in community activities will delay or reduce their use of social care services, a saving that will accrue to the council.
- 5.44 Whilst it could be argued that not all of the social prescribing benefits described for the 90,000 population above will be delivered through Weston Favell, there is no doubt that the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will facilitate a significant part of the social prescribing for this area and will have a very positive contribution to attaining the benefits.
- 5.45 In an example from Berkshire West, which has a population of 550,000, 70% of the practices within the area participated in an integrated care approach to the management of diabetes. The prescribing savings for this population over a two-year period were £800,000. If we translate that to Weston Favell, assuming the population of 90,000 and full practice participation savings could be £187,000 over two years. This is a saving for a single long-term condition, so if it assumed that new models of care could be delivered across a wide range of conditions as a result of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub development, these savings start to be considerable.

- 5.46 Modelling carried out by Sport England estimates that the project has the potential to deliver in excess of £10m of social value across mental health, physical health, individual development and society impact based on the project resulting in 5,000 currently inactive people in Northamptonshire to become more physically active.
- 5.47 The projected increase in footfall at the new leisure centre would deliver a significant increase in the £3m+ per year social impact NLT already deliver through its activities, as measured by a 2018 independent study by the University of Northampton.
- 5.48 Based on modelling undertaken by Continuum Sport and Leisure Ltd on the impact of increased physical activity amongst the community, the project has the potential to deliver a significant saving for WNC through a reduction in levels of childhood obesity, youth crime and disorder, and elderly frailty.
- 5.49 The delivery of the new Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub would not only deliver value for money financially through the delivery of new accommodation that will have lower running costs and leisure facilities that will increase footfall and income generation but also generate wider social and economic value for the communities in Northampton.
- 5.50 The proposed occupational arrangements would be that the council is the landlord and the developer. The potential Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub tenure model would be as follows:
- The health system – with the emergence of the Integrated Care System (ICS), it is assumed that that “health head lease” would be granted to this organisation. The ICS would then grant sub-tenancies to the various organisations, including voluntary sector, GP surgeries and dentistry and others as appropriate.
 - The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) – the council would grant a direct lease. The PCC has indicated a preference for security of tenure and a longer lease term, a term of 25 years is assumed.
 - Children’s Trust - the council would grant a direct lease; a term of 25 years is assumed.
 - The council – the new leisure centre, library space and central hub would be granted through a lease and a management agreement to the new leisure services operator which would need to be procured via a competitive process
 - Adult services – this would dealt with by way of an internal occupational arrangement.
- 5.51 The designs for the Health and Wellbeing Hub are currently only in the early stages of development and for the project to be able to meet the funding requirement of having the LUF spent by 31st March 2025 work needs to continue ahead of the funding announcement that is expected in late autumn. £250,000 one off funding from the approved 22/23 revenue general fund budget pipeline projects budget will be utilised to undertake further studies on the site location, appoint the professional team including architects to develop the designs ahead of the funding announcement. Unless the project continues to be progressed ahead of the funding announcement, this will substantially increase the risk of not being able to meet the Government’s requirement of spending all the LUF funding, if successful, by March 2025.

- 5.52 There has been considerable engagement with partners during the course of the project, the project board meets regularly and this is made up of West Northamptonshire Council, Northamptonshire CCG, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Property Services, University of Northampton, Police & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire and Sport England. Partners are committed to the project and have re-affirmed that this project aligns with their strategic priorities, however Heads of Terms or financial commitments have not yet been secured. Due to the wide range of partners involved, there are different processes to go through within each organisation to achieve sign off for the project. This will be the focus of the next stage, however it is a risk that health partners may not be able to secure the permissions for the project or approvals are not as quick as anticipated. If this is the case, the council will proceed with the project without the health element and seek to deliver a scaled down Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub at a lesser cost.
- 5.53 The next steps for this project are to appoint a professional team which will include architects, a project manager, leisure and sport consultancy and cost consultants to continue to progress the design development of this scheme.
- 5.54 The team will continue to engage with the partners highlighted above and understand the partners requirements for sign off to proceed with the project. Indicative timescales for the programme are detailed below:
- July 2022 – April 2023 – detailed design development
 - May 2023 – planning application submitted
 - July 2023 – selection of a preferred contractor
 - December 2023 – enabling works to start on site
 - May 2024 – May 2027 – phased delivery of works on site

6. Issues and Choices

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 The cost for building the Health and Wellbeing Hub is estimated to be up to £45.1m. The development costs have considered demolition and external works costs and the build costs. The costs are indicative and greater detail will emerge at the detailed design and costing stage. The costs have been calculated using the base unit costs (plus prelims, overheads, contingency, professional fees and optimism bias) which have been calculated by cost consultants Stace Ltd.
- 7.1.2 The council have the opportunity to bid for £20m for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project through the LUF. For submissions into the LUF, projects need to have a full funding package identified. Any gaps in the funding must be clearly identified and evidence provided of any wider public or private sector co-funding commitments (such as letters, contractual agreements.) To provide Government with confidence, where there is a shortfall in the funding package, there needs to be a commitment from the local authority that this will be met.

7.1.3 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project does not have a complete funding package with no commitments for the remaining £25.1m required for the project to proceed. If successful with the LUF bid of £20m. This report is seeking approval for the council to fund the £25.1m funding gap.

7.1.4 The council will be borrowing up to £25.1m for the build of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub.

7.1.5 The council would seek to provide a lease to health and police partners for their respective space in the hub to deliver their services. The cost of the operating leases would include a contribution to the cost of borrowing for the scheme.

7.1.6 It has been estimated that the average annual cost of borrowing £25.1m will be approximately £1.5m per annum. This revenue impact will then be reduced for the following reasons:

- An anticipated contribution to the borrowing costs from the health partners and the PCC.
- Revenue savings associated with operating more efficient buildings than the current suite of buildings
- Increased footfall and use of the leisure services thereby increasing income
- Increased income as a result of hiring out rooms to external clients at the new hub
- Social care savings associated with the enhanced facilities potentially having a positive impact on people's well being and mental health for example and thereby reducing the costs of these services to the Council.

7.1.7 All of these revenue savings, partner contributions or increased income will significantly reduce the net impact on the revenue account but are subject to agreement and further detailed work and therefore cannot be quantified at this stage. The financial position set out above is the worst case scenario.

7.1.8 Delegated authority is sought to finalise the business case in order to be able to continue with the detailed work including seeking agreements in principle from key partners to contributions to the scheme to minimise the impact on the revenue account if the levelling up bid is successful.

7.1.9 This work will continue and the overall net impact, once verified, will be fed into the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2023-24 and beyond.

7.1.10 Another important financial consideration is the condition of the buildings currently being used at Weston Favell. It is estimated that there will need to be a level of expenditure spent on the current estate to deal with capital expenditure, operational property expenditure and income. An estimate of the cost of 'status quo' to continue to run the services from the Library, Olympus House, the Forum and the Leisure Centre for a further 25 year period, is £11.4m. In moving to the new model some of these costs will clearly be avoided.

7.1.11 The designs for the Health and Wellbeing Hub are currently in the early stages of development and for the project to be able to meet the funding requirement of having the LUF spent by 31st March 2025 work needs to continue ahead of the funding announcement that is expected in late autumn. £250,000 of capacity funding is requested from the Pipeline Projects budget and

in the 2022/23 revenue general fund to undertake further studies on the site location, appoint the professional team including architects to develop the designs ahead of the funding announcement. Unless the project continues to be progressed ahead of the funding announcement, this will substantially increase the risk of not being able to meet the Government's requirement of spending all the LUF funding, if successful, by March 2025.

7.1.12 Partners have indicated that capital funding will not be available to them and they would most likely occupy on a revenue basis, this would take the form of annual rental payments governed by a lease.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the council the power to do anything that individuals may generally do and section 111 of the local government act 1972 gives a local authority power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions. If successful, the council must ensure use the funding in line with the proposal and be provided with evidence to demonstrate how the funding has been spent.

7.2.2 The Council will need to consider the application of any applicable subsidy rules before passing on any funding to ensure that any funding given is lawful. External advice has been received on the subsidy control implications of the LUF funding to the Council. Given the timescales involved, external legal advisers have not been in a position to provide a full subsidy control advice (but will assist with the subsidy control aspects of the application). The provisional advice, which can be summarised as follows:

7.2.3 Given the timescales for the decisions on the award of LUF funding by DLUHC, the subsidy control regime which will apply to the award is likely to be that under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the **Act**). The Act has received Royal Assent but its operative provisions are expected to come into force in the autumn.

7.2.4 The definition of a subsidy under section 2 of the Act is "*financial assistance which –*

- *is given directly or indirectly from public resources by a public authority;*
- *confers an economic advantage on one or more enterprises*
- *is specific, that is, is such that it benefits one or more enterprises with respect to the production of goods or the provision of services, and*
- *has, or is capable of having, an effect on-*
- *competition or investment within the United Kingdom*
- *trade between the United Kingdom and a country or territory outside the United Kingdom,*
or
- *investment as between the United Kingdom and a country or territory outside the United Kingdom."*

7.2.5 For the purposes of the Act includes a direct transfer of funds (such as a grant) and a public authority would include DLUHC and other central government departments. Leaving aside the other elements of the definition, the key test is whether any of the public sector beneficiaries of the LUF funding in respect of the Health and Wellbeing Hub (i.e. the Council, the NHS partners

and the Police) are acting as enterprises for the purposes of the Act. To understand whether this is the case, it is necessary to look at the activities to be carried out at the new Hub:

- Leisure services, library services, cinema
- Community hub
- Adult services
- Children services
- GP practices, dental practice, opportunity for additional services such as maternity and physiotherapy services
- Community policing.

7.2.6 These are all activities which would fall historically, under the state aid rules, as being “public functions” of the bodies delivering them (leisure and related activities, social services, publicly funded health services, policing) i.e. would not be economic activity and funding them would not be state aid. Going forward to the current regime, which derives from the UK-EU Trade and Co-operation Agreement, the same assumptions have been made about public functions, because the definition of a subsidy is very similar to that of state aid.

7.2.7 Looking further at the Act (and absence of any guidance so far), an “enterprise” is defined in section 7. This is:

“(a) a person who is engaged in an economic activity that entails offering goods and services on a market, to the extent that the person is engaged in such an activity, or (b) a group of persons under common ownership or common control which is engaged in an economic activity that entails offering goods or services on a market, to the extent that the group is engaged in such an activity”.

7.2.8 This is similar to the definition of an undertaking in state aid law and an economic actor under the TCA, so it is reasonable to assume that the distinction between economic and non-economic activities is still valid. This is reinforced by section 7(2), which goes on to provide that “...an activity is not to be regarded as economic activity if or to the extent that it is carried out for a purpose that is not economic”. As noted above, there is no guidance yet on this sub-section, but it reinforces the view that the public function activities set out above are not for an economic purpose. Accordingly, there is a good argument that the LUF funding would not amount to a subsidy to the Council or to its partners.

7.2.9 Looking at private sector delivery partners (contractors/consultants involved in the construction of the new Hub and any operators of the new Hub), they will be enterprises but there will be no specific economic advantage conferred on them indirectly by the LUF funding if they are appointed on terms and rates no more favourable than the market would bear in similar circumstances. This is most easily demonstrated by their being appointed through open and non-discriminatory public tenders, performed according to public procurement rules. If that is the case, then it is unlikely that there will be a subsidy to any private sector delivery partner.

7.2.10 Further legal advice will be required in relation to the project, before the final delegated decision is made to award the funding.

- 7.3.1 If the LUF applications are unsuccessful, the information and evidence developed will still be utilised as part of the scheme planning and in support of securing the required investment from alternative sources.
- 7.3.2 If the LUF grant is secured and the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub can not be delivered within the Government's timeframe by March 2025, there is a risk that Government could claw this money back from the council.
- 7.3.3 In order to meet the timescales of the LUF, work will need to be progressed at risk prior to the outcome of the bid being known, and for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project this will include site surveys, preparation of a planning application, design and cost development and procurement activity.
- 7.3.4 There is a risk that it is not possible to secure permissions from the health partners in time when developing the detailed designs and cost information, if this is the case the council would progress with the project and deliver a scaled down Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub at a lesser cost.
- 7.3.5 Partners are committed to the project and have re-affirmed that this project aligns with their strategic priorities, however Heads of Terms or financial commitments have not yet been secured. Due to the wide range of partners involved, there are different processes to go through within each organisation to achieve sign off for the project. This will be the focus of the next stage, however it is a risk that health partners may not be able to secure the permissions for the project or approvals are not as quick as anticipated. Permissions will be sought from partners ahead of project delivery to reduce the risk on the council.

7.4 **Consultation**

7.4.1 There has been extensive consultation throughout the development of this project. The process has involved a number of key stakeholders, service providers, public and patient consultation. Consultation has included:

- Engaging with key stakeholders and partners for sport and health, including council teams, school representative, public health, Northamptonshire Sport and Sport England
- National Governing Bodies such as the Football Association, England Boxing, England Basketball, British Gymnastics, Swim England and England Squash
- Public consultation through a user survey of the leisure centre users and leading community sports clubs resulting in 349 responses.
- Patient survey for the GP surgeries at Weston Favell with 914 responses
- Community consultation through public surveys and virtual consultation rooms resulting in over 1000 responses
- Workshops with service providers in Weston Favell including Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, Locality Board for Northampton, Northampton Leisure Trust, Northamptonshire Adult Social Services, Northamptonshire Children's Trust, Northamptonshire Libraries, Mayfield GP Surgery and Favell Plus Surgery.
- Student survey with Northampton Academy with a total of 252 responses

7.4.2 Despite the restrictions on physical meetings during the pandemic there was a very encouraging response to the consultation process and the online consultation room resulted in a high response rate and very positive feedback.

7.4.3 There has also been consultation with influential stakeholders including Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commissioner, NHS Property Services, NHS Nene Clinical Commissioning Group, Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership, Northampton General Hospital, Kettering General Hospital, Healthwatch Northampton, Northampton Swimming Club, South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP), Emmanuel Church, Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, Weston Favell Shopping Centre, University of Northampton, Northampton Academy and Northampton Partnership Homes.

7.4.4 The key findings of the consultation are that:

- Weston Favell remains a very important district centre serving a very important part of the town and investment into health and wellbeing remains a strategic priority for all partners
- A drive towards shared service provision (across health, wellbeing and physical activity) with Weston Favell becoming a key site for the implementation and delivery of the Integrated Care System and social prescribing model within Northampton and wider
- The facilities of each service are dated and not fit for purpose and there is a need for modernisation to allow better provision of services
- The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project is supported unanimously and is needed in order to serve the local communities

7.4.5 Whilst there has been limited time and opportunity to undertake consultation prior to submission of potential applications to the LUF, it should be noted that further consultation and engagement focused on proposals arising from the applications, will be undertaken, as part of the development of detailed proposals.

7.5 **Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

7.5.1 Levelling up Fund is part of the work programme of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7.6 **Climate Impact**

7.6.1 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub project looks to modernise and regenerate the current outdated facilities, this will have a positive effect in terms of carbon reduction and energy efficiency.

7.6.2 The project will be subject to an environmental impact assessment.

7.7 **Community Impact**

7.7.1 The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will have a positive impact on the community through redeveloping essential facilities which are currently outdated and not fit for purpose.

7.7.2 If the council is successful with its LUF bid, the project will be subject to engagement and consultations with local stakeholders and the public through all stages, including statutory consultations to take place during the planning stages.

7.7.3 The council will undertake programme-wide level impact assessments, relevant project-level impact assessment and equality and impact assessments when required

7.8 **Communications**

7.8.1 Communications will play a key role in informing, engaging and updating the public and all other stakeholders on the development of this project, its future outcomes and wide-ranging benefits for the local community as the scheme moves forward.

Background Papers

UK Levelling Up Fund Round Two Cabinet Paper, 14 June 2022.

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Section 1 – Introduction



1. Introduction

In March 2020, Continuum Sport and Leisure (in partnership with Hawkins Brown) were commissioned by Northampton Borough Council to undertake a design feasibility study for a new Health and Wellbeing Hub in Weston Favell. The Council were keen to be armed with detailed and robust information to help inform their planning and decision making in relation to any potential future developments of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub. During the project Northampton moved to a new Unitary Authority – West Northamptonshire Council. Government legislation was passed to create a new West Northamptonshire unitary council serving the areas of Daventry District, Northampton and South Northants, and a new North Northamptonshire unitary authority serving Wellingborough, Kettering, Corby and East Northants. The remit of this project is now under the guidance of the new West Northamptonshire Council which started on 1 April 2021.

In February 2020, ahead of commissioning the study and circulating the subsequent brief, the previous borough Council had set out the need for both the recognition of the importance of the Weston Favell area and the need to undertake further detailed research into the opportunities and costs associated with any development of the study site to Cabinet. In order to explore the feasibility of developing the site, identify options that are available, highlight the demand for facilities, illustrate the impact that they can have in the local area and to explore the potential financial issues and opportunities that are associated with any scheme, the Consultant Team have undertaken a detailed review process to assist West Northamptonshire Council with their decision making regarding the long-term future of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub.

The focus of the study has been to investigate the most effective and efficient potential redevelopment options for a new Health and Wellbeing Hub that incorporates the current facilities onsite. These facilities include:

Lings Forum Leisure Centre, The Forum Centre (Children’s services), Olympus House (Adult Services), Weston Favell Police (Community Officers), Weston Favell Library and the Weston Favell Health Centre (Mayfield Surgery, Favell Plus Surgery and Roderick’s Dental).

It should be noted that this commission was completed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The assumption within this report (at the time of its collation) is that the time taken to develop the proposed facilities will allow for the leisure centre to operate as business as usual after whatever length of break in use or attendance by users, members and staff. The report does not at the time of its publication allow for any unknown additional cost to the Council due to Covid-19 or potential changes to any future contract that would need to be re-negotiated for the management of the new facilities and the current leisure provision.

Whilst these challenges will not be clear until everyday life returns to normal, the potential future development of the current leisure provision and the options to develop new facilities represent a very real and exciting opportunity for West Northants Council.

In the current climate of financial and political uncertainty, the Consultant Team are confident that with strong leadership and robust long-term, non-partisan decision making focused on working towards further technical and financial certainty, the delivery of the recommendations presented within this study can have a lasting positive impact on the provision of health, wellbeing and leisure for the communities of Weston Favell and for the new West Northampton Unitary Authority area.

1.1 Methodology

To ensure the development of a detailed and robust feasibility study and associated recommendations, the Consultant Team deployed a multi-stage methodology to meet the needs of the Council in relation to identifying the options available to the authority for developing the Weston Favell Health

and Wellbeing Hub. It has built upon our expertise and experience of conducting research and consultation in relation to projects of this type and has ensured an objective and outcome focussed review.

1.1.1 Desk Based Review

A significant amount of research, statistical information and strategic documentation has been analysed and reviewed by the Consultant Team during this project. This information has provided background data and context about the population and demographic make-up, current participation trends and the existing supply of leisure facilities within Northampton and neighbouring areas. This background research also includes the review of strategies and action plans that have been published by a range of national, county-wide and local bodies and organisations. It has been undertaken as a way of highlighting the strategic relevance of the study site to a wide range of partners and stakeholders. Information has also been provided by the leisure centre's operator Northampton Leisure Trust, NHS Property Services, the previous Northampton Borough Council, and Northamptonshire County Council that relates to the current and historical management of the buildings. This data has been reviewed and analysed and used to inform the consultation sessions as well as the facility mix and financial options for the site.

1.1.2 Consultation with Key Stakeholders

A key part of this study has been a detailed consultation process with key partners and stakeholders. The Consultant Team were keen to ensure that this process sought the views of a wide range of individuals and organisations. The Consultant Team undertook a number of virtual and telephone interviews with key stakeholders. These interviews centred around standardised and bespoke questions for each of the consultees in order to gain their insight and opinions on the Health and Wellbeing Hub and the potential impact to their service area.

In order to gain the views and opinions of a wider range of partners, potential users of the facilities and the local community, the Consultant Team also completed an in-depth public consultation process. This process included a virtual consultation room, public survey, leisure centre user survey and, with the assistance of the GP Surgeries, a patient survey. Additionally, the Consultant team undertook two workshops to engage a number of wider stakeholders in the process. In November 2020, the Consultant Team held a service provider workshop which brought together the main service providers that would be accommodated in the new hub. This enabled the Consultant Team to gain insight into the current facilities' constraints and the opportunities to deliver a more joined up approach.

The findings of the consultation process, the responses to the online questionnaires, and the workshop discussions have been analysed and incorporated into the consultation findings, which are presented within section five of this report.

1.1.3 Client and Project Board Review

Throughout the study the Consultant Team have presented the key findings at specific milestones with the Council's Project Team, the Health and Wellbeing Project Board (responsible for overseeing this project). Key findings and emerging priorities have been relayed and debated within these different forums, and feedback and direction from the Council has been sought throughout these stages. The Consultant Team have ensured that each key milestone has been developed in partnership within these forums to ensure a truly shared and owned feasibility study.

1.1.4 Concept Designs, Options Appraisal, Business Case and Affordability

Following on from the detailed analysis of the consultation findings, the Consultant Team identified different options, working closely with the West Northants Council Project Team and the Health and Wellbeing Project Board. These options were then subject to concept designs and indicative cost planning exercises.

As a result of this process, a number of initial concept designs and spatial plans have been prepared to illustrate the different options for the site. Cost Consultants, Stace, have also been an integral part of the Consultant Team and they have prepared outline indicative capital costs for each of the options presented for consideration. Following this the Consultant Team undertook an options appraisal for the study site. A key element of the options appraisal exercise that has been undertaken as part of this project is the development of outline business plans that illustrate the associated revenue implications for the preferred options. The options are then subject to qualitative and quantitative financial analysis to present a series of initial recommendations and provide West Northants Council with a preferred facility mix that will help the Council to discuss and agree a way forward for the site. The results of the options appraisal and the Outline Business Case can be found within sections seven and eight of this report.

1.2 Strategic Vision

The Council have a key strategic vision for the Weston Favell site, which is evident from the commitment and work to develop a Health and Wellbeing Hub to benefit the community of Weston Favell. The emerging vision for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub has been developed iteratively to date based on the following key elements and opportunities:

- Lings Forum Leisure Centre, a 1970's wet and dry leisure centre with Cinema is now considered beyond its operational life.
- The Health Centre adjacent to Lings Forum is also beyond its operational life and not fit for purpose to meet the integrated health and social care needs of residents.
- The Police Station nearby has been considered by the Northamptonshire Constabulary as surplus to requirements and any future presence of the police could be a community presence in any future Community Health and Wellbeing Hub.
- The potential redevelopment of the Leisure and Health sites will enable housing and mixed developments to be explored on sites.

- Surrounding buildings are also approaching end of operational life or not optimally utilised:
 - The Forum Family Centre – ageing property and approaching end of operational life with poor accommodation.
 - The Library in Weston Favell District Shopping Centre currently operates from the shopping centre and is the most expensive library in the County to operate.
 - Olympus House (Adult Social Care) is dated and lacks capacity to expand to meet the growing demand for adult social care.

The strategic vision for this study has been formed through the consideration of local, county and national strategic documents. The national strategic objects are echoed throughout the county and local strategies. These strategies set the context for County councils and local authorities.

The wider regional strategic objectives are also influential as these set ambitions and actions for the local authorities to follow to ensure they meet the strategic objectives. Northamptonshire County Council want to make Northamptonshire a great place to grow up, live, learn, work and grow old. The Northamptonshire Sport strategy mirrors the strategic objectives set by Sport England, which include decreasing inactivity and improving health and wellbeing.

Northampton have produced several local strategies that are considered when discussing the strategic vision for the study site. A common theme throughout the local strategic documents is economic and physical regeneration and enabling the town to be more attractive for people to live, work, study, invest in and visit.

The strategic vision is clear, and can be seen throughout the national, county and local strategies. A further analysis of the national, county and local strategies can be found in section three of this report.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The previous Borough Council have devoted substantial resources to examining the potential opportunities to develop a Health and Wellbeing Hub in Weston Favell. This study's priority aim is to "to bring forward 3.8 hectares of under-utilised public sector buildings and land at Weston Favell for the delivery of a new Health and Wellbeing Hub and enable the regeneration of surplus land for housing and mixed use." The study highlights two key areas for development, which are the leisure and health and wellbeing offer. The study outlines the desired outcomes the Council want to achieve in terms of community and social aims and financial aims, which are:

Social and Community Aims

- Greater integration of primary care, social care, mental health and health and wellbeing services.
- Lifelong learning provision.
- A social hub and meeting place.
- Leisure provision; swimming, health and wellbeing preventative-based services.
- Community Police.
- Adult, Children and Social Care Services.
- Place making regeneration creating a sense of pride in the local area.

Financial Aims

- Reduce annual running and maintenance costs resulting from public service estate rationalisation through further 'hub' opportunities and eliminating estate duplication as the two new unitary authorities are put in place.
- Potential capital receipts from the release of property declared surplus to requirement.
- Release of surplus land and buildings to accelerate housing delivery and economic growth.

- Cost avoidance resulting from the release of public estate that would otherwise require significant backlog maintenance or capital spend.

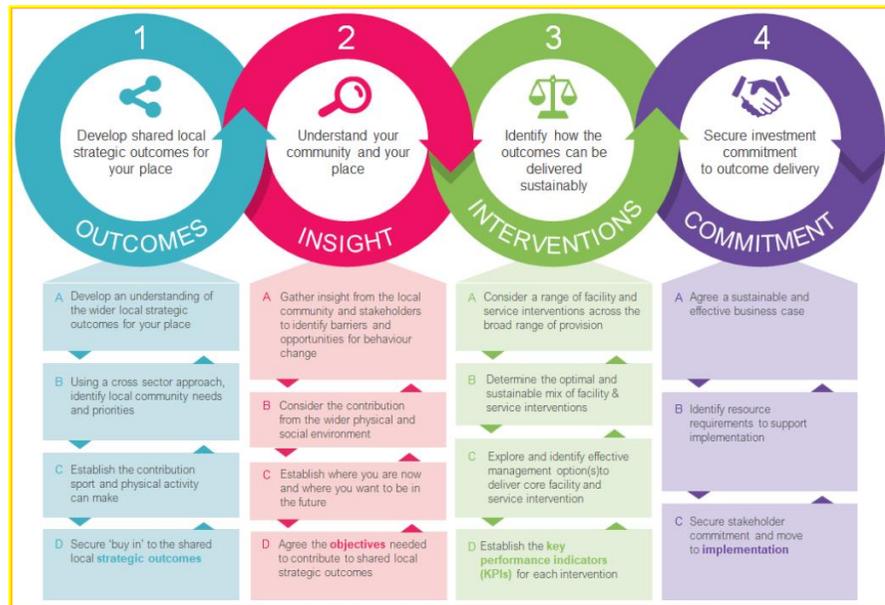
The scope of the study sets the clear aspirations the Council has for the study site to bring an underutilised area for the delivery of a market leading Health and Wellbeing Hub for Weston Favell. The key aim for the Council is to have a range of services with "one front door" to encourage the joined up working of services for the local community. During this project we have meticulously examined the brief to ensure this project remains aligned with the Council's vision for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub.

1.4 Sport England Planning Guidance

The brief has also been shaped and influenced by the recent Sport England guidance on Strategic Outcomes, with West Northants Council keen to ensure that the study focuses on the need to ensure a clear evidence base and a strategic approach to developing community facilities. Whilst the model has been developed by Sport England with the focus on facilities for sport and physical activity, it can be equally applied to the development of health facilities and the important and positive impact that they can and do have on the wellbeing and quality of an area and its communities.

The Sport England guidance is summarised in the diagram below. The model describes the stages and approach needed to ensure investment best meets local strategic outcomes and the needs of the community, but importantly recognises the challenges faced in terms of resourcing and developing large-scale capital projects. The guidance clearly states that projects need to be achievable and sustainable which, as detailed within this study report, have remained at the forefront of our thinking when discussing the options for the facilities and options on the study site.

Figure 1.1: Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance



This brief and the delivery of this feasibility study cover Stages 2 and 3 of the Sport England model. The Council have set the outcomes associated with the study and have invested notable time and resources into assessing the wider needs of the town and its population through its various key strategies and policies. This study adds to the insight stage with our analysis and consultation. Having used this insight, the Consultant Team have identified the leading strategic objectives and set out how the proposed interventions will have the greatest impact on the leading objectives. By considering a range of facility and service interventions across the broad range of provision, completing Stage 3 has identified the optimal and sustainable mix of facility and service intervention. This will enable the Council Project Team and the Health and Wellbeing Board to work towards a future strategic commitment that is deliverable and will ensure significant improvements and benefits for Weston Favell.

1.5 One Public Estate Programme

OPE is an established national programme delivered in partnership by the Office of Government Property (OGP) within the Cabinet Office and the Local Government Association (LGA). It provides practical and technical support and funding to councils to deliver ambitious property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners. The programme is underpinned by three core objectives:

- Creating economic growth (new homes and jobs).
- Delivering more integrated, customer-focused services.
- Generating efficiencies, through capital receipts and reduced running costs.

In 2019, the then Northampton Borough Council submitted a proposal for OPE Phase 7 to obtain funding for a range of projects in Northampton which are designed to meet three objectives of the OPE programme. These projects included:

- Pan-Northamptonshire Public Services & Estate Framework.
- Weston Favell Public Services Hub and Regeneration Programme (Pilot) to Outline Business Case stage.
- Moulton Housing-Led Mixed-Use Development & Coronial Hub to grant of outline planning consent.
- Kettering Station and Surrounds Land Release Programme to outline business case stage and exchange of landowners' agreement.

This project closely aligns with the strategic objectives of OPE as this is a cross service and organisational project with the partners looking to collaborate and work together to improve service delivery whilst generating revenue savings and capital receipts, securing regeneration and housing growth.

1.6 Report Structure

This report is structured under nine key sections. Section two provides a background of Northampton, including key statistics such as population

change, deprivation, physical activity rates and health. Section three gives an overview of the findings of the Consultant Team’s assessment of the study site, the facilities currently available at the site and the analysis of the current facilities. Section four provides an overview of the key policy and strategy background covering national, regional and local level strategies. A full analysis of all the strategies is provided in Appendix 3. Section five provides an overview of all of the in-depth consultation findings with key stakeholders, National Governing Bodies (NGB), and public consultations (virtual consultation room and surveys). Section six presents a review of the supply and demand of sporting facilities within the borough and across the sub-region and region. Section seven sets out the options and concept site layouts and provides the outline capital costs. Section eight provides a detailed Outline Business Case following Office of Government Commerce guidance related to public sector funding. This section provides a detailed options appraisal and business case for the potential developments. It provides outline revenue implications and qualitative and quantitative analysis for each project option. Section nine provides the Consultant Team recommendations and the next steps of the process for the Council. Section ten provides a final summary of the study.



Section 2 – Background and Context

2. Background and Context

2.1 Introduction

When developing or improving facilities for leisure and health and wellbeing it is important to consider the demographic characteristics of the local area and the population the facilities will serve. This helps to ensure that the facilities best meet the needs of local people and provides a viable and sustainable offer. Ensuring that any decisions about investment and the development of new or improved facilities are based on a robust needs and evidence base also allows for long-term strategic planning for facilities and their future usage. Additionally, it can help to engage partners and stakeholders by demonstrating the potential impact of new or improved facilities on a wide range of outcomes.

This section of the report provides a detailed analysis of the local population and existing facility provision for leisure activity in Northampton. It sets out a summary of the demographic breakdown of the local area and the current levels of participation in physical activity. This information is used to examine the potential need for new or improved facilities for leisure and health and wellbeing and helps to inform financial planning with regards to potential income which could be generated by facilities.

A range of research tools are used to fully understand the needs of a local population and the extent to which these needs are being met by existing facility provision. These include the latest research from the Office of National Statistics, Northampton Public Health Profile and Indices of Multiple Deprivation as well as sports specific tools which give information on participation levels, including Sport England's Active Lives Survey. These research tools allow us to understand what barriers might prevent people from being active and what would help to motivate greater activity levels amongst all age groups.

In addition to understanding the local population it is also important to fully understand local facility provision. Sport England's Active Places Power

database, Sports Facility Calculator tool and Facilities Planning Model research allow for an understanding of what facilities are provided within a specific area and where they are located as well as an appreciation of the extent to which existing facility provision is likely to be meeting local needs. These tools consider facility provision and local demand for facilities. Sport England's tools provide the most up to date method of assessing facility provision within a local authority area. The supply and demand of local cultural provision has been examined through desk-based research and consultation.

The Consultant Team have analysed the available research and data and the outcomes are presented within this section of the report to help inform potential options for the study site so that they meet the demand and needs of local people in the long term. This evidence base is important to both inform decisions, which need to be made by West Northants Council and to engage potential funders, partners, and stakeholders to support the potential development of new or improved facilities at the study site.

2.2 Physical Activity and its Benefits

Physical activity substantially benefits people's social, mental, and physical well-being and can play a vital role in supporting and helping local communities. Northampton's current health statistics are below the national average and have some notable challenges for public health. The cost of physical inactivity nationally is high; the economic burden of physical inactivity in terms of healthcare costs, productivity losses and disability adjusted life years amount to around £955 million in England. The Council's investment on the study site can help reduce physical inactivity by providing higher quality indoor and outdoor leisure and health facilities that are inclusive for the whole community in Northampton. Providing access to both indoor and outdoor facilities is key to creating an active culture. Therefore, it is vital for this investment to improve the facilities and the accessibility to the site to enable a hub of physical activity and health to be created, enabling the residents of Northampton to live a more active and healthier lifestyle.

2.3 Reducing Health Related Illnesses

There is significant evidence to suggest that physical activity can help prevent and deter long term health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and coronary heart disease. There is an intimate link between physical activity and physical health, which shows the importance and benefits it can have on an individual. Many authors have cited research that shows correlation between physical activity and the positive effects it has on preventing and deterring certain conditions. Some of the health-related benefits of exercise include:

- Reduced weight/obesity levels.
- Reduced blood pressure.
- Lower blood cholesterol.
- Reduced risk of type 2 diabetes.
- Reduced risk of some cancers.
- Preventing coronary heart disease.
- Preventing cardiovascular disease.

This is very significant as recent Sport England research indicates that one in four people in England live with a long-term health condition, and they are twice as likely to be inactive, despite the evidence that being active can help manage many conditions and help reduce the impact and severity of symptoms.

2.4 Benefits to Wellbeing

There has been growing interest in the concept of wellbeing, with momentum in recent years and this is for good reason, since wellbeing is associated with good self-rated health, longevity, healthy lifestyle, better mental and physical health, social connectedness, and a feeling of the ability to contribute to wider society. A previous meta-analysis demonstrated across 35 studies that good psychological wellbeing was associated with an 18% reduction in premature mortality. Additionally, there is good evidence from systematic reviews that engaging in physical activity and sport can improve mental health (including reducing depression and anxiety), self-

esteem, cognitive performance, and academic achievements, especially amongst children. Regarding adults, research notes that being physically active improves life satisfaction, mental health, and self-perception of health. Well-being in elderly adults needs to be considered for this study due to the ageing demographic in Northampton. The research shows that physical activity, sport and leisure are integral components in promoting healthy ageing and wellbeing for elderly people. One study found that regular older swimmers, who reported swimming between two and five times a week over a period on average of 2.5 years, had significantly better executive function on three tasks, compared to sedentary older adults of similar age and gender who did not swim.

2.5 Physical Activity Rates in Northampton

The planning of any new or improved facilities for sport and physical activity at the study site should consider the current participation levels as well as barriers and motivating factors which affect the local population in Northampton. It is important that new community facilities for sport and physical activity target and reach those who are currently inactive whilst also creating sufficient opportunities for those with a high propensity to be active to have the best possible impact on activity levels in the local area. An overview of local participation levels based on Sport England's Active Lives Survey results is provided within this section. As well as informing decisions about the potential facility mix at any new or improved facility, this analysis can also be utilised to develop and promote specific activities at the site.

Sport England's Active Lives Survey provides the most comprehensive assessment of levels of sports participation and physical activity at a local authority, county, regional and national level. Active Lives measures a range of performance indicators including activity rates, volunteering and satisfaction with local sports provision. Active Lives also enables the analysis of activity rates across a number of different demographics including gender, disability, ethnicity, and other demographic indicators.

As well as participation, it is also possible to measure non-participation using the Active Lives Survey results. This makes it possible to identify those sections of the population most in need of intervention to increase their participation in sport and physical activity. The annual survey results can be used to identify general patterns and trends in participation across the past few years. The following analysis utilises data from four surveys that have been conducted by Sport England in: May 19/20, November 2018/19, May 2018/19, and November 2017/18. This evolving body of data allows for a comparison of performance over time across a range of sport and physical activity participation indicators.

Figure 2.1 demonstrates Northampton’s performance in terms of participation in moderate intensity activity for at least 30 minutes once a week and more than 150 minutes once a week.

Figure 2.1: Participation in physical activity In Northampton, Northamptonshire, East Midlands and Nationally.

Key Performance Indicators	NBC Nov 17/18	NBC May 18/19	NBC Nov 18/19	NBC May 19/20	Northants May 19/20	East Mid May 19/20	Eng May 19/20
Active (More than 150 minutes a week)	58.2%	57.3%	56.2%	57.4%	60.5%	61.3%	62.8%
Fairly Active (30-149 minutes a week)	15.1%	16.2%	18.4%	14.2%	13.3%	12.2%	11.7%

Figure 2.1 shows that regular active participation levels in Northampton have varied from November 17/18 to May 19/20. The figure recorded in May 19/20 is below the county, regional and national averages. Regarding fairly active residents within Northampton, the number has decreased from 15.1% to 14.2%. However, the figure remains higher than the county,

regional and national averages. Improving the facility offer at Weston Favell and providing additional activities can help to further increase the activity levels within Northampton. High quality facilities and service provision could support those who are active to become more active, which would increase the proportion of active people in Northampton.

As well as considering activity and participation levels, it is useful to consider inactivity levels in Northampton. The Active Lives Survey also measures the proportion of people who had not participated in 30 minutes of moderate sport and physical activity. Results for Northampton are provided in Figure 2.2 along with county, regional and national results.

Figure 2.2: Inactivity in Northampton, Northamptonshire, East Midlands and national.

Key Performance Indicator	NBC Nov 17/18	NBC May 18/19	NBC Nov 18/19	NBC May 19/20	Northants May 19/20	East Mids May 19/20	Eng May 19/20
Less than 30 minutes a week (all adults)	26.7%	26.5%	25.4%	28.4%	26.2%	26.5%	25.5%

Figure 2.2 shows that inactivity levels in Northampton are higher than the regional, county, and national averages. The rates of inactivity levels have increased from 26.7% to 28.4% across the previous surveys. It will be beneficial if renewed facilities at the study site can target those that are currently inactive by providing new activities and addressing identified barriers to participation. This could result in an overall increase in participation among local people, which is in line with the strategic objectives of Sport England. Providing facilities that also offer the ability for people to become physically active in a more informal and recreational manner, such as walking and jogging within the open space, can also help get more people active and using the site.

When analysing participation in sport and physical activity it is important to consider variations in participation levels between demographic groups to ensure that participation opportunities are appropriately planned and, where necessary, targeted at those most in need of intervention.

Figure 2.3 illustrates how sport and physical activity participation rates in Northampton differ between demographic groups. This provides an overview of this data for Northampton, Northamptonshire, East Midlands, and nationally.

Figure 2.3: Demographic breakdown of physical activity participation (150+ minutes a week) in Northampton, Northamptonshire, East Midlands, and nationally.

Population	NBC Nov 17/18	NBC May 18/19	NBC Nov 18/19	NBC May 19/20	Northants May 19/20	East Mids May 19/20	England May 19/20
All	58.2%	57.3%	56.2%	57.4%	60.5%	61.3%	62.8%
Male	63.1%	60.6%	57.0%	58.4%	62.5%	63.0%	64.6%
Female	53.2%	54.4%	55.7%	56.3%	58.6%	60.0%	61.3%
16 to 34	63.1%	63.7%	53.9%	56.2%	63.3%	68.3%	69.1%
35 to 54	57.7%	58.8%	61.7%	60.2%	63.7%	66.2%	66.4%
55-74	66.0%	58.6%	58.5%	59.7%	59.7%	58.4%	60.5%
75+	-	-	-	-	46.4%	36.8%	40.2%
White	56.0%	54.7%	58.0%	61.4%	61.8%	62.3%	64.2%
Asian	-	-	-	-	49.6%	55.9%	53%
Chinese	-	-	-	-	-	70.2%	60.7%
Black	-	-	-	-	-	45.7%	57.1%
Mixed	-	-	-	-	-	61.8%	68.7%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	50.9%	56.4%
Limiting disability	42.0%	42.0%	40.1%	48.9%	46.2%	46.5%	47.0%
No limiting disability	62.0%	60.9%	61.1%	61.4%	64.5%	65.9%	67.0%

Population	NBC Nov 17/18	NBC May 18/19	NBC Nov 18/19	NBC May 19/20	Northants May 19/20	East Mids May 19/20	England May 19/20
NS-SEC 1-2 (A)	61.4%	68.6%	66.4%	65.8%	69.2%	69.6%	71.9%
NS-SEC 3-5 (B)	67.2%	53.3%	58.8%	56.9%	59.3%	61.9%	62.5%
NS-SEC 6-8 (C)	59.1%	50.7%	-	50.4%	52.8%	54.7%	53.3%
NS-SEC 9 (D)	-	-	-	-	65.3%	70.4%	69.4%

As overall participation in Northampton is below the national average, it is expected that participation among demographic groups is below the national averages. Key issues which are relevant to the development of new or improved facilities on the study site are detailed below.

Gender

Female participation is below the county, regional and national averages and has fluctuated over the course of the Active Lives surveys. Providing facilities and activities which are tailored to women and girls at the study site can potentially help to address this and contribute to increasing the overall participation level in Northampton. Male activity levels are also below the county, regional and national averages. Northampton needs to improve the overall levels of physical activity for both males and females.

Age

The data for the breakdown of age groups and their participation makes for interesting reading. National trends suggest that participation levels decrease as you get older. However, the participation in Northampton is the highest amongst those aged between 35-74, which goes against the national statistics. Capturing the 18-34 age group as the study site users could particularly contribute to increasing overall participation levels in Northampton, especially as this age group is usually the most active. The Northampton figures are significantly below county, regional and national

averages for all age groups. Having a new site study that offers activities and opportunities tailored to all different age groups can help increase physical activity levels.

Ethnicity

Data for ethnicity participation in Northampton could not be measured through the Active Lives survey as there was not a sufficient sample size. It will be important to ensure that facilities and activities at the study site cater for all members of the community to ensure physical activity levels in Northampton will increase.

Disability

Regular participation by people with a limiting disability is above the county, regional and national averages, indicating that disabled people in Northampton are more active. Providing accessible facilities and inclusive as well as disability specific sessions at the study site can help to ensure that disabled people have access to suitable participation opportunities to be active.

Socio-Economic Status

Participation for groups NS-SEC 1-2, 3-5, and 6-8 in Northampton are below the regional, county, and national average. As Northampton has some areas of high deprivation, especially near the study site, it will be important to cater for those with lower incomes.

2.6 Weston Favell - Northampton

The study site is located within the borough of Northampton in Northamptonshire. Figure 2.4 shows the location of Northampton within Northamptonshire.

Figure 2.4: Map of Northamptonshire



2.7 West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority

In April 2021, Northampton Borough Council merged with South Northamptonshire Borough Council and Daventry District Council to form the West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority. Figure 2.5 highlights the map of the new Unitary Authority.

Figure 2.5: West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority Map



2.8 Catchment Areas of the Study Site

The study site is in the Brookside ward situated to the east of Northampton Town centre. It is important to understand the catchment areas of the

study site to help understand the potential users of the site. Northampton has high car ownership (75.6%), and the study site will rely on being connected by road travel. The study site is well connected by public transport, due to its proximity to the shopping centre. There are a few bus stops located at Billing Brook Road that are very close to the site and are approximately a few minutes' walk. These service buses from various locations including Duston, Brackmills, Silverstone, Corby, Moulton, and the Northampton Town Centre. Figure 2.6 highlights the 5,10 and 15-minute walking catchment around the study site.

Figure 2.6 Walking Catchment of our Study Site

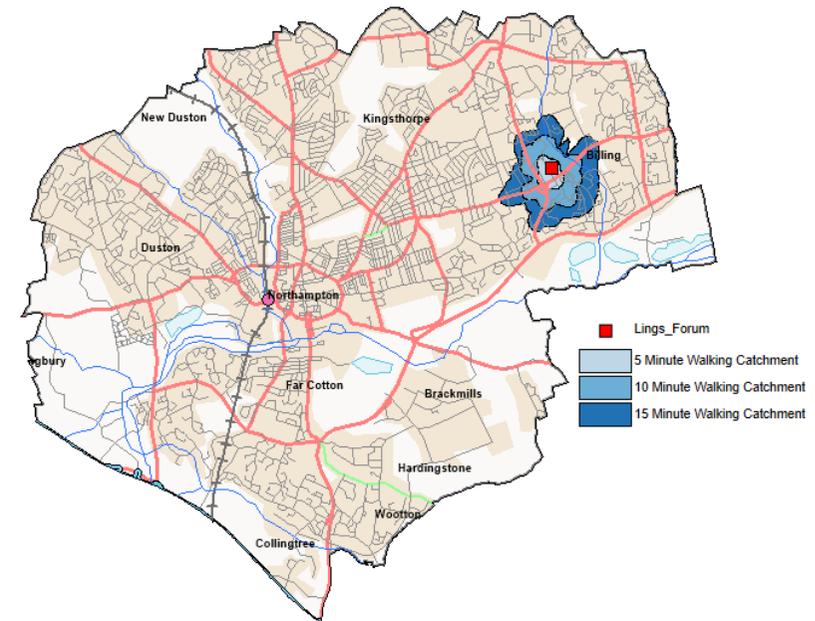
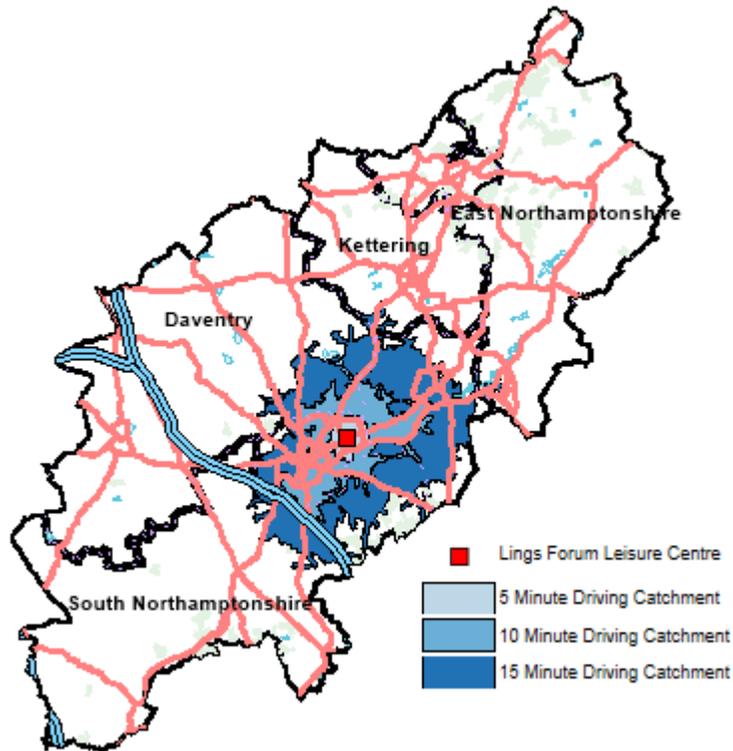


Figure 2.7 highlights the 5, 10 and 15-minute drive time catchment area from the study site. The drive time catchment covers most of Northampton, which shows the study site is accessible by car for much of the population.

Additionally, due to our study site’s location in the east of the borough, there is a significant amount of Wellingborough District that is within the drive catchment area of our study site. A large area of South Northamptonshire is also covered within the drive catchments of our study site.

Figure 2.7 Driving Time Catchments



2.9 Demographic Profile

Demographic and social indicators such as population change, deprivation levels and health outcomes are important considerations when profiling a local area and determining needs associated with leisure and cultural activity. This section provides an overview of these issues in Northampton, highlighting areas in which potential facility developments can contribute to improving the overall quality of life for local people.

2.9.1 Population

Any facilities which are developed at the study will need to meet the needs of Northampton’s future population as well as its current population. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) produces population projections which help to enable future planning for local populations. Figure 2.8 summarises the most up to date population projections which are available for Northampton. Projections have been produced based on the latest 2011 Census Data.

Figure 2.8: Projected Population Growth – Northampton, Surrounding Boroughs/Districts, Northamptonshire & East Midlands (2020-2029).

Borough/District	Projected 2020	Projected 2024	Projected 2029	Increase 2020 -29	% increase
Northampton	226,702	228,836	230,355	3,653	1.6%
South Northamptonshire	94,907	99,120	103,213	8,306	8.8%
Daventry	87,464	92,870	98,311	10,847	12.4%
Wellingborough	80,721	82,753	84,599	3,878	4.8%
Northamptonshire	763,001	789,770	815,520	52,519	6.9%
East Midlands	4,882,230	5,017,011	5,165,842	283,612	5.8%

Figure 2.8 demonstrates that Northampton’s population is projected to grow by 1.6% from 2020 to 2029, compared to projected growth of 6.9% in Northamptonshire and 5.8% in the East Midlands. Northampton has a

significantly larger population than the neighbouring local authorities. However, the projected population growth is below the county and regional averages. The current provision of facilities for sport, physical activity and recreation in Northampton will be under further pressure in the coming years as this growth occurs.

However, it is worth noting that Northampton will be forming a unitary authority with South Northamptonshire and Daventry in April 2021, who both have high population growth rates. Once the population projections are calculated for the new unitary authority it equals to population growth of 22,806 people (5.6%).

In terms of population density, on average there are 26.3 people per hectare in Northampton, compared to 2.9 people per hectare in Northamptonshire and 2.9 people per hectare in the East Midlands. In densely populated areas it is particularly important to ensure that there are sufficient high-quality leisure facilities, both indoor and outdoor, and cultural facilities to meet the needs of local people. Delivering high quality facilities at the study site can help to ensure that people living in Northampton are able to access quality opportunities to take part in leisure activity now and in the future.

2.9.2 Age Profile

When planning for the development of new facilities for leisure and cultural activity it is important to consider the age profile of the catchment population. Participation preferences and facility requirements vary across age groups, and it is essential that these requirements are fully understood to ensure that any new and improved facilities meet identified needs.

Figure 2.9 shows the age breakdown in Northampton in 2020 and the projected age breakdown in 2029, with county figures for comparison.

Figure 2.9: Age breakdown of Northampton population (2020 and 2029)

Area/Year	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
Northampton 2020	31,877 (14.2%)	28,114 (12.4%)	28,299 (12.5%)	32,800 (14.4%)	30,297 (13.3%)	28,526 (12.6%)	21,394 (9.4%)	16,332 (7.2%)	9,056 (4%)
Northampton 2029	27,658 (12.3%)	31,550 (13.7%)	27,901 (12.1%)	29,681 (12.9%)	31,219 (13.6%)	27,391 (11.9%)	25,195 (10.9%)	17,470 (7.6%)	12,289 (5.3%)
Northamptonshire 2020	97,612 (12.8%)	91,508 (12%)	81,586 (10.7%)	99,924 (13.1%)	101,325 (13.3%)	108,053 (14.2%)	82,240 (10.7%)	66,413 (8.7%)	34,348 (4.5%)
Northamptonshire 2029	91,929 (11.3%)	104,270 (12.8%)	80,060 (9.8%)	100,646 (12.3%)	110,888 (13.6%)	103,487 (12.7%)	102,746 (12.6%)	71,246 (8.7%)	50,254 (6.2%)

Figure 2.9 shows that in line with Northamptonshire trends, Northampton's population is expected to age (the 80+ age group increasing from 4% to 5.3%, 70-79 age group increasing to 7.2% from 7.6% and 60-69 increase from 9.4% to 10.9%). Northampton will have a growth in the number of teenagers, which is expected to grow from 12.4% to 13.7% by 2029.

2.9.3 Ethnicity

Ethnicity can be an important consideration in planning suitable facilities for sport and physical activity as it can influence participation levels and can demonstrate a need to cater for cultural differences and groups. In 2011, 84.5% of Northampton's population was White, 1.2% was mixed, 6.5% of the population was Asian, 5.7% were Black and 0.7% were classified as

other. Northampton is a more ethnically diverse local authority in comparison to the neighbouring authorities and the county and regional averages.

The proportion of the total resident population reporting as Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic (BAME) in the 2011 Census is at 15.5% which is higher once compared to the Northamptonshire and East Midlands average. It is important to ensure that community facilities for sport and physical activity are accessible to people from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures and this must continue to be a consideration when planning new facilities in the borough.

Figure 2.10: Ethnic Profiles within Northampton and surrounding Boroughs (2011 Census)

Borough/District	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Other
Northampton	179,238 (84.5%)	6,849 (3.2%)	13,751 (6.5%)	10,741 (5.1%)	1,490 (0.7%)
South Northamptonshire	82,572 (96.9%)	1,003 (1.2%)	1,129 (1.3%)	376 (0.4%)	109 (0.1%)
Daventry	75,123 (95.5%)	971 (1.2%)	1,183 (1.5%)	481 (0.6%)	85 (0.1%)
Wellingborough	65,788 (87.3%)	2,158 (2.9%)	4,463 (5.9%)	2,696 (3.6%)	251 (0.3%)

2.9.4 Health

It is useful to understand the health profile of Northampton with regards to identifying health issues which new or improved facilities can contribute to addressing.

Improving and developing the facility offer at the site can contribute to each of these priorities by providing new high-quality opportunities for sport and physical activity that can support work being undertaken to address a range of health issues.

Figure 2.11 provides an overview of the performance of Northampton across several Department of Health key health indicators in comparison with national averages. Where figures for Northampton are highlighted in red, they are worse than the national average.

Figure 2.11: Health indicators for Northampton and England (DoH Health Profiles)

Indicator	Northampton	England
Deprivation	24.3	21.8
Children in low-income families (U16)	15.7%	17.0%
Obese children (Year 6)	19.2%	20.2%
Physically active adults	59.3%	67.2%
Obese adults	61.2%	62.3%
Average Attainment 8 score	45.0	46.9
Life expectancy: male	78.7	79.6
Life expectancy: female	82.3	83.2
Under 75 mortality: Cardiovascular	83.4	71.7
Under 75 mortality: cancer	144.1	132.3

Figure 2.11 shows that Northampton performs poorly in comparison to the national averages with scores that are below the national average for nine of the ten health indicators. Therefore, it is vital that facilities for health and leisure are built so they can help contribute to reducing these health concerns, including under 75 mortality rates, increasing the life expectancy for male and females and decreasing the level of obesity in Northampton.

2.9.5 Deprivation

When planning for the development of new facilities for leisure and cultural activity it is important to consider deprivation levels within the catchment area. Deprivation affects the propensity and ability of the catchment population to access and use such facilities. These projects can also form an important element of the regeneration of deprived areas. An awareness of how deprivation affects a local population can also influence how activities

are delivered and what type of initiatives are launched to increase participation.

Figure 2.12 illustrates where Northampton was ranked nationally according to the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). It also compares Northampton’s overall IMD ranking with that of the other local authorities in Northamptonshire. Local authorities are listed with their 2019 IMD and 2015 IMD ranking.

Figure 2.12: Deprivation in Northampton in Comparison with other Northamptonshire Local Authorities (IMD 2019)

Local Authority	Rank Nationally 2019	Rank Nationally 2015
Northampton	105/317	105/317
South Northamptonshire	312/317	308/317
Daventry	243/317	232/317
Wellingborough	124/317	129/317
Kettering	161/317	164/317
Corby	70/317	74/317
East Northamptonshire	226/317	215/317

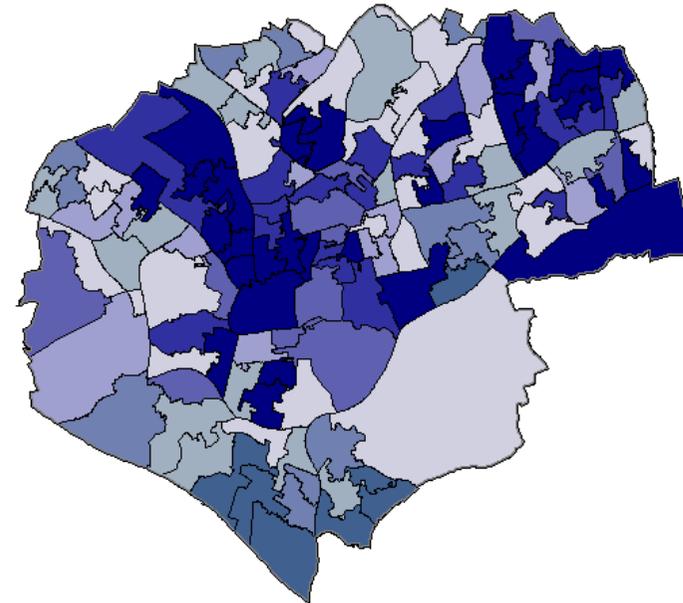
Using the IMD rank of average summary measure, this local authority is ranked 105th out of 317 local authorities. Northampton is within the top 33% of the most deprived local authorities in the Country and is the second most deprived local authority in Northamptonshire, behind Corby.

Northampton is a relatively deprived area in comparison to national averages. Currently in Northampton there are 12 (9%) LSOA’s (Lower Layer Super Output Area) ranked within the 10% most deprived LSOAs in the country, and 19 LSOA’s (14%) within the 20% of the most deprived LSOA’s in the country. The Riverside ward located to the south of the study site is considered one of the most deprived areas in the UK. This neighbourhood

ranks 184 out of 32, 844 in the whole of the UK, and is amongst the top 10% of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. Our study site is within the Brookside ward which is ranked 3,296 out of 32,844 LSOA’s in the country and is considered in the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. Children born in the most deprived areas can expect to live 7.8 years less than those born in the most affluent parts of the county. People in the most deprived areas are likely to spend 13 fewer years in good health than those living in the least deprived areas.

Figure 2.13 illustrates the deprivation statistics within Northampton. The darker an area is shaded, the higher the relative levels of deprivation.

Figure 2.13: Deprivation in Northampton (IMD 2019)



2.9.6 Local Economy

Local employment levels and the local economy can have an influence on the propensity of people within an area to participate and can also influence people's ability to pay to access facilities for sport and physical activity. As such, this is an important consideration when planning new and improved facilities for sport and physical activity both in terms of the facility mix which should be provided and the specific programmes and range of activity that should be offered.

Rates of unemployment are relatively high in Northampton compared to the rest of the East Midlands and England. Unemployment in Northampton, as measured by the claimant count, stood at 4.1% in 2019, compared with 3.7% for the East Midlands and 3.9% for Great Britain as a whole. Over one-third (33.7%) of Northampton's working age population hold degree level qualifications or higher (NVQ4 and above), lower than the equivalent proportions for the East Midlands (34.1%) and Great Britain (40.3%).

This must also be considered when planning for new or improved facilities and must be considered when determining levels of income which facilities might be expected to generate. It will be important to plan for a range of price levels including subsidised and off-peak prices to allow all local people to benefit from the provision of high-quality facilities for sport and physical activity.

2.10 Summary

The Consultant Team have examined the current demographics of Northampton Borough, which include population growth, age profiles and ethnicity. Although, the focus of this analysis was on Northampton it does consider the wider population areas of the new Unitary Authority. However, Northampton is the largest settlement within the Unitary Authority (by population) and will continue to be a key strategic area for growth for the future of the West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority.

Northampton's population is predicted to grow by 1.6% by 2029 which is lower than all neighbouring authorities, the regional and national averages. However, Northampton has considerably higher population density than all its neighbouring authorities.

It will be important for the facilities in Northampton to continue to meet the needs of the local population as it grows and as its profile changes. Northampton's population is expected to age further by 2029. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to the provision of accessible facilities that offer a range of suitable activities for older people, including low impact sports and activities. It is also important that families and younger adults are accommodated at any facilities that are developed and improved. The provision of indoor and outdoor facilities that are family friendly will make the site more attractive and promote participation in sport and physical activity in the borough across all parts of the community.

In Northampton, the physical inactivity rates are significantly lower than the regional, county, and national averages. There is considerably more success that can be achieved in Northampton, as over one in five people are inactive within the Borough. However, the Borough does have a higher percentage of people who are fairly active than the regional, county, and national figures. Providing high quality leisure facilities and services can improve the current offer and help people become physically active, both in a formal and informal manner.

The current health statistics are concerning for Northampton as they currently rank below average on eight out of the ten selected indicators. Physical activity has been shown to significantly improve people's mental, physical, and social wellbeing. It is vitally important that the local population has access to high quality sport and physical activity and health facilities. The introduction of a health and wellbeing hub will create a place where the residents of Weston Favell and Northampton are encouraged to be

physically active, lead healthy lifestyles and have access to high quality community facilities.

Northampton's deprivation levels rank relatively high in comparison to other neighbouring local authorities. There are some pockets of extremely high deprivation that do exist within the Borough, which are found near our study site. Therefore, it is important that the facilities at the site continue to provide affordable activities which can improve the health and wellbeing of those communities from a lower socio-economic background and provide them with new opportunities to be active and access community health and wellbeing facilities.

Section 3 – Study Site Appraisal



3. Site Appraisal – Weston Favell

3.1 Study Site Location

Figure 3.1 shows the location of Northampton Town Centre and our study site in context of Northampton Borough.

Figure 3.1 Wider Location



Figure 3.2
The Study Sites

Site Analysis
Site Options
Overview

Where could the new facilities be located?

Building on the previous masterplan study, two potential sites emerge for the location of the Health and Wellbeing Centre. Both options were reviewed at the start of this feasibility study, and Site A taken forward as the preferred location.

The additional areas within the site boundary may be used for new residential development, or improvement works to the wider site.

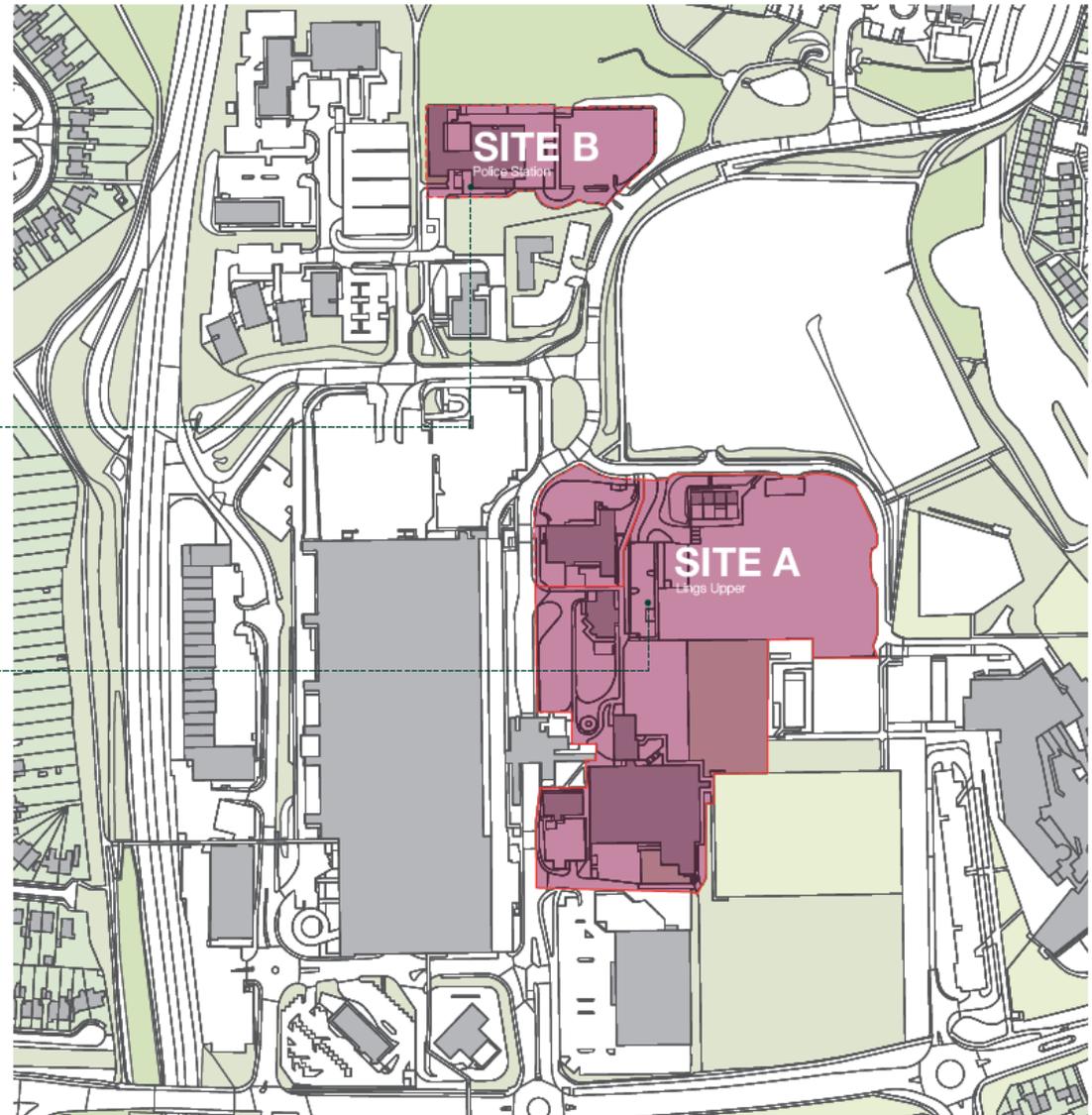
-  Land under the ownership of Northampton Borough Council
-  Possible additional or alternative land for development

Site B
Located on the current Police Station site, to the north of the Shopping Centre.

There are 2no. 2 storey buildings on the site, with a series of additional single storey garages and out-buildings. There is a surface car park to the east.

Site A
Located on the Lings Upper site. The existing Primary Care Centre is located here with car parking provision. The remainder of the site is predominantly scrubland, with 4 houses and a series of garage structures.

The site's topography slopes down from west to east, as a series of terraces still exists from the previous building's substructure.



3.2 Access to the Study Site

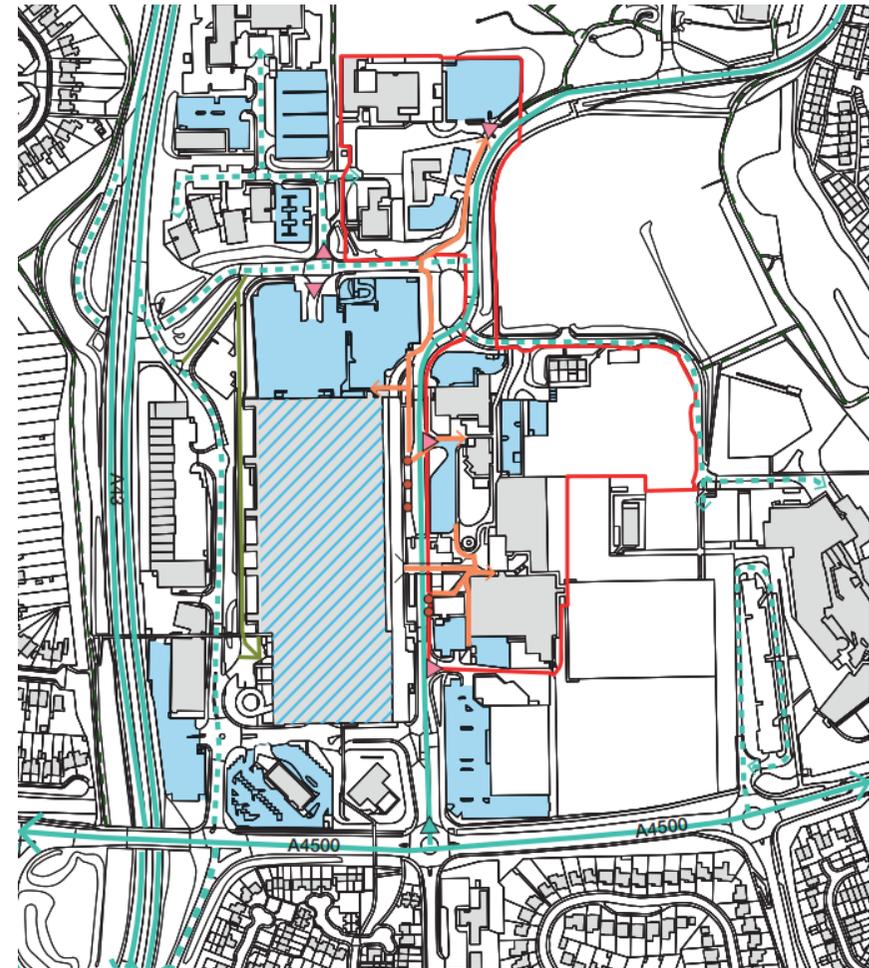
It is important to understand the connectivity, pedestrian routes and the vehicle routes for the study site in comparison to the local area. Figure 3.3 identifies the existing primary pedestrian (highlighted in orange) and vehicle (highlighted in turquoise) approaches and access routes. Parking provision is also highlighted within figure 3.3 by the light blue areas, which includes the facilities' current parking areas.

It is important to understand the main vehicle access points as Northampton has high car ownership (75.6%). The main access for vehicles is along Billing Brook Road, which runs through the middle of our study site and separates the site and the Weston Favell Shopping Centre. Additionally, the study site has excellent access to two of the main A roads that service the eastern district and the connection to Northamptonshire. The A4500 is to the south of the study site and the main connection route to Wellingborough. There is also the A43, which is located to the west of the study site and is the main road connection to Kettering.

In addition, to understand the main vehicle access routes and points, it is important to consider the pedestrian access routes and the proximity to the public transport network. One objective of this development is to improve the active environment (cycle and walking network) around the current site. The eastern and southern boundaries of the site are fairly impermeable and there is limited access for pedestrians. The main pedestrian access points are to the north of the study site, which is indicated by the orange lines in figure 3.3. However, due to the study site's location and proximity of other facilities, there is no pedestrian access to the east and north east.

The study site has extremely good public transport links, which is due to the proximity of the Weston Favell Shopping Centre. There are a number of bus stops located on Billing Brook Road, which run services to various locations including Duston, Brackmills, Silverstone, Corby, Moulton, and the Northampton Town Centre.

Figure 3.3: Access Routes to the Study Site



3.3 Building Typologies

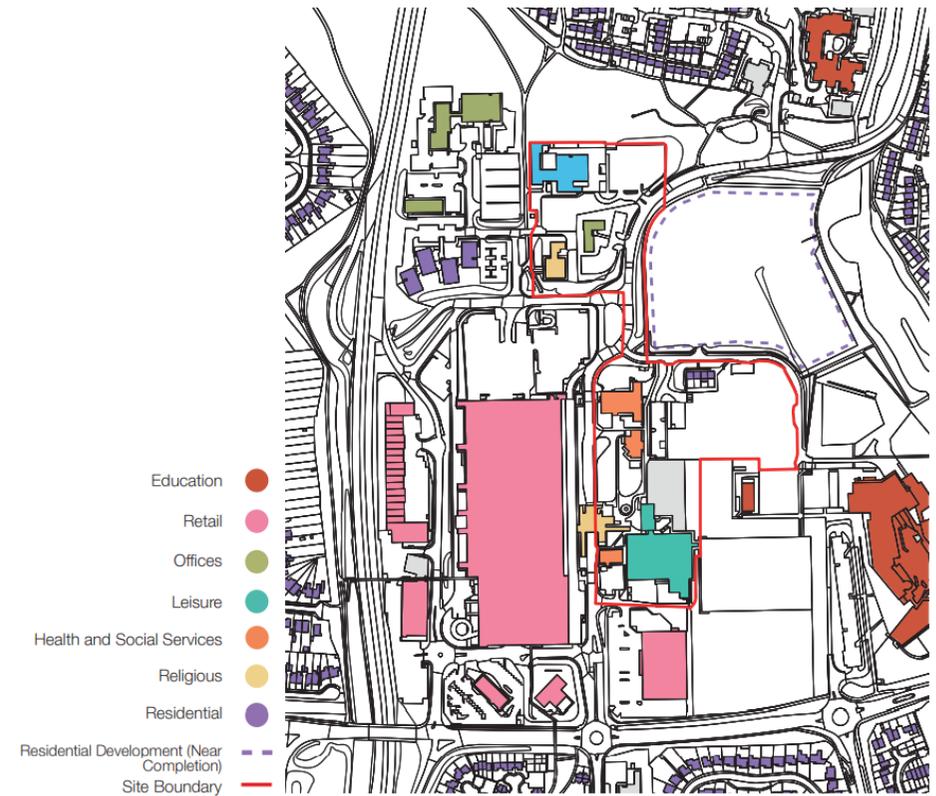
Figure 3.4 highlights the various buildings within and around the site. These buildings are clearly zoned by usage, which highlights the number of services and occupiers on and around the study site.

Within the study site boundary, there are a number of facilities that provide important services for the community of Northamptonshire. In the northern section of the site, there is the Northamptonshire Police Station (highlighted in blue), the Chartered Association of Building Engineers offices, and the Sacred Heart Church.

The service provision is located within the southern area of the study site, which can be found to the east of the Weston Favell Shopping Centre. The buildings on this area of the site, include: The Forum Centre (Children’s Services), Olympus House (Adult Services), the Weston Favell Health Centre, and the Lings Forum Leisure Centre. In the southern area of the site, there is also a small area that is currently occupied by residential property. The decanting of these residential properties will need to be considered if the southern area of the study site provides the best opportunities for the Health and Wellbeing Hub.

As you can see in figure 3.4, there is considerable retail provision, which is predominately provided by the Weston Favell Shopping Centre at the west of the study site. However, there is also a large retail store located to the south of our study site, which is currently occupied by B&M. On the border of the study site there is the Emmanuel Church.

Figure 3.4: Building Typologies on the Study Site



3.4 Current Facilities in Weston Favell

The Health and Wellbeing Hub aims to bring together a number of key services into one building. This section of the site analysis explores the facilities that have been considered by the Consultant Team for inclusion in the new hub. It is important to examine the current site, operations and quality of the building to understand the opportunities and constraints for each of the services and buildings. The facilities that will be examined are Lings Forum Leisure Centre, Olympus House (Adult Services), The Forum Centre (Children Services), Weston Favell Health Centre (GP Surgeries and Dental Practice), Northamptonshire Police Station and the Weston Favell Library which is currently located within the Weston Favell Shopping Centre.

3.4.1 Lings Forum Leisure Centre

Lings Forum Leisure Centre is located on Billing Brook Road and is located within the study site. The leisure centre was built in 1972 and is owned by the Council and managed by Northampton Leisure Trust. NLT was established in 2011 with a 15-year contract until 2026. The Consultant Team understand that in 2018 the Council agreed to FRL with the Trust for all the sites, however the current status of the lease (and whether this has been agreed for Lings Forum) and the imminent change to the new Unitary Authority need to be clarified.

Lings Forum Leisure Centre provides an important leisure service for the local community of Weston Favell. The facility provides a number of sport and leisure facilities, which include:

- 65 station health and fitness suite
- 6 court sports hall
- 2 fitness studios
- 4 squash courts
- 6 lane 25m swimming pool

Due to the age of the building, there are a considerable constraints and problems with the structure of the building. The recent options appraisal

undertaken by Northampton Leisure Trust stated that the leisure centre is “extremely inefficient in terms of energy consumption, all Plant and Equipment is beyond its useful life (as determined by the Condition Survey carried out in 2010), and the facility does not meet the needs of its customers now and in the future.”

The building has several limitations which include:

- Uninspiring and outdated external and internal appearance fails to promote participation and showcase activities;
- Entrance experience is disconnected from the streetscape and the building misses an opportunity to present itself as a destination;
- Inward looking spaces with poor quality of natural light and a lack of connection with the outside fail to support wellbeing of the occupants;
- Building layout promotes inefficient circulation and lacks legibility of activity spaces;
- Internal finishes are largely worn and outdated;
- Ageing building services fail to deliver a quality environmental control and user experience.

Figure 3.5: Lings Forum Leisure Centre



3.4.1.2 Lings Forum Leisure Centre – Current Operations

This section summarises the findings of a review of the current operational and financial arrangements regarding the leisure management contract.

Lings Forum is operated by NLT on behalf of WNC and in 2019/20 prior to the Coronavirus pandemic it generated a surplus in excess of £415k per annum to support the Trust’s operations across Northampton including other leisure facilities without recourse to any financial support from WNC.

3.4.1.3 Operator’s Perspective

Key points from consultation include:

- Health and Fitness and Group Exercise can be limited due to the design and outlay and lack of studio space.
- The sports hall design limits its flexibility, and the centre has been designed to surround this large space.
- Swimming pool is too small and with only the one water space, there are limited opportunities to expand and meet demand for the swimming school and more flexible activity.
- Surrounding areas outside are in poor condition and community safety has been an issue during winter months.
- Successful operation of the site has seen very successful levels of junior membership.
- The cinema remains a very popular part of the leisure centre offer and a key part of the future needs for any new centre.

3.4.2 Weston Favell Health Centre

Weston Favell Health Centre is located on Billing Brook Road and comprises two GP surgeries (Favell Plus Surgery and Mayfield Surgery) with a combined patient list of c. 20,000, a dental practice (Weston Favell Dental Surgery) and a range of community health services provided by Northamptonshire Health Foundation Trust (NHFT), including physiotherapy, podiatry and speech and language therapy. It is also likely

that the community midwifery team run by Northampton General Hospital will be providing services at this site shortly.

This site is owned and managed by NHS Property Services and provides important health and wellbeing services for the local community in the Weston Favell area. However, the building itself is no longer fit for purpose, with a less than optimal design. Users of the building have commented on it needing ‘major refurbishment’ and the layout of the building is confusing and needs to be improved. Users have also fed back that disabled facilities need to be redesigned.

3.4.2.1 West Favell Health Centre – Current Operations

The building is currently managed by NHS Property Services (NHSPS), for which the NHS is charged an additional management fee. The GP Practices and the Dental practice have expressed concern about the level of the service charges. All occupants of the building are tenants of NHSPS, although NHFT also utilise some sessional space, in addition to their leased premise.

Basic costs for the entire building for FY 2019/20 are:

Rent	£210,000 (E)
Rates	£ 30,000
FM & Service Charges	£369,00 (E)
Total	£609,000 pa

3.4.2.2 Operators Perspective

In discussion with the practice, the dental surgery and the midwives, they agreed they would like to be housed in the new facility. The GP practices, whilst they would welcome more space, have accepted a replication of the current footprint. However, given that the current space is not laid out optimally, there is scope to provide significantly more useful clinical space on the same footprint, particularly given the potential for digitisation of

medical records. The only change is to add a minor ops suite to be shared by both practices. The dental practice would like to take a slightly reduced footprint, but still providing the same quantum of services.

NHFT would like to continue with a similar footprint within the health centre but are keen to expand the range of services provided on the Weston Favell site, through a suite of rooms in a ‘central hub’ accessible to a range of service providers and separate to the health centre. These rooms will be for the provision of mental health services, group consultations and meetings and for the emerging Primary Care Network roles, such as social prescribing link workers. The other key addition to the NHFT footprint is a physiotherapy gym and options are being considered in order to incorporate this into the leisure centre, to achieve a truly integrated health and wellbeing service.

Figure 3.6 Healthcare Centre and Car Parks



3.4.3 Olympus House (Adult Services)

Olympus House is currently used by Northampton’s Adult Social Services (NASS). NASS support those who need more help for certain physical, cognitive or age-related conditions; in carrying out personal care or domestic routine and to sustain involvement in work, education, learning, leisure and other social support system in building social relationships and participating fully in society.

Olympus House is an ageing facility that is split across two floors. The ground floor is predominantly used to provide NASS’ services with a number of activity rooms, toilets, reception and a kitchen. The first floor is mainly office space for NASS staff, which also has a meeting room, a board room, toilets and a kitchen.

Figure 3.7 Olympus House



3.4.3.1 Operator's Perspective

As with all the facilities on the study site, NASS highlights the poor and dated environment for both their users and their staff.

The centre remains a key location for the County so its re-provision within the new community hub is vital for the current services provided alongside the ever-growing pressure on adult social care.

The surrounding environment is also a factor in their current provision for both their user groups and staff – poorly lit car parks and environment limits the capacity to deliver more wraparound care and meet the demands.

NASS considered there to be excess office space for their service requirements at present and moving forward in relation to what is currently provided.

Dedicated activity space was very beneficial and this needs to stay as part of the future offer; NASS would like to be involved in future designs.

3.4.4 The Forum Centre (Children's Services)

The Forum Centre is a dedicated contact centre for Northamptonshire Children's Trust, who are part of Northamptonshire County Council and provide children's services in the following areas:

- Adoption and fostering
- Help and protection for children
- Early Years
- Schools and education
- Special educational needs and disability
- Youth offending service

The current Forum Centre has a number of facilities but is predominantly made up of a number of groups rooms, where the contact services are provided by the Children's Trust.

Figure 3.8: The Forum Centre



- The Children’s Trust would like the contact service to be closely aligned to the future community setting to remove the stigma for the children. This could include leisure centres and better open space.

There are a number of opportunities to reconfigure this facility to ensure the facility works better for the children’s trust delivery of services. The Forum Centre provides an important service for the community of Weston Favell and is considered a key asset for the Children’s Trust.

3.4.5 Weston Favell Library

Weston Favell Library has been serving the town’s eastern district for over 40 years, providing books, advice, education, and entertainment to generations of local people. The Library is currently operated by Northamptonshire County Council First For Wellbeing service, who operate a number of libraires in Northamptonshire.

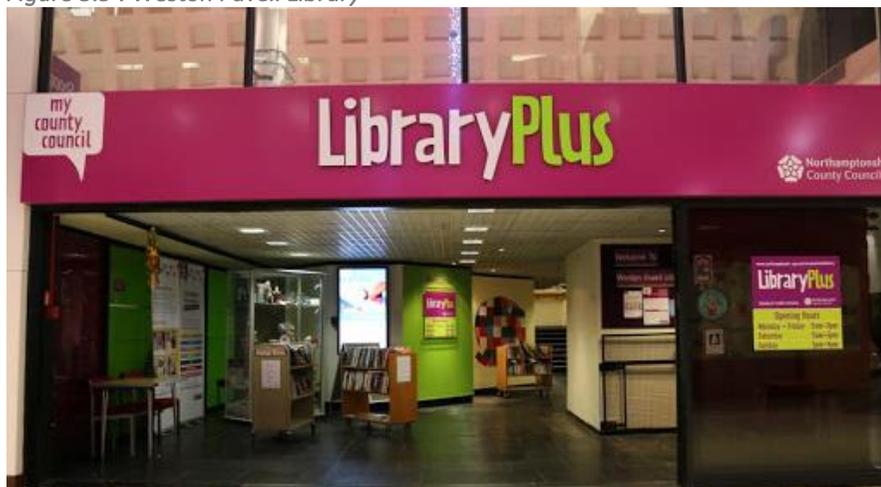
The library is not currently located within our site boundary but is located within the Weston Favell Shopping Centre, which is in close proximity to our study site. The location of the current facility creates both opportunities and constraints for the library service. The footfall of the shopping centre is extremely important for the library. Weston Favell currently accounts for 12.4% of total physical visits across the service. However, being located within a commercial facility does mean the cost of renting is higher than most comparable libraries.

3.4.4.1 Operator’s Perspective

During our stakeholder consultation, we engaged with Northamptonshire Children’s Trust to understand the site in greater detail. The key discussion points have been summarised below.

- There are 4 contact service sites in the county, but the Forum Centre is the biggest.
- The Forum Centre is a dedicated site, which means the Children’s Trust have control over the facility.
- The forum is currently the centre that is used the most and accounts for 60% of all contact care in Northampton. This is because of the size of the building, which allows for a more efficient service as multiple rooms can be used at the same time.
- The function of the facility is needed, but the building itself needs to change.
- The Children’s Trust want the ability to control who can enter, the size and capacity of the building.

Figure 3.9 : Weston Favell Library



3.4.5.1 Operator's Perspective

The key discussion points have been summarised below:

- The current library is very tired and unloved.
- The service has been considering leaving the shopping centre for a long time because the rent and service charge are high.
- The Service Manager noted that they currently have a space larger than they probably need if access to other flexible spaces were to be provided in any new development.
- In the current library there is a lack of repairs, leaking roofs and no natural light.
- To date they have not been able to find a good facility to replace the current library, which is why they have not refurbished the library as they were hoping to move away.
- The library is keen to work with health partners and become more integrated within the public health agenda to help the health and wellbeing of the Weston Favell residents.

The inclusion of the Weston Favell Library as part of the wider facility mix provides a number of opportunities. The current facility provides an important service for the local community. From the consultation with the Library Service Manager there is a clear demand for the facility to be re-located. The Consultant Team believe that the opportunity to provide a new and improved library as part of the Health and Wellbeing Hub would be mutually beneficial for both parties. The new library would resolve the issues of relocation and the high rent and service charges, which would be beneficial for the library service.

3.4.6 Northamptonshire Police – Weston Favell Police Station

Northamptonshire Police currently operate the Weston Favell Police station, which is to the north of our study site. In 2017 Northamptonshire Police undertook an Estates Strategy exercise to identify the future need for facilities within the County. The outcomes of this exercise were that Weston Favell Police Station would not be part of the future plans and would be vacated (and placed on the market).

During our discussions with Northamptonshire Police, they have been working on exit strategy for the past 12-18 months which will enable them to leave the Weston Favell site. They stated that they expect this to be around Easter/summer in 2021. However, the land needs to show value for the police and will be sold at market rate. They estimated that the land is worth approximately £1.5m-£2m. However, progress has stalled due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 3.10: Weston Favell Police Station



Northamptonshire Police have recognised that the current Weston Favell Police Station is surplus to requirements. The current facility provides an important service for the eastern district of Northampton as the main front desk and the busiest station in the county. Therefore, Northamptonshire Police would like to have a presence in the Weston Favell Area. The Consultant Team believe that there is an opportunity to provide some provision within the Health and Wellbeing Hub for the Northamptonshire Community Neighbourhood team.

3.4.6.1 Operator's Perspective

During our stakeholder consultation, we engaged with Northamptonshire Police to understand the site in greater detail. The key discussion points have been summarised below:

- The current site is the main front desk for Northamptonshire and is the busiest station in the county.
- The police noted that the current building is ageing and is in need of improvement.
- The area of Weston Favell needs to be improved. The commissioner is keen to have a better-quality environment to prevent crime and help reduce anti-social behaviour.
- The police noted that they would be open for a land swap if they got the right land in the right location.
- Northamptonshire Police noted that they wanted to keep a police presence in Weston Favell, which would be the neighbourhood policing team.
- The new Police provision would need to include approximately 40m² of office space and a secure car park for Police vehicles.

Section 4 – Strategic Context



4. Strategic Context

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report reviews the policy and strategic context for the assessment of options for the facilities at Weston Favell as part of the wider development of the site. It is important that the strategic priorities and policy objectives of relevant local, regional and national organisations are considered with regard to the replacement and development of any new health, leisure and wellbeing facilities at Weston Favell. A strong alignment with key strategic priorities will be vital in determining the success of the project and ensuring that it continues to operate sustainably, attract funding and meet the needs of the local community.

The success of the proposed facilities will depend to a large extent on their ability to deliver a number of outcomes across a wide range of agendas including sport and physical activity, health, education and community cohesion.

As part of this review, a range of strategies, policies and plans have been examined and summaries are presented in Appendix 3. Relevant key messages have been extracted from each leading document along with key outcomes and actions which any potential facility development can support. This process helps to demonstrate that plans for the development of new facilities for leisure and health at Weston Favell can be of strategic relevance to a wide range of partner groups and organisations. This will help to ensure that they are well-used and of great benefit to the community and also potentially worthy of investment from partner organisations.

4.2 Sport England – “Uniting the Movement (2020)”

Sport England have recently released a new 10-year strategy, “Uniting the Movement.” This strategy sets a clear vision for the next ten years for Sport England and partners which is to have “A nation of more equal, inclusive

and connected communities. A country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives.” The mission of this strategy is “to invest in sport and physical activity to make it a normal part of life for everyone in England, regardless of who you are.” Sport England’s previous strategy “Towards an Active Nation” had a key focus on improving the activity levels of the nation. Uniting the Movement mission is underpinned by three key objectives:

1. Advocating for movement, sport, and physical activity: Sport England have a responsibility to advocate for the transformational impact sport and activity can have on the nation’s health and wellbeing.
2. Joining forces on five big issues.
3. Creating the catalysts for change.

The “five big issues” that Sport England are targeting include:

- *Recover and Reinvent*: Recovering from Covid-19 to reinvent a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
- *Connecting Communities*: Focusing on sport and physical activity’s ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- *Positive Experiences for Children and Young People*: An unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people.
- *Connecting with Health and Wellbeing*: Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
- *Active Environments*: Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

Sport England acknowledge that these five issues require change and improvement to ensure sport and physical activity is delivered better. These catalysts for change include:

- *Effective Investment Models*: The right kinds of investment, timed well and delivered skilfully can stimulate demand, provide opportunities to get active, enable innovation, encourage collaboration, reduce inequalities and enable greater sustainability.

- *Realising the Power of People and Leadership*: The people who spend their time helping others to be active are our most precious resource and their potential is limitless. They are the key to adopting and achieving the ambitions in this strategy.
- *Applying Innovation and Digital*: Times are changing, and so are people's expectations. In the face of significant opportunity and change, its critical innovation, including digital, is applied to the big issues that are holding many more people back from being active.
- *High-Quality Data, Insight and Learning*: Key to collaborative action is a shared understanding of the opportunities and the challenges that we face together.
- *Good Governance*: Good governance, and a commitment to positive, effective, safe delivery of opportunities at every level is how intentions and ambitions are enshrined into ways of working.

Uniting the Movement is a bold strategy which sets a clear vision for the next 10 years, which is guided by investment into sport for those who most need it, and a blend of national and local action. The project at the study site contributes across the Sport England's strategic focus. The developed facilities, together with the improvements to the circulation routes and the quality of the public realm, will provide an attractive setting for inactive people (including under-represented groups) to be supported into changing their physical activity behaviour. Through the development of new facilities, it will give the opportunity to **connect with communities** by providing a destination for the local community to have access to high quality health and wellbeing facilities. **Children and Young People** are central to the Weston Favell development as the Health and Wellbeing Hub incorporates the Council's Children's services contact centre. The Health and Wellbeing Hub aims to provide positive experiences for children and young people. **Connecting with Health and Wellbeing** is a key aim of this project as it looks to provide Council services, health and wellbeing services and physical activity opportunities under one roof. The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will create an **active environment** where people have the

opportunities to be physically active. This project sits within the strategic objectives of the "Uniting the Movement" Strategy and Sport England are advocates of the approach to join up services as proposed within this study.

4.3 Health and Wellbeing

A key strategic partner of this project is the local health partners that operate within Weston Favell and Northampton. NHS organisations and local councils in England are joining forces to coordinate services around the whole needs of each person and to ensure full population coverage of the services that they provide. Their aim is that people can live healthier lives and get the care and treatment they need from the right person, in the right place, at the right time. Integrated care is about giving people the support they need in a joined up and co-ordinated way across local councils, the NHS, and other partners. It removes traditional divisions between hospitals and family doctors, between physical and mental health, and between NHS and council services such as social care, housing, public health and wellbeing services. In the past, these divisions have meant that too many people experienced disjointed care.

Integrated care systems (ICSs) are new partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces health and wellbeing inequalities between different demographic groups in the community.

Since 2018, there has been a deepening of the relationships in many areas between the NHS, local councils and other important strategic partners such as the voluntary, community and the social enterprise sector. They have started developing better and more convenient services, investing in keeping people healthy and out of hospital and setting shared priorities for the future.

The NHS Long Term Plan confirmed that all parts of England would be served by an Integrated Care System from April 2021. An important part of the NHS vision is that decisions about how services are arranged should be made as close as possible to those who use them and involve service users/patients in the design and evaluation of those services. For most people, their day-to-day health and care needs will be met locally in the town or district where they live or work. Partnership in these ‘places’ is therefore an important building block of integration, often in line with long-established local authority boundaries. But one of the strengths of the system is that arrangements can be adapted to reflect what makes sense locally.

Whilst demand for NHS services continues to grow, it is intended that integrated care will provide a key solution for meeting this continued demand, by doing the following: redesigning healthcare so that people get the right care in the optimal care setting (for example, by providing better social care and community support to slow the development of older people’s frailty; and fundamentally redesigning outpatient services so that both patients’ time and specialists’ expertise are used more appropriately);

- improving upstream prevention of avoidable illness and its exacerbations. So, for example, diabetes prevention through obesity reduction by promoting healthy lifestyles, and reduced respiratory hospitalisations by reducing the incidence of smoking and from lower air pollution.
- Providing better support for patients, carers and volunteers to enhance ‘supported self-management’ particularly of long-term health conditions.
- supporting GP practices to work together at scale with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local areas in groups of practices known as primary care networks (PCNs).

PCNs build on existing primary care networks and services, enabling greater provision of proactive, personalised, coordinated care and more integrated

health and social care for people closer to their home. Clinicians describe this as a change from reactively providing appointments to proactively caring for the people and communities they serve. The emergence of PCNs has provided significant new investment into new primary care roles, including additional clinical pharmacists, physician associates, first contact physiotherapists, community paramedics and social prescribing link workers. This will enable primary care to have the skills and capability to operate as part of integrated teams, including social prescribing.

Social prescribing is a key component of Universal Personalised Care set out in the NHS Long Term Plan and is a way for local agencies to refer people to a specially trained link worker, who can give people time, focusing on what matters to individuals and taking a holistic approach to people’s health and wellbeing. They connect people to community groups, can prescribe fitness and wellbeing services and refer people to other statutory services for practical and emotional support.

Social prescribing works for a wide range of people, including people:

- with one or more long-term conditions
- who need support with their mental health
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

It therefore fits clearly with the development of integrated care and enhancing population health management locally with a focus on prevention. In particular it can be used to proactively address those health and social inequalities which are known to have increased during COVID-19, and those groups who may have been disproportionately disadvantaged.

These policy priorities are aligned very closely with the direction of travel for Weston Favell, with its aspiration as an integrated care hub, with close links to Primary Care Networks, social prescribing and addressing health inequalities.

4.4 Economic Impact of Physical Activity

Sport and physical activity contribute significantly to the national economy, in terms of spending, economic activity and employment. Community sport and physical activity in England has a social and economic value of £85.5bn (Sport England, 2020). Whilst it is clear that sport contributes significantly to local economies, further insight from the Local Sport Profiles estimates that physical inactivity costs the national economy £7.4billion in healthcare, premature deaths and sickness absence per year.

The redeveloped facilities at Weston Favell will help to increase the already significant investment in sport and physical activity across Northampton, but the identified need and importance of providing a diverse offer through the redeveloped facility will also help towards reducing the sizeable costs of inactivity for local communities. Investment into sport and physical activity is key as Sport England research has shown that for every £1 spent on sport and physical activity, almost £4 is generated in return across health and wellbeing, stronger communities and the economy.

4.5 Strategic Importance of Weston Favell

Alongside the statistics associated with improved levels of physical activity and the overview presented earlier within this section the Consultant Team have also undertaken an outline review of the strategic impact of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub under a number of key headings, which are explored further below.

Behaviour Change

Tackling inactivity, increasing the number of people with a regular activity habit and sustaining participation among those who are already active will undoubtedly deliver multiple benefits to health, wellbeing, social and economic outcomes. But behaviours are hard to change, and the behaviour change journey is multi-faceted.

People' activity levels significantly fluctuate at different stages in their lives. Some have negative associations with physical activity and sport and are harder to engage than others. People move through the journey at different paces, face different challenges and require different levels of support. The ambition and vision for this site is to ensure that people feel motivated, able and supported to change their behaviours and lead more active lives. Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub has an important role to play for the local community as it is located in an area of high deprivation which is usually associated with lower activity levels. It is important that the facilities at Weston Favell provide opportunities for everyone to be physically active and lead healthier lifestyles. In Northampton, 28.5% of people are inactive, which is currently above the national and regional averages. In addition, the Northampton health statistics are also alarming as they are mostly below the national averages. The facilities at Weston Favell will help support the behaviour change of many residents by providing easily accessible and high quality of health and leisure facilities. Having a range of facilities and services in one central location will give people the opportunity to live a healthier and more active lifestyle.

Capability, Motivation and Opportunity

Capability, motivation and opportunity are vitally important in helping people to make choices to lead more active and healthier lifestyles. 14.2% of people in Northampton are fairly active which means they are active but it's less than the recommended amount. This percentage of people is above the national and regional averages, which highlights that people in Northampton have the desire to be active.

Opening up and widening the offer for physical activity and sport, improving the quality of the facilities, improving the openness and permeability of the site (as presented within the design proposals) will contribute to a wider range of people interested and motivated to use the site and for many, introduce physical activity to their daily lives. The proposed development will continue to serve those active people and generate further

opportunities for those who are fairly active and inactive. However, the measure of its success and wider impact will be to draw in an increased number of inactive people who feel that the new facilities will enable them to participate and reduce the barriers that exist.

Health and Wellbeing

Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets a clear vision for the community, which is to “improve the health and wellbeing of all people in Northamptonshire and reduce health inequalities by enabling people to help themselves.” This overarching vision for Northamptonshire is underpinned by four main priorities, which include:

- Every child gets the best start
- Taking responsibility and making informed choices
- Promoting independence and quality of life for older adults
- Creating an environment for all people to flourish

The development of the Health and Wellbeing Hub in Weston Favell encompasses these four key priorities and will help support the wider delivery of the Northamptonshire’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy vision. The facilities at Weston Favell will include the current two GP and one dental surgeries that are based onsite currently. The co-location of facilities provides an excellent opportunity to work together in providing health and leisure programmes for the local community. Additionally, maintaining an active life is important for people’s social, mental and physical wellbeing. Therefore, it is important to have high quality facilities that provide the community with the opportunity to lead an active life. The development of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will help provide a better facility mix that can help reduce the latent demand in the area and support the future population growth in Weston Favell and Northampton.

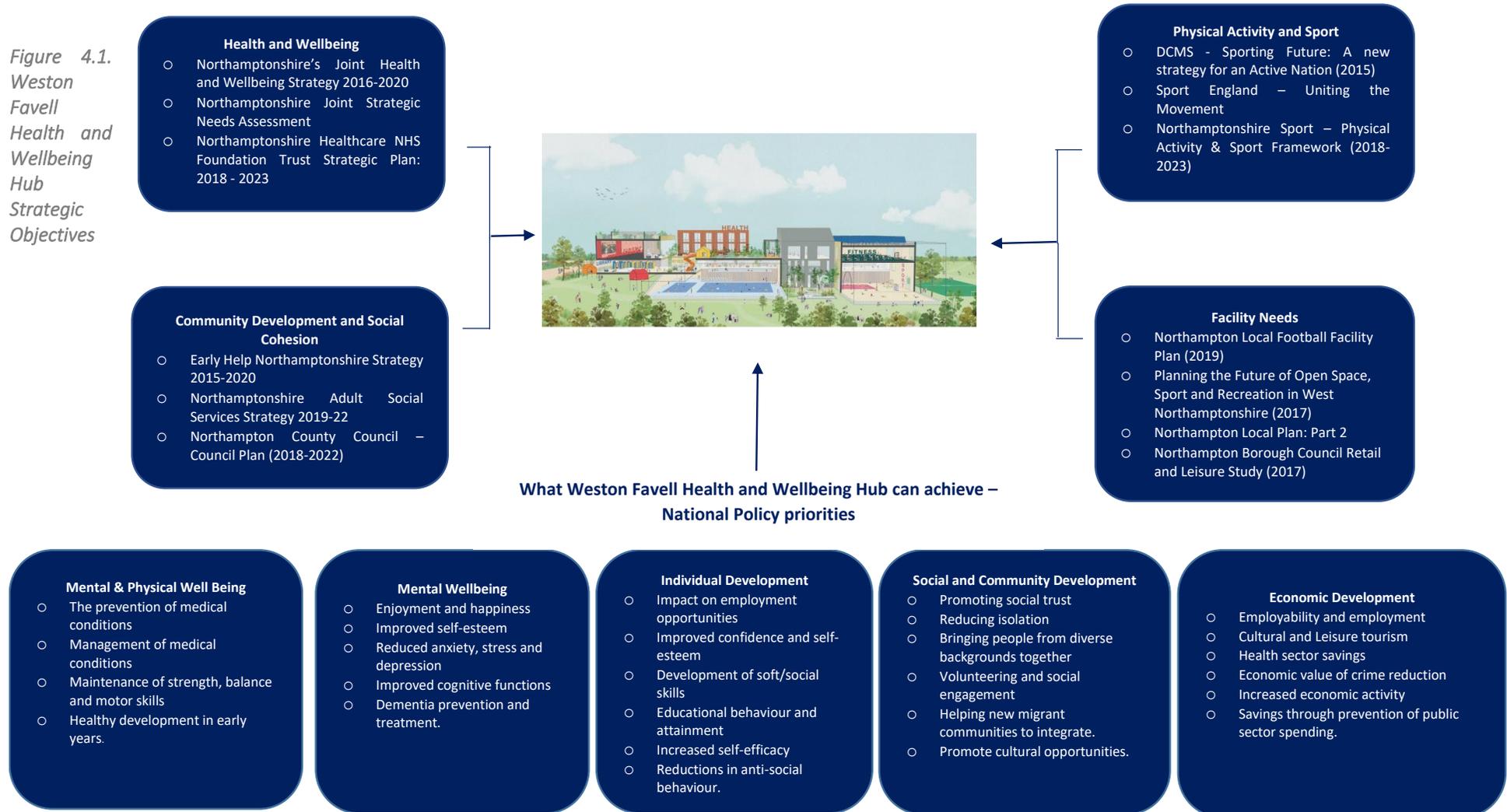
Physical Activity

Physical activity and sport can contribute towards a wide range of socio-economic outcomes. The health and wellbeing benefits associated with being physically active are both wide reaching and irrefutable. In addition to health and wellbeing benefits, physical activity is also linked to evidence of improved educational attainment, either directly (improved grades, school engagement, behaviour and reduced absenteeism), or indirectly (by enhancing skills such as self-control and concentration, team working and time management).

Positive impacts on employability include greater employment opportunities, earnings, job performance and job satisfaction. The evidence around young people not in education, employment or training shows the positive impact of taking part in sport or volunteering in terms of employability. Evidence also shows a positive association between sport and physical activity and self-efficacy (for example motivation, goal setting and commitment), for groups including elderly people and disaffected young people. Other evidence includes an increased willingness to volunteer and the development of soft skills, such as integrity, responsibility and leadership.

The Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub can have a very positive impact on levels of physical activity and subsequently improve the health of local residents. Additionally, it can improve and provide opportunities for sport and continue to build upon Northampton’s rich heritage of sport. There is an opportunity to build further partnerships with the University of Northampton and the healthcare partners to help deliver health and wellbeing programmes to support the local population to live a healthier lifestyle. This wider role of health-related impact and the connection to leisure is a central part of the case for investment into Weston Favell.

Figure 4.1.
Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub Strategic Objectives



4.6 Summary

The potential development of the Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub represents an exciting opportunity for the Council, health partners, the local community and a range of wider partners. In determining the most appropriate facility mix for the site it will be important to consider the strategic impact of options with regards to meeting long-term identified priorities relating to sports development, health and wellbeing, community development and physical regeneration. This will have an impact on the long-term sustainability and viability of the facility as well as ensuring that the facility provides the best possible option with regards to meeting the needs and demands of the varied catchment for the site.

Nationally, key aims for physical activity is to decrease the number of inactive people in England and improve the health and wellbeing through the benefits of physical activity. Our project will enable the population of Northampton to access high quality indoor and outdoor facilities to participate in physical activity. This will create a physically active culture and a hub to encourage the benefits of the physical activity. The facilities at Weston Favell have a key role to play in the delivery of the vision, aims and priority health and wellbeing, and social outcomes for Northamptonshire.

Weston Favell is already an important site within the local area, as it currently provides a range of facilities and services for the local population. The new and improved facilities onsite will continue to support the work of a range of local council services and provide a better working relationship between the different departments. Alongside the work of healthcare and Council services, the site clearly also has the potential to support a sustained increase in sport and physical activity for local people and bring about a range of benefits to the local population.

Whilst any decisions regarding the potential development will be governed by financial viability and the impact that any project can have on the work of the Council and its partners, the wider community benefit and the ability

of the site to play an increased role in helping Northampton meet their aspirations across a wide range of agendas should not be overlooked.

The potential development of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub will help deliver a range of national, regional and local strategic objectives. Additionally, the redevelopment presents the Council with the opportunity to help support the delivery of a wider range of priorities, including Health and Wellbeing. The opportunity to support these objectives could potentially increase the amount of funding available to the Council, which should be explored further. One wider opportunity for the Council to explore is the ability to build on partnerships with the University of Northampton.

The Council have the opportunity to further explore avenues to widen the social impact of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub and help deliver national, regional and local objectives.

Section 5 – Consultation



5. Consultation

5.1 Introduction

Consultation has been at the heart of this study and has assisted in shaping the overall development planning for the future options for the Health and Wellbeing Hub. The process has involved a number of key stakeholders, service providers, public and patient consultation.

The Consultant Team have been engaging with key stakeholders throughout the process undertaking the following:

- Consultation with key stakeholders and partners for sport and health, including Local Authorities Teams, Northamptonshire County Council, School representatives, Director of Public health, Northamptonshire Sport (Active Partnership), and Sport England.
- Consultation with National Governing Bodies on funding, facility development and the supply and demand of sporting provision in Northampton.
- User survey to the leisure centre users and leading community sports clubs and a public survey to help understand the current and future demands for leisure provision in Northampton.
- Patient Survey for the two GP surgeries based at Weston Favell to help understand the patients views on the current facilities available.
- Community consultation through the public survey and virtual consultation room.

Despite the restrictions on physical meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic there was a very encouraging response to the consultation process and the on-line consultation room resulted in a high response rate and very positive feedback.

5.2 Key Stakeholder Consultation

This stage of consultation was completed with major stakeholders for health, wellbeing and leisure. This consultation enabled the Consultant Team to gain a better understanding of Northampton, Weston Favell and the opportunity to develop a health and wellbeing Hub. These leading influential stakeholders included:

- Northampton Leisure Trust
- Northamptonshire Sport
- Sport England
- Northamptonshire Police Crime Commissioner
- Northamptonshire Adult Social Services
- Northampton's Director of Public Health
- Northampton Borough Council: Finance
- Northampton Borough Council: Planning
- Northampton Borough Council: Estates
- Northampton Borough Council: Housing and Wellbeing
- Northamptonshire County Council: Property
- Northamptonshire County Council: Library Services Manager
- Northamptonshire County Council: Education
- Primary Care Networks (PCN)
- NHS Property Services (NHS PS)
- NHS NENE CCG
- Blu PCN and MMWF PCN
- William Pope
- Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership (HCP)
- Northampton General Hospital
- Kettering General Hospital
- GP Alliance and Chair Northampton Health and Wellbeing Board
- Northampton Locality Board
- Healthwatch Northampton
- Northampton Disability Forum
- Northampton Swimming Club
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP)

- Growing Together
- Emmanuel Church
- Rodericks Dental
- Mayfield Surgery
- Favell Plus Surgery
- Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
- Silhouette Youth Theatre
- Weston Favell Shopping Centre
- Children First (Director)
- Children First (Contact Services)
- Children First (Early Prevention)
- University of Northampton: Estates
- University of Northampton: Sport and Physical Activity
- University of Northampton: Health
- Northampton Academy
- Daventry District Council
- Northamptonshire Partnership Homes
- This delivery model has the chance to deliver notable savings associated with more efficient service delivery and associated improvements to the health and wellbeing of residents of Northampton.
- A community hub that creates a sense of belonging and draws people in who would not regularly use leisure facilities can result in significant positive changes to people’s health and wellbeing.
- Northampton Leisure Trust are very keen on the shared service approach and having a closer connection with healthcare providers in line with the Trust running health checks at present.
- NLT would like the facility to be more modern, flexible and sustainable. Swimming and health and fitness are two offers they would like to see expanded as part of this development.
- Weston Favell is currently the most popular library in the county, as it accounts for 11% of total visits, 10% of income and 6% of lending.
- The Library would require less space than it currently has onsite. There is less of a need for book shelves and more of a need for interactive shared spaces.
- Northamptonshire Police have been working on an exit strategy for the past 12-18 months which will enable them to leave the Weston Favell site around Easter/summer in 2021.
- Northamptonshire Police are keen to keep a police presence in Weston Favell in the form of the neighbourhood policing team who would require approximately 40m² of office space.
- The Forum Centre is the largest dedicated children’s contact centre in the county, which accounts for 60% of the contact care in Northampton.
- The Forum Centre needs to become a modern facility with a better environment for children. The Trust needs to be able to control who can enter the building to ensure the children are safeguarded.
- The future vision for NASS is to bring together social workers, community nurses, Pharmacies and GPs to provide integrated signposting, social prescription and support.

Key Findings

Full details of the stakeholder consultation are presented in Appendix 5. We have highlighted the key findings found during our key stakeholder consultation below:

- Weston Favell remains a very important district centre serving a very important part of the town.
- Investment into the health and wellbeing of East Northampton remains a strategic priority for all stakeholders.
- Investment into improving and increasing capacity within Primary Care remains a key priority for Weston Favell.
- A drive towards shared service provision (across health, wellbeing and physical activity) with Weston Favell becoming a key site for the implementation and delivery of the Integrated Care System and Social Prescribing model within Northampton and the County overall.

- The dedicated space within Olympus House needs to be replicated in any new development and sufficient space for specialist equipment needs to be provided.
- The Dental Practice would like to have a slight reduction in internal area by reducing the size of treatment rooms to standard size and lose the redundant X-ray room.
- The CCG is keen for the new facility to utilise technology, including through the digitisation of records.

5.3 Service Provider Workshop

In October 2020, the Consultant Team undertook a workshop with the service providers in Weston Favell. The stakeholders included: Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, Locality Board for Northampton, PCNs, Northampton Leisure Trust, Northamptonshire Adult Social Services, Northamptonshire Children’s Trust, Northamptonshire Libraries, Northamptonshire County Council (Property), Mayfield GP Surgery, and the Favell Plus GP Surgery.

A second workshop was planned for January 2021 but due to the additional lockdown this was done via email with initial site plans shared with the service providers for feedback on the early site and facility planning.

This group discussion was focussed around five key tasks, which included:

- What are Your Top 3 Leading Priorities for any new Community Hub Building?
- Key Challenges (Part 1) – Please Identify 3 Leading Challenges to your Current Service that any New Facility Could Address.
- Key Challenges (Part 2) – What Are the Barriers to Making This Project Work? Please list 3 leading barriers.
- What Would Constitute Success for Your Service - Either to Your Service / Department Itself or to the Individual Users of Your Service?
- What Key Actions Will Move this Project Forward Across the Different Partners and Providers?

Key Outcomes from the October 2020 workshop are summarised below.

Priorities

- Feeling of community ownership
- State of the art clinical provision
- Social space – draw in population
- Shared space / flexible space
- Access to other services in one location

Challenges (current)

- Building quality- poor
- Unsuitable / insufficient space
- Cost and inefficiency
- Organisational / service boundaries
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Population growth and growing need

Barriers

- Designing in joint use
- Better / more space and cost balance
- Gaining agreed objectives across services
- Time and momentum – public sector / unitary authority
- Funding

Success

- Eastern District – Community feel valued
- Services without barriers – referral system
- Better access to primary care
- Financially sustainable

Key Actions to Move Project Forward

- Identify things that can be done before the big project – surrounding environment and landscape.

- Keep momentum – keeping the story alive.
- Focus on right services and needs for the catchment.
- Communication of next stages – staff, services and community.
- Tangible commitment across the different service providers.

Key Outcomes from February 2021 site feedback (responding to initial draft site plans)

Northampton Leisure Trust

- Activity on display and entrance / sight lines
- Larger spa
- Outdoor exercise
- F&B Central access
- Commercial leisure?

Library

- Ground floor presence
- Proximity to other services (cinema) and plant (noise)
- Access to flexible space

Healthcare

- Additional consultation rooms NHFT
- Maternity / midwife facility
- Shared space and access to other consultation rooms very positive.

Children's services

- Shared work / breakout areas
- Dedicated outdoor play area
- Outdoor play for older children (general access)

Adult Services

- Dedicated function space at the correct size
- Safeguarding considered in the designs

- Shared admin spaces but dedicated service areas

The service providers workshop provided valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges faced by the service delivery organisations that are currently located onsite. A brief summary of these findings can be seen below:

- An under-invested area of Northampton which is in desperate need of redevelopment with ageing buildings, poor public realm and a community in need of positive interventions.
- Significant health and wellbeing needs for the local catchment which require additional capacity within the primary care setting.
- Facilities and buildings that are now beyond their economic life.
- The investment into a new community health and wellbeing hub which provides a clear transition from one service to another is welcomed and remains a key priority.
- A clear facility and site management plan needs to be developed in order to ensure that alongside the facility developments a culture of partnership working can be embedded in both the facility itself as well as the service providers who will lead in the new facility.

5.4 National Governing Body Consultation

The Consultant Team contacted 18 National Governing Bodies and had a detailed discussion with nine of the leading NGB's (below). The small response rate is due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in a number of the NGB staff being on the government furlough scheme. The Consultant Team would recommend that the NGB's are consulted during the next phases of this project. These discussions were based around the current facility offer in the Borough and the future aspirations of the sport. We have highlighted an overview of the key discussion points and opportunities following discussions with:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| ○ The Football Association (FA) | ○ Badminton England |
| ○ England Basketball | ○ England Boxing |
| ○ England Netball | ○ Table Tennis England |

- British Gymnastics
- England Squash
- Swim England
- Swim England noted that Lings Forum Leisure Centre be replaced / redeveloped with a similar sized main pool, along with the inclusion of a learner pool.

Key Findings:

National Governing Bodies

- Weston Favell remains a key strategic location for a number of sports and activities, including football and swimming.
- The Northampton FA and the Football Foundation would like to see the 3G pitch at Northampton Academy redeveloped as part of this overall development. This will enable more community use on the pitch.
- Table Tennis has the opportunity to fit into the wider health and wellbeing agenda and the aims that will be delivered by this health and wellbeing hub through their PING programme.
- Badminton England noted that they would like to run No Strings badminton from the new health and wellbeing hub. These sessions are non-committal sessions encouraging people to be physically active through badminton.
- Gymnastics provision and needs within Northampton should remain a consideration within the facility mix. The aspiration is to have a competition venue in Northamptonshire that accommodates Trampoline/DMT/Tumbling/Acro and Rhythmic.
- Northampton has high levels of participation for boxing, which can be seen from the strong club network in the area. The Frank Bruno Foundation have started a boxing project at the Standens Barn Community Centre, which is located near Weston Favell.
- In Northampton, there are currently six Basketball clubs with a total of 545 members, which makes Northampton one of the most active local authorities in terms of basketball participation (rank 4 out of 326).
- There is a very poor spread of Squash facilities across the area, the large population means that there needs to be a large spread of courts to meet the needs of the local population.

5.5 Public Consultation

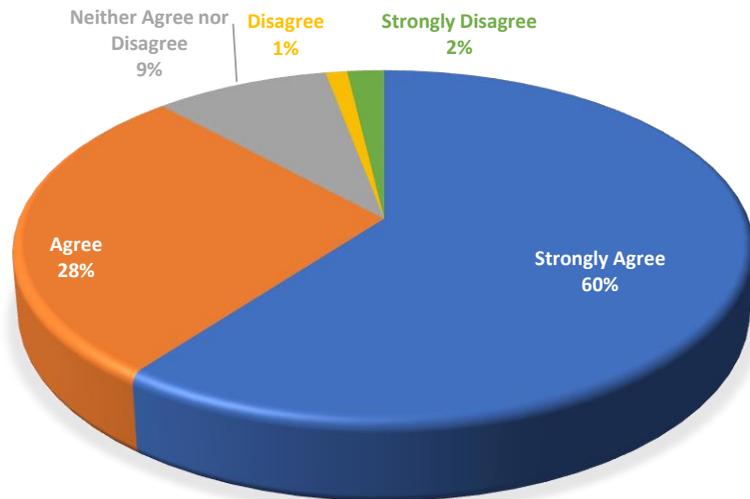
In addition to completing stakeholder consultation, the Consultant Team undertook public consultation to ensure the views of the Northampton population were considered during the development of the options for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub. As part of this process, the Consultant Team developed a virtual consultation room, a leisure centre user survey, a patient survey, a public survey, and a student survey in partnership with Northampton Academy. In this section of the report, the Consultant Team has provided the key headlines from each survey. The full analysis of the results can be found in Appendix 5.

During the analysis of the public consultation (virtual consultation room, public survey and leisure centre user survey), the Consultant Team combined the answers to “how supportive are you of the plans to develop and enhance the sports, leisure and health and wellbeing facilities at Weston Favell?” In total there were 638 responses to the following question.

Feedback from the participants was extremely positive with 60% strongly agreeing and 28% agreeing with the plans to develop and enhance the facilities at Weston Favell.

These results shows that the public recognise the importance to invest in facilities that can improve the resident’s health and wellbeing, especially in the eastern district of Northampton.

Figure 5.1: “How supportive are you of the plans to develop and enhance the sports, leisure and health and wellbeing facilities at Weston Favell?” results



5.5.1 Virtual Consultation Room

The Consultant Team developed a Virtual Consultation Room in replacement of the community workshops that were unable to take place due to Covid-19. The aim of this room was to highlight the progress of the project to the local community and provide an opportunity for them to comment on the thoughts of the Consultant Team. The Virtual Consultation Room is highlighted within Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Virtual Consultation Room



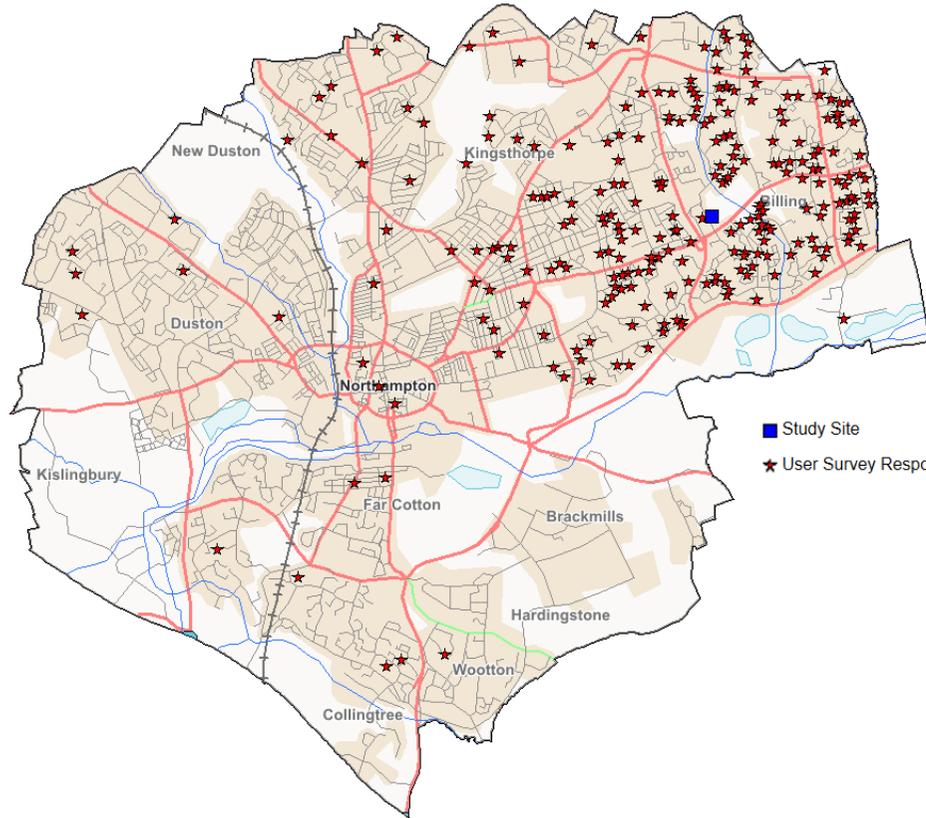
The Virtual Consultation room centred around four thematic walls, which included ‘Meet The Team’, Project, Opportunities, and a site analysis. The aim of these boards was to give the public an update and support understanding of the project and progress.

The Virtual Consultation Room also provided the opportunity for residents to comment on material presented within the room. In total there were 944 visits to the site. According to Google analytics the gender split was 49% male & 51% female. There was also a good consistent age split across the number of visits, which included 25-34 (20%), 34-44 (24%), 45-54 (24%), 55-64 (16%), and 65+ (16%).

5.5.2 Leisure Centre Survey

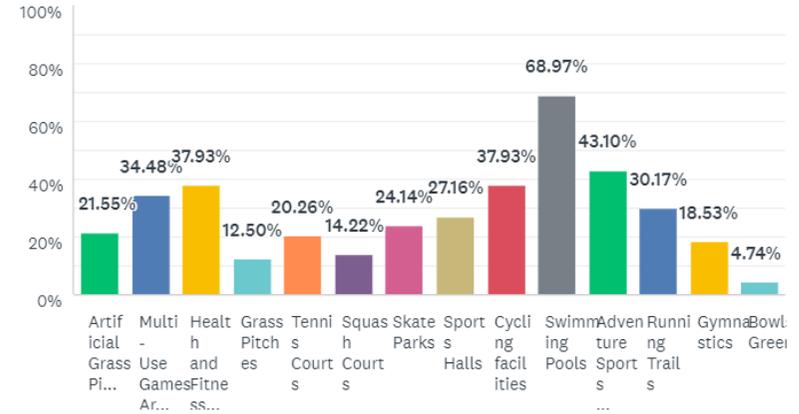
The Consultant Team developed a leisure centre user and club survey which was aimed at those who currently use sport and leisure facilities in Northamptonshire. The survey was distributed by Northampton Leisure Trust and Northamptonshire Sport, and received a total of 349 responses. As you can see from figure 5.3, the majority of the responses were in east side of Northampton.

Figure 5.3: Map of Leisure Centre Survey Respondents



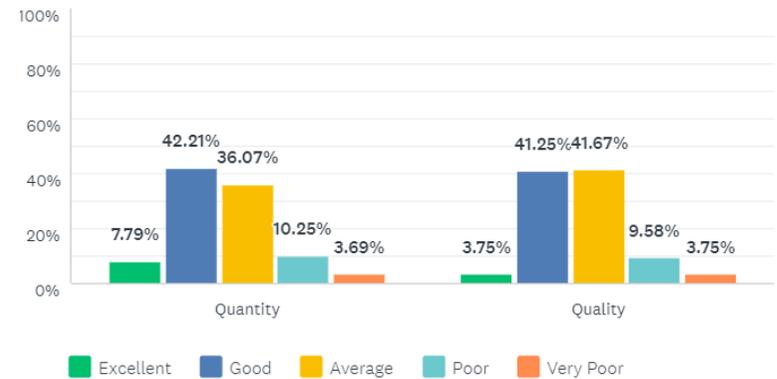
During the survey, the respondents were asked about their views on the demand, quality and quantity of the current provision within Northampton. As detailed in Figure 5.4, the most popular facilities that respondents believe to be in demand were: Swimming Pools (68.97%), Adventure Sports (43.1%), Health and Fitness Suites (37.93%), Cycling Facilities (37.93%) and Multi Use Games Areas (34.48%).

Figure 5.4: Facility Provision – Demand



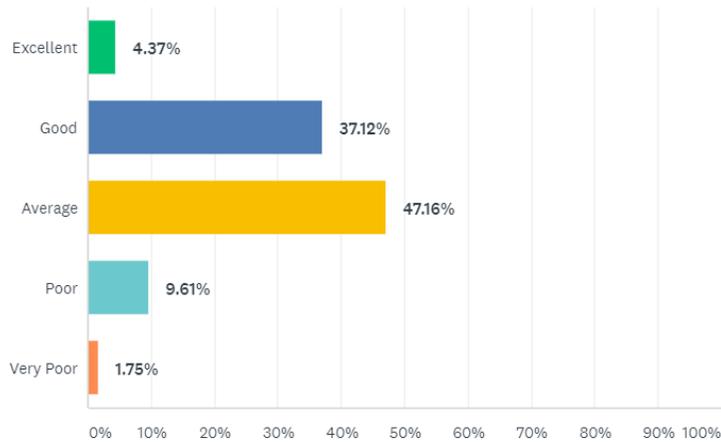
The quality and quantity of the facility provision is important to understand for any new development. As detailed in Figure 5.5, 42.21% stated that they thought the current facility quantity was good and 36.07% noted it was average. The quality of facilities in Northampton were rated good by 41.25% and were rated average by 41.67% of the respondents.

Figure 5.5: Facility Provision – Quality and Quantity



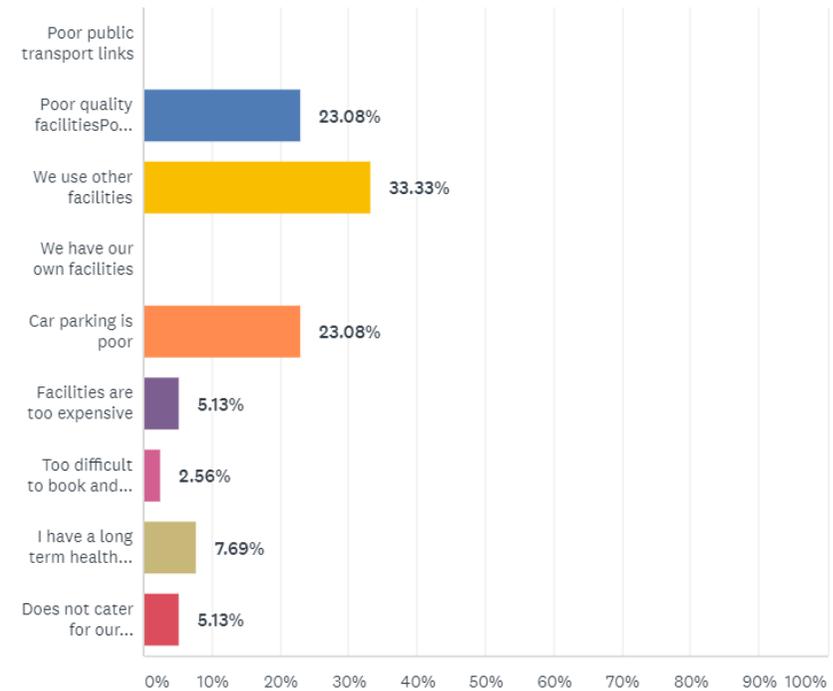
Lings Forum is an old and outdated leisure centre and has been identified as in need of refurbishment or redevelopment due to not meeting modern standards and customer expectations. However, the responses on the quality of Lings Forum were positive. 47.16% of respondents thought the Lings Forum Leisure Centre was of average quality. 37.12% of the respondents thought that the centre is of a good quality. Only 9.61% of people thought that the centre is of poor quality.

Figure 5.6: Lings Forum – Quality



There was a total of 39 respondents who identified that they did not use the Lings Forum Leisure Centre. The most common answers, demonstrated in figure 5.7, were due to using other facilities (33.3%), poor quality facilities (23.08%), and the car parking being poor (23.08%). In addition to these three main identified reasons for not using Lings Forum, there were several others identified in the responses. These included: long term health conditions, cost, and the centre not catering for the respondent’s needs. Any future development needs to consider the parking provision for the leisure centre as most attendees will access the site via a vehicle.

Figure 5.7: Lings Forum – Reasons for not using the centre

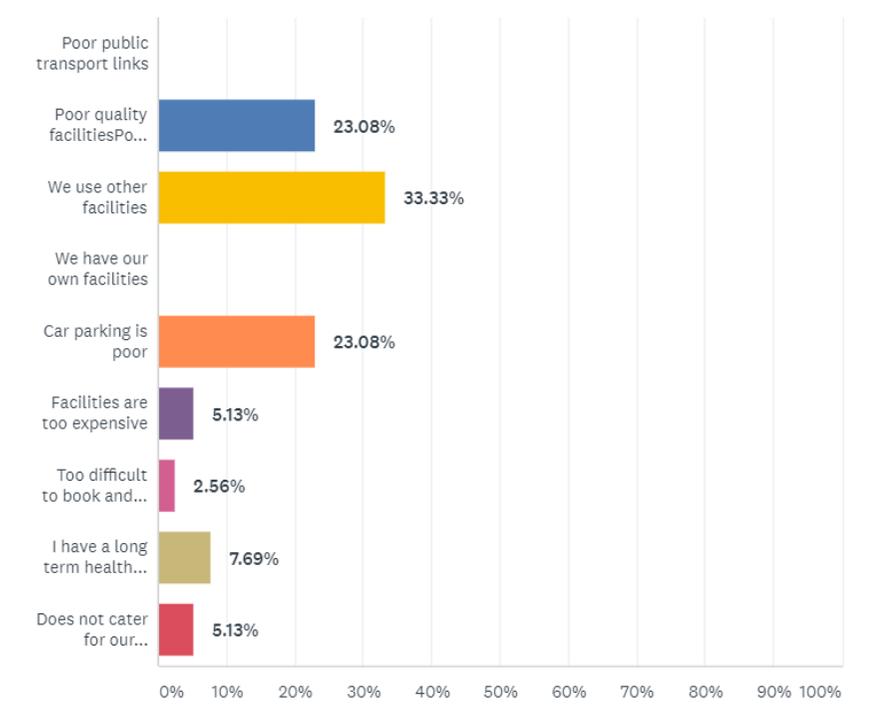


The final key headline to take away from the leisure centre user and club survey is respondents’ thoughts on the future facility mix for the Health and Wellbeing Hub. The access and quality of the Swimming provision has been apparent throughout this survey and our consultation, so therefore it is no surprise that it was the most popular facility with 75.55% of respondents stating they would like a swimming pool to be included.

In addition to the swimming pool there were a number of facilities identified, which include: Spa facilities (59.39%), cinema (58.95%), health and fitness suite (54.15%), aerobics studio (45.85%), adventure sports (47.6%).

Outside of the typical leisure centre provision, the respondents noted children's soft play (33.62%) and music and events space (39.74%) would be good to see within a new development. These facilities can help support the venue to become a more of a destination hub for the residents of Weston Favell.

Figure 5.8: Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub – Future Facility Mix

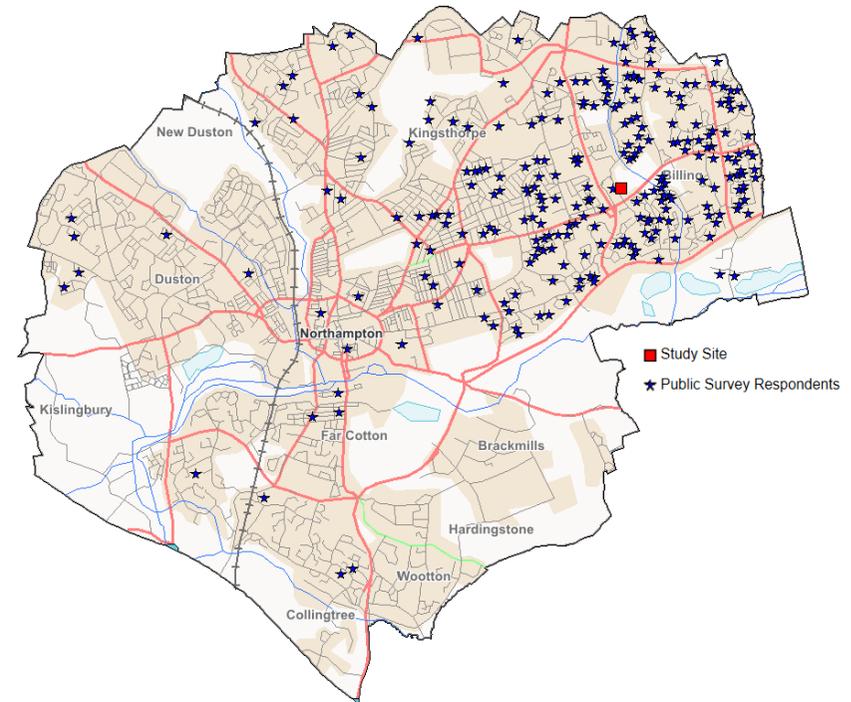


Overall, the leisure centre user and club survey provided a good understanding of the current sport and leisure provision and what the users would like to see in a future development. The Consultant Team have considered the current and future needs of the leisure centre users and clubs when developing the facility mix for the Health and Wellbeing Hub.

5.5.3 Public Survey

Alongside the leisure centre user and club survey, the Consultant Team developed a public survey which was aimed at the local community of Weston Favell. The survey was distributed via the Council, stakeholders and community groups. The survey received a total of 533 responses. As seen in figure 5.9, the majority of the responses were from the east side of Northampton.

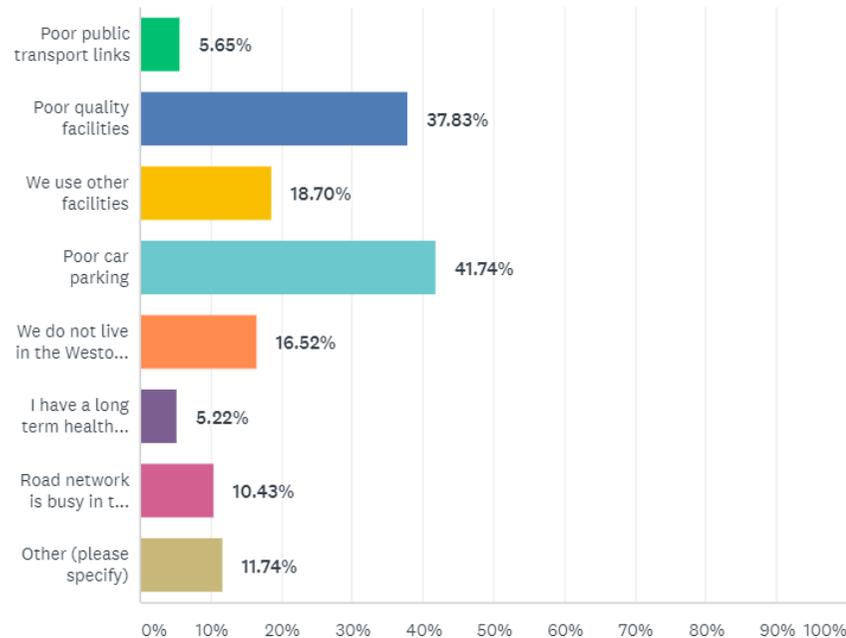
Figure 5.9: Public Survey – Map of Responses



Within the public survey the respondents were asked to comment on whether they currently use the facilities at Weston Favell. 79.45% of our respondents noted that they use the facilities in Weston Favell. However, it

is important to understand the reasons why participants do not use the current facilities, noted in figure 5.10.

Figure 5.10: Public Survey: Reasons for not using the current facilities

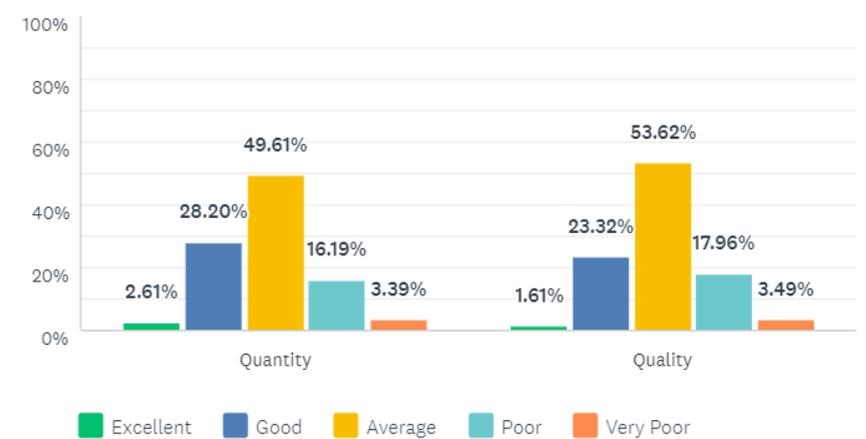


Parking has been a common theme throughout the public consultation, and within the public survey 41.74% (96) noted that it is the main reason they do not use the current facilities. 37.83% (87) of participants said that the reason they do not use the facilities is because they are of poor quality.

It is clear that investing in facilities at Weston Favell will attract a larger consumer base. However, parking has been a persistent issue raised by the residents and therefore will need to be considered in the wider masterplan for the health and wellbeing hub.

Within the survey the respondents had the opportunity to evaluate the quality and quantity of sporting and health provision that is currently available in Northampton. The quantity of sporting provision in Northampton, as in figure 5.11, has been voted as average by 49.61% of the total respondents. Additionally, the quality of the facilities was noted as average by 53.62% of the total respondents. The comments presented by respondents highlighted the need to make the current facilities more modern. The swimming pool and parking/access issues were also noted within the comment section of this response.

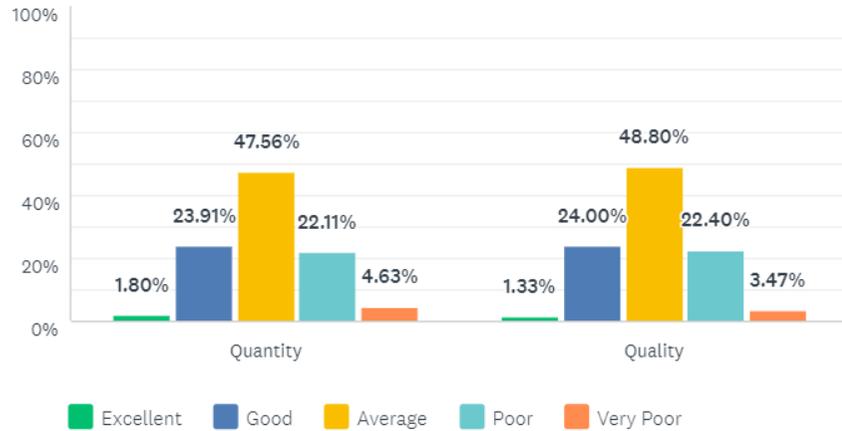
Figure 5.11: Quality and Quantity of Sporting Provision



The health, wellbeing and community service provision includes; Doctor Surgeries, Dentistry's, Adult Social Care, and Children Services. The quantity of health and wellbeing provision in Northampton, as detailed in figure 5.12, has been voted as average by 47.56% of the total respondents. Additionally, the quality of the facilities was noted as average by 48.8% of the total respondents. The comments presented by the participants highlighted the need to make the facilities more accessible as they struggle to access the service. In addition, participants would like to see an

improvement to adult and children's care services, which could be supported by better facilities, service delivery, and partnership working.

Figure 5.12: Quality and Quantity of Health and Wellbeing Provision

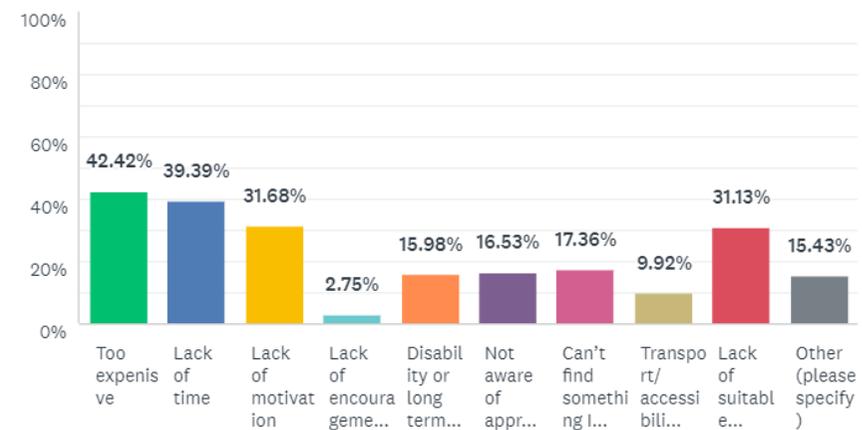


A key objective of this project is for the facility to enable people to live a more active and healthier lifestyle. Therefore, the respondents had the opportunity to state the barriers to participation that they currently face. Our respondents, as detailed in figure 5.13, noted that they have the desire to become more active, with 83.82% stating that they wanted to do more physical activity. The survey participants provided several reasons why they do not participate in physical activity. The main reasons for not completing more physical activity are; too expensive (42.42%), lack of time (39.93%), lack of motivation (31.68%) and lack of suitable facilities (31.13%).

The area surrounding Weston Favell suffers from high levels of deprivation, and therefore cost is an evident barrier to participation. Any new facilities will need to consider the pricing to ensure it accommodates the local catchment. Lack of time and motivation are common barriers to participation. Although new facilities can support people to become active,

there needs to be a high-quality service delivery from partners to highlight the opportunities and the benefits of being active to the Northampton residents. The redevelopment of Lings Forum can help support the issues of 'lack of suitable facilities' by providing high quality sporting provision that meets the needs of the local population and the current and future sporting trends.

Figure 5.13: Reasons for lack of participation

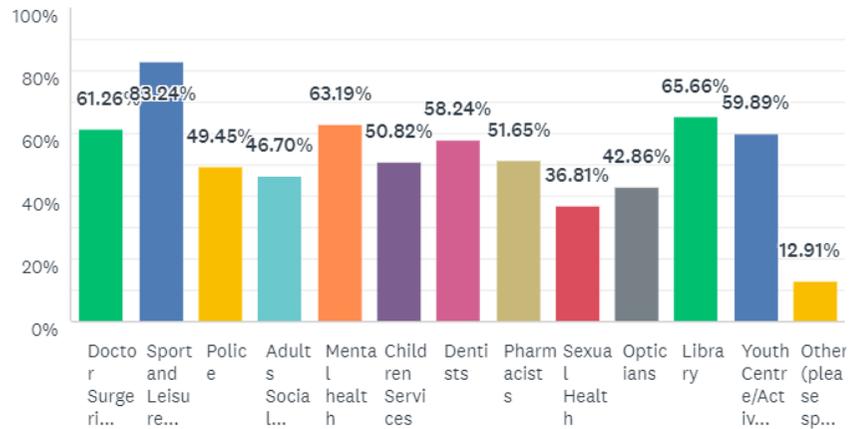


As with the leisure centre user and club survey, the respondents had the opportunity to highlight which facilities they would like to see as part of a future development at Weston Favell. As shown in figure 5.14, the facilities with the highest response rates included sport and leisure (83.24%), library (65.66%), mental health services (63.19%), doctor surgeries (61.26%), youth centre/activities 59.89%, and dentist (58.24%).

The majority of the leading facility provision are already based at Weston Favell, so there is no surprise that participants would like to see these replaced. There was also clear support to include the library within a new health and wellbeing hub. Mental Health has become a vital part of the health agenda that came up in the responses and we know that the leading

stakeholders are keen to include extended service provision within this concept of a community hub setting.

Figure 5.14: Public Survey – Future Provision



Overall, the public survey provided a good insight into the public's views on the current facility provision and what the community would like to see in any future development. The Consultant Team have considered the current and future needs of the public survey when developing the facility mix for the Health and Wellbeing Hub.

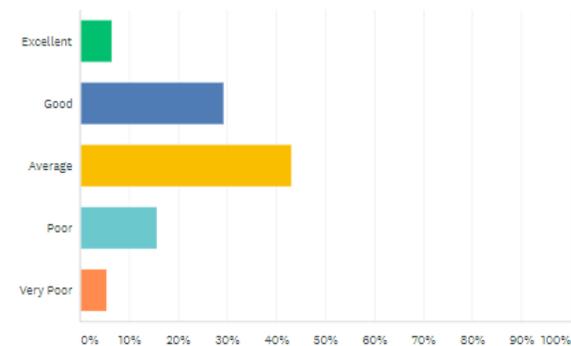
5.5.4 Patient Survey

The Consultant Team also undertook a patient survey which was distributed by Favell Plus GP Surgery and Mayfield Surgery via a text message. There was a total of 914 responses to the survey. As results collected were from patients of both practices (c19,500) the total respondents as a percentage of registered patients were 4.5%.

The survey allowed respondents to submit free text responses to some of the survey questions. Most respondents engaged well with these questions providing multiple comments, which is why the cumulative sum of the number of references to various themes for some questions in the analysis below exceeds the number of respondents.

The respondents were asked to rate the current health facilities in Weston Favell in terms of quality of the building, its layout and state of repair. The two most popular responses were average, with 43% of the responses and good, with 29.32% of the responses.

Figure 5.15: Patient Survey – Quality of Existing Provision



A key objective of this project is to improve the quality of the current facilities to ensure they are more accessible for residents. Therefore, the respondents had the opportunity to highlight important particular design elements, including more space in the waiting area, improved layout of the building, improved environment, increased car parking, and improved bike racks. More space in the waiting room proved to be vital to the patients with 52.65% noting it as important and 33.63% as very important. The current facility is outdated, which was recognised by the patients who stated that it is important (49.725) and very important (26.69%) for the building to have an improved layout.

The surrounding environment of the Weston Favell Health Centre needs improvement, which was recognised by most patients as important (49.83%) and very important (27.97%). Car parking has been a common theme throughout our consultation, and the patients consistently cited this as an issue in Weston Favell. 75.85% of respondents noted it to be very important and 18.3% noted it to be important that the new development provides additional car parking.

Figure 5.16: Patient Survey – Improving the Quality of the Facilities

	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	I DONT KNOW	TOTAL
More space in the waiting area	11.17% 101	52.65% 476	33.63% 304	2.54% 23	904
Improved layout of the building	17.50% 158	49.72% 449	26.69% 241	6.09% 55	903
Improved Environment e.g. lighting, decoration etc.	17.98% 162	49.83% 449	27.97% 252	4.22% 38	901
Increased Car parking	3.97% 36	18.30% 166	75.85% 688	1.87% 17	907
Improved Bike racks/ cycle security	21.84% 197	41.46% 374	18.07% 163	18.63% 168	902

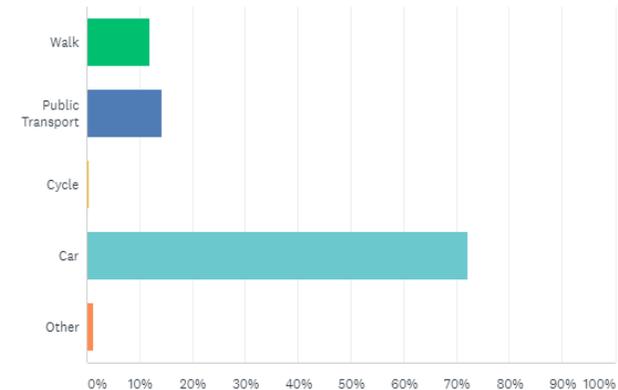
A key objective of this part of the considerations for an integrated Health and Wellbeing Hub is to bring services together to enable a more joined up approach. The respondents had the opportunity to give their views on the GP Surgeries sharing facilities with other services including leisure, Council, and other health services. The most popular service to be included in partnership with the GPs was other health services, which 52.87% of respondents thought was important and 28.81% deemed it be very important. However, patients did not think the sharing of leisure services or Council services was as important, with the majority of participants stating it is not important.

Figure 5.17: Patient Survey – Sharing of Facilities and Services

	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	I DONT KNOW	TOTAL
Sharing the building with other Health Services	11.26% 102	52.87% 479	28.81% 261	7.06% 64	906
Sharing the building with leisure services such as the swimming pool and gym	57.84% 524	24.06% 218	10.60% 96	7.51% 68	906
Sharing the building with other Council Services such as social services and library	45.63% 412	32.67% 295	11.63% 105	10.08% 91	903

It is unsurprising that the patients think that additional car parking is very important for a new Health and Wellbeing Hub. The car is the most popular mode of transport for accessing the current facility, which accounts for 72.14% of all travel to the GP Surgeries.

Figure 5.18: Patient Survey – Mode of Transport



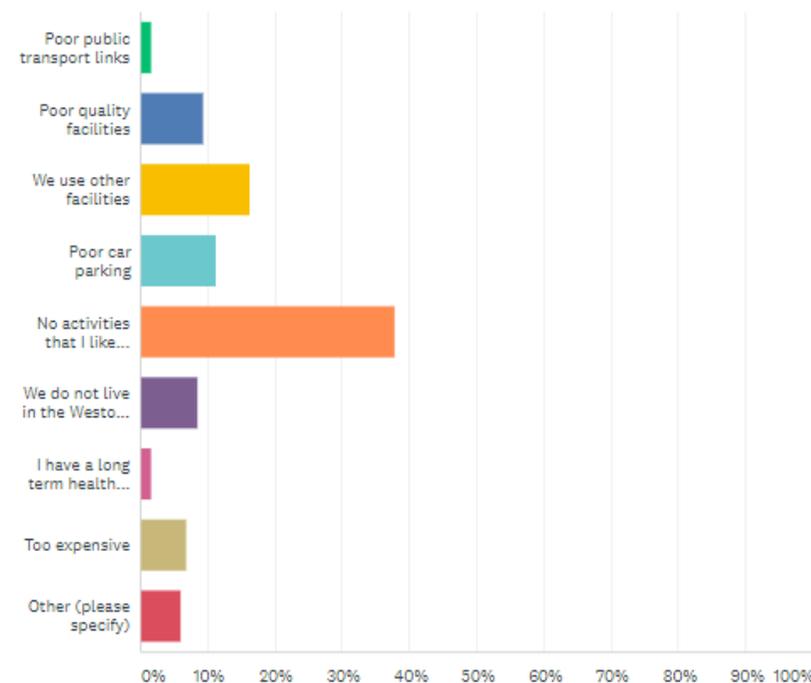
Overall, the patient survey provided a good insight into the public’s views on the current health provision and what the community would like to see as part of a future development. The Consultant Team have considered the current and future needs of the public survey when developing the facility mix for the Health and Wellbeing Hub.

5.5.5 Student Survey

The final survey that the Consultant Team undertook was a student survey in partnership with Northampton Academy. The survey received a total of 252 responses across the five different year groups at the school.

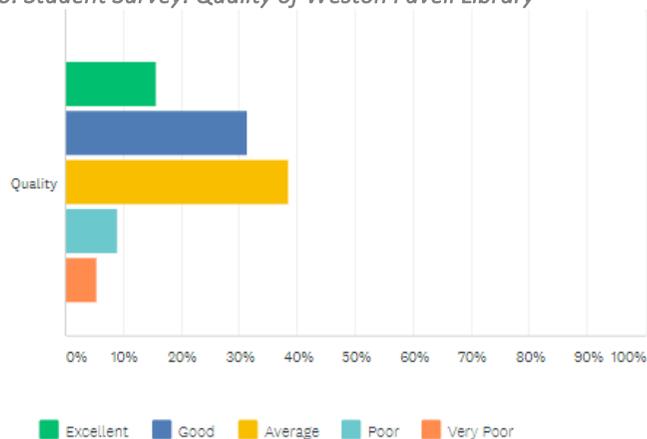
During this survey, the students were asked whether they currently use the facilities at Weston Favell. 66.67% of respondents noted that they used the facilities prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. A key objective of this study is to enable the local community to be more physically active and lead a healthier lifestyle. Therefore, the participants were asked about the current barriers to participation at Lings Forum. There were 116 responses to the following question. The two most popular reasons for not using Lings Forum were ‘no activities that I like’ at 37.93% and ‘we use other facilities’ at 16.38%.

Figure 5.19: Student Survey: Barriers to Participation



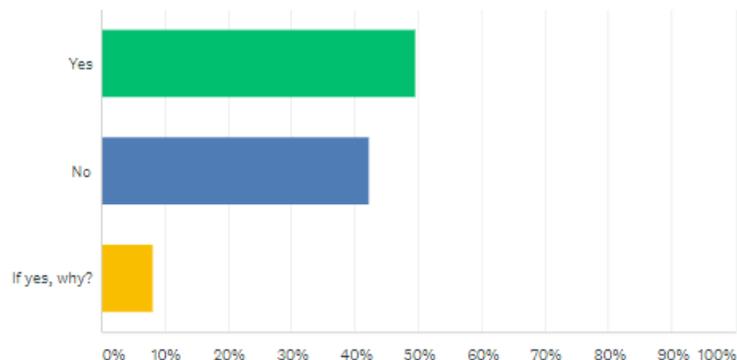
The students were asked to rate the quality and quantity of the sport and leisure facilities in Northampton and the Weston Favell Library. 38.57% of the respondents noted that the library was of average quality, and 31.39% stated that the quality was good. The high numbers of response to this question highlights the importance of the Weston Favell Library for the pupils of Northampton Academy.

Figure 5.20: Student Survey: Quality of Weston Favell Library



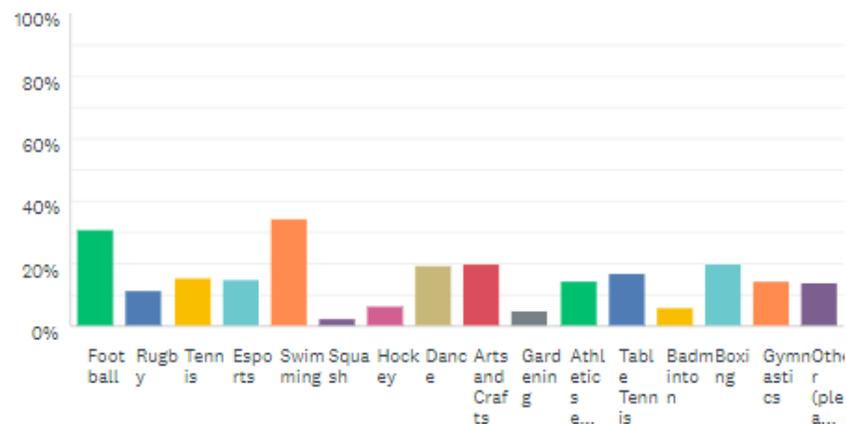
Throughout our consultation there has been regular discussions and comments around the lack of activities for the younger population. The Consultant Team have been exploring the opportunity to provide an E-sports/Virtual Reality area as part of the new hub. During this survey, the pupils were asked if they would like to see the inclusion of E-sports. 49.55% respondents thought it would be a good to include E-sports provision in the facility mix.

Figure 5.21: Student Survey: E-Sports Provision



Within the survey the pupils had the opportunity to state which were their favourite activities and what provision they would like to be included within the facility mix of the new Health and Wellbeing Hub. There was a wide range of provision that the students would like to see. The most popular were swimming (34.38%), football (31.25%), arts and crafts (20.09%), Boxing (20.09%), dance (19.64%), and table tennis (16.96%).

Figure 5.20: Student Survey: Future Provision



Overall, the student survey has provided a good insight into the pupils' views on the current provision and what they would like to see as part of a future development. It is important to consider the views and opinions of the younger generation in particular, to ensure the new facility can attract consumers of all ages and the student survey was very helpful to highlight potential future needs of those users who will be the next generation of users and future families and communities in Weston Favell.

Overall, the public consultation highlighted a number of issues and opportunities, including a very high level of public and user support for new investment into better quality facilities at Weston Favell.



Section 6 – Facility Analysis and Provision

6. Facility Analysis and Provision

6.1 Introduction

When assessing the potential future facility provision for leisure facilities for Northampton, it is important to consider the needs and market demands alongside the existing level of supply and location of similar facilities both in the local area and the sub-region. The following research, alongside our consultation and strategic analysis, has been used to influence the potential facility mix options for the future of the leisure provision with Northampton.

The focus of this section has been to review the core facilities within the current leisure offer and based on the consultation findings review potential demand and supply of the facilities which could form part of the future facility mix of leisure provision in Northampton. Data that has been utilised within this section includes our desk-based research, Sport England’s Active Places Database and the Sports Facility Calculator.

6.2 Swimming Pools

The swimming pool is an important element of any new leisure facility mix. In Northampton there are currently 19 swimming facilities across 16 sites that can be accessed by the local community.

There is currently a six lane 25m pool within the Lings Forum Leisure Centre, which is one of the largest pools in the borough. The two pools that are larger than Lings Forum are located within the Northampton School for Boys (6 lane 25m pool) and Mount Baths Leisure Centre (6 lane 30m pool). The majority of the facilities which offer pay and play and club hire are owned by the Borough Council. These are Danes Camp, Lings Forum, and The Mounts Baths. Cripps Recreation Centre is owned by the Health Trust but is managed by Northampton Leisure Trust as part of the public facility network but on a membership only basis. In addition, Billing Aquadrome is also a pay and play facility that offers community use.

Additionally, there are another three swimming facilities that are located within private facilities. These have been excluded from the analysis due to not having any community accessibility. Figure 6.1 illustrates the location of all swimming pool in Northampton.

Figure 6.1: Swimming Pools in Northampton (Active Places Power)

Site	Facilities	Distance to Lings Forum
Billing Aquadrome	340m ² leisure pool	1.88km
Cripps Recreation Centre	250m ² pool (25m pool)	4.36km
Danes Camp Leisure Centre	200m ² pool (25m pool)	6.95km
DW Sports Fitness (Closed)	162m ² pool (18m pool)	5.43km
Fitness4less	90m ² pool (15m pool- 4 lanes)	5.03km
Lings Forum Leisure Centre	250m ² pool (25m pool – 6 lanes)	0km
Livingwell Health Club	162m ² pool (18m pool – 2 lanes)	5.30km
Marriott Leisure Club	78m ² training pool	4.68km
Mounts Baths Leisure Centre	366m ² pool (30m pool – 6 lanes) and 150m ² learner pool	4.34km
Northampton High School Sports Centre	250m ² pool (25m pool – 4 lanes)	6.36km
Northampton School for Boys	325m ² pool (25m- 6 lanes)	2.92km
Nuffield Health	160m ² pool (20m pool – 2 lanes)	6.93km
*The Duston School	250m ² pool (25m – 1 lane)	8.37km
The Northampton School for Girls	250m ² pool (25m – 5 lanes)	2.88km
Virgin Active Club (Collingtree Park)	160m ² pool (20m – 3 lanes) and 160m ² lido (20m – 3 lanes)	7.85km
Virgin Active Club (Riverside Park)	250m ² pool (25m – 5 lanes) and a 96m ² learner pool	1.67km
*Temporarily closed		

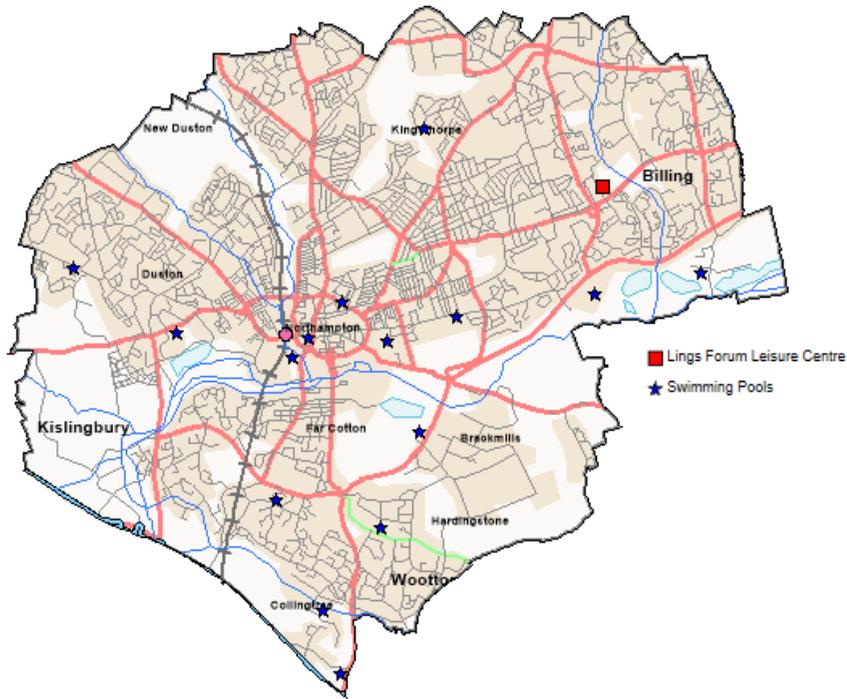
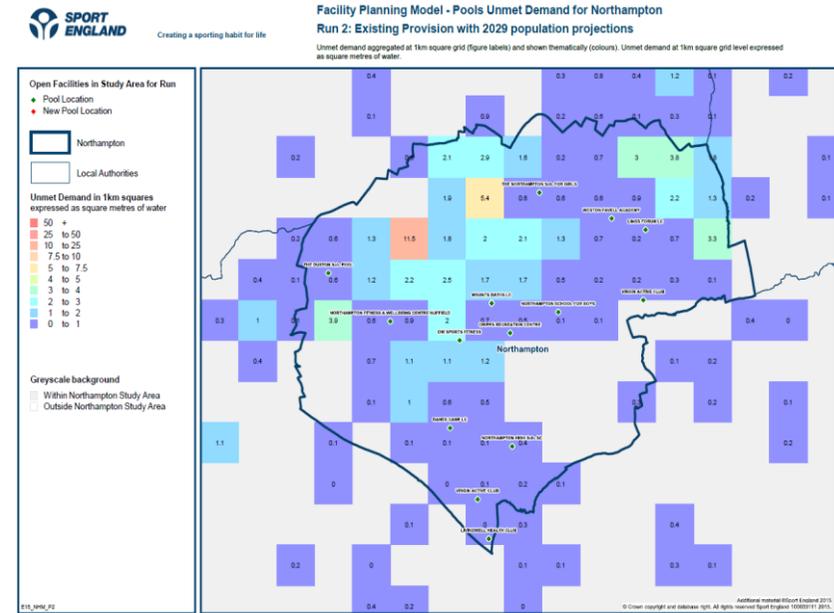


Figure 6.2: Sport England FPM – Pool Demand (up to 2029)



The NRDA highlighted that “the proposed redevelopment of Lings Forum includes the provision of a 25m x 8 lane pool plus a 25m x 12.5m teaching pool”. The facilities planning modelling (FPM) indicated that additional pool space is required to meet current and future need. The proposed redevelopment of Lings Forum will meet some of the existing demand, but another pool is required to meet the needs of Northampton and the wider NRDA area up to 2029. The FPM data highlights that the majority of the unmet demand will be in western side of Northampton. However as presented in figure 6.2, there are some levels of unmet demand in the north east of the borough up to the period of 2029.

Swim England provided us with reports that examined the current supply and demand of swimming facilities in Northampton, using the Facilities Planning Model (FPM). Some of the main highlights from this report, included:

- Northampton district currently has a water provision surplus of 351 m².
- The area is showing adequate water provision at this time along with a small unmet demand.
- There are a number of facilities that have reached and/or are approaching the expected lifespan of an aquatic facility.
- Community Use swimming pools are in limited supply, with a far greater stock of Membership facilities.

- Lings Forum Leisure Centre provides swimming to the open community. This facility was built in 1975, meaning it has already surpassed the expected age for an aquatic facility.
- Swim England are of the opinion that the current water provision should as a minimum be maintained.
- Swim England have stated that Lings Forum Leisure Centre should be replaced / redeveloped with a similar sized main pool, along with the inclusion of a learner pool.

The FPM data is summarised within the table below, which highlights that there is currently a 351m² surplus of water space within Northampton. When discussing the supply and demand of facilities, we must consider how the population changes will affect the facility provision in the future. With the expected population increases in Northampton, there is going to be increased demand for water supply.

Figure 6.3 Supply and Demand of Swimming Pools (Swim England)

Supply/Demand Balance	Northampton 2020	Northampton 2029
Supply - Swimming pool provision scaled to take account of hours available for community use	2,747 m ²	2,747 m ²
Demand - Swimming pool provision taking into account a 'comfort' factor	2,396 m ²	2,374 m ²
Provision available compared to the minimum required to meet demand	351 m ²	334m ²

Currently in Northampton there is a slight water surplus within the Borough that totals 351m². This surplus is likely to decrease, especially with the expected population growth within the Borough. By 2029, the water surplus will decrease to 334m².

During the Consultation, the Consultant Team engaged with Northampton Swimming Club who are a very successful and established swimming club. They currently use Lings Forum for club training (alongside a number of other pools in the region). The club would like to see a good quality 25m short course pool with at least 8 lanes, ideally 10 lanes if possible. The provision of a learner pool for the demand there and a moveable floor may increase flexibility.

Swim England have identified that the Lings Forum Leisure Centre has surpassed its economic life and needs replacing or refurbishing. Currently the area is showing adequate water provision, but there is a small level of unmet demand. There is a clear need to ensure swimming provision is protected within Northampton. As a minimum, we would recommend that the current provision of swimming pools is retained. Our recommendation would be that the water provision would be increased to an eight or 10 lane swimming pool with supporting learner pool.

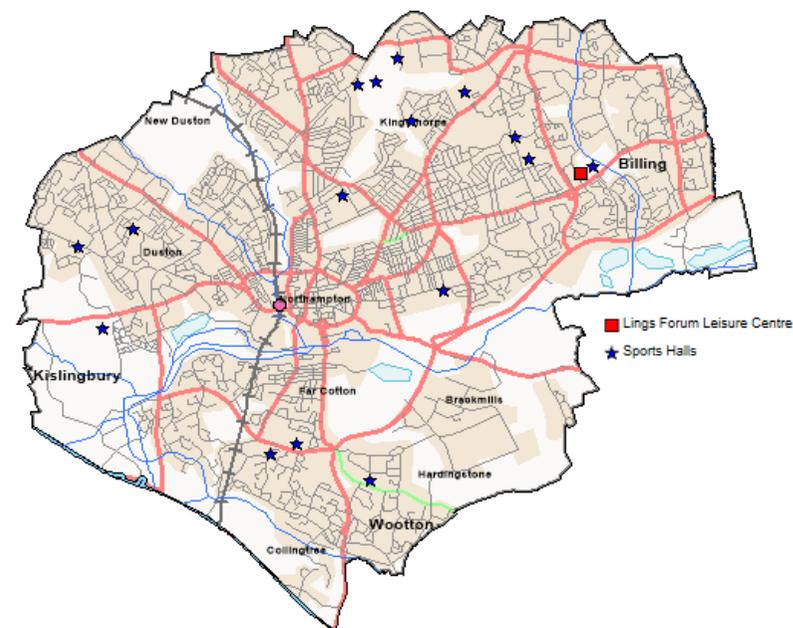
6.3 Sports Halls

Sports halls are important for leisure centres as they provided a large flexible space where a range of activity can take place including Badminton, Netball, Basketball, and Volleyball. There are currently 17 sports halls across 17 sites in Northampton which are 3+ courts in size. The total number of courts in Northampton totals to 77 badminton courts. There is a 6-court sports hall at the Lings Forum Leisure Centre, which is one of the biggest sports halls within the borough. The largest sports hall in Northampton is a 10-court hall located at Benham Sports Arena, located to the north west of the Lings Forum.

It is important to consider both the amount and distribution of sports halls within Northampton and Figure 6.4 illustrates the location of all sports halls in Northampton. Only sports halls which are 3+ badminton courts in size and accessible by the community fall within the parameters of this review of provision.

Figure 6.4: Sports Halls in Northampton (Active Places Power)

Site	Facilities	Distance from Lings Forum
Abbeyfield School	4 courts	6.59km
Benham Sports Arena	10 courts	3.45km
Danes Camp Leisure Centre	4 courts	6.95km
Duston Sports Centre	4 courts	7.31km
Kingsthorpe College	4 courts	4km
Lings Forum Leisure Centre	6 courts	0km
Malcolm Arnold Academy	4 courts	3.86km
Northampton Academy	4 courts	0.3km
Northampton College	4 courts	1.27km
Northampton High School Sports Centre	4 courts	6.36km
Northampton School for Boys	4 courts	2.92km
Quinton House School	3 courts	8.29km
The Duston School	4 courts	8.37km
The Northampton School for Girls	6 courts	2.88km
Thomas Becket Catholic School	4 courts	2.35km
University of Northampton	4 courts	4.62km
Weston Favell Academy	4 courts	0.8km

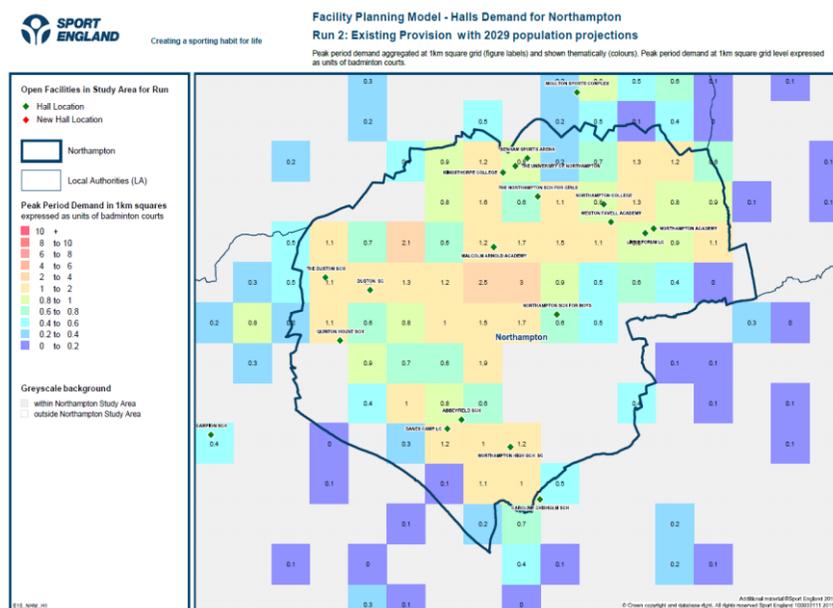


As presented in figure 6.4, there are three sports halls located within close proximity to Lings Forum Leisure Centre. The closest facility to our study site is Northampton Academy, with Northampton College and Weston Favell Academy both also located near the study site. All these sites offer a 4-court sports hall with reduced community access due to being located on educational sites. Figure 6.4 shows that the supply of sports hall is significantly larger and more condensed in the north east of the borough.

There are currently 13 sports halls located on educational sites, which is accounts for 76.5% of the total provision. Sports halls on educational sites have restricted community use hours, which normally are weekday evenings and weekend usage due to the school using the facility during opening hours.

The Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA) Sports Facilities Summary Report notes that there is the potential opportunity to reduce in size the Lings Forum from a 6-court hall to a 4-court hall within any proposed new development. According to the Sport England Facilities Planning Model, the central north area of Northampton will have the most unmet demand up to the period of 2029. This can be seen in figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5: Sport England FPM – Halls Demand (up to 2029)



It is important to consider consultation findings with regards to demand and need for additional sport hall space in Northampton in order to further understand area needs for the key sports that require a sports hall. During our consultation, we engaged with Badminton England and England Basketball who predominantly use sports halls for their sport.

Basketball England noted that there is a total of 20 indoor basketball courts within Northampton, with 17 of these being single court venues. The largest

venue in Northampton is the Northampton School for Girls, which currently has 3 courts. Basketball England have noted that there is currently a slight deficit of 0.36 courts of dedicated basketball courts in Northampton in 2019. This is expected to increase to 0.40 dedicated basketball courts in 2029. England Basketball have stated that there are currently 418 visits (30 hours) of demand that is currently being missed in Northampton. This is expected to increase to 465 (33) by 2029.

Badminton England noted that there could be the opportunity to run the No Strings Badminton from the new health and wellbeing hub. These sessions are non-committal sessions encouraging people to be physically active through Badminton. At the moment Trilogy are not a national operator partner but Badminton England would happily support them to run the No Strings Badminton programme from Weston Favell. As part of the new development, Badminton England would typically see four courts but six would be beneficial.

Sport England’s Sports Facility Calculator Tool provides another means of measuring the supply of sports halls within Northampton. The tool considers the size and age profile of a local population and provides a recommended level of supply to meet the needs of that population. It is crucial to remember that it does not take account of the quality of the facilities, accessibility, imported demand from neighbouring authorities or exported demand to neighbouring authorities. Sports Facility Calculator findings relating to sports hall provision in Northampton are summarised in figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6: Comparison of Sport England Recommended Supply and Actual Supply of Sports Hall provision in Northampton (Sport England)

Year	SFC Recommended Supply	Actual Supply	Difference
2020	63.98	77	+13.02
2029	65.01	77	+11.99

The Sports Facility Calculator figures show that Northampton has a surplus of sports hall space which equates to 13 badminton courts. The surplus will decrease from 13.02 to 11.99 by 2029. Therefore, the Sports Facility Calculator appears to show that there is an oversupply of sports hall space in Northampton. However, it is worth noting the SPC does not consider imported and exported demand and does not consider the quality and accessibility of facilities. There is a significant amount of provision (76.5%) based on educational sites which will reduce the accessibility to these facilities.

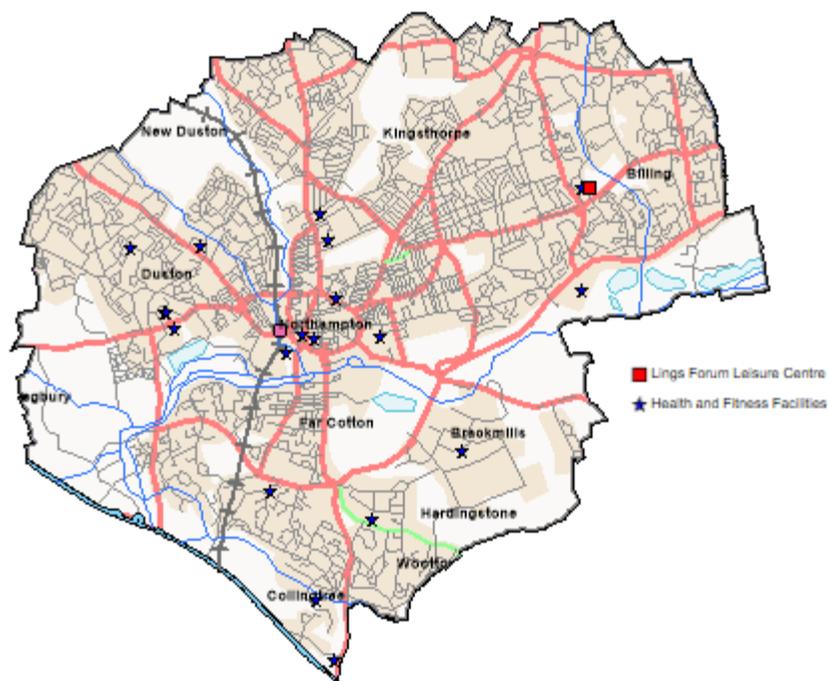
Overall, there is currently sufficient supply to meet the demand of sports halls within the borough in 2020 and up to the period of 2029. There is a good geographical spread of facilities in Northampton, especially in the north east of the borough. Lings Forum is currently the second largest sports hall. There is the opportunity to reduce the sports hall at Lings Forum from a 6-court sports hall to a 4-court hall as part of this redevelopment, which is supported by the NRDA (2017). Our recommendation would be to supply a minimum of a 4 courts sports hall that meets the spatial requirements set out by Sport England.

6.4 Health and Fitness Suite

Health and Fitness facilities form a key part of the facility mix in modern Leisure Centres, providing an important income stream to support the operation of successful Leisure Centres. There are currently 65 stations within the Lings Forum Leisure Centre.

Figure 6.7: Supply of Health and Fitness Suite's in Northampton (Active Places)

Site	Facilities	Distance from Lings Forum
Better Bodies Gym	40 stations	4.24km
BST MMA	120 stations	5.04km
Cripps Recreation Centre	60 stations	4.36km
Dallington Fitness	112 stations	6.21km
Danes Camp Leisure Centre	68 stations	6.95km
Duston Sports Centre	60 stations	7.31km
Image Fitness Club	150 stations	4.7km
Lings Forum Leisure Centre	65 stations	0km
Livingwell Health Club	25 stations	5.30km
Mounts Baths Leisure Centre	60 stations	4.34km
Northampton High School Sports Centre	30 stations	6.36km
Nuffield Health	98 stations	6.93km
Pink Ladies Health and Fitness Club	54 stations	4.33km
Pure Gym (Central)	220 stations	5.18km
Pure Gym (Weston Favell)	220 stations	0.1km
The Gym	170 stations	7.17km
Virgin Active Club (Collingtree Park)	100 stations	7.85km
Virgin Active Club (Riverside Park)	220 stations	1.67km
Total	1,872 stations	



Within Northampton there are currently 18 sites that offer health and fitness provision (25+ stations) with a total of 1,872 stations.

The largest sites in Northampton are Pure Gym Central (220 stations), Virgin Active Club Riverside Park (220 stations), Pure Gym Weston Favell (220 stations), and the Gym (100 stations). DW Sports Fitness has recently closed due to DW Sports going into administration. This site had 174 stations. Our study site is near Pure Gym Weston Favell, which is located in the shopping centre. This facility is a well-known Highstreet chain that offer 24/7 opening hours at low prices (from £19.99 a month). The proximity of this gym will need to be considered when evaluating the membership costs at our study site.

As presented in figure 6.7, the majority of the health and fitness provision is with Northampton town centre, with just 3 sites providing health and fitness in the eastern side of Northampton, which includes the Lings Forum Leisure Centre and Pure Gym.

To examine the supply and demand of health and fitness facilities in more detail, the Consultant Team commissioned the Leisure Database Company to complete an in-depth review of the health and fitness offer in Northampton. Considering the areas reached and the competition around Northampton town centre, the report concentrates on a 2-mile radius when estimating the latent demand for fitness at Weston Favell. This area is home to almost 85k people and of these, 67,038 are adults aged 15+. Almost three quarters (74%) of existing Lings Forum members live within this catchment area.

The dominant Mosaic group within the catchment is one of the least affluent: I (Family Basics). Almost a quarter (23%) of the population are classified as such, a figure which is almost three times higher than the national average. Family Basics consists of families with school age children who have limited budgets and struggle to make ends meet due to low incomes and the costs of raising their children. There is one type that really stands out: I39 (Families with Needs – 13.7%). These are typically large families, headed by parents in their late 20s / early 30s. A further 4.9% fall into type I36 (Solid Economy) and these tend to be older parents (mid-30s to mid-50s) with two or more children. Both types have low household incomes but those in Families with Needs are particularly low; high unemployment and low wages make these some of the most deprived areas in the country and result in many families needing support.

Leisure Database have estimated the latent demand for fitness at the new Weston Favell Health & Wellbeing Hub to be 3,662 – this is the total number of adult members that could be achieved. This figure includes allowance for

30% of the total to come from outside the estimated catchment area; 26% of total members currently travel more than 2 miles to get to Lings Forum and this could increase slightly with the new facilities. This latent demand estimate also accounts for the allowance of 150 residential units which are due to be built nearby. These could house around 225 adults. Lastly, the report has made some negative considerations for competition in the area, particularly the large low-cost club that is close by. Lings Forum had an average of just under 2,600 adult members during 2019, although numbers had been decreasing month on month from April. By December 2019, there were approx. 2,100 adult members. Our estimate therefore highlights a significant increase in membership. A full copy of the Leisure Database Company report can be found in Appendix 4.

The market for Health and Fitness provision is changing, moving away from the traditional “stations” towards more functional exercise and group exercise methods. Retaining and improving the health and fitness offer at Lings Forum can help the facility meet local community needs and provide a high-quality health and fitness offer. Health and Fitness suites are a staple of all leisure centres and will need to be provided to ensure an effective leisure offering at each centre within Northampton.

The NRDA highlights that over 80% of provision is through the commercial fitness sector. It should be noted that this study was completed before the new Pure Gym opened at the Weston Favell Shopping Centre, so the percentage has increased. All Borough Council Leisure Centres and the Cripps Recreation Centre have fitness and gym provision. Northampton’s supply is much higher than Daventry or South Northamptonshire, which is typical of a large town. The rate of provision is very similar to those of its comparator authorities. The NRDA notes that there will be a need for both additional fitness stations and studio space up to 2029 to cater for growth and that it is expected that the redevelopment of Lings Forum will include additional fitness facilities as these will help balance the budget with the new swimming pool. However, since the NRDA was completed, Pure Gym

have opened a gym at the Weston Favell Shopping Centre, which provides 220 stations at low costs.

In Northampton there is currently a good level of health and fitness within the borough. However, a significant proportion of the current provision is provided by the commercial sector, which does create accessibility issues for the local community. However, in recent times, a number of cheaper alternative commercial 24/7 facilities have been entering the market, which are considered more accessible. From our initial analysis, there is a need to increase the level provision in the borough to meet the demand of the future population. Therefore, the Consultant Team would recommend that a larger health and fitness offer (minimum 100 stations) should be redeveloped at Lings Forum. The report completed by Leisure Database Company highlights that there is currently latent demand of 3,662 adult members.

6.5 Studios

Studios form an important aspect of the health and fitness at leisure centres. Leisure centres heavily rely on flexible indoor studios to provide group fitness classes such as Spin, Yoga and Pilates.

There are 34 studios across 22 different sites within Northampton that currently offer studio provision.

Figure 6.8: Supply of Studios in Northampton (Active Places)

Site	Facilities	Distance to Lings Forum
Cripps Recreation Centre	4 studios	4.36km
Dallington Fitness	2 studios	6.21km
Danes Camp Leisure Centre	2 studios	6.95km
Duston Sports Centre	1 studio	7.31km
Energie Fitness	1 studio	4.38km
Fitness4less	1 studio	5.11km
Image Fitness Club	1 studio	4.7km
Kingsthorpe College	1 studio	4km
Lings Forum Leisure Centre	2 studios	0km
Mounts Baths Leisure Centre	1 studio	4.34km
Northampton Academy	1 studio	0.3km
Northampton College	2 studios	1.27km
Nuffield Health	1 studio	6.93km
Omni Studios	1 studio	4.32km
Pink Ladies Health and Fitness Club	1 studio	4.33km
Pure Gym (Central)	1 studio	5.18km
The Elgar Centre and Playing Fields	1 studio	7.85km
Northampton School for Girls	1 studio	2.88km
University of Northampton	1 studio	4.62km
Virgin Active Club (Collingtree Park)	4 studios	7.85km
Virgin Active Club (Riverside Park)	3 studios	1.67km
Weston Favell Academy	1 studio	0.8km
Total	34 studios	

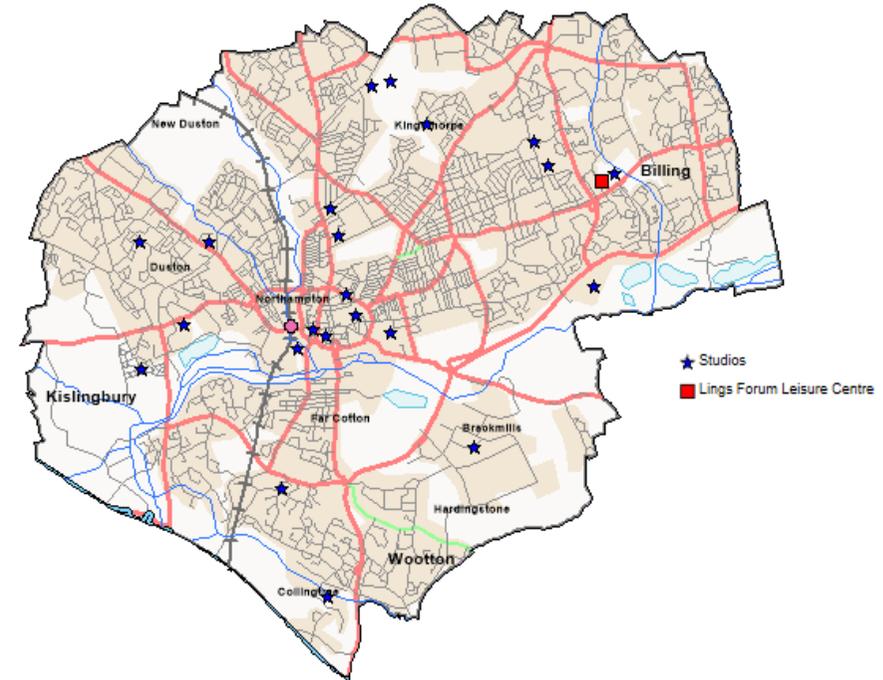


Figure 6.8 shows that significant amount of the studio space provision is provided in the Northampton town centre. There are three facilities near our study site, which include Northampton Academy, Weston Favell Academy, and Northampton College. These are all located on educational sites and will have reduced community access, although they will be available predominately during peak times.

Retaining and improving the studio offer onsite can help the facility meet the needs of the local community and provide a high-quality and wider health and fitness offer than just a stations approach. Studios have become

a staple of all leisure centres as the health and fitness industry has moved towards group classes. The NRDA highlights that redevelopment of Lings Forum should include a new gym and studio space, with the size and number of which should be determined through the business case. Although studio spaces are growing in popularity, it is important to ensure these are flexible to enable operators to accommodate a wide range of activities within the space. This is due to the exercise classes being held during peak times (weekends and evenings).

There is a good level of studio provision in Northampton, with much of the provision based out of health and fitness facilities. As expected, there is considerable provision within the town centre. Our recommendation would be to re-provide four studios as part of the redevelopment, whilst ensuring that these spaces are as flexible as possible to enable operators to provide a range of different activities within the space.

6.6 Squash Courts

There are currently four courts as part of the offer at the Lings Forum Leisure Centre, which provides the largest amount of provision in the borough. There are three other sites that all provide two courts each. However, in the borough there are two facilities that provide pay and play facility provision, which are Lings Forum and the facility at Dallington Fitness. It is important to consider both the amount and distribution of squash courts within Northampton and figure 6.9 illustrates the location of all squash courts in Northampton.

Figure 6.9: Supply of Squash Courts in Northampton (Active Places)

Site	Facilities	Distance to Lings Forum
Dallington Fitness	2 courts	6.21km
Lings Forum Leisure Centre	4 courts	0km
Northampton High School Sports Centre	2 courts	6.36km
Northampton Saints Sports Club	2 courts	1.18km



Figure 6.9 shows that there is a total of ten courts across four sites, with Lings Forum providing three (40%) of the total courts within Northampton. There is a good amount of provision in the east of the borough, near our study site. Northampton Saints Sports Club is located in close proximity of Weston Favell and currently provides two courts.

During our engagement with England Squash, they noted that there is a very poor spread of facilities across the area, the large population means that there needs to be a large spread of courts to meet the needs of the local population. As such it is imperative sites are maintained and more sites are added in the future. There are currently only 8 sites within a 10-mile radius of Northampton, and only 5 within a 5-mile radius.

Northampton does not meet the national requirement listed of courts per people. The recommended supply from England Squash is 1 court per 10,000 people (Currently 1:21,000 approximately). Improving and even increasing the quality of Squash courts in Northampton needs to be considered to ensure there is sufficient supply to meet the needs of local people from within Northampton.

Although there is a strategic need to provide additional squash provision in the borough, the future operations of two squash courts would be more sustainable from the spatial and programming view of the operators. Therefore, the recommendation of the Consultant Team is that a minimum of two squash courts is provided within the overall development. There is also the opportunity to create flexible spaces that can be used as Squash courts and other activities during off peak times. This opportunity may present a more economically viable solution to maintain flexible indoor space whilst catering for the lack of Squash courts in Northampton.

6.7 Artificial Grass Pitches

Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) are another facility type that requires consideration when discussing the future facility mix in Northampton. There are 27 different AGPs across 17 sites. However, five of these facilities are based at private facilities and therefore have no community access. These facilities include the full size 3G AGP at the University of Northampton, the small sized sand filled AGP at Rectory Farm Primary School, the small sized 3G pitch at Northampton College, the small sized 3G pitch at Ecton Brook Primary School, and the small sized 3G pitch at East Hunsbury Primary School. There are currently eight full size 3G pitches, one full sized sand filled pitch and one full sized sand dressed pitch. Additionally, there are a further 11-small sized 3G AGPs and one small sized sand filled pitch in Northampton.

Figure 6.10: Supply of AGP facilities within Northampton (Active Places)

Site	Facilities	Distance to Lings Forum
Abington PDC	1 small sized sand filled pitch	2.12km
Goals Soccer Centre	11 small sized 3G pitches	6.67km
Kings Heath Recreation Ground	1 full sized sand filled pitch	6.04km
Kingsthorpe College	1 full sized 3G pitch	4km
Malcolm Arnold Academy	1 full sized 3G pitch	3.94km
Northampton Academy	1 full sized 3G pitch	0.3km
Northampton High School Sports Centre	1 full sized sand dressed pitch	6.36km
Northampton School for Boys	1 full sized 3G pitch	2.92km
The Duston School	1 full sized 3G pitch	8.37km
The Northampton School for Girls	1 full sized 3G pitch	2.88km
Thomas Becket Catholic School	1 full sized 3G pitch	2.35km
Weston Favell Academy	1 full sized 3G pitch	0.8km

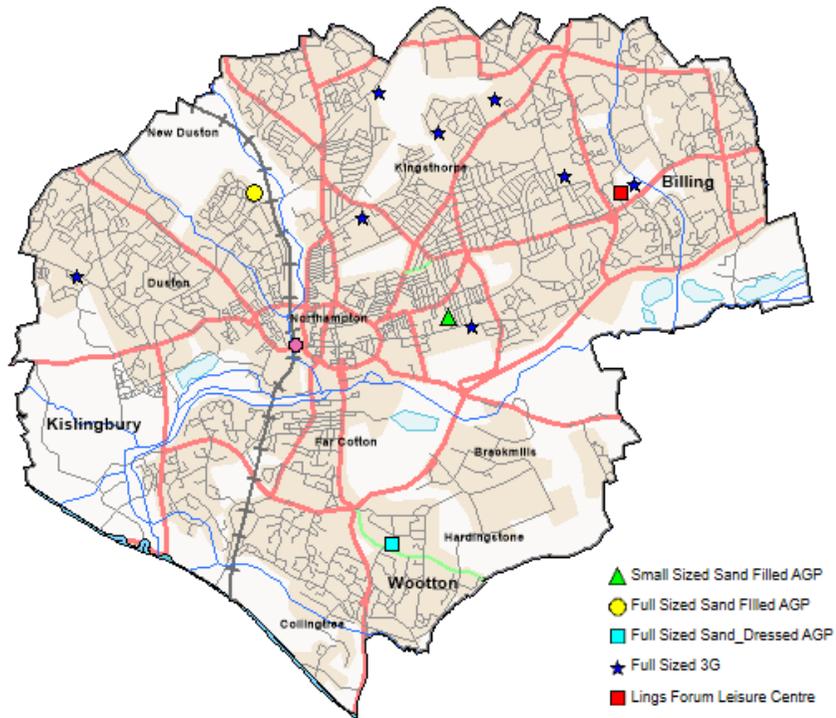


Figure 6.10 highlights that there are several AGP facilities in the north and east of Northampton, with less provision in the south and west of the borough. There are two full sized 3G pitches located near our study site, which are Northampton Academy and Weston Favell Academy. A large proportion (75%) of these facilities are located on educational sites and have limited community accessibility, which is weekday evening and weekends (peak periods).

Sport England’s Sports Facility Calculator Tool provides another means of measuring the supply of AGPs in Northampton. The tool considers the size and age profile of a local population and provides a recommended level of supply to meet the needs of that population. It is crucial to remember that it does not take account of the quality of the facilities, accessibility, imported demand from neighbouring authorities or exported demand to neighbouring authorities.

Recommendations from Sport England’s Sports Facility Calculator relating to artificial grass pitches are also useful in this regard and these are provided in Figure 6.11.

Figure 6.11: Comparison of Sport England Recommended Supply and Actual Supply of Artificial Grass Pitch provision in Northampton (Sport England)

Year	SFC Recommended Supply	Actual Supply*	Difference
2020	7.29	10	+2.71
2029	7.40	10	+2.6

* Excluding private facilities and small sided pitches.

The sports facility calculators show that when all Artificial Grass Pitches are included that are accessible by the public, Northampton has a surplus of 2.71 pitches, according to Sports Facility Calculator recommendations for 2019, which decreases to 2.6 pitches by 2029.

The Northampton Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) was developed as part of an overarching West Northampton Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy and was adopted in 2018. This states that there is no current shortfall in full size 3G provision. However, the Local Football Facility Plans (LFFP) suggest there are a number of contractual issues with several sites (Weston Favell Academy, Kingsthorpe College, The Duston School, Northampton School for Girls). Additionally, the pitch at

Northampton School for Girls has no floodlights which severely limits community usage. The LFFP noted that an additional two full-size 3G FTPs are required to meet the demand football in Northampton.

It is worth noting that all the nine publicly accessible 3G pitches are all over ten years old and will need to be resurfaced. The LFFP highlighted that the facilities at Malcolm Arnold Academy and the Northampton Academy need to be replaced.

Three projects relate to delivery of full-sized (11v11) 3G FTP provision, and one is a small sided 3G pitch to accommodate recreational and informal demand. These projects are located at the following sites:

- The Racecourse
- Northampton Town FC (PTS Academy Stadium)
- Northampton Academy
- Far Cotton Recreation Ground
- Malcom Arnold Academy

The Football Foundation are channelling 80% of their funding into projects that are identified within the LFFP. We believe that the Council need to consider the current supply for 3G pitches and those identified within the LFFP when deciding the future of its leisure provision.

During our consultation, we engaged with the Northamptonshire FA and the Football Foundation to discuss the LFFP in more detail. Within the LFFP there is an identified project at the Northampton Academy, which borders our study site. The Academy have noted that they would like to develop indoor football provision on site. The support provided by the Football Foundation would be predominantly equipment and markings. In Northamptonshire there is currently one national league venue at Moulton College. However, there is no dedicated area for spectators, which would be the preference of the FA. In addition, the 3G pitch currently onsite at the Northampton Academy has been identified as a priority project by the LFFP.

The pitch surface needs refurbishment, which costs approximately £200,000 - £500,000 dependent on the type of surface, quality of maintenance and the quality of the original pitch fitting.

One of the main issues contributing to why the Football Foundation will not fund the refurbishment of the pitch is due to the current facility opening hours, as the school does not have the resources to open the facility for longer. It was noted that an agreement could be in place where the leisure operator looks after the lettings of the pitch in the evenings and weekends. However, the Football Foundation would only fund the refurbishment if the usage increased, and the cost hiring was similar to other pitches in Northampton. The Football Foundation average grant award is approximately 65% to 70% of the project costs.

The opportunity to create a link with the study site and Northampton Academy could be extremely positive and provide the leisure operator with the opportunity to utilise the 3G pitch as an income stream. There also is the opportunity to provide two additional 5-a-side pitches next to the full size 3G, which will provide an additional income stream. The Consultant Team have considered the opportunity to provide two 5-a-side pitches and bring in the 3G refurbishment as part of the overall masterplan for the site presented later in the report.

6.8 Gymnastics

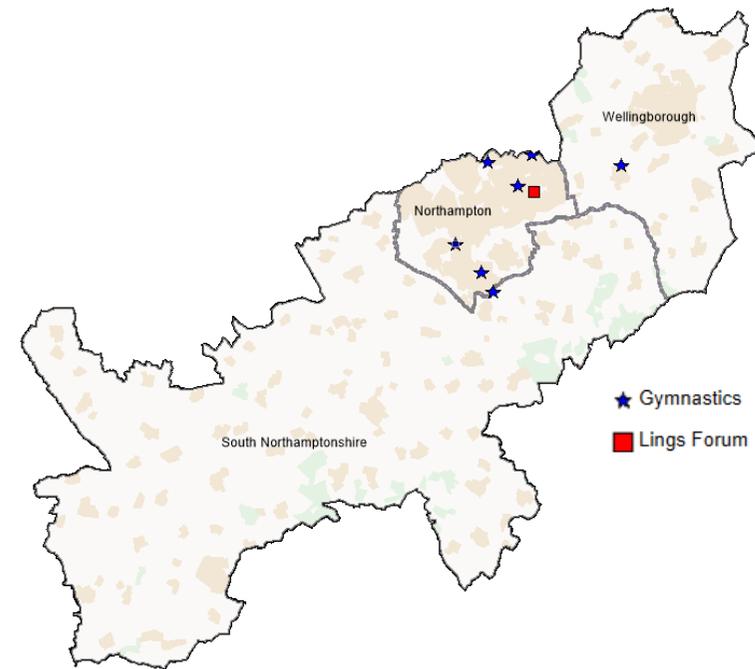
Gymnastics is a popular activity within Northampton. Gymnastic clubs commonly report significant waiting lists. In Northampton, there is a demand for more gymnastics opportunities as the clubs all report waiting lists. The total number of people estimated to be on waiting lists for gymnastics is 1 million. Furthermore, this research also shows that a further 1.9 million would like to participate but are not currently on a waiting list.

British Gymnastics highlighted that there is limited provision of access to facilities within Northampton. There are currently seven clubs within the

catchment area of Weston Favell. All the clubs are currently reporting waiting lists. Growth within the Northamptonshire area rose from 1,232 in 2012 to 5,153 in 2019. We have identified the clubs, number of participants, and the type of facilities in Northamptonshire in figure 6.12.

Figure 6.12: Gymnastic Facilities in Northampton

Club	Number of Participants	Type of Facility	Distance to Lings Forum
NCAAC Gymnastics Club	589	Dedicated Gymnastics Facility	6.13km
Northamptonshire Trampoline and Gymnastics Academy	468	Dedicated Gymnastics Facility	3.62km
Northampton Gymnastics Academy	819	Dedicated Gymnastics Facility	2.46km
Northampton School of Rhythmic Gymnastics	13	Non-dedicated sites (Benham Sports Arena, and Caroline Chisholm School)	6.92km
Corby Gymnastics Academy (Aspire Satellite)	1083	Dedicated in Corby – Non-dedicated in Northampton (Northampton High School)	29.75km
Billing Rhythmic Gymnastics	63	Non-dedicated sites (Western Favell School, Billing Lower School, John Ashby Hall)	1.08km
Lings Gymnastics	371	Dedicated Gymnastics Facility	6.1km



Having consulted with the Regional Chair, the aspiration is to have a competition/event venue in each county. Northamptonshire is the only county which does not have an event venue which is regularly used by the East Midlands region. Ideally this would accommodate Trampolining/DMT/Tumbling/Acro and Rhythmic, which would need a height of 11m. The region has invested into facilities in neighbouring counties and there is scope to invest into Northamptonshire. British Gymnastics noted that they have recently lost a rhythmic site in Wellingborough, so there is a need for reprovision in the area.

There is the opportunity to provide a gymnastics facility within the overall development, which has been further explored by the Consultant Team in the facility options for the Health and Wellbeing Hub. If a gymnastics facility is developed on the study site, it will require a large area, especially if the facility is developed for trampolining, tumbling and rhythmic gymnastics. There is a clear need and demand for a new gymnastics facility within Northampton. However, the Consultant Team will need to explore whether developing a facility on our study site is a sustainable option for the project.

6.9 Additional Facilities – Soft Play, Esports/Virtual Reality, Leisure Water, Commercial Leisure and Cinema

The Consultant Team have been exploring additional facilities that can be included within the facility mix of the Health and Wellbeing to add a more diverse range of activities, income streams and widen the potential consumer population. The Consultant Team have examined the current facility supply of soft play, Esports/Virtual Reality, leisure water, commercial leisure, and cinema provision in Northampton.

6.9.1 Soft Play

Soft play facilities are essential to the wider provision of a town. Many leisure centres offer soft play and Creche facilities as part of their facility mix, as they can be a positive income stream, and provide a larger amount of footfall onto the site.

In Northampton, there are a number of facilities that offer soft play for the local community, shown in figure 6.13.

Figure 6.13: Soft Play Facilities in Northampton

Club	Distance to Lings Forum
Hullabaloo Play and Party Centre	5.61km
Riverside Hub	1.35km
Wacky Warehouse - Quays	2.01km

Berzerk Leisure	2.53km
Wacky Warehouse - Lakeside	3.59km



Northampton has a good level of provision of soft play facilities, which is quite well spread in terms of geographical location. The nearest facilities to our study site are the Riverside Hub, Wacky Warehouse – Quays, and Berzerk Leisure. There are also a number of trampoline parks located in close proximity to our study site, which targets teenagers as the primary consumer base. Soft play facilities can be a good income generator for operators and are facilities that will bring increased footfall onto the site, which can help generate further secondary spend. Therefore, the opportunity to provide soft play provision is important for the health and wellbeing hub as it ensure it captures a larger number of customers.

The opportunity to provide soft play also will support the wider cohesion of services as children’s services have highlighted that providing soft play facilities would be beneficial for their service. Soft play spatial arrangements must be over two floors to ensure enough variation in activity for children to maintain interest. From our experience, facilities are approximately 150m² in size. The Consultant Team will further explore the options to provide soft play facilities in section seven of this report.

6.9.2 Esports and Virtual Reality

The Consultant Team have been exploring other opportunities to potentially include facility space for new activities on site. We have examined the opportunity to provide Esports and virtual reality provision within the hub.

Esports is an extremely fast-growing industry globally and within the UK. It is expected that the esports industry will generate \$1bn in 2020. Data shows that there are 36.6 million gamers in the UK, of which 3.1 million are esports enthusiasts. There are currently a wide range of Esports teams and organisations that offer both elite and grassroots Esports participation. Esports has started to influence educational institutions throughout the UK. These include universities who run courses and modules on Esports. Northampton University currently offers a BSc (Hons) Esports which places significant emphasis on the development of knowledge and real-world skills needed in sport technology, analytics, media, marketing, gameplay, and performance, to meet the growing demand for qualified graduates in the fast-paced world of Esports. In addition, there is a Esports & Gaming Society within the University Student Union, where the teams take part in tournaments organised by the National University Esports League (NUEL) and National Student Esports (NSE). This presents opportunities to build relationships and maximise the potential for esports and gaming in Northampton. Northampton Football Club also have an established Esports Team that compete in national FIFA tournaments. It is worth noting that the University of Northampton are looking to develop an Esports Arena in 2021. Figure 6.14 highlights artists impressions of the potential facility.

Figure 6.14: University of Northampton Esports Arena – Artist Impressions



In Northampton, there is currently no provision to meet the needs of the Esports community. In a number of large settlements, GAME usually have Belong gaming areas. However, the nearest site to the Weston Facility is based in Milton Keynes.

Virtual reality is also a market that is excelling with the market size of consumer virtual reality hardware and software projected to increase from 6.2 billion in 2019 to more than 16 billion by 2022. There are a number of virtual reality experiences that can be found within the market. These vary in size and offer, but all have a common theme. All of the VR experiences offer multiplayer options and are supported by a social aspect, such as a bar or a café. The provision is usually set around arcade games and immersive experiences. In Northampton, there is currently one main supplier of virtual reality provision, which is Fever VR. Fever VR is located within Northampton town centre and is an activities bar that predominantly targets young adults.

Both Esports and virtual reality provide an exciting opportunity for the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub, especially given there is little

provision within the borough. There is also the opportunity to build relationships with the University of Northampton. These are both growing industries that will attract a different clientele to the hub building and increase the footfall around the site. In addition, the public consultation highlighted the need to provide activities for younger people, which presents an opportunity for virtual reality and Esports.

6.9.3 Leisure Water

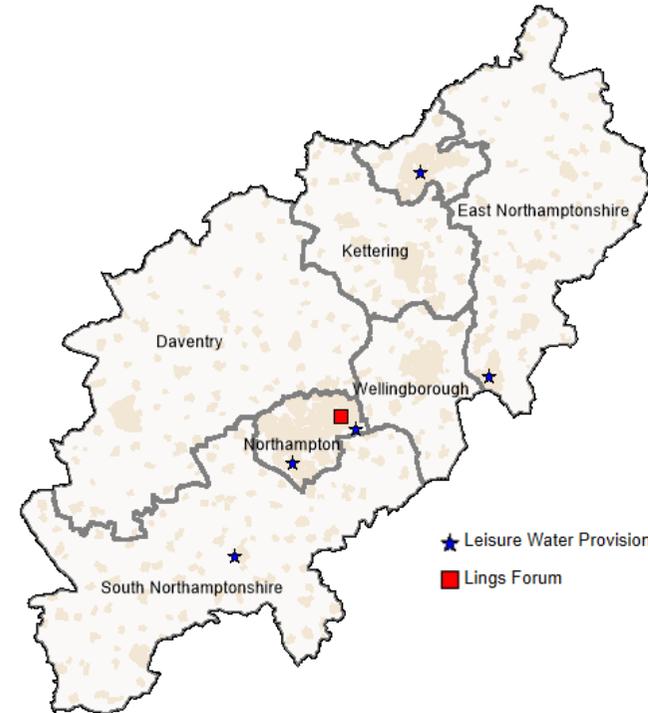
The provision of swimming at Lings Forum Leisure Centre is an integral part of the current offer. However, providing leisure water within the facility has the potential to increase the number of visitors and the operator’s income. Leisure water can be a positive income stream for operators as it can attract a wider catchment and encourages longer visits to the facility, which can support the increase of secondary spend. The Consultant Team have completed a supply and demand analysis of leisure water in Northamptonshire to understand the current provision available to residents in the borough.

Leisure water is provided in a variety of forms, including water features, air features, rides, and slides. There is a good level of leisure water provision in Northamptonshire with a total of six facilities providing a form of leisure water.

Figure 6.15: Leisure Water Facilities in Northamptonshire

Site	Facilities	Distance to Weston Favell
Danes Camp Leisure	200m ² leisure pool	7km
Billing Aquadrome	340m ² Leisure pool	1.8km
Corby East Midlands international Swimming Pool	32m ² Leisure pool	27km
Splash Leisure Pool	81m ² Leisure pool	16.3km

Towcester Centre for Leisure	for 150m ² Leisure pool	18.5km
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The nearest facility to Weston Favell is the Billing Aquadrome, which is located an approximately 5-minute drive from our study site. At this facility there is a large 340m² leisure pool, which has a number of water features predominantly aimed at children. The only other leisure water facility in Northampton is located at Danes Camp Leisure Centre, which is 10-15 minute drive from Weston Favell. At this facility, there is a pirate themed water factory, which is aimed at regular visits from families. Features installed included a pirate themed water ball with a two-arm interactive mast, three additional interactive masts each with two arms and a pirate ship toddler slide.

Outside of Northamptonshire there are a number of facilities that offer slides and rides as part of their leisure offer. It is important to consider large facilities that are located within a short drive from Northampton, as consumers will travel and spend prolonged visits at leisure water facilities. During our research we found a number of facilities located within a 60-minute drive.

Although there are a number of facilities within a 60-minute drive, a good proportion of these facilities are seasonal, which means they are only operational in the summer. The closest facility to Northampton is the Gulliver’s Splash zone based in Milton Keynes. This facility is predominantly aimed at families with young children. The facilities located at Box End Park, Ryde Leisure Events, Southlake Aqua Park, and The Wave is targeted towards teenagers and young adults.

Figure 6.16: Leisure Water Facilities within a 60-minute drive time

Site	Facilities	Distance to Lings Forum
Gullivers Splash Zone (Milton Keynes)	Indoor water attraction with water features, cannons and slides.	23.6km
Box End Park (Bedfordshire)	Aqua Park/Inflatable obstacle course (summer).	26.4km
Oasis Beach Pool	Indoor water attraction with water features and three slides.	32.8km
Ryde Leisure Events	Aqua Park/Inflatable obstacle course (summer).	42.3km
Southlake Aqua Park	Aqua Park/Inflatable obstacle course (summer).	43.5km

The Wave Coventry	Indoor water attraction with water features and four slides.	45.8km
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There is the opportunity to provide a leisure water offer within the overall development of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub. However, the size of the leisure water will need to be explored further as the level of provision will greatly affect the size of the development area. For example, slides and flumes will require a much larger space and height clearance. The Consultant Team have considered developing leisure water on our study site in section seven of this report.

6.9.4 Bowling, Go Karting and Laser Tag

Throughout our consultation several stakeholders have highlighted the need to have more activities for younger people to participate in due to the lack of provision in Weston Favell and Northampton. The Consultant Team have reviewed the current commercial leisure provision in Northampton, which includes ten pin bowling, Go Karting and Laser Zone. It is important to consider the wider commercial leisure opportunities for the Health and Wellbeing Hub as these can attract more visitors and provide another revenue stream for the facility.

In Northampton there is currently one facility that offers Ten Pin Bowling provision, which is located at Sixfields Leisure and has 26 lanes. This facility is located to the west of the Northampton Town Centre and is approximately 7.3km from our study site. Ten Pin Bowling offers a range of provision, including bowling, pool and snooker, table tennis, parties and food and drink. The facility is predominately aimed at families and young adults. Northampton commissioned a Leisure and Retail study in 2018, which highlighted that Ten Pin Bowling was the fifth most popular leisure activity behind health and fitness, cinema, restaurant and pubs, bars, and nightclubs.

Ten pin bowling has generally experienced a decline over the last decade, with a gradual reduction in the number of facilities. The Northampton Retail

and Leisure Study highlights that the current provision of lanes exceeds the potential number of lanes that the projected population could support up to 2029.

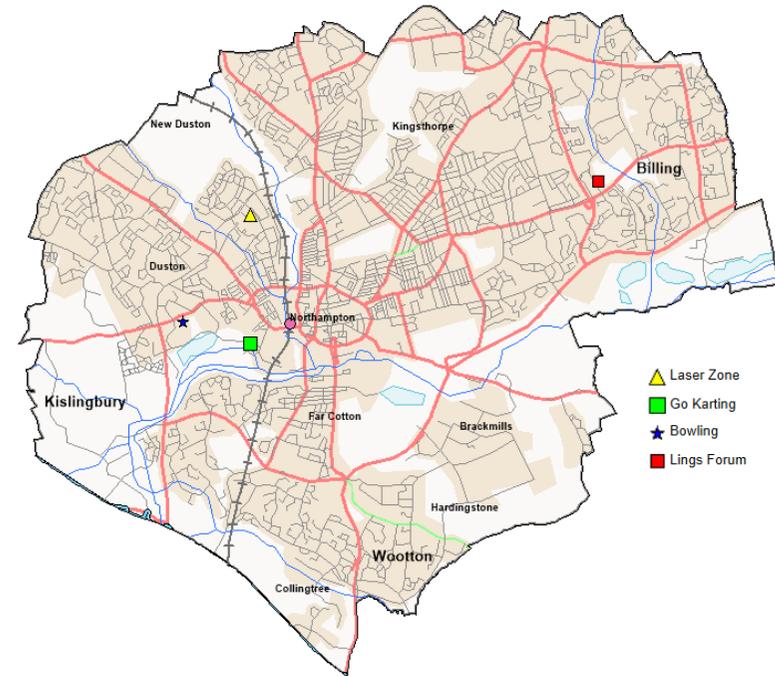
The inclusion of bowling provision in Weston Favell would service another area of Northampton as the current facility is located in the western side of the Borough. However, the Ten Pin Bowling facility has a monopoly in the market and an established brand identity, which will consistently draw consumers to the site. Following the review of the Leisure and Retail Study, the Consultant Team’s view is that the Council do not make any further plans for ten pin bowling facilities as part of this redevelopment.

Go Karting is another commercial leisure opportunity that is present within Northampton. There is a Go Kart facility located at Teamworks Karting Northampton, which is located on the western side of the Borough. This facility is located approximately 6.23km from our study site. It is usual for a Local Authority like Northampton to have one facility for the provision of Go Karting. Customers and participants expect to travel to access a Go Karting facility. Following the review of the Go Karting provision in Northampton and the available space on the study site, the Consultant Team do not believe that providing Go Karting provision in the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub is sustainable.

Laser Tag is a popular activity which is often participated by children, teenagers, and young adults. In Northampton there is currently one facility that provides Laser Tag, which is Laser Zone. This facility is located to the North of Northampton Town Centre, which is approximately 5.61km from Weston Favell. Laser Tag is an activity that people travel to access, as there is normally limited provision in each local authority. These facilities are usually in retail units as a large space is needed for the full immersive experience of Laser Tag. Therefore, the Consultant Team do not believe that providing Laser Tag provision in the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub is sustainable.

Figure 6.17 highlights the location of the bowling, laser tag and Go Karting provision in Northampton.

Figure 6.17: Bowling, Laser Tag and Go Karting provision



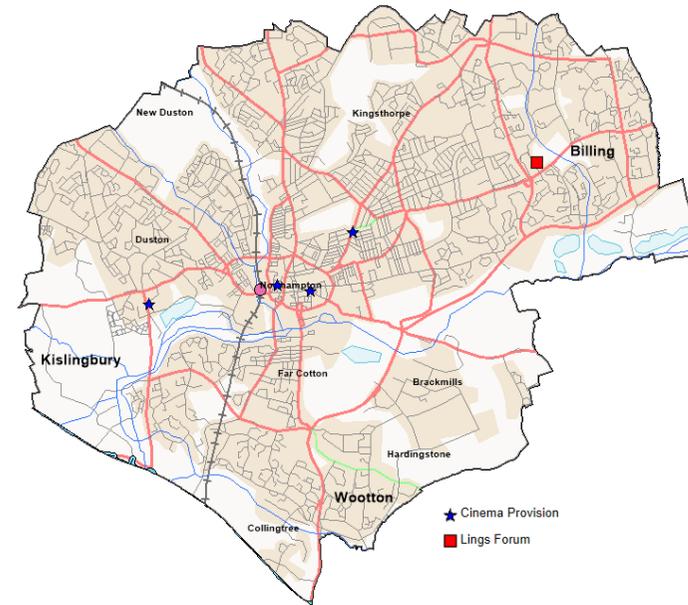
Due to the size restrictions of the study site, there are limited opportunities to provide commercial leisure opportunities within the current facility mix. Therefore, the Consultant Team have not considered bowling, laser tag, and Go Karting in the facility options for the Health and Wellbeing Hub.

6.9.5 Cinema

At Lings Forum Leisure Centre, the cinema plays an important role in attracting young consumers to the study site. In Northampton there are currently five facilities that provide Cinema provision. These facilities can be found in figure 6.18.

Figure 6.18: Cinema Provision in Northamptonshire

Site	Facilities	Distance to Weston Favell
The Forum Cinema	1 screen – 213 seats	0km
Northampton Filmhouse	2 screens, 90 seats	4.6km
Vue Cinema Northampton	10 screens, 2,547 seats	5.1km
Cineworld – Sixfields Leisure	9 screens, 1,816 seats)	7.3km
The Picturedrome	(1 screen, 130 seats)	3.44km



The Northampton Leisure and Retail Study highlights that the cinema was the 2nd most popular leisure activity behind indoor health and fitness. The most popular Cinema was the Cineworld in Sixfields Leisure. A total of 47.8% of residents within the Study Area visit the cinema. The most recently visited cinema across the Study Area is Cineworld, Sixfields Leisure Centre, Northampton (33%), followed closely by Odeon, Burton Latimer (27.2%). For residents of Northampton, 61.4% stated they had most recently visited Cineworld in Sixfields Leisure Centre, 19.6% that they had visited Vue, Doddridge Street, Northampton and 10.6% had visited Northampton Filmhouse.

Within the Leisure and Retail Study respondents were asked to state which facilities they would like to see more of in Northampton. Across the Study Area, better shopping facilities is the most requested leisure facility that

residents wish to see more of (6.9%), closely followed by a new cinema (6.6%) and a new swimming pool (6.2%).

This study demonstrates that Northampton's current supply of 4,796 seats is well above what could be supported by the residents of the Borough both at present, and in 2036. The study completed a benchmarking exercise, which estimates that there will be 614,606 cinema admissions in 2018, increasing to 741,567 admissions by 2036. Based on the national average of 210 trips per seat, we are then able to calculate that Northampton can support an average of 1,551 seats in 2018, rising to 1,872 seats by 2036. In consideration of Northampton's current level of cinema provision the Consultant Team would not recommend actively planning for additional cinemas at this time. Therefore, the Consultant Team recommend that the current 213-seater cinema at the Lings Forum is divided into two 100/120-seater cinemas to enable greater flexibility for the operator.

6.10 Conclusion

The supply and demand analysis highlighted several key issues surrounding the current and future provision of facilities on the study site that have influenced the emerging facility options and provision on site.

Overall, this section has help provide a supply and demand of analysis of key facilities in Northampton, which have highlighted the current and future needs of the population. There is a clear need to maintain and expand the existing offer most notably for swimming provision, enhanced health and fitness facilities, retention of a small, localised cinema offer, and creation of additional activities that will draw people, particularly families and young people, into the community hub.

Section 7 – Site Development Options



7. Site Development Options

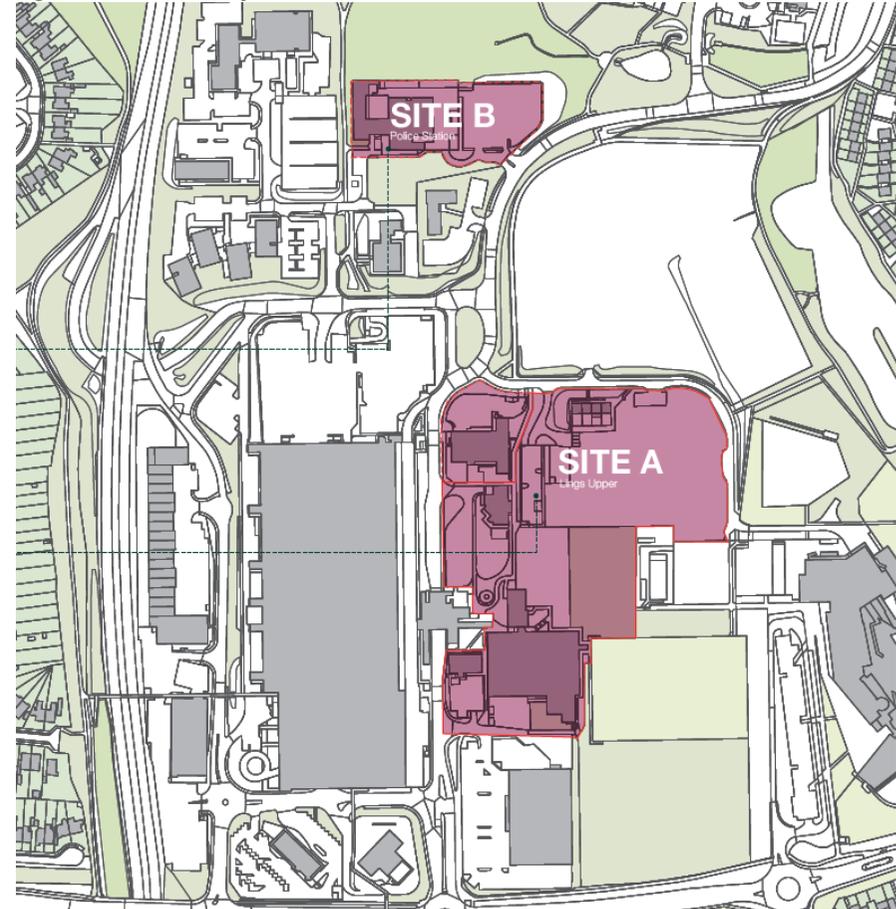
7.1 Study Site Options

The site analysis and consultation carried out during this feasibility study has highlighted across the whole study site two potential development sites for the proposed new Health and Wellbeing Hub. The two sites that have been identified as potential opportunities are the Northamptonshire Police Station site and the Former Lings Upper School Site as detailed earlier in Section 3. Both of these sites can be seen within figure 7.1.

Site A: Located on the Former Lings Upper site, this site has been vacant for a number of years. The site is predominantly hard standing overgrown scrubland on the former school site. The full site boundary includes 4 residential properties (and garages) with 3 under council ownership and 1 privately owned. The site's topography slopes down from West to East quite significantly, and a series of terraces still exist from the previous building's substructure. The site is in the current ownership of West Northamptonshire Council. Whilst the site was previously allocated for new housing the County Council property team have confirmed that the site would be a key consideration for the development of the new community hub.

Site B: This site is the current Police Station property, to the north of the Shopping Centre. There are 2x 2 storey buildings on the site, with a series of additional single storey garages and outbuildings. There is a surface car park to the east. The Northamptonshire Constabulary have confirmed that their intention is to vacate the site and they are looking to market the property during 2021. The NC have stated that ahead of the site going to market there would be a discussion regarding a sale or the potential of a land swap with the local authority.

Figure 7.1 Location of Site A and Site B



The Consultant Team has provided commentary on the pros and cons for both the Police Station site and the Former Lings Upper School site to help understand which location is best suited for the development of the Weston Favell Health and Wellbeing Hub.

7.2 Site Option A: Former Upper Lings School Site

Pros – Former Upper Lings School Site

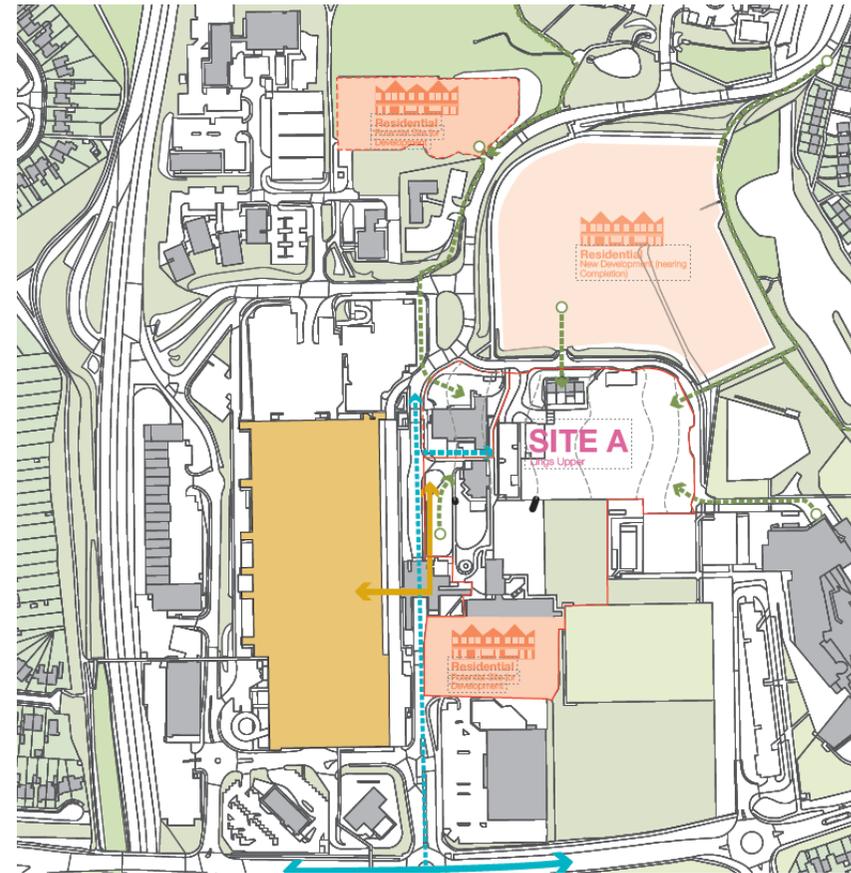
- *Located in the Heart of the Site:* With the shopping centre to the west, Northampton Academy to the east, and residential area to the north and south, this site has the potential to reorientate the centre of the surrounding area.
- *Ownership:* The site is currently under the County Council ownership to be West Northamptonshire Unitary.
- *Connection to the Shopping Centre:* The site is in close proximity to the shopping centre, and able to benefit from its footfall.
- *Main Entrance:* The site sits on the main vehicular access route into the wider site and a street side presence linked to the shopping centre.
- *Public Transport:* The site is opposite the existing bus stops which are adjacent to the Shopping Centre.
- *Site Area:* The site has the capacity to incorporate the emerging brief across all service areas and is notably larger than the police station site at 3.55 hectares.
- *Northampton Academy:* The site provides the opportunity to link with Northampton Academy and their 3G pitch widening both the leisure offer and links with the extended school offer for young people.

Cons – Former Upper Lings School Site

- *Topography:* There is a significant height change across the site, from West to East.
- *Ownership:* The overall site boundary includes the healthcare centre which is not owned by the Borough or County Council and would need to be potentially acquired to link the full site development. This is not insurmountable as considered later in this report looking at phasing options.
- *Services and Ground Conditions:* As with all development sites given its vacant nature the study has not had the scope to test the infrastructure and the conditions of the site as yet.

- *Housing Development:* The previous allocation for housing potentially reduces the development income associated with residential development on this site.
- *Existing Buildings:* The future of the current residential properties and garages within this site would need to be determined.

Figure 7.2: Site A: Former Upper Lings School Site Location



7.3 Site B: Police Station Site

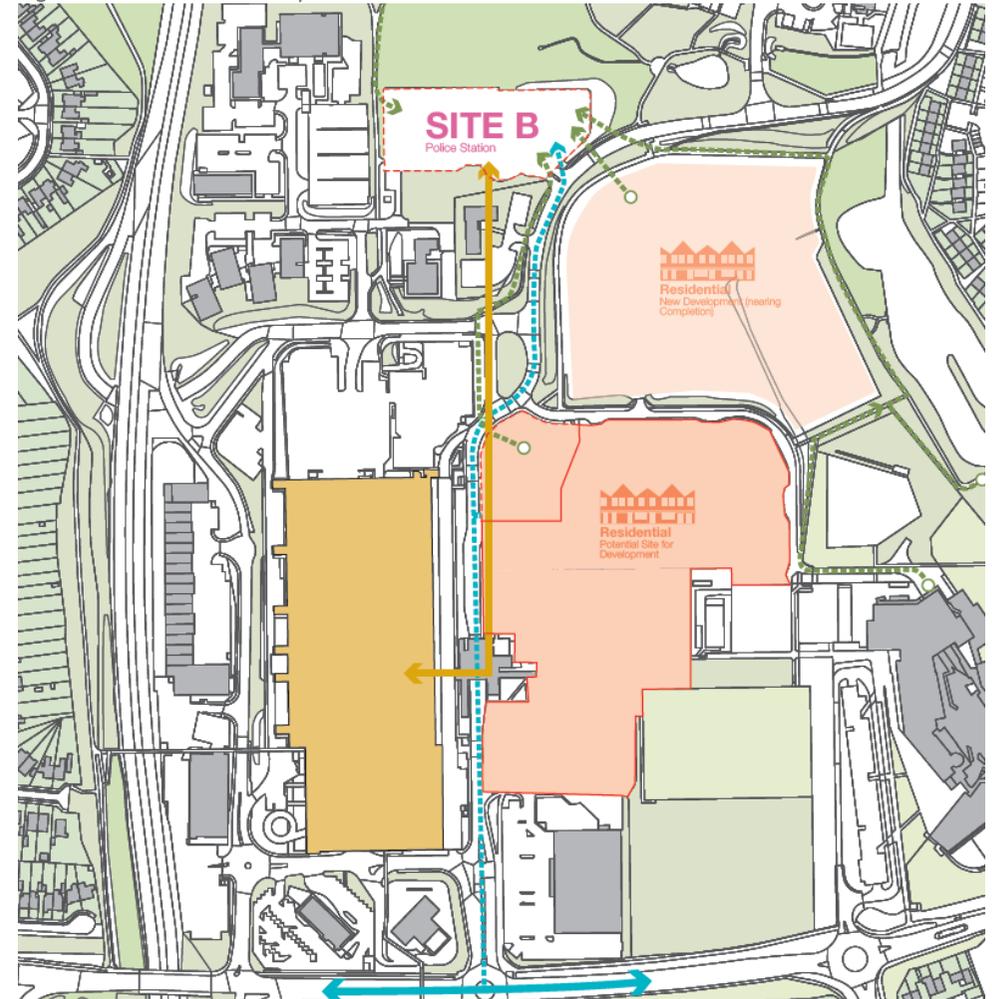
Pros - Police Station Site

- *Enables a larger critical mass of new residential development:* The land that will become available by any potential relocation has the potential to release a significant parcel of land for residential development across the current site and the former Lings Upper Site.
- *Current Operations:* There will be no disruption or closure of the current facilities and services onsite with any development on the police station site.
- *Location:* The site retains presence within Weston Favell and has a street side presence. Any development has an opportunity to link with the adjacent green space and local residential areas.

Cons – Police Station Site

- *Ownership:* The site is currently not owned by the Council, and the Northamptonshire Constabulary would be keen on achieving close to market price or a land swap with the Council. Either option would include potential additional cost.
- *Disconnected from the Shopping Centre:* The location is further away from the heart of the overall site reducing footfall spread from the shopping centre and important links such as pharmacy access, library footfall.
- *Small Site Area:* Depending on the emerging brief, the site's area is limited requiring a higher and more complex building design and potential cost.
- *Reduced Visibility:* The southern and western sides of the site are flanked by existing buildings that will remain, shielding potential views.
- *Planning Preference:* The initial view of the planners is that the police station site would be more suitable for additional residential development as opposed to the busy community site.

Figure 7.3.Site B: Northamptonshire Police Station Site Location



7.4 Site Evaluation

Both sites were reviewed in terms of a set of agreed criteria covering ownership, location, development potential and likely overall cost. As summarised in the table below, Site A, the former Lings Upper Site, scored higher on each of the criteria with notable differences in the ownership and development potential. This site is a clear front runner.

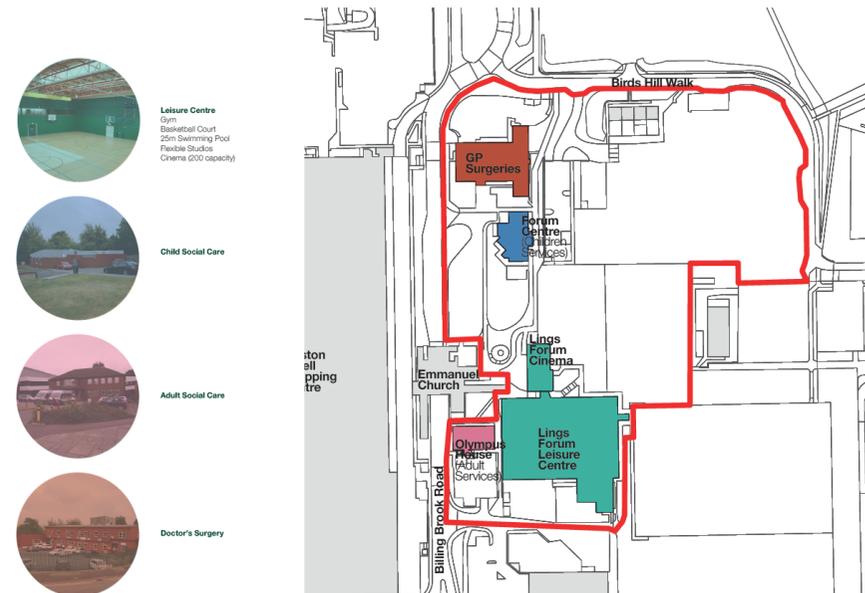
Figure 7.4 Site Evaluation Scores

Criteria	Notes on Scoring	Weighting	A		B	
			Score	WS	Score	WS
Ownership (30%)	LA Ownership = 5 Other Owner = 1	30	5	150	1	30
Location – including access to transport and geographical location (30%)	Score based on proximity/visibility to main road network and public transport (bus routes). 5 = very well located and visible with excellent transport links. 1 = poorly located with limited visibility and/or poor transport links.	30	4	120	3	90
Development Potential – including any heritage listing issues, size, ability to fit the leisure centre minimum requirements and ability to co-locate other facilities on the site (30%)	Leisure facilities and additional accommodation fits on the site and no heritage/townscape restrictions = 5. Site is unable to accommodate the desired leisure facility mix, additional development and/or has notable heritage/townscape restrictions = 1	30	5	150	3	90
Likely leisure centre development costs (10%)	Lowest likely cost compared to other site options explored in this study = 5. Highest likely cost compared to other site options explored in this study = 1.	10	3	30	2	20
Total				450		230

Following discussion with the Council and stakeholders, this study assumes that the land currently occupied by the Health Centre can be acquired by the Council in order to increase the site area for development. The Health Care facilities would be re-provided in the new health and wellbeing community hub.

The large area of Site A in comparison with Site B allows for more generously laid out facilities of a height and density appropriate to the context. It also ensures there is sufficient space for car-parking adjacent to the facilities as well as an opportunity to provide high-quality landscaping and external leisure spaces.

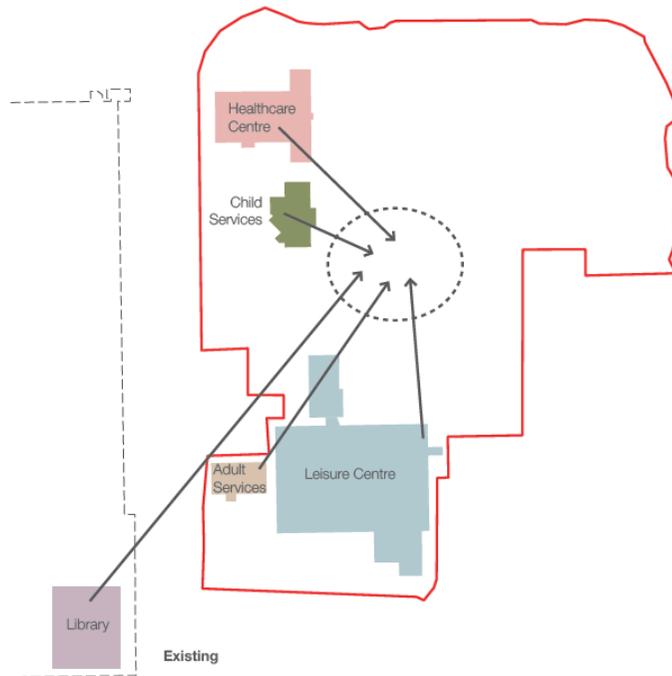
Figure 7.5 Site A Re-cap



7.5 Creation of the Community Hub

Returning to the original brief, the aim of the study is to re-provide the existing health, wellbeing and leisure facilities located around the Lings Forum and Weston Favell shopping centre in a new central hub on to the leading development site of the former Lings Upper school.

Figure 7.6 Current Locations



Based on the wider social and community aims the amalgamation of the services provides:

1. Greater integration of primary care, social care, mental health and

- health and wellbeing services.
2. Lifelong learning provision
3. A social hub and meeting place
4. Leisure provision; swimming, health and wellbeing preventative-based services.
5. Community Police
6. Adult, Children and Social Care Services
7. Place-making regeneration reinforcing a sense of pride in the local area.

Figure 7.7 Proposed Amalgamation of Facilities and Services

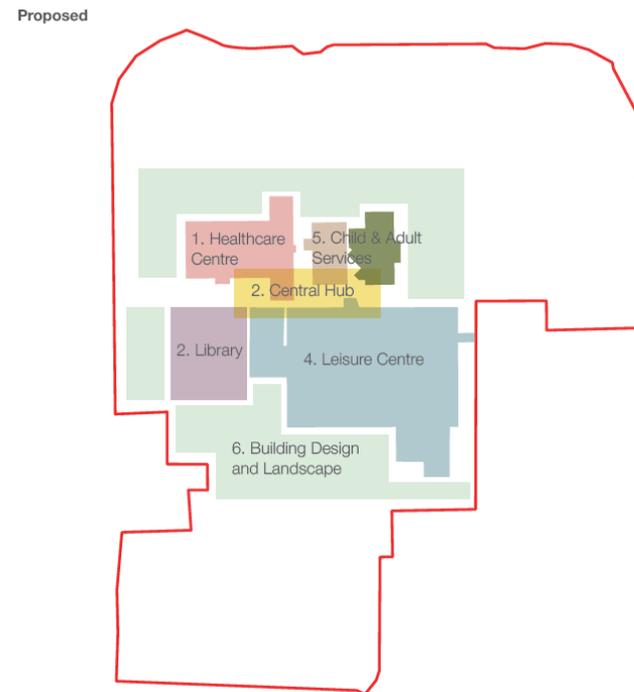
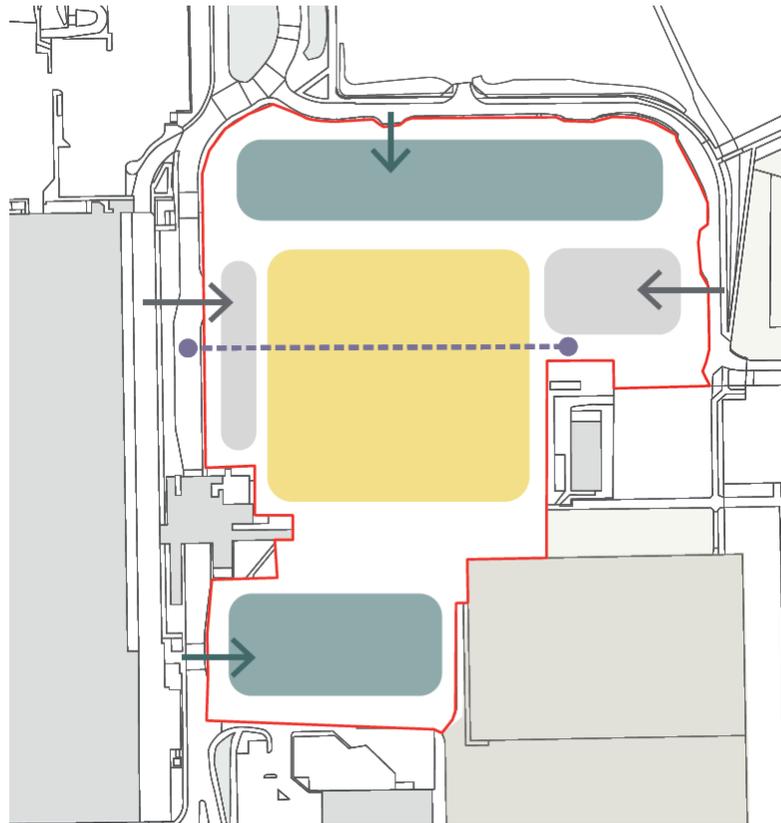


Figure 7.8 Design Development – Site Layout



The Yellow area indicates the new location of the Hub - centrally located within the site, with vehicular access to the east and west away from any residential access points. The Parking zones are either side of the central area - the main parking zone to the east to draw the vehicular traffic away from the main pedestrian entrance, accessible and emergency parking to the west.

The central area is set in between proposed areas of residential housing - using existing access points into the site, the zones flank the hub and are set within a new landscape.

Figure 7.9 Zoning and Connections

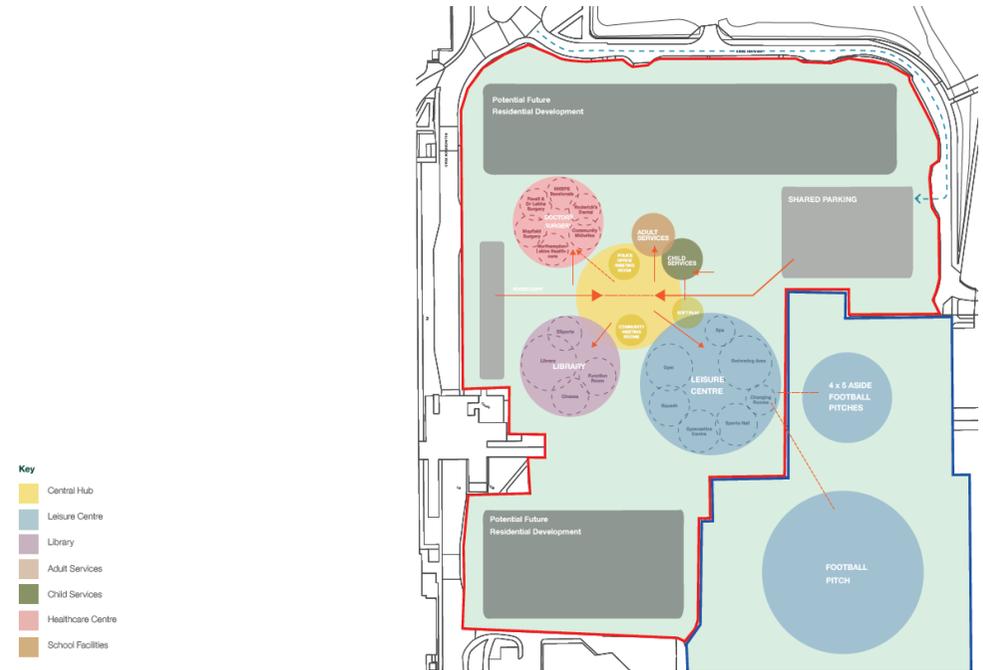
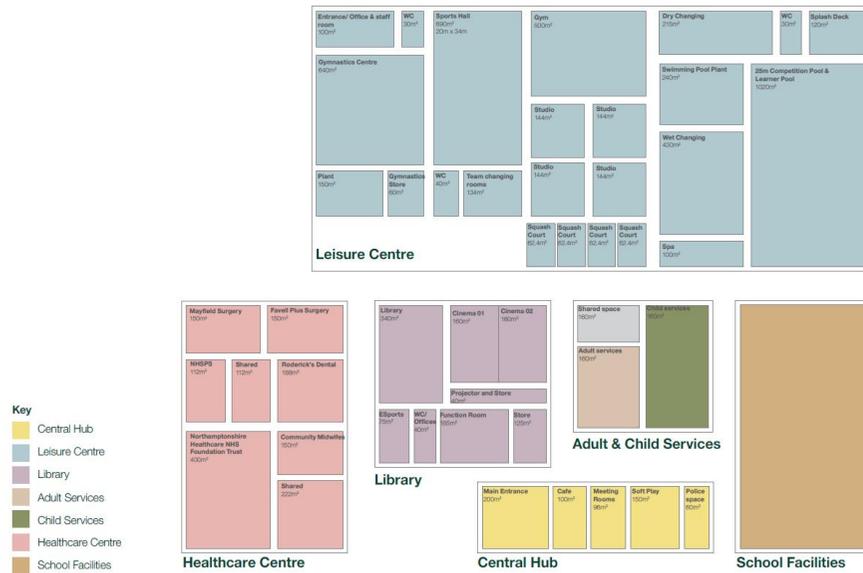


Figure 7.9 starts to bring these service areas and needs together to form the community health and wellbeing hub based on the initial building blocks and specification that the Consultant Team has researched and consulted on. Input from the key stakeholders and partners have influenced the location and position of the services.

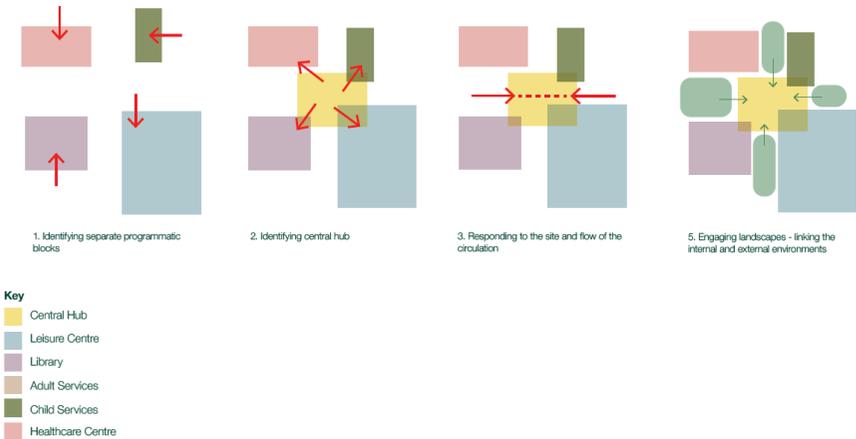
Figure 7.10 Building Blocks and Facility Specifications



The building blocks are based on Sport England and National Governing Body design guidance for the sport and leisure facilities, as well as input from the service providers on site and industry design standards and expectations across the different services and facilities.

The full schedule and further design considerations are provided in Appendix 1.

Figure 7.11 Massing Principles



The massing principles start with identifying a central community hub that links the facilities together. The facilities could be directly connected to and accessed from the central hub as shown in the diagram, or set apart slightly with connecting external space between, depending on stakeholder requirements.

Given the nature of the site there is a need to respond to the topography and orientation of the site and flow of the circulation. Following that the opportunity to engage with the landscape - link the internal and external environments, maximising views out across nature, and creating external social and leisure spaces. The site is also to accommodate potential residential developments to the north and south of the central area with

indicative site layout for residential development highlighted in Figures 7.12.

Figure 7.12 Indicative Residential Zones

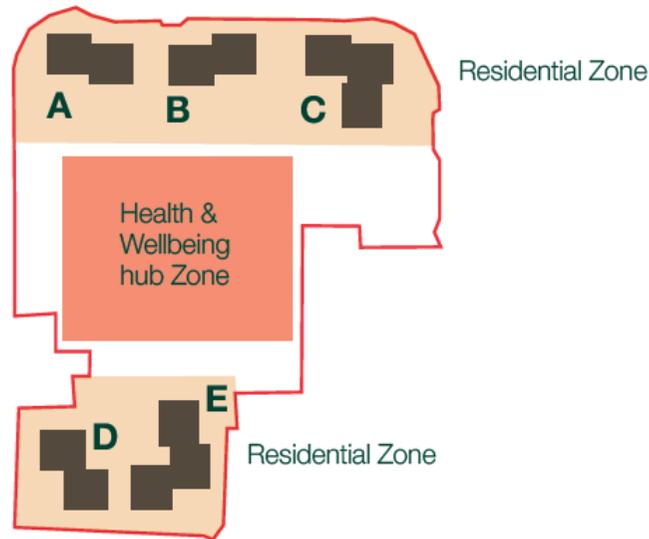


Figure 7.13 shows the site overview with the leading facilities across healthcare, sport, cinema, library, adult and children’s services. Figure 7.14 shows the proximity to the outdoor sports facilities at the adjacent academy site.

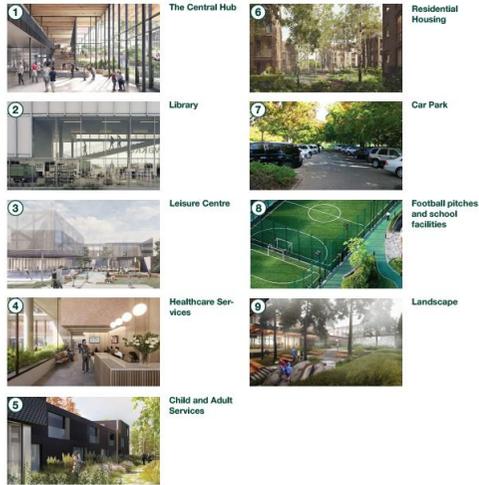
Figure 7.15 includes the option for a dedicated gymnastics centre and additional leisure waters to add to the swimming offer based on the demand modelling set out in Section 6. This can be seen with the additional dotted line on the aerial view. Figure 7.16 provides a concept section of the facilities and the overall site relationship.

The facilities include:

Facility	Content
Central Hub	Main entrance and lobby Café Meeting / Community Rooms Clinical Consulting Rooms Breakout / workspace Community Police Office Softplay
Leisure Centre	Sports Hall (4 badminton court) Studios (x4) Squash Courts x 2 25m Swimming pool (8 or 10 lane options) Health and Fitness (capacity for 120 stations) Spa and 4 treatment rooms Small sided football x 4 Refurbished full size AGP (on school land) Outdoor changing (on school land)
Library and Cinema	Library facility - study area, children’s library, small event space Cinema – 2 screens with 240 seats across two spaces E-sports and VR room and Gaming Area
Adult Services	Office space Activity Rooms x 3 Sensory Room Dedicated Function Space / High Needs Dining space
Children’s Services	Contact and family rooms x 5 Babies Rooms x 2 Meeting / interview rooms Dedicated outdoor play area
HealthCare Centre	<u>Mayfield Surgery:</u> Consulting Rooms x 7, Office and Admin space <u>Favell +</u> Consulting Rooms x 7, Office and Admin Space <u>Midwife</u> Dedicated room and admin <u>NHSPS Sessional</u> Treatment Rooms x 2 <u>Roderick Dental</u> Treatment Rooms x 7, Waiting, recovery and admin rooms Shared kitchen, toilets (staff and patients) and common waiting areas.

Figure 7.13 Site Plan and Facilities

Site Plan
Uses



The Central Hub

The hub is the heart of the facility and connects all the different uses. The double storey height space contains the cafe, the soft play and the communal meeting rooms. The wide steps and open space allow for visitors to meet, with large areas of glazing to bring the green surroundings into the building. A central walkway connects the east and west of the site.

Library

The Library holds a prominent position on the site and will contain the cinema, function rooms and Esports studios. The visibility of the library is important as it is a community space. The ground floor library could be glazed with the

upper floors designed to be a more solid construction to suit the requirements of the cinemas and Esports studios.

Leisure Centre

The leisure facility links to the sports pitches within the school grounds. Spread over three floors the location takes advantage of the site topography to ensure the building mass is not too overpowering as high ceilings are required in many of the spaces. The building is close to the main car park and links with the landscape to encourage external play and sport.

Healthcare Services

The Healthcare services will be located at the west of the site with an adjacent car park to ensure users are not forced to travel too far from their car. This building can either be connected to the Central Hub or separate depending on construction phasing and stakeholder preference.

Child and Adult Services

Surrounded by greenery, this three-storey building is situated away from the main road to the rear of the site. The facilities have separate entrances with the child services being accessed externally from the lower level and the adult services entrance from with the central hub at level 0. The position of the building allows for a direct link between the child services and the soft play area.

Residential Housing

The residential buildings are situated to the north and south of the site. Taking the form of pavilions in the landscape, they provide green spaces and quiet pedestrian routes through the residential zones. The large green spaces create a buffer between the retail zones and the housing.

Car Park

The car park will be designed to be part of the landscape, with trees planted between car park spaces and surrounding the area. The main car park will

provide child and parent spaces as well as accessible parking. There will also be a car park to the west of the site which will contain further accessible car parking for level access and deliveries.

Football pitches and school facilities

The proposed and existing football pitches will provide an additional offer and are close in proximity to the changing rooms situated in the leisure facility. The changing rooms can be accessed both externally and internally.

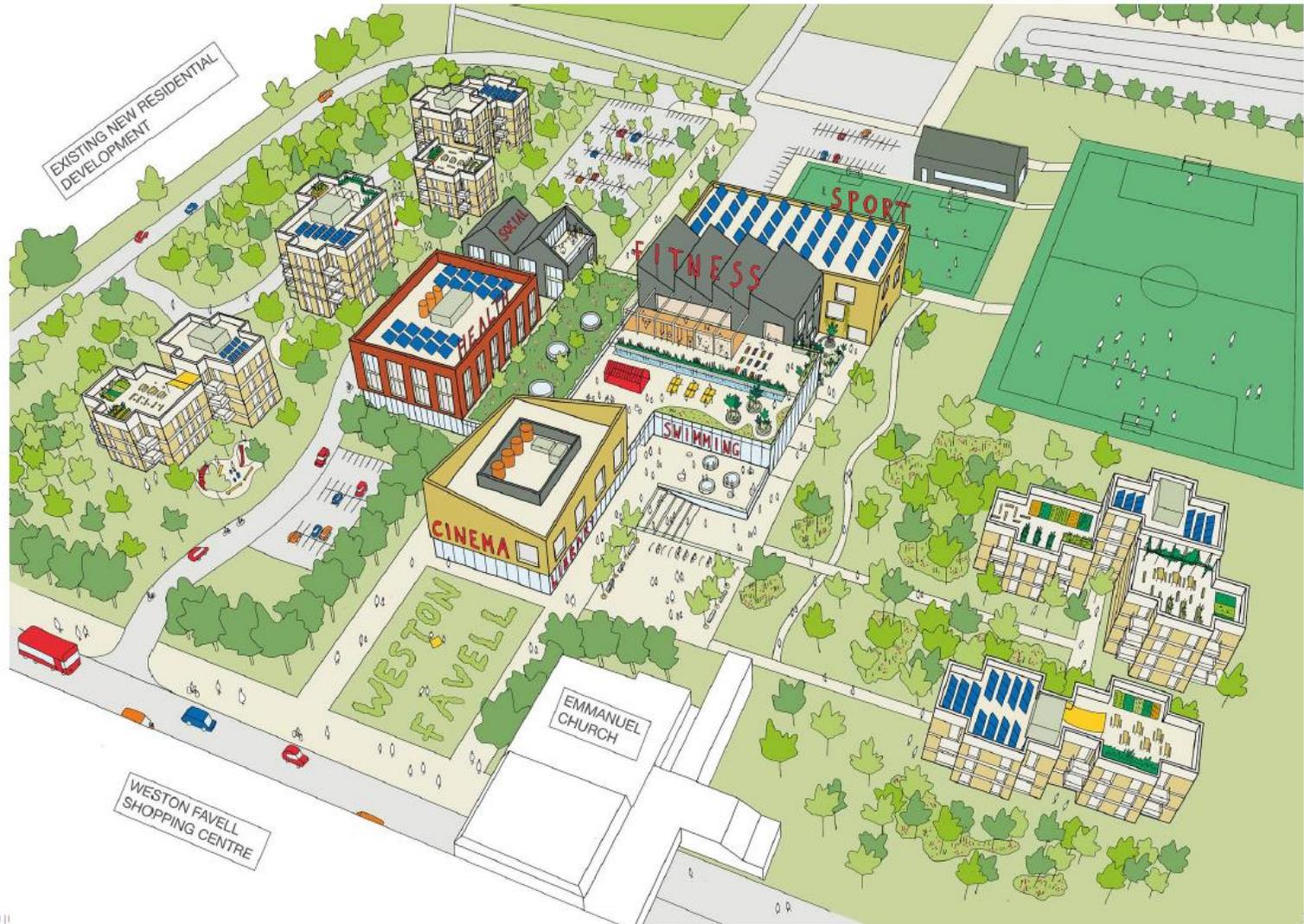
Landscape

The sloping topography of the site will create interesting landscapes and areas for wildlife. The landscape design will also create different areas for play, outdoor sports, relaxation and community use.

Figure 7.14 Aerial Site View – Option 1.

Design Proposals

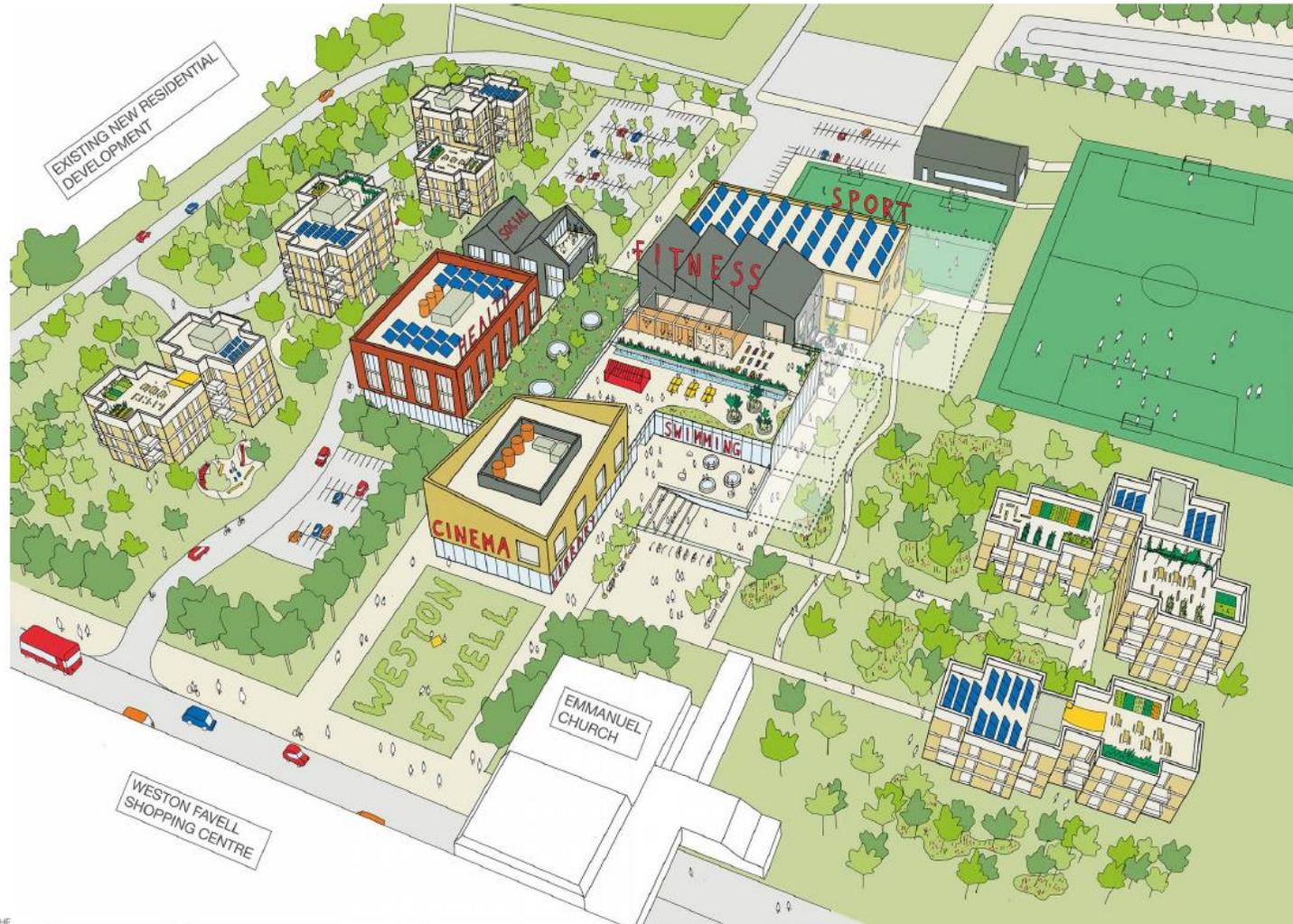
Figure 7.14 Aerial View Option 1



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Design Proposals

Figure 7.15 Aerial View Option 2



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Design Proposals

Figure 7.16 Concept Section



7.6 Site Delivery and Phasing

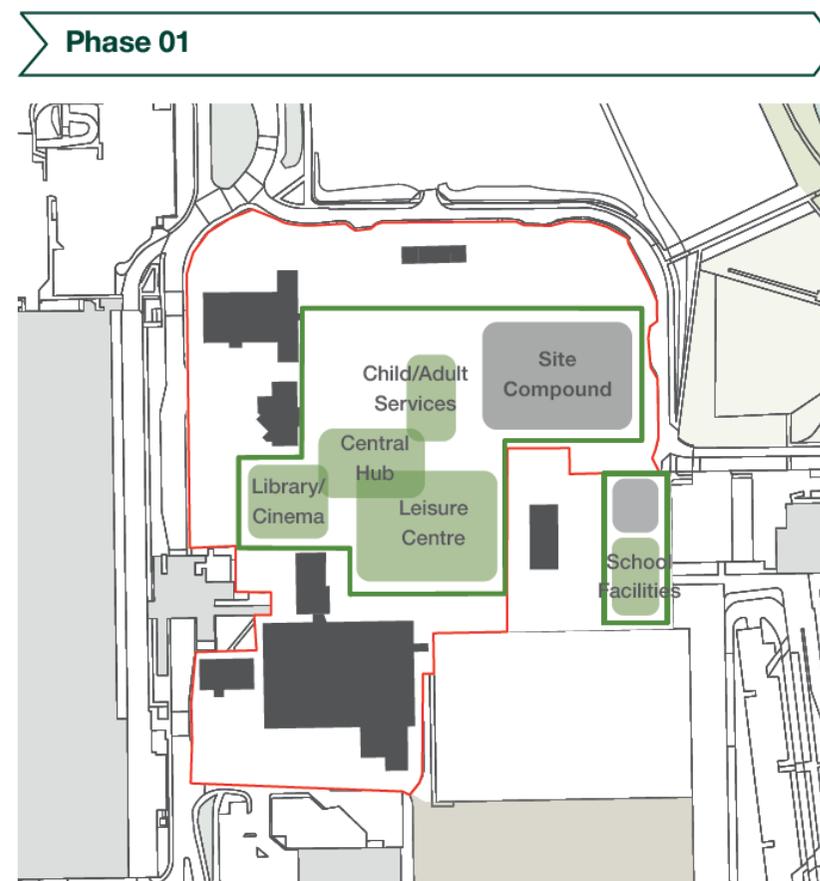
Bringing together the wide range of services is not only going to be a challenge in terms of finance, ownership and operations - it will be a key challenge to develop the overall site, the facilities, services, car parking and landscaping.

A key part of the site review and analysis has been to look at the physical delivery of the leading site options as set out in this section looking to take advantage and use the topography and characteristics of the land. Another very influential factor has been to plan for the continuation of these vital services during development.

The overall site planning is based on the development of the Community Hub ahead of any residential development (on the proposed vacated areas) and some initial consideration of phasing is set out below.

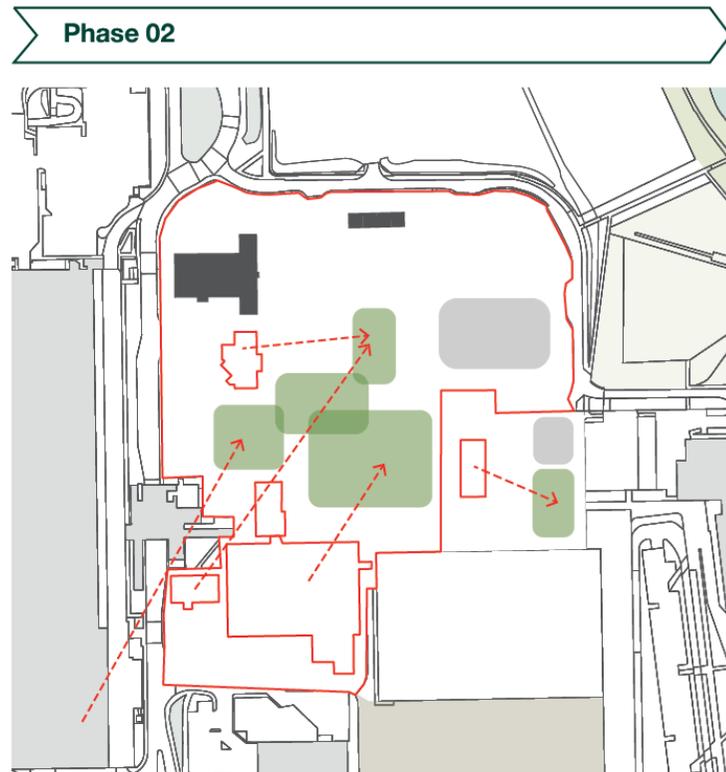
Phase 01

At Phase 01 the Central Hub, Child & Adult Services, Leisure Centre, Library and School buildings (subject to their funding and programme) are constructed while all existing facilities remain open on site. The site access and compound are at the East to keep construction traffic separate from the existing users and facilities. Careful planning is required to avoid disruption to Emmanuel Church and the Forum, close to the new Library. The new Healthcare Centre (shown dotted) could also be constructed during Phase 01 if the sale and transfer of the land, not currently owned by the Council, can be completed in time. This would result in a shorter programme overall and would also make it easier for the Healthcare building to be physically connected to the central hub if that is preferred by the client and stakeholders. The phasing shown on the following diagrams assumes that the Healthcare centre is constructed in a later phase.



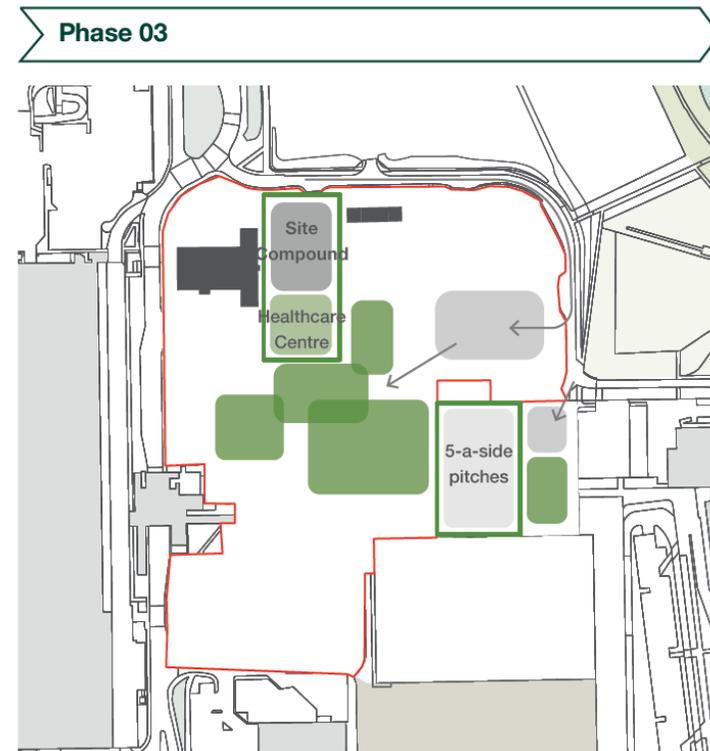
Phase 02

Following completion of Phase 1, the Child and Adult Services, Leisure Centre, Library move into the new completed buildings and the existing buildings are demolished. Access to the site is from the East, away from the demolition, and the main car park takes the place of the site compound.



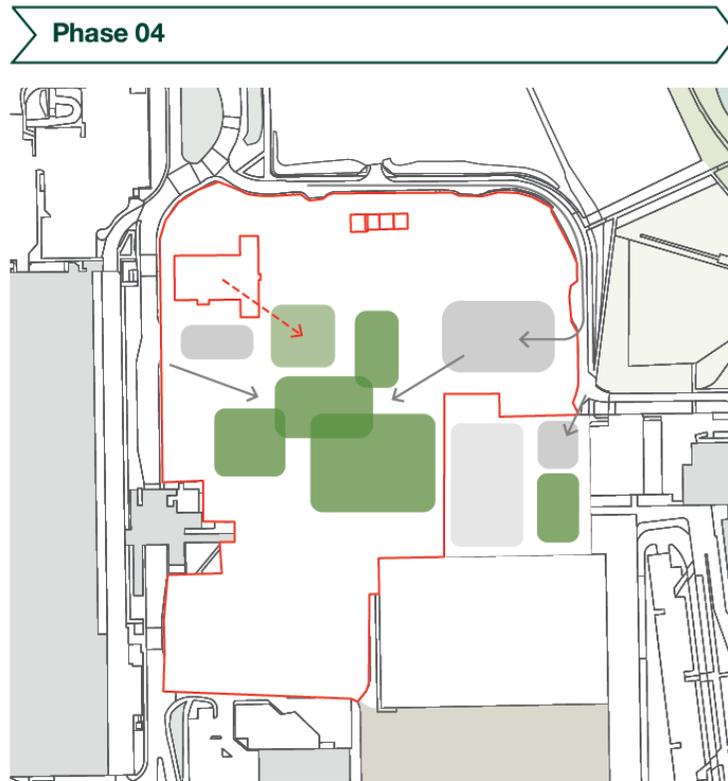
Phase 03

In Phase 03 the Healthcare Centre and 5-a-side pitches are constructed. The rest of the new facilities remain open on site and the construction site and traffic is managed carefully. The existing Healthcare centre remains open throughout Phase 03. This will require careful design and construction management to ensure that the new building is sufficiently set back from the existing to allow enough space to construct safely and avoid disruption to services. The Healthcare Centre can be physically linked to the central hub or could work as a separate building from the hub, directly adjacent and connected with an external landscape link.



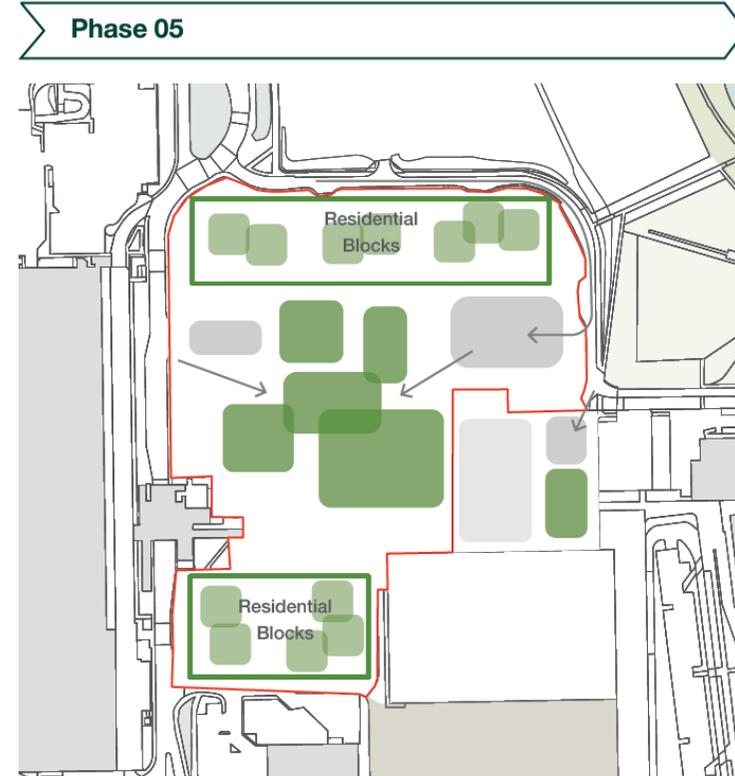
Phase 04

In Phase 4 Healthcare users move into their new building and the existing building is carefully demolished, along with the garages in the north of the site. The new Health and Wellbeing Hub is now complete and fully operational.



Phase 05

While users enjoy the new facility construction work can start on the residential pavilions to the north and south. These blocks can also be phased to ensure site compounds are within the residential zones and away from users.



Section 8 – Outline Business Case



8. Outline Business Case

8.1 Introduction

An Outline Business Case (OBC) has been prepared following the recommended format and approach as set out by HM Treasury and UK Office of Government Commerce, which breaks the business case down into distinct headings, namely:

- Strategic Case for redeveloping Weston Favell that aligns with local, regional and national strategies, and priorities, supported by a clear needs analysis and a clear definition of the outcomes and benefits sought.
- Economic Case for change based on a detailed options appraisal against a set of clear critical success factors that has identified a preferred redevelopment and future operating option.
- Commercial Case for the redevelopment of Weston Favell Community Hub that would enable an operator(s) to be procured who would deliver the financial, sporting, health and social value outcomes sought by WNC.
- Financial Case demonstrating that the preferred redevelopment and operating option is affordable and would deliver the best VFM outcome for WNC and its partners over the long term.
- Management Case demonstrating that the preferred redevelopment project and future operating arrangements can be successfully delivered by WNC and its partners and the outcomes and benefits sought achieved.

Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub involves the redevelopment of a series of dated public and health facilities that are no longer fit for purpose to create a new integrated centre delivering leisure, learning, adult, children's and healthcare services in a more coordinated

and efficient manner to promote improved health and wellbeing outcomes for a local community facing a range of poor health indicators.

It should be noted that the business case is based upon the leading priority site already assessed and evaluated in the previous section (see section 7.4) with the focus on the most effective and efficient development options being considered on the former Lings Upper Site.

8.2 Strategic Case

National Strategic Context

'Sporting Futures' central government's 2015 strategy for an active nation looks beyond simple participation to how sport changes lives and becomes a force for good. The strategy seeks to increase the number of people who engage in sport and activity, not for its own sake but for the wider benefits it can bring, in terms of the physical and mental wellbeing of an individual, the community and its effect on wider economic development.

'Uniting the Movement' is Sport England's recently published 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. A key element of the strategy is the recognition that for too long people with the most to gain from being active have been the least able to take part:

- disabled people and people with a long-term health condition are twice as likely to be physically inactive than those without a disability or health condition.
- people in a lower socio-economic group are more likely to be inactive than people in higher social groups.
- women are less active than men, and this gender gap starts with girls being less active from a young age.
- people from Asian and Black backgrounds are far more likely to be physically inactive than people who are White.

The huge disruption the Coronavirus pandemic has caused has reinforced or even exacerbated inequalities, such as those around socio-economic

status and ethnicity. Uniting the Movement seeks to tackle these deep-rooted inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity, providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity.

NHS organisations and local councils in England are joining forces to coordinate services around the whole needs of each person and to ensure full population coverage of the services that they provide. Their aim is that people can live healthier lives and get the care and treatment they need from the right person, in the right place, at the right time. **Integrated care** is about giving people the support they need in a joined up and co-ordinated way across local councils, the NHS, and other partners. It removes traditional divisions between hospitals and family doctors, between physical and mental health, and between NHS and council services such as social care, housing, public health and wellbeing services. In the past, these divisions have meant that too many people experienced disjointed care.

Integrated care systems (ICSs) are new partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces health and wellbeing inequalities between different demographic groups in the community.

Since 2018, there has been a deepening of the relationships in many areas between the NHS, local councils and other important strategic partners such as the voluntary, community and the social enterprise sector. They have started developing better and more convenient services, investing in keeping people healthy and out of hospital and setting shared priorities for the future.

The **NHS Long Term Plan** confirmed that all parts of England would be served by an Integrated Care System (ICS) from April 2021. **The White Paper 'Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social**

care for all' makes clear that ICS will become statutory organisations and be responsible for strategic commissioning, and this is expected to be from April 2022. Working together to integrate care, and population health, are at the heart of these White Paper proposals.

An important part of the NHS vision is that decisions about how services are arranged should be made as close as possible to those who use them and involve service users/patients in the design and evaluation of those services. For most people, their day-to-day health and care needs will be met locally in the town or district where they live or work. Partnership in these 'places' is therefore an important building block of integration, often in line with long-established local authority boundaries. But one of the strengths of the system is that arrangements can be adapted to reflect what makes sense locally.

Whilst demand for NHS services continues to grow, it is intended that integrated care will provide a key solution for meeting this continued demand, by doing the following:

- Redesigning healthcare so that people get the right care in the optimal care setting (for example, by providing better social care and community support to slow the development of older people's frailty; and fundamentally redesigning outpatient services so that both patients' time and specialists' expertise are used more appropriately).
- Improving upstream prevention of avoidable illness and its exacerbations. For example, diabetes prevention through obesity reduction by promoting healthy lifestyles, and reduced respiratory hospitalisations by reducing the incidence of smoking and from lower air pollution.
- Providing better support for patients, carers and volunteers to enhance 'supported self-management' particularly of long-term health conditions.
- Supporting GP practices to work together at scale with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in

their local areas in groups of practices known as primary care networks (PCNs).

PCNs build on existing primary care networks and services, enabling greater provision of proactive, personalised, coordinated care and more integrated health and social care for people closer to their home. Clinicians describe this as a change from reactively providing appointments to proactively caring for the people and communities they serve.

The emergence of PCNs has provided significant new investment into new primary care roles, including additional clinical pharmacists, physician associates, first contact physiotherapists, community paramedics and social prescribing link workers. This will enable primary care to have the skills and capability to operate as part of integrated teams, including social prescribing.

Social prescribing is a key component of Universal Personalised Care set out in the NHS Long Term Plan and is a way for local agencies to refer people to a specially trained link worker, who can give people time, focusing on what matters to individuals and taking a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing. They connect people to community groups, can prescribe fitness and wellbeing services and refer people to other statutory services for practical and emotional support.

Social prescribing works for a wide range of people, including people:

- with one or more long-term conditions
- who need support with their mental health
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

It therefore fits clearly with the development of integrated care and enhancing population health management locally with a focus on prevention. In particular it can be used to proactively address those health

and social inequalities which are known to have increased during COVID-19, and those groups who may have been disproportionately disadvantaged. These policy priorities are aligned very closely with the direction of travel for Weston Favell, with its aspiration as an integrated care hub, with close links to Primary Care Networks, social prescribing and addressing health inequalities.

The other key national policy development which is relevant to this study and our site is the introduction of Cavell Centres. **Cavell Centres** are in-community health and wellbeing buildings, offering a range of joined-up health and social care services, closer to home. The Centres form part of a national estates programme and are designed to promote the co-location of primary care, community services, outpatients, diagnostics and wider community services.

For example, the Plymouth Cavell Centre will have 3 GP practices, a range of community and mental health services, plus CAB and local third sector organisations, for a population of 30-50,000. The buildings will be system-owned and managed, and the direction of travel is that this would be done through the ICS.

The current Cavell Centres have been funded to develop their business case and await outcome of the autumn Spending Review regarding capital funding. There is likely to be another wave announced at the same time and sites such as Weston Favell would need to be ready to apply. This is likely to be a key funding stream for capital to fund the health element of the Weston Favell build and most likely, any application will be led by the CCG.

Local Strategic Context

The local strategic case for redeveloping Lings Forum Leisure Centre, the Library and the Healthcare Centre is focused around supporting the previous Northampton Borough Council's (NBC's) existing Corporate Plan,

which focuses on delivering a stronger local economy and working with partners to build more resilient communities. The options for the future of Lings Forum and the need for new provision were explicitly identified in NBC’s Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy which aligns to corporate plans for the regeneration and growth of the area and sets out clearly the contribution leisure and sport will make to improving the quality of life of local communities. At the time of the report the transition has been made from Northampton Borough Council to the new Unitary – West Northants Council, and in the absence of current corporate plan, the importance of these services being planned for the new Community Hub the Consultant Team are confident will remain a priority for the new administration.

The development of the Weston Favell Health Centre is a key priority for the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Whilst this needs to be developed within the current financial envelope, there is scope to significantly improve the way health and care services are delivered within the new facility.

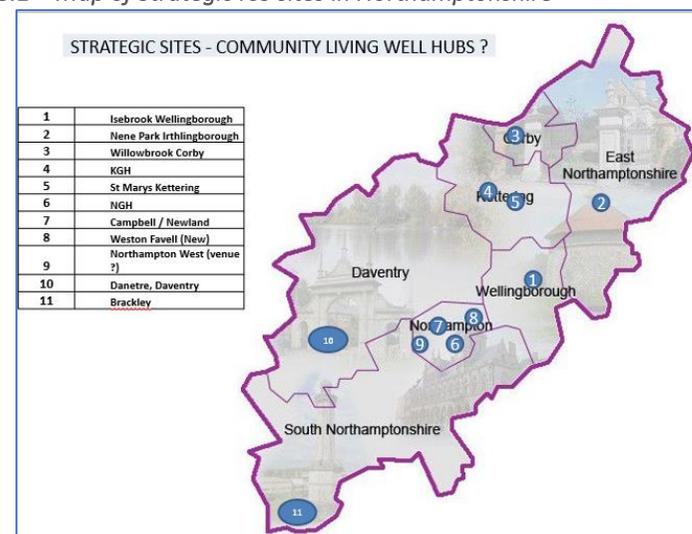
The **Northamptonshire Care Partnership** (the ICS) has developed the following key partnership themes of ‘**Choose well, Stay well, Live well**’:

- **Choose well** - Taking action before things happen: Making sure the right services and the right choices are available to help us look after our own health and prevent illness.
- **Stay well** - Understanding the causes of ill health and getting the right treatment: Putting the right health and care services in place locally to detect, diagnose and treat illness as early as possible.
- **Live well** - Keeping you well supported and cared for: Providing the right care and support in the right place to help us to manage our health as we get older or live with long-term illness.

The project presents an opportunity to have a collective health and care estates solution for Weston Favell to deliver the themes of the Partnership. The ICS is developing the idea of a small number of strategic sites which

would deliver integrated services in the future. **Figure 8.1** shows that Weston Favell is being considered as one of these sites.

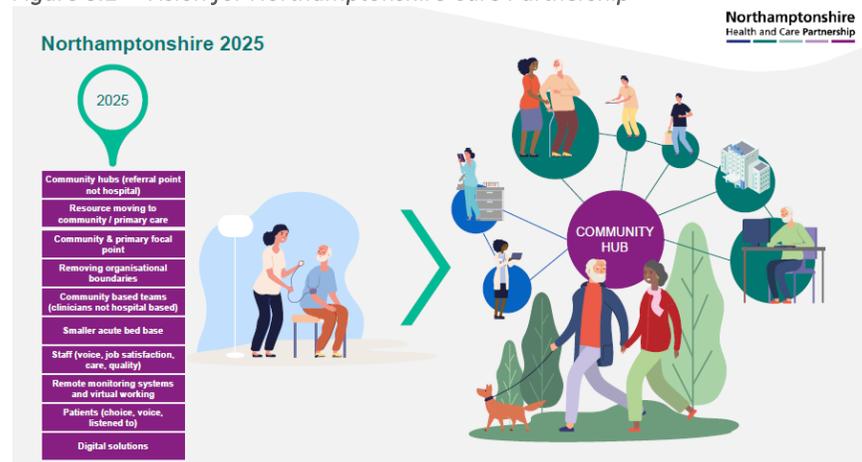
Figure 8.1 – Map of Strategic ICS sites in Northamptonshire



The ICS Strategic Estates Board has supported a direction of travel in which the Weston Favell development is one of the key community hubs which would provide flexible space both clinical and non-clinical services in a ‘non-health specific’ environment, able to deliver integrated care and enable appropriate services to move out of an acute setting into the community.

This is in line with the **Northamptonshire iCAN Programme** shown in **Figure 8.2**, which sets out the vision for a community hub by 2025 as the focal point for community and primary care, removing organisational boundaries and housing community teams.

Figure 8.2 – Vision for Northamptonshire Care Partnership



This is exactly what the development at Weston Favell is intended to address: providing the facilities to enable integration in a way that is focused on what residents want and need in order to manage their own health.

The other key policy driver is the development of **Primary Care Networks** and the new roles within the PCNs. Weston Favell will provide a hub for the Northampton PCNs and flexible space for staff to engage with residents in a setting that is not perceived to be a traditional ‘health centre’. Providing an environment that is not stigmatised as a ‘health centre’ with a range of activities that promote health, such as leisure, recreation, advice and information, having the potential to improve the population’s quality of life, mental and emotional wellbeing and help with depression, anxiety and isolation issues. This will reduce patients’ reliance on NHS services, easing pressure on acute and primary care services. This, in turn, means financial savings to the NHS in Northamptonshire and wider beneficial social impact for society such as reduced welfare spending and increased employment.

Local Demographics, Needs and Demand

NBC’s Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy assessed the needs of local users and demand for better provision. This has been further supported by additional needs analysis undertaken as part of this study which clearly identifies the demand for more extensive swimming, fitness and other leisure provision that is much better integrated with other health and public services. Detailed consultation with partners, as summarised in Section 5 of this report (and further detailed in the appendices) has highlighted the opportunities offered by the closer physical integration of leisure, health, learning, children’s and adult care services in helping address some of the inequalities in physical activity and breaking down barriers to exclusion.

- **Deprivation** - Around 40% of the population live in areas where levels of deprivation are above the England average.
- **Inequalities** - Children born in the most deprived areas can expect to live 7.8 years less than those born in the most affluent parts of the county. People in the most deprived areas are likely to spend 13 fewer years in good health than those living in the least deprived areas.
- **Mental health** - In 2018/19 more than 21,000 adults entered mental health services in Northamptonshire – around 4% of the total adult population.
- **Unhealthy lifestyles** - Around one in six people in Northamptonshire smoke. Two out of three people in our county are overweight or obese, while nearly one in four do not do enough physical activity.
- **Children** - Nearly 70% of children in Northamptonshire are reaching a good level of development by Reception class (age 4-5 years). This falls to just over half reaching good level of development if they are receiving free school meals.

Risk factors

- 30% of children aged 10 to 11 are overweight or obese, which is significantly higher than the Northamptonshire PCN average.

- 28% of the population are recorded as smoking, significantly higher than the Northamptonshire PCN average.
- 29% of patients accessing smoking cessation services successfully quit at 4 weeks -significantly below Northamptonshire PCN average.
- Blood pressure management for hypertensive patients is significantly below the average for all Northamptonshire PCNs and below the national expectation (80%).

Service use

- Just over 1 in 4 (29%) of hospital admissions, for patients registered to this PCN, are for patients with one or more long term conditions, just over half of these (54%) are for patients with multiple conditions (two or more).
- Emergency admissions rate (taking account of age differences) – significantly higher than the Northamptonshire PCN average.
- The percentage of children assessed by social care is significantly higher than the Northamptonshire PCN average.

Service provision and current limitations

The current services are delivered from numerous locations spread across Weston Favell and in most cases the facilities are approaching the end of their useful economic lives, are expensive to rent, heat and/or maintain, and will require substantial investment to bring them up to modern standards and extend their life.

Lings Forum Leisure Centre is more than 45 years old and whilst it is extremely popular with users and generates a substantial operating surplus, it is approaching the end of its useful economic life and will require substantial investment just to keep the facilities going with limited improvement in provision. In addition, it has a number of design limitations that constrain the leisure offer; there is only one pool which severely limits access for local swimming clubs and the capacity of the swim school, and there is limited dedicated studio space for exercise classes at peak hours.

The Library is located in the adjacent shopping centre and is expensive to operate as there is too much inflexible floor space for which the service has to pay a commercial rent and service charge. The library is also in need of a major refit to create a more flexible, welcoming space. Opening hours are constrained by staff costs and there is no opportunity to co-locate services within the existing library to enabled reception and other costs to be shared and opening hours to be extended.

Adult and Children’s Services are located in nearby accommodation that is owned by the Council. The current accommodation is limited in its flexibility and the public areas are not particularly accessible or welcoming for residents seeking to access these services.

The Healthcare Centre is located next to Lings Forum in accommodation which like the other facilities, which is dated, the rent and service charges are considered to be expensive and poor VFM considering the age and condition of the buildings, and it is becoming increasingly expensive to operate and maintain. There is a lack of flexible spaces which would allow some medical treatments and procedures to be provided on site, negating the need to send patients to district hospitals where the costs of outpatient delivery are much higher than within a dedicated community healthcare setting.

From a Patient Survey undertaken for this study (as detailed in Section 5) users of the building have commented on the following:

- It is an outdated building which is run down and in need of major refurbishment.
- The layout of the building is confusing and needs to be improved, particularly the waiting area.
- Disabled facilities need to be redesigned.
- There is a lack of parking.
- The environment is generally unpleasant and needs to be improved.
- Would like better links to wellbeing and mental health clinics.

More widely, Healthwatch Northampton asked what people thought and felt about local NHS services and what improvements could be made to how these services are delivered in the future.

Suggestions for improvement included:

- Coordinate care to enable patients to move seamlessly through and between services and make pathways easier to understand.
- Across all themes, the value of communities, local initiatives and having care and support close to home was highlighted, particularly to help people stay well and age well.
- Focus on the needs of the whole person to support people to stay well and live well, including physical and mental wellbeing and nutritional support.

The lack of any co-location means there are few opportunities to integrate services or share facilities. For instance, it is recognised that preventing many lifestyle conditions developing is far more cost effective than treating such conditions and it would be far easier for health professional to refer patients for physical activity interventions if the leisure facilities were under the same roof and designed to feel less like a typical leisure centre, as we know that many of those groups who do not take part in physical activity do not feel comfortable using a typical leisure centre.

Community, Social and Health Benefits

The development of an integrated public service hub offering a wide range of leisure, learning, healthcare, children’s and adult services would bring huge benefits to the local community in terms of physical activity, learning, wellbeing and healthcare provision.

The project would provide enhanced leisure provision offering a much wider range of physical and leisure activities in a more modern setting, allowing more people to lead more active lives, especially those from groups with

lower rates of participation. The new library, children’s and adult services facilities would provide the community with a better user experience. This process (and the related benefits discussed within this report) however is unlikely to happen without public sector intervention and the strength of the partnerships built up during this study will be key to delivering on this.

The new health centre would allow a more extensive range of health care services to be offered in a more efficient and convenient local setting, reducing costs to the NHS. It would also facilitate closer working with between the partners to offer more integrated health and wellbeing services that would encourage people to lead more active and healthier lives. The plan is to re-provide facilities for the GP practices and the dental surgery, within the new building. The GP practices, whilst they would welcome more space, have accepted a replication of the current footprint. However, given that the current space is not laid out optimally, there is scope to provide significantly more useful clinical space on the same footprint, particularly given the potential for digitisation of medical records. The only change is to add a minor ops suite to be shared by both practices. The dental practice would like to take a slightly reduced footprint, but still providing the same quantum of services. The community midwifery team are also seeking a similar footprint to the one they currently have.

Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) would like to continue with a similar footprint within the health centre but are keen to expand the range of services provided on the Weston Favell site, through a suite of flexible bookable rooms in a ‘central hub’ accessible to a range of service providers and separate to the health centre. These rooms will be for the provision of mental health services, group consultations and meetings, and for the emerging Primary Care Network roles, such as social prescribing link workers. The other key addition to the NHFT footprint is a physiotherapy gym and options are being considered in order to incorporate this into the leisure centre, to achieve a truly integrated health and wellbeing service.

The idea of integrated, flexible space within a larger site is supported by a range of organisations including **the Locality Board** (comprising the Northampton PCNs), the GP Federations, Public Health colleagues and Northampton University.

The central hub will be the focal point of the building, from which residents will access all other services in the building. In addition to a café and area for meeting and relaxation, it will house the following:

- Small meeting rooms that can be booked by partner organisations or the community. These will enable social prescribing and other integrated care interactions.
- Large meeting rooms for group consultations, events and community activities. Again, these will be able to be booked by the partner organisations and the community.
- Clinical rooms within the central hub which can be accessed by any organisation and are separate to the health centre. These will be particularly appropriate for mental health consultations and remove the stigma that some people associate with going to a ‘healthcare’ building.
- Digital technology is a key enabler for the central hub so that data systems can be accessed by all partners, virtual consultations can take place, residents can use it as an information point, and it can provide a source of digital inclusion to the community.

Addressing Health Needs

As set out above, there are key health needs and wider determinant of health needs within the Weston Favell area. This new site is ideally placed to address these needs, as follows:

- Obesity and smoking - Linking a health centre with both a leisure centre and a library is the ideal way to tackle primary prevention. The centre

will provide the opportunity to engage residents in a wide range of physical activity and within the central hub and the library, there will be the capacity to have health prevention events, activities and interventions that engage people coming to the hub.

- Long Term Conditions - This site will provide both the capacity to run long term condition clinics but will also provide the environment to support people with long term conditions to improve their health: through information and advice at the library, through the leisure facilities and being able to access integrated, holistic care, including social prescribing.
- Mental Health and social isolation - The new site has been specifically designed to house mental health services in a way that reduces the stigma of accessing these services, but it will also allow professionals to refer to other services on site that will have significant mental health benefits such as physical activity, leisure, information and advice, and social connection. Having a café on site will enable a range of community activities to take place which can address social isolation in the community.
- Social care utilisation in children - Having the children’s contact centre on site will allow a facility that is currently separate, to be integrated into normal, everyday activities. This will enhance the experience for families and support the service in progressing families beyond the statutory sector.

Benefits of the New Facility

This new way of working will have many benefits, some of which have already been set out above. The Economic Case will go into more detail about how this investment will benefit the system and are summarised as follows:

- Weston Favell will become a hub where people will be able to access high quality, holistic and integrated care.

- It will provide an environment which supports people to take control of, and manage their own health, through having access to leisure, library and other community facilities on site.
- People will have better access to community services in one place away from the acute hospital.
- It will provide a flexible environment, ensuring optimal utilisation.
- It provides the opportunity to develop new models of integrated care.
- The patient and resident experience will be enhanced by being treated in a fit for purpose, well designed building.
- Through the University, there is the opportunity for Weston Favell to become a clinical training site, used as a model for student placements to support the training of future clinicians. This could lead to the site becoming a wider employment and economic regeneration hub.

8.3 Economic Case

A detailed site analysis has been undertaken to identify potential redevelopment options for the Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub which have been refined for further consideration against a set of clear critical success factors that has identified a preferred redevelopment and future operating option. These critical success factors include:

- **Ownership** – the land required for the preferred Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub redevelopment option is almost all in the ownership and control of WNC or the NHS, minimising the costs of expensive site acquisition.
- **Redevelopment potential** – the initial design releases land surrounding the hub facilities for residential development that will meet existing demand for more housing for sale and rent locally, whilst potentially generating a contribution to help offset the net financing costs of the project.

- **Improved services** – the new health and wellbeing hub will facilitate the delivery of enhanced and extended services for the community in a more modern, attractive and welcoming environment.
- **Shared/integrated public services** – the integrated design brings all of the public services together in one location, built around a central community hub from which each service can easily be accessed, and provides shared spaces for the partners to deliver health and wellbeing services in a more welcoming non-traditional environment.
- **Affordability** – the costs of financing the redevelopment project and funding the operating model is considered as affordable for the Council and each of the partners and is set out in more detail in the Financial Case. Each partner operates their own individual parts of the hub (leisure and learning, children and adult services, police and community safety, and healthcare) with WNC (or NLT/Leisure Operator) managing and maintaining the central community space and the external areas which has been identified as the most efficient and affordable operating model. Each partner will pay a rental and service charge for the use of their defined area within the hub and for access to the central community space and for the upkeep of the buildings structure, fabric and external areas. The rental fee and service charges are projected to be less than those currently being paid by the health centre and the library, with savings in utilities and day to day repairs and maintenance further improving the affordability of the project for each of the partners.

Social, Health and Economic Benefits

The development of the Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub is an investment into buying greater capacity and integrated service capability which will have the following benefits:

- Enabling delivery of appropriate services out of hospital.
- Enabling a population health management approach through the PCNs

- Providing a site for integrated care, not just between health and social care but those services addressing the wider determinants of health, including leisure, library, other advice services such as housing and CAB.
- Enabling the Northamptonshire model of social prescribing with its significant aims to address frequent attendance to primary and secondary health care, long term conditions, mental health and support carers.

The outcomes of this way of delivering care are expected to be:

- Improving the population's physical health, mental health and wellbeing, impacting on the use of services but also wider impacts such as increasing employment rates.
- Building more resilient communities.
- Reducing reliance on NHS services and releasing capacity through a prevention-focused approach.

Social Prescribing Benefits

The economic impact of the Weston Favell development is very closely linked to the wider social prescribing interventions in Northamptonshire¹. The new building will provide an ideal environment in which to undertake social prescribing, given the co-location of:

- Health services (GP, Dental and Community Services)
- Leisure and recreation facilities,
- Library with access to information, advice and guidance,
- Community café; and
- Central hub with meeting rooms, bookable consulting rooms and the opportunity for group consultations and interventions.

Therefore, this case has used some of the assumptions from the Northamptonshire social prescribing programme and brought these to a

local level. It has assumed that the Weston Favell site will be one of the key social prescribing solutions in the Weston Favell area, and working with NHFT, the emerging ICS and the PCNs, this case assumes that it will serve a population of approximately 90,000 people who live in the East Northampton area surrounding Weston Favell.

The value to the health system of the social prescribing intervention has been estimated based on assumptions around the level of complexity of the beneficiaries that will take part in the social prescribing programme and the expected reduction in their use of the health system. Reductions are based upon the learning and experiences from other social prescribing interventions, national evaluation pilots and other evidence of the impact of the use of health and care services attributed to social prescribing.

It is estimated that the net impact on the health system for the whole of Northamptonshire will be a saving of £2.65m per annum from Year 6 onwards. Given that this closely aligns with when the Weston Favell development would be completed, this figure has been used to calculate the impact this development could have on the health system. The figure of £2.65m relates to the whole of the county with a population of 730,000. If it is assumed that the Weston Favell hub could serve a population of 90,000, the savings to which Weston Favell could contribute could be in the region **of £326,000 per annum**.

The social prescribing programme is expected to have a broader impact beyond reductions in the use of health and care services, including benefits to the central government departments and local authority social care:

- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP): 59% of people with long-term conditions are in work in the UK, compared to 72% of the general population. For some beneficiaries, the improvement of their wellbeing will allow them to enter into employment. The avoidance or delay of benefits claims will be an immediate saving to DWP.

¹ Northamptonshire Social Prescribing Full Business Case

- Social Care: For some beneficiaries of the intervention, an improvement in their physical and mental health and wellbeing and an increased engagement in community activities will delay or reduce their use of social care services, a saving that will accrue to WNC.

These wider benefits have been estimated to be £6.1m for the 5-year programme or £1,105 per patient on average. The assumption is that 6,585 people will have an improvement in their wellbeing within the first 6 months, across the county (730,000 people). If it is assumed that the Weston Favell hub could serve a population of 90,000, then social prescribing associated with this scheme will be able to attain an improvement for approximately 808 people. **The wider benefits for the 5-year programme would be £1,105 x 808 people = £892,840.**

Whilst it could be argued that not all of the social prescribing benefits described for the 90,000 population above will be delivered through Weston Favell, there is no doubt that this building will facilitate a significant part of the social prescribing for this area and will have a very positive contribution to attaining the outlined benefits.

The impact on the ICS system will be felt in terms of:

- A reduction in the burden of disease resulting from the top lifestyle risk factors amenable to impact from social prescribing interventions.
- A reduction in A&E attendances and non-elective admissions amongst the most complex patients.
- Reduced lengths of stay for those medically suitable for discharge from our hospitals.
- Reduced health inequalities across our system and improvements in overall health and wellbeing.

- Ultimately it is assumed that these improvements will result in cost avoidance, capacity release and reduced stress across the health and care system.

This business case has also used evidence from the Year of Care (YOC) Partnerships², which provide collaborative care and support planning for people living with one or more long term conditions (LTCs) or multi morbidity, linked with activities in a supportive community. The care described in this programme is similar to that described in the Strategic Case for Weston Favell: integrated care and planning for people with long term conditions, with the following components:

- Support for self- management.
- Productive interactions between ‘empowered and activated patients’ and ‘proactive systems’.

Delivering integrated care to people with long term conditions had the following benefits:

- improved experience of care
- real changes in self-care behaviour
- improved knowledge and skills and greater job satisfaction for health care professionals
- better organisation and teamwork
- improved productivity

In an example from Berkshire West, which has a population of 550,000, 70% of the practices within the area participated in an integrated care approach to the management of diabetes. The prescribing savings for this population over a two-year period were £800,000. If we translate that to Weston Favell, assuming the population of 90,000 and full practice participation the following savings could be achieved:

² NHS Year of Care Partnerships <https://www.yearofcare.co.uk/summaries>

Figure 8.3 – Projected Savings in Management of Diabetes

Berkshire population (70% of 550,000)	385,000
Weston Favell population	90,000
Berkshire prescribing savings on diabetes	£800,000
Assumed Weston Favell savings (2 years)	£187,000

This is a saving for a single long-term condition, so if we assume that new models of care could be delivered across a wide range of conditions as a result of the Weston Favell development, these savings start to be considerable.

Taking all these savings together, this provides an annual net saving to the system of:

Figure 8.4 – Projected Annual Net Health Savings

Health system savings	£326,000
Social prescribing 892k/5 years	£178,568
Diabetes prescribing 187k/2years	£93,500
Total annual savings	£598,068

Modelling carried out by Sport England³ estimates that the project has the potential to deliver in excess of £10m of social value across mental health, physical health, individual development and society impact based on the project resulting in 5,000 currently inactive people in Northamptonshire to become more physically active.

The projected increase in footfall at the new leisure centre would deliver a significant increase in the £3m+ per year social impact NLT already deliver

³ Measuring the Social and Economic Impact of Sport in England, Sport England 2020

through its activities, as measured by a 2018 independent study by the University of Northampton⁴

Based on modelling undertaken by Continuum on the impact of increased physical activity amongst the community, the project has the potential to deliver a positive impact worth £1 million per annum for WNC through a reduction in levels of childhood obesity, youth crime and disorder, and elderly frailty. These figures are based on small reductions in incidents for Northampton and the relative costs associated with each incident.

Figure 8.5 – Potential Community Savings

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
Reduction in Youth Crime	96,000	96,000	96,000	96,000	96,000	480,000
Reduction in elderly frailty	409,202	409,202	409,202	409,202	409,202	2,046,010
Reduction in childhood obesity	562,638	562,638	562,638	562,638	562,638	2,813,190
Total Savings	1,067,840	1,067,840	1,067,840	1,067,840	1,067,840	5,339,200

As has been stated before, a building in itself cannot achieve this magnitude of change. However, aligned with the aims of WNC and ICS and with a whole system approach to developing meaningful integrated care and supporting residents to better manage their own health, the Weston Favell development will have a considerable economic impact on WNC, the NHS and the wider system.

⁴ Social Impact of Northampton Leisure Trust, University of Northampton 2018

As detailed further within Section 8.5 the Financial Case, for a projected revenue commitment from WNC of less than £1m per annum the project has the potential to deliver social, health and related economic value worth many times this investment. The Consultant Team are of the opinion, again as discussed in more detail in Section 8.5, that this represents value for money for the Council in relation to the structural delivery changes and benefits to primary care, health and wellbeing of Northampton residents.

8.4 Commercial Case

The Commercial Case for Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub is based on WNC leading the delivery of the project, in partnership with the healthcare partners and NLT, who are expected to take long leases for the facilities they operate, bringing the public services together in an integrated hub that would enable each of the partners to operate more effectively and deliver the financial, health, wellbeing and social value outcomes sought by WNC and the NHS.

Project Delivery

The redevelopment and creation of a new and enhanced leisure centre, library and cinema within the hub would deliver a substantial increase in footfall and usage, growing physical activity rates in Weston Favell, and generating more income and an increased operating surplus for NLT.

The enhanced surplus would be used to support the costs of financing the upfront investment, noting that the current operating surplus achieved at Lings Forum is used by NLT to support the other leisure facilities it operates within Northampton on behalf of the WNC. The healthcare facilities will be more efficient to operate enabling the health partners to reduce their overall accommodation costs, releasing resources to invest in improving local healthcare and facilitating closer working with leisure, children's and adult services to deliver better health outcomes.

A refurbishment option involving investment to extend the life of the various facilities and enhance their appearance and purpose would not deliver the outcomes sought. The leisure centre would not generate any significant growth in income and hence operating surplus compared to a new build solution. The impact of a prolonged closure during the refurbishment works also needs to be factored in with no income generated during the closure and much of the costs remaining such as staffing. A refurbishment of the health centre, library and children and adult services facilities would leave the partners with substantial financial commitments and would not release resources to reinvest in frontline care and services. Nor would a refurbishment facilitate closer integration and sharing of services to promote more active and healthy lifestyles amongst target groups. The project would it is assumed be led and delivered by WNC who would take responsibility for:

- Project Management
- Design and Planning
- Site assembly and acquisition
- Procurement of the build programme for the community health and wellbeing hub
- Appointing a development partner to deliver the residential elements of the project
- Commissioning of the operator of the leisure centre, library, cinema and the community hub and shared spaces, and facilities management services for the site.

We have however, given the potential partnership and interest by Northampton Partnership Homes in the site looked at a range of options related to the delivery of the whole site and / or sections of the site split into community facilities and residential. This is set out later within this sub-section of the OBC.

Health Centre Development

The existing health centre is in the ownership of NHS Property Services. The intention is that WNC will purchase the site from NHS Property Services and develop the new health centre within the new Health and Wellbeing Hub, with extensive input and support from the health partners to ensure the new facilities meets the requirements of the healthcare tenants. The health partners will be solely responsible for funding the fit out of the health areas, by way of a capital grant from the NHS. This is considered to be the quickest and most straightforward process to deliver the healthcare facilities. Also, it should accrue financial benefits to the project associated with undertaking a development at a larger scale. The funds used to purchase the health centre are expected to be reinvested in the project via the health partners.

Site Delivery Options and Considerations

Overview

Having considered the site options, the programme, and the various projects that form part of the development, there are two headline routes WNC could consider to deliver the scheme. This is based on the direction the Consultant Team has been given initially on the development of housing in Northampton.

- Option 1 – NPH deliver the residential units and WNC deliver the rest of the community and leisure facility projects; and
- Option 2 - WNC sell the residential land to a developer and deliver the rest of the community and leisure facility projects themselves.

The advantages and disadvantages of these options are outlined within this section. There are numerous ways the above options could be split into sub-options by, for example, further splitting down each project into sub-projects that are delivered by individual teams. For the purposes of this stage of the project, where a decision is required on the holistic approach

to delivering the programme, these leading options provide the basis for a discussion. This decision should be concluded before moving onto a more detailed discussion on the procurement strategy for the project.

Key considerations for all options

The key considerations for all the options are:

The assumption is that the land where the current healthcare centre is located is acquired to remove the dependency on NHS central decision-making processes. NHS approvals processes, Outline through to Full Business Case, do not align well with local government funded and delivered projects and the approvals WNC will need to obtain as they progress.

The leading options (and subsequent sub-options) should be considered in more detail during the subsequent next detailed stages to understand which option would be the most cost effective, and if any of the options have a material impact on the timescales for delivering the programme.

The value of the residential site should be checked further through market testing to ensure it is not undervalued in the financial model; and ecology, initial site investigation and transport / highways works should start early to inform the viability of delivering the programme.

Option 1 – NPH deliver the residential, the Council deliver the community infrastructure.

NPH could be instructed by the Council to deliver the residential schemes and then the Council would deliver the leisure centre and central hub, library, cinema, adult and children's services and health centre directly.

Advantages

1. The Council will have complete control over the delivery of the leisure and health projects. They will be able to input closely on design, costs, the construction phases and so forth. This control would enable the

- Council to appoint a team with the correct experience to deliver the complex leisure and health projects;
2. The residential projects would be delivered separately from the community hub. Therefore, if for any reason the residential scheme were delayed or stopped in the future, it would be easier for the Council to continue with the main project;
 3. The Council can use NPH to deliver a residential scheme that is a more socially driven project as opposed to a profit-making venture;
 4. Potential funders and tenants, such as Sport England and the NHS, may prefer this governance structure as it is simpler for their future agreements/contracts with the Council.

Disadvantages

1. The Council will have to procure a team to design and deliver each of the projects. This will require more procurement and legal resource than Option 1, but this exposure could be mitigated by using frameworks for both consultant and contractor appointments;
2. One planning application from two applicants, or a series of applications, will need to be made which is more cumbersome and riskier than the approach outlined in Option 1;
3. Moving funding between individual projects, if required, to manage over / under spend may be more difficult.

OPTION 2 The Council sell the residential land and deliver the community infrastructure.

The Council sell off the residential sites for development and then the Council deliver the leisure centre and central hub, library, cinema, adult and children's services and health centre directly.

The Council could approach this option in a number of different ways, for example:

- i. The Council could sell the land;

- ii. The Council could form a Joint Venture with a development partner to develop the site;
- iii. The Council could enter into a Development Agreement; or
- iv. The Council could progress the project through a Development Management approach. This may involve the Council developing certain aspects of the project / site prior to receiving a receipt. For example, the Council may wish to obtain an outline planning consent prior to disposal, or they may wish to develop infrastructure, highways and so forth on the site, to de-risk the site, prior to entering a Development Agreement.

These options, and others, come with different risk profiles. Further considerations should be given to these sub-options at the next stages for the overall development.

Advantages

1. The Council can achieve best market value for the residential sites as the land could be competitively tendered;
2. The Council will have complete control over the delivery of the other facilities, being able to input closely on design, costs, etc;
3. The risk of the residential receipt and value can be removed earlier in the programme timeline;
4. The risk of the residential projects is removed from the delivery of the leisure and health facilities. For example, if for any reason the residential scheme was delayed or failed in the future, it would be easier for the Council to continue with the projects whilst the residential scheme was brought back on track; and
5. Potential funders and tenants, such as Sport England and the NHS, may prefer this governance structure as it is simpler for their future agreements/contracts with the Council.

Disadvantages

1. The Council will have to procure a team/s to design and deliver each of the projects. This will require more procurement and legal resource than Option 1, but this exposure could be mitigated using frameworks for both consultant and contractor appointments;
2. One planning application from two applicants, or a series of applications, may need to be made which is more cumbersome and riskier than the approach outlined in Option 1;
3. Moving money between individual projects, if required, to manage over / underspend may be more difficult; and
4. The Council will have less control over the final residential design.

Preferred Route

Subject to further commercial analysis the Consultant Team are of the opinion that the preferred route would be for the Council to partner with NPH with NPH leading the residential element and the Council leading the delivery of the community infrastructure. NPH have stated that there is a compelling argument for the residential element to be developed up in the Housing Revenue Account. Given the integrated nature of the scheme, NPH can legitimately utilise HRA funding for the next stages of technical feasibility work such as ground investigation, utilities assessment and so forth. This has the scope to allow much more design and funding work to be undertaken with the OPE8 funding that the Council has secured.

Furthermore, the focus of Weston Favell Hub is to drive a range of local strategic objectives but has to work commercially. Whilst at this stage the financial benefits from the residential side are a bit unclear, however, if this were led by NPH/the HRA funding could be used to undertake design development to optimise this. It may be that the scheme 'ends up' as a mixed tenure scheme but it should not be assumed that having affordable housing in the mix reduces the land value. It would be possible therefore to:

- a) attract external subsidy.
- b) capitalise rents over a long period of time.
- c) raise PWLB loan finance or private investment (L & G/Aviva type model) and the HRA can pay the general fund a capital receipt in the same way that it is paying external landowners for sites at present; examples including the former university site.
- d) Explore the potential for cross-funding and cross-subsidy between the residential and the community (non-resi) infrastructure.
- e) Explore the potential for delivering any shared housing objectives with adult health and social care. This could be for adult health and social care customers or even for staff, building on the key worker objectives of housing within the local area.
- f) There is an opportunity to bid to Homes England which can bid for alongside the OPE8 funding as it helps de-risk the scheme significantly.

Procurement Process

WNC will take on the responsibility for the procurement process which shall relate to the purchase of land and the development of the Community Health and Wellbeing Hub, including the development of the health centre facilities. NHS Property Services is not expected to play any role in the procurement or be the landlord of the new health facility, however they may be either appointed by the local health system to ensure that the health element of the building specification meets the required standards and/or their involvement maybe required by the local system or Cavell Centre Project Governance to provide assurance in respect of the design and procurement that the health element complies with requirements of any capital grant received. As well as complying with the relevant public procurement regulations, the process will also need to comply with local and national NHS Standing Financial Instructions, regulations and guidance. The procurement will not involve any specific health services that will be delivered from the site, and the procurement of any such clinical services will remain a CCG/PCN/NHS England activity governed by separate contractual arrangements.

To supplement limited internal resources and expertise, WNC will procure external support to deliver the project management, site assembly and acquisitions process, and develop the detailed designs and planning approvals. WNC will then procure a contractor to construct the new community health and wellbeing hub.

The project management function will include the role of ensuring that the design and delivery of the new facilities meet the requirements of the individual tenants, particularly in relation to specialist elements such as the clinical spaces that will need to meet regulatory requirements. To support this process specialist surveyor input will be required to ensure specific building requirements necessary for compliance with HBNs and other health contractual and regulatory requirements are met.

Phased Development

As detailed previously in Section 7, the initial designs will enable the delivery of the project to be phased to allow each of the services to continue to operate as normal, whilst construction takes place before the services decant into the new facilities. This will then release the original sites for redevelopment to create the external areas and release the sites for residential development. More detailed work is required in this area as the design progresses to allow the partners to develop their decanting plans, which may involve a gradual move into the new facilities to ensure service continuity, especially in relation to healthcare.

Service Requirements and Outcomes

The outline service requirements and outcomes for each facility within the community Health and Wellbeing Hub are set out below.

Figure 8.6 – Service Requirements and Outcomes for each Service

Service	Key requirements	Key Outcomes
Leisure Centre	New 25m swimming pool, learner pool, gym, exercise	Enhanced leisure facilities that will increase footfall

Service	Key requirements	Key Outcomes
	studios, sports hall, spa, outdoor 3G pitch, changing rooms, and ancillary accommodation (with scope for additional leisure waters and dedicated gymnastics hall)	and generate more income in an energy efficient building
Library	Main library area, quiet study areas, exhibition space, meeting rooms and staff areas	A flexible, more efficient space with plenty of natural light that will attract more footfall with lower accommodation costs
Cinema	2 screen cinema, located close to café and central hub, with ticket sales kiosks	Modern, comfortable space that will attract more visits and secondary spend
Community Hub	Lobby area, Public Seating, Café, Meeting/Consultation Rooms	A welcoming space that attracts the public and encourages use of the facilities
Adult and Children Services	Office space, and consultation/meeting rooms	Fit for purpose premises, improved utilisation of space, lower service charge costs
Mayfield Practice	General Practice Surgery Site of similar size, with access to additional clinical space and minor operations room.	Fit for purpose GP premises, improved utilisation of space, lower service charge costs
Favell Plus Practice	that complies with HBN	
Rodericks Dental Practice	Dental Practice Surgery Site of similar size that complies with HBN	Fit for purpose Dental premises, improved utilisation of space, lower service charge costs
NHFT	Site for location of current community services provided by	Fit for purpose site for the delivery of Trust services,

Service	Key requirements	Key Outcomes
	the Trust with additional space for service delivery expansion including Physio Gym that complies with HBN	improved utilisation of space, lower service charge costs per sqm
NGH	Site for the location of Maternity Services that complies with HBN	
ICS	Site for location of community services in the Central Hub that complies with HBN	Fit for purpose site for the delivery of community services
University of Northampton	Potential requirements for physiotherapy services.	Suitable high quality physio clinic space and training areas

Risk	Allocation
Leisure Centre and Cinema Library, Adult and Children Services Health Centre	WNC Health tenants
Internal repairs and maintenance (TIR) External repairs and maintenance, insurance and central hub	Tenants WNC as landlord
Payment of Annual Rent and Service Charges GP Practices Other occupiers	CCG Tenants
Annual Rent and Service Charges for Bookable Health Spaces	Northamptonshire ICS/(CCG)
Rent and Service Charges for Bookable Spaces in the Central Hub	All users based on use and agreed hire rates

Risk Allocation

The initial allocation of risks for the project are set out in the table below (based on WNC leading the development).

Figure 8.7 – Initial Risk Allocation

Risk	Allocation
Funding	WNC
Design development	WNC (shared with Northamptonshire ICS)
Site assembly and acquisition	WNC
Procurement and Delivery of Construction	WNC
Fit out of Buildings Leisure Centre and Cinema Library, Adult and Children Services Health Centre	Tenant NLT WNC Northamptonshire ICS/(CCG)
Operational Costs	NFT

Charging Mechanism

A contribution to costs incurred by WNC of financing and maintaining the Community Health and Wellbeing Hub will be recouped from tenant rental fees and associated service charges. The costs of financing the investment to develop the health centre within the project will be fully recovered through the rent paid by the health partners. The rental costs are based on a TIR lease (internal repairs only) based on an indicative rate of £13.00 per square foot. Service charges are set to fully recover the costs of insurance, grounds maintenance and the cleaning and maintenance of the shared central hub space.

Key Contractual/Stakeholder Arrangements

To enable the project to progress to the procurement and construction stages a number of financial and legal commitments will be required to protect the interests of each party. These are:

- MOU between WNC and NLT for the future provision of community leisure in Northampton and the treatment of the projected revenue surplus that will be generated by NLT.
- Agreement to Lease between WNC and NLT for the leisure centre, cinema (and potentially the library).
- Declaration by the local ICS that the current Weston Favell Health Centre site is surplus to requirements.
- Capital Grant Agreement issued by NHS England for capital expenditure (re-investment of receipts of current Weston Favell surgery site back into the local health system for fit out of new development).
- Contractual/Grant Agreements for Cavell Centre Funding to be advised.
- MOU between WNC and Northampton ICS for the contribution by Northampton ICS into the fit out of the new development.
- MOU between WNC and Northampton ICS to underwrite the rental costs of the Flexible Bookable Space.
- Agreement to Lease between WNC and Health Partner Tenants (NB. NHS Property Services is not expected to hold the lease for the Health domains of the building and sublet to Health Tenants).
- Lease and FM Service agreements between WNC and Health Partner Tenants.

Accountancy Treatments

- WNC will be freeholder of the Community Health and Wellbeing Hub.
- Long term leases will be agreed with NLT and the health partners.
- Fit out of health centre will be funded by health partners to be met by a non-recurrent capital Grant.
- Cavell Centre Funding accounting treatment to be advised.
- Rental fees for health centre will be sufficient to fully recover WNC costs associated with financing the development of the health centre.
- NLT will fund part of the fit out of the leisure centre and cinema, such as fitness and loose equipment.
- A proportion of the projected increased operating surplus is expected to be paid to WNC by way of a rental payment/income share

arrangement subject to wider discussions around the provision of leisure by NLT in Northampton.

8.5 Financial Case

The Financial Case for the Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub is based on the preferred redevelopment and operating option securing an affordable and best VFM outcome for WNC and its partners over the long term, largely through the delivery of new accommodation that will have lower running costs, and leisure facilities that will increase footfall and income generation.

The additional residential development may deliver a capital contribution towards the scheme. This will become clearer once a detailed financial appraisal has been undertaken and there is more clarity over the preferred delivery model, scope of accommodation and forms of tenure.

The principles of the financial approach to the scheme are:

- A community entrance and lobby with a café and community rooms for hire will form a central hub space at the core of the scheme.
- Leisure centre, cinema and library will form the largest element of the scheme.
- Adult and children services will occupy a self-contained space, paying a service charge and hiring space within the community hub.
- Healthcare centre (including NHFT) will occupy a self-contained space, paying rent and service charge and hiring space within the community hub.
- Local police will occupy a small space within the community hub.
- Service charges will cover the cost of communal areas and the central hub, as well as insurance and maintenance costs.

The business plan assumes that WNC can raise the funds for the new build through borrowing, grants and is not (at this stage) based on any direct development contributions. The business plan also assumes the additional

revenue surpluses generated through the leisure facilities can be used to help finance the borrowing costs.

8.5.1 Current Provision

- Lings Forum is operated by NLT on behalf of WNC and in 2019/20 prior to Coronavirus it generated a surplus in excess of £415k per annum to support the Trust’s operations across Northampton including other leisure facilities without recourse to any financial support from WNC. Without investment it will become increasingly difficult to sustain footfall and income and inevitably the revenue surplus will reduce.
- The library is located within the shopping centre and it costs WNC £194k per annum in rent, service charges, rates and other property costs.
- The health centre costs of £466,000 per year, 62% of which is FM, rates and service charge.
- No conditions surveys have been undertaken to ascertain the full liabilities of the current building stock or the costs of refurbishing the facilities to modern standards.

Capital Requirements

The capital costs of the project are currently estimated at £37.35m inclusive of fees. A breakdown of the capital costs is set out in the table below.

Figure 8.8 – Health and Wellbeing Hub Capital Breakdown

Element	Capital Costs
Leisure	£16,180,000
Library /Cinema	£4,500,000
Adult Services	£1,090,000
Children Services	£560,000
Communal Space	£230,000
Health Centre	£4,800,000

Community Hub	£2,370,000
Externals	£2,630,000
Demolition	£1,590,000
Fees	£3,400,000
Total	£37,350,000

- WNC will finance the development and delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Hub through a long-term Public Works Loan Board Loan.
- WNC will seek external funding such as a Sport England grant.
- There is an anticipation that Health Partners will contribute capital of between £500,000-£700,000 (based on recent site valuation) towards the development from sale of the current Health Centre site.
- NHS Property Services currently own the Health Centre Asset on behalf of the local health system. They will be able to sell the site to WNC if the ISC declares it surplus to requirements. The proceeds from the sale are returned by NHS Property Services to NHS England and Improvement.
- NHS England can, following application by the local ICS, approve the reinvestment of capital funds in other premises in the local area.
- This scheme anticipates the approval of such a re-investment of funds and direction of those funds by the local ICS into the fit out of the Health domain of the Weston Favell development.
- This Business Case also identifies a potential source of capital for the development of the site from the Cavell Centre Capital Development Scheme, proposed by NHS England and NHS Improvement. Currently there are no published details of how this scheme will operate, but it is assumed that it will take the form of an application process for a capital grant towards the cost of a health site development, to be allocated from fixed, earmarked regional/national funds. It is hoped that more detail will be available (likely to be in the autumn 2021).

8.5.2 Revenue Projections

The revenue projections for each area of the project are set out in Figure 8.9 below. The business plan projects that the scheme will generate a combined revenue of circa £2,994k p.a. in income from leisure centre, cinema and library users, and rent and service charges from the partners, to help offset costs of £2,243k to operate the leisure centre, cinema and library, and maintain the central community hub, the building structure and fabric, and the external areas. The project is therefore estimated to generate a surplus of circa £751k per annum.

Figure 8.9 – Summary of Income and Expenditure for Project

Area	Income	Expenditure	Net Income
Leisure	£2,394,165	£1,812,095	£582,070
Library & Cinema	£128,004	£257,288	-£129,284
Health Centre*	£273,128	£0	£273,128
Community Hub/Police*	£141,142	£0	£141,142
Adult and Children Services*	£57,926	£0	£57,926
Facilities Management Services	£0	£173,770	-£173,770
Total	£2,994,366	£2,243,153	£751,213

* Income relates to estimated rent and service charges payable. Excludes any costs associated with delivering soft FM services such as cleaning and utilities as each partner will be responsible for these costs within their service area.

Based on an upfront capital investment of £37.35m, financing this through a 30-year loan with a fixed interest rate of 2.5% would cost £1.78m per annum. Assuming a Sport England grant of circa £1m could be secured and all of the projected operating surplus could be applied to the project, it would leave a net annual cost of £0.99m for WNC to fund.

Figure 8.9 – Summary of Revenue Position for Project

Revenue Position	Amount
Financing Costs	£1,784,495
Less Savings if £1m Sport England grant	£47,778
Operating Surplus	£751,213
Delivery Costs	£985,504
Net Position (taking into account current known liabilities of library, children's and adults)	£533,273

The estimated additional revenue costs of the proposed new community hub are based, at this stage, on the known liabilities of the services being delivered by West Northants Council namely the library, children's and adults services. At the time of this report the cost to the Council of Lings Forum Leisure Centre is zero based on the management structure in place. However, the future liabilities of all of the building stock across the study site – which has not been tested in this study – are likely to increase once further analysis has been undertaken. Therefore, the net position (based on likely future liabilities) and additional cost is likely to be reduced.

Comparison of new build versus refurbishment of leisure centre, cinema and library

Based on a cost estimate of £20.68m for the new build option and an estimated £4.35m for the refurbishment of the leisure centre, cinema and library option, and allowing for the financial impact of the closure of the facilities for around 12 months, the new build option would have comparable costs to a refurbishment over 25 years (in net present value terms). Furthermore, a number of factors need to be considered that favour a new build option:

- A refurbishment would only extend the life of the buildings by up to 15 years and further substantial investment would be required again in later years.

- The refurbishment of leisure centres can often cost far more than originally envisaged as the works can reveal further problems in the building that need to be addressed.
- The likelihood is that there would be a desire from stakeholders to improve the leisure offer through a refurbishment instead of simply maintaining the status quo. For instance, a £2m-£4m increase in the costs of refurbishment to £6m-£8m would cost £485k-£646k per annum to finance, resulting in Lings Forum no longer generating a revenue surplus. In NPV terms a refurbishment of Lings Forum could cost more than a new build option once the library and cinema are factored into the figures, with a £6m leisure centre refurbishment costing an estimated £2,303k over 25 years in NPV terms and an £8m refurbishment costing up to £4,956k.
- A more extensive and expensive refurbishment would be required to deliver any substantial increases in footfall and income generation.
- No costs have been allowed for investment in the shopping centre by its landlords which would be reflected in future rents/service charges.
- A new leisure centre, cinema and library is crucial to the development of the integrated community hub. This could not be achieved with a refurbishment project.

Therefore, it is considered that a new build project would offer more cost certainty over a refurbishment scheme and would allow the delivery of the additional financial health, social and economic benefits for a comparable cost over 25 years.

Figure 8.10 - Leisure and Library Refurbishment Costs

Refurbishment	Lings Forum	Library	Combined
Income	£1,677,756	£34,600	£1,712,356
Expenditure	£1,046,966	£399,500	£1,446,466

Support Costs	£215,586	£0	£215,586
Surplus/(Cost)	£415,204	-£364,900	£50,304
Financing Costs	£323,066	£28,268	£351,334
Net Costs	£92,138	-£393,168	-£301,030
25 Year NPV Net Costs	£359,150	-£6,945,948	-£6,586,798

Figure 8.11 – Leisure and Library New Build Costs

New Build	New Leisure	New Cinema & Library	Combined
Income	£2,394,165	£128,004	£2,522,169
Expenditure	£1,588,250	£257,288	£1,845,537
Support Costs	£223,845	£0	£223,845
Surplus/(Cost)	£582,070	-£129,284	£452,787
Financing Costs	£725,265	£214,999	£940,264
Net Costs	-£143,194	-£344,283	-£487,477
25 Year NPV Net Costs	-£984,182	-£5,674,336	-£6,658,518

8.5.4. Coronavirus

The revenue projections in the business plan do not at this stage factor in any long-term impact of Coronavirus on the services or revenue streams. The model assumes that demand for leisure will be back to pre Covid-19 levels ahead of any new facilities being delivered. At this stage it is uncertain as to whether Coronavirus will have a long-term impact on demand, but footfall data from re-opened sites and user surveys so far undertaken suggest the leisure industry will return to normal once the pandemic ends and restrictions are lifted. It is likely to be late 2021 before there is a more accurate picture of the long-term impact of Coronavirus on demand for leisure activities. It has been well documented as to the longer-term impacts on public health as a result of the pandemic, not only in terms of the virus itself and longer-term health related issues but also the delays in

appointments, diagnosis, and people’s own delays in coming forward with other health issues.

8.5.5 Financial Impact on Leisure Provision

The financing of the leisure centre element of the project needs to be seen in the context of wider leisure provision within the WNC authority area. NLT operate 4 leisure centres in Northampton in addition to Lings Forum on behalf of WNC. The surplus currently generated by Lings Forum is used to support the Trust’s operation of the other leisure centres, removing the need for the Council to provide any ongoing revenue support towards these facilities.

Whilst any additional surplus arising from the operation of the new leisure centres could in principle be applied to supporting the financing of the project, any decision to utilise more of the operating surplus would potentially have a material impact on NLTs ability to operate the wider leisure portfolio at zero subsidy.

8.5.6 Financial Assumptions – Leisure and non-health facilities

The revenue projections are based on a series of assumptions for the facilities and within the leisure centre each activity area. These set out the growth in additional footfall and income that the new leisure centre could achieve. The assumptions are based on benchmark data from comparable community leisure facilities, amended to reflect local circumstances and performance in recent years.

The range of assumptions underpinning the revenue projections include:

- The leisure centres and cinema will be operated by NLT with similar staff structures and terms and conditions as currently in place.
- Leisure fees and charges based on current NLT prices.
- An allowance for modest revenue growth subject to further latent demand analysis for fitness and swimming.
- Additional staffing costs to reflect the extended provision.

- No savings in energy as the existing costs are already low compared to benchmarks.
- An allowance has been made for a contribution towards NLT’s central costs.
- Financing costs are annual revenue costs of funding the investment based on 30-year PWLB fixed loan at 2.5%.
- No site acquisition costs (at this stage noting the health centre position)
- The site has good access and sufficient parking.
- Sport England grants of £1m.
- Development contributions estimated at circa £1.66m based on a desk-based valuation report have not been factored into the figures. Further work is required to estimate the potential contribution of the residential development based on the scale of accommodation and forms of tenure.
- Rental income based on a rent of £13 per square foot per annum.
- Service charges based on share of insurance, maintenance and shared space costs of £174k per annum.
- Refurbishment of the leisure centre would require a 12-month closure with loss of all income during these periods offset by some property and casual staff cost savings.

Project Specific Set Up Costs

The project will have additional set up costs for WNC and the partners (health, NLT) associated with professional fees for technical and legal advice, such as for the funding agreements leases, as well as SDLT which will need to be factored into the project budget.

Although it is anticipated WNC will lead in the overall project management of the site development, it is recognised that there will need for specific specialist health input to ensure that the new site is fit for purpose, meets the needs of health partners and complies with relevant Health Building Notes, guidance and contractual requirements.

There will also be costs associated with decommissioning and moving sites and of communication with service users and patients.

Financial assumptions – Healthcare facilities

- The scheme is not expected to result in any significant increase in rent charged to the health sector tenants of the building.
- Space allocations are similar or the same as current building occupation and design considerations reflect the need to maintain tenant rent as close to current levels as possible.
- The planned approach involving a direct relationship between WNC and the health tenants, under a TIR lease should minimise service charges, reducing them to below the level tenants pay for their occupation of the current health centre building.
- Given rent and service charge costs for health service providers will be tightly controlled there should be minimal impact on provider prices, and therefore in terms of cost to the local health system.
- The flexible bookable space will be underwritten by Northampton ICS, but analysis suggests that the per hour booking cost will be very competitive allowing for the commissioning of cost-effective community-based services on site as either an alternative to Secondary Care Provision or as additional system capacity.
- There should be no material recurrent revenue requirements for Health Partners associated with this scheme in addition to the annual rent fees and services charges.

Impact on Balance Sheet

- There should be no impact on the balance sheet of any of the health organisations involved in this project.
- Any Capital receipts either by way of reinvestment of sale proceeds of the current Health Centre or from the expected Cavell Centre Scheme will be by way on non-recurrent capital grants that are not reflected on the balance sheet of recipient organisations.

Financial Impact on Health care

- There would be no direct impact on the income of the Health Partners associated with construction or leasing of the site itself, although it is anticipated that Health Partners (with the possible exception of the Dental Provider, Rodericks) will be able to expand service provision from the new site. This may, dependent on the associated contract arrangements, result in increased income for those providers.
- There would be no direct impact on the expenditure of the Health Partners associated with construction of the site, other than that associated with the release of sale proceeds of the current Health Centre and onward payment of any agreed Cavell Centre Scheme Capital Grant.
- It is not considered that there will be any material impact on rental expenditure for individual Health Partner tenants.
- It is anticipated that service and FM charge expenditure associated with the occupation of the site by Health Partners will be lower than current levels.
- In respect of Capital the input for health partners would be limited to capital receipts from the sale of the current Health Centre Building and any Capital Grant Funding received under the anticipated Cavell Centre Development proposals. The balance of cost of the Health domain of the development would be funded by WNC, as part of a loan secured for the overall development of the integrated site. The Capital costs should therefore be regarded as affordable by Health Partners.
- In respect of rent accruing from the need to service the capital cost of purchase and development of the site the revenue projections within this study assume similar to the current levels, which we understand would be affordable by Health Partners.
- In respect of Service and FM charges associated with the occupation of the new development by Health Partners, we anticipate that these will be less than the current costs, having calculated the needs for the overall new community hub and shared spaces, and therefore be affordable to Health Partners.

Confirmation of Stakeholder Support

- As part of the preparations of this Business Case, the various elements of this Financial Case have been discussed and agreed in principle with each of the proposed Health Service Tenants.
- CCG as funder of the GP Practice rent and rates have agreed this approach.
- The PCNs and nascent ICS have agreed in principle to this Financial Case including to
 - declare the current health centre site surplus to requirements,
 - re-invest capital receipts from the sale of the current health centre site if sanctioned by NHS England,
 - underwrite the rent for the new flexible, bookable space.

Residential Development

The residential element of the scheme will be delivered by a development partner appointed by WNC. This approach is considered to offer a VFM solution for WNC as it strikes a sensible balance between optimising the commercial value of the residential development to the project and managing the risk of successfully delivering this element of the scheme allowing WNC to focus on delivering the core project.

As discussed earlier in the Commercial Case, there are two development options for WNC to consider for the residential elements of the scheme: selling the land to a commercial developer in return for a capital receipt to invest in the core project, or to work with Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH), who would fund the development of the residential scheme for market and social rent using the rental income to finance the investment. Subject to completing a feasibility study and financial appraisal of the residential development, the preferred option would be for WNC to work with NPH to fund and deliver the residential development as this option would address the demand locally for homes at affordable rents and would create a steady long term revenue stream for the Council.

8.6 Management Case

The Management Case for the Community Health and Wellbeing Hub demonstrates that the preferred redevelopment project and future operating arrangements can be successfully delivered by WNC and its partners and the outcomes and benefits sought achieved.

The design and build of the new Health and Wellbeing Hub will be procured by WNC, on behalf of and in association with its leisure and health partners. The Council will lead the site assembly and land acquisition and as landlord will then enter into agreements with each of its partners who will lease their individual facilities from WNC paying a rent and service charge for insurance and maintenance of the structure, fabric and external areas of the site and access to the central community hub space.

Management of the Leisure Facilities

The expectation at this stage, is that NLT as the current Lings Forum operator will be closely involved in the process for WNC appointing an operator to manage the new leisure centre and cinema, and potentially the library. The health partners will lease the healthcare facilities as a self-contained unit.

The leisure operator will need to be appointed in line with the procurement regulations in place at that time and WNC obligations to obtain the best consideration and deliver VFM on behalf of residents. The new State Subsidy rules which have replaced the previous State Aid regime will need to be considered as public funds are being invested in the scheme.

The current leisure contract with NLT is not subsidised by WNC and the operation of the facilities at Weston Favell are part of an integrated cross Northampton leisure offer with the surplus Lings Forum generates supporting the other sites at Mounts Baths and Danes Camp. Any changes in the Weston Favell operation and how the surplus is utilised will need to

be considered in the context of the impact on the other community leisure in Northampton.

WNC as the new Unitary Authority also incorporates the former Daventry and South Northants District Councils and their leisure facilities, which are managed by separate commercial operators, Everyone Active in Daventry and Parkwood Leisure in South Northants. The expectation is that at the appropriate time linked to the expiry of the various management agreements, WNC will undertake a review of its leisure provision to ensure it remains sustainable and fit for purpose. It is not expected that any such review would impact on the project as the outcomes being sought should not be affected by the leisure operating model. Whoever operates the leisure facilities would be required to work closely with the health and other partners to improve physical activity rates and promote better health and wellbeing.

The options for the management of the leisure elements of the project are therefore:

- **NLT directly appointed.**
Pros – service continuity, retains linkages with other leisure facilities in Northampton.
Cons – May not deliver the best VFM solution, may not satisfy Public Procurement and/or State Subsidy rules.
- **A new leisure operating contract is procured.**
Pros – Likely to deliver the best financial outcome and addresses any Public Procurement and/or State Subsidy rules.
Cons – Would impact on the wider NLT leisure contract which may not be viable without inclusion of a proportion of the Weston Favell surplus.
- **Interim contract with NLT until review of leisure provision across WNC undertaken and then implement a new leisure operating model for all of the WNC leisure portfolio.**
Pros – Service continuity, retains linkages with NLT facilities, allows most efficient model of leisure provision to be implemented at a later

date, should address any Public Procurement and/or State Subsidy rules.

Cons – delays delivery of best value solution.

Management of the Health Facilities

The health centre building is currently owned and managed by NHS Property Services. They are happy to consider selling the site and to recommend receipts are reinvested in Weston Favell, although this is ultimately an ICS decision. The Strategic Estates Board for the ICS has given its preliminary agreement to this process and to ensuring that the proceeds of sale would be reinvested into the Weston Favell development. The next step is to have this formally endorsed by the ICS when it is fully formed.

As stated earlier in the report, it is not envisaged that NHS Property Services will be involved in the management of the new building. Instead, the intention is that WNC will develop and own the building as a whole.

The Health Partners will manage and operate the health centre as a separate entity. WNC will have no involvement in this part of the building other than in relation to its landlord obligations under the TIR lease. ICS will manage and underwrite the rental cost of the clinical rooms within the central hub which can be accessed by any organisation and are separate to the health centre. These will be particularly appropriate for mental health consultations and remove the stigma that some people associate with going to a 'healthcare' building. The ICS will recover their costs from hiring out these clinical rooms to the health partners and other organisations, with the ICS responsible for managing bookings.

Management of the Community Hub Space

WNC will be responsible for managing the community hub spaces, although it is likely that they will sub-contract this responsibility to NLT as this is likely to offer best value. WNC/NLT will manage the meeting rooms that can be booked by partner organisations or the community for group consultations,

events and community activities, as well as for social prescribing and other integrated care interactions.

WNC/NLT will manage the costs of operating the central hub, such as heating, cleaning and maintenance, recovering their costs through income generated from the hire of the flexible rooms. They will agree a pricing policy for the community rooms with commercial and community rates and discretion to offer spaces free of charge and manage the bookings so as to ensure the spaces are optimally utilised, particularly at evenings and weekends. There will be scope for the health partners to include use of these rooms within their service charges.

The café within the community hub is likely to be leased to a catering provider as this would offer the best VFM outcome as NLT have a limited food and drink offer across their sites. As well as providing an offer for users the café will also generate an income stream for the project.

8.7 Summary

This section of the report has set out the strategic, economic, commercial, financial and management business case for the Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub. The project:

- Clearly aligns with the direction set out in the Government’s Sporting Futures strategy and Sport England’s Uniting the Movement vision in focusing resources on addressing the inequalities in opportunity that result in some groups leading less active lifestyles, and the NHS Long Term Plan around better integrating care services at a local level to improve health outcomes.
- Has been identified by the precursor authority to WNC in its Corporate Plan and by the Northamptonshire Care Partnership (the ICS) as a strategically important site in addressing health inequalities and building more resilient communities.
- Will replace existing accommodation which is no longer fit for purpose and expensive to operate with new integrated facilities that will

promote closer working. For instance, it is far more cost effective to prevent than treat many lifestyle conditions, and by making it easier for health professional to refer patients for physical activity interventions if leisure facilities are co-located and designed to be welcoming to those groups who do not take part in physical activity.

- Will deliver extensive social, health and economic benefits measured against a clearly defined criteria around site ownership, redevelopment potential, improved and integrated services and affordability.
- At a capital costs of £37.35 million and a net annual revenue costs to WNC of £0.99 million per annum (a potential additional cost of £0.53million based on current known liabilities), could generate £1.67 million of annual community and health benefits, demonstrating the long-term affordability and VFM of the project to WNC and its partners. It is important to note that the estimated additional revenue costs of the proposed new community hub are based, at this stage, on the known liabilities of the services being delivered by West Northants Council namely the library, children’s and adults services. At the time of this report the cost to the Council of Lings Forum Leisure Centre is zero based on the management structure in place. However, the future liabilities of all of the building stock across the study site – which has not been tested in this study – are likely to increase once further analysis has been undertaken. Therefore, the net position (based on likely future liabilities) and additional cost is likely to be reduced.
- Can be successfully delivered by WNC and its partners through a phased redevelopment of the Weston Favell site that will ensure continuity of provision throughout the project and has the support and commitment of all of the local partners.

Section 9 – Recommendations and Next Steps



9. Recommendations, Next Steps and Delivery

9.1 Recommendations

This detailed study has identified and considered the strategic and local needs, extensive consultation and service provider needs, site development options and the outline business case and have translated these into a series of leading options for the wider site which includes the Leisure Centre, Library, Cinema, Adult and Children’s Services, Healthcare centre, sports pitches, outdoor facilities, and an active outdoor environment for Weston Favell. It has also set out the advantages, disadvantages, operational issues, revenue implications and capital costs associated with the leading options.

The study has identified that the former Lings Upper school site is a clear frontrunner in terms of the overall development of the proposed new Community Health and Wellbeing Centre and that the creation of a central hub and the ethos of a single site development is physically and operationally achievable.

The business case has set out that whilst the new Unitary Authority will be required to support the additional debt financing costs required to facilitate the development, the overall operation of the site can generate a financial return to meet some of the debt finance. The remaining cost to the new Unitary Authority across the five different services, the wider social and health benefits, the increased capacity within the Primary Care Network and the delivery of a truly integrated care system at Weston Favell is considered to be value for money by the Consultant Team and will significantly improve the health and wellbeing of Northampton’s resident and specifically those within the Eastern Districts that are to be served by the proposed new development. It should be noted that the business case is not presented

and does not depend upon the provision of the residential development that is proposed flanks the new community hub.

The leading options, set out in Section 7, present a range of very exciting opportunities for all the partner involved in the project West Northants Council, the service providers, the CCG, NHFT and importantly the local community. The enhanced and expanded opportunities for people to get together, play, learn, be active and experience greater opportunities for physical activity alongside the increased capacity, efficiency and quality of primary care addresses not only the identified needs within the original brief, but also to address the strategic aims of the One Public Estate Round 7 funding from which this study was supported.

The site planning has also highlighted the opportunity to address the much-needed potential for housing in the Eastern district of Northampton meeting the growing demand for quality, affordable housing as directed again by the OPE policies and also the Council’s own planning priorities and policy.

The overall affordability has been tested against a ‘standstill position’ in terms of the on-going provision of unaffordable library provision for Weston Favell and also the projected future costs of maintaining the ageing leisure centre facilities. The current situation at the Healthcare centre, where both practices are in dispute with NHSPS regarding the service charges and high costs and the CCG have confirmed the re-provision of replacement primary care as a leading priority for Weston Favell. Alongside this both adult and children’s services have also confirmed that the current accommodation is not fit for purpose to meet the demands and quality of service that they both wish to address and maintain.

The leading services across leisure, library, adult and children’s services are all within the remit of the new unitary authority. Investment into these integral services remains a priority as supported by the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Borough Council’s Chief Executive’s office.

The primary care and clinical provision are of course influenced by a wider partnership and must go through what is often a more convoluted decision-making process. The concern at the early stages of this study was the lack of buy-in from health partners (notwithstanding the critical pressure these partner have been under due to Covid-19), however it is extremely promising that the ICS Strategic Estates Board has supported a direction of travel in which the Weston Favell development is one of the key community hubs which would provide flexible space both clinical and non-clinical services in a 'non-health specific' environment, able to deliver integrated care and enable appropriate services to move out of an acute setting into the community. This in line with the Northamptonshire iCAN Programme which sets out the vision for a community hub by 2025 as the focal point for community and primary care, removing organisational boundaries and housing community teams.

This is exactly what the development at Weston Favell is intended to address: providing the facilities to enable integration in a way that is focused on what residents want and need in order to manage their own health. The other key policy driver is the development of Primary Care Networks and the new roles within the PCNs. Weston Favell will provide a hub for the Northampton PCNs and flexible space for staff to engage with residents in a setting that is not perceived to be a traditional 'health centre'. This will reduce patients' reliance on NHS services, easing pressure on acute and primary care services.

In light of this detailed study, the impending transition from the borough Council to the new unitary authority and the successful allocation of OPE8 funding towards the Weston Favell Community Hub, the following recommendations for the new Unitary Authority to considered are therefore summarised below:

- West Northants Council agree that investment into new facilities for leisure, library, adult, children's and healthcare services are confirmed as a continued priority for WNC (the Council).
- The Council facilitates and enables the CCG to confirm the healthcare centre land is surplus to requirements on the back of agreeing the development option and recommendation within this study.
- The Council agree to lead and facilitate the priority next stages and agreed target programme following the proposed staged approach (as detailed later in this section).

9.2 Key Next Steps

The study to date has established the Strategic and Business case supporting development of the Weston Favell Community Health and Wellbeing Hub in principle, and subject to WNC progressing with the recommendations above and the funding, the project remains a priority for the Council and the stakeholders engaged within this study.

However, further technical and commercial evaluation is required to develop a more detailed understanding of cost implications and associated with developing this complex site. There are some leading next stages that the Consultant Team are recommending for WNC to achieve greater cost, commercial, land assembly and technical certainty.

Given WNC are in a very positive situation in terms of future funding support having been successful of the back of the progress of this study in securing OPE8 funding towards the development of the next stages, much of the additional technical and commercial needs for the emerging masterplan for Weston Favell can be covered by this funding.

The potential involvement of Northampton Partnership Homes also has the opportunity to release development funding towards the residential element of the scheme both in terms of assessing the capital generation as

well as the potential for housing revenue to be part of the overall site management and operations.

Central also to progress is to engage with the ICS as it develops and forms into a statutory organisation, to agree how the new approach outlined in the management case will be supported in practice. In particular, it has been set out that the ICS will have both financial and managerial responsibility for the Central Hub element (or a key part of it) of the new centre. Whilst this has been tested at the Strategic Estates Board and with a number of partner organisations, this needs to be tested once the ICS is a fully formed statutory organisation.

Key next steps include:

- Further work on valuations (housing) and site technical studies (site surveys) to be commissioned to address cost certainty, commercial viability, potential delivery and procurement (for property, management and residential including the future of the healthcare centre land with NHSPS) with a further aim to reduce the capital gap as a part of the aim to deliver the Community Hub.
- The establishment of **working group** formed from the service providers on site from leisure, library, GP and dental practices, adult and children's services, NHFT, ICS, Public Health and the CCG. The working group will need to be led by a dedicated resource either in the form of a project manager or a senior officer from WNC. The working group will need to establish the key initial step of planning for the healthcare centre land acquisition.
- **Health Centre Land** - It is important to agree with the CCG the process for declaring the health centre surplus to requirements so it can be acquired (by the Council). It is also vital to agree with the CCG that they will lead the process for taking the case to NHSE/I, to approve any proceeds of sale being reinvested into the Weston Favell development. Alongside this the Council need to plan out the process of potentially

becoming the landlord of the current building during the development phase for Weston Favell (ideally for a minimum lead in time before the new centre is operational).

- **Services and Support:** The business case refers to the types of services that will be able to use the Central Hub, which includes Primary Care Network new roles. However, this has not been fully tested with the CCG and it would be helpful to have confirmation from CCG leadership that the assumptions made in the business case are aligned with their plans for the PCN new roles and any other integrated services planned for that hub.
- **Funding Opportunities:** It is important to agree with the CCG and the ICS how any Capital Funding request associated with Cavell Centres would be managed. It is anticipated that this will require a business case submitted by the CCG/ICS and commitment is needed that the local health system will both support, resource and lead on any funds application process.
- **Other Clinical Services** : It has not at this stage been assumed that any specific out of hospital services will move to the Weston Favell development but instead a Central hub of flexible, bookable rooms, both clinical and non-clinical, has been developed, which can provide space for the development of integrated care and out of hospital services. The CCG needs to confirm that this aligns with their strategic estate and commissioning plans.
- **Project Brief and Scope** - Building on the findings and recommendations of this study, the partners need to further confirm an agreed Project Brief. This should include desired project outcomes, sustainability outcomes, quality aspirations and overall spatial requirements.
- **Technical Studies** - Before starting Concept Design stage, information should be gathered on the existing (preferred) site. This will inform the project Brief and designs, increasing cost certainty and reducing risk. This should include – topographical survey – underground utilities survey – geotechnical investigations – arboricultural survey – ecology survey.

- **Concept Design** - Once the Project Brief is confirmed and site information has been collected, the concept design for the health and wellbeing hub should be developed. This will build on the vision established in this study. The concept design will incorporate architectural proposals and landscape strategies, as well as strategic engineering requirements. This also needs to be supported by updated cost estimates based on the designs developed during the concept stage.
- **Valuations** – Further valuation works are required to gain greater clarity on residential development opportunities associated with the areas identified in the report. It is recommended to undertake site capacity tests and determine an urban design strategy to ensure that spatial cohesion can be achieved and capital estimates for funding are attained. The residential sites could also be soft market tested to gauge market interest and to benchmark the valuations.
- **Planning** – Re-engage with the Council planning department for pre-application advice on the emerging vision, including the housing proposed for the north and south of the site and how best the overall scheme should be presented.
- **Revision of Business Case, Delivery and Funding Strategy** – Following on the technical studies, revisions to the site planning and greater clarity on the capital position (via development and more detailed residential assumptions) a revision of the overall business case to update this study and assess the funding and financing position for the Council. An overall commercial, delivery, funding and procurement strategy will need to be updated.
- **Procurement Strategy** - As part of the detailed procurement strategy that is developed, there will be a need to carry out detailed due diligence on the delivery options outlined in this paper. The procurement strategy will look at sub-options under each of the three key options outlined, to ensure the optimum strategy is arrived at. This strategy should be developed in discussion with the Council’s lead project, procurement and legal officers;
- **Leisure Management** - the Council to review the position of the leisure contract in relation to Lings Forum and the wider Northampton portfolio and the proposed options for the new community health and wellbeing hub. The figures within this study assume the diversion of surpluses towards repaying the debt finance which is contrary to the current arrangement. This has been set out intentionally focused on the single site options appraisal and not reviewing the wider implications on leisure provision in Northampton. The future management of leisure facilities in Northampton may be subject to further review in the medium to longer term in relation to the new Unitary Authority and other contracts and management.

9.3 Indicative Project Programme

The business plan and revenue projections detailed in Section 8 have been prepared based on a phased redevelopment with the new leisure centre, cinema and library, healthcare centre and adult and children services progressing before the residential developments. A phased development is essential as it allows the existing facilities to remain operational during construction to ensure service continuity for each partner. Following completion of the construction and fit out of the facilities the services would be decanted into the new accommodation.

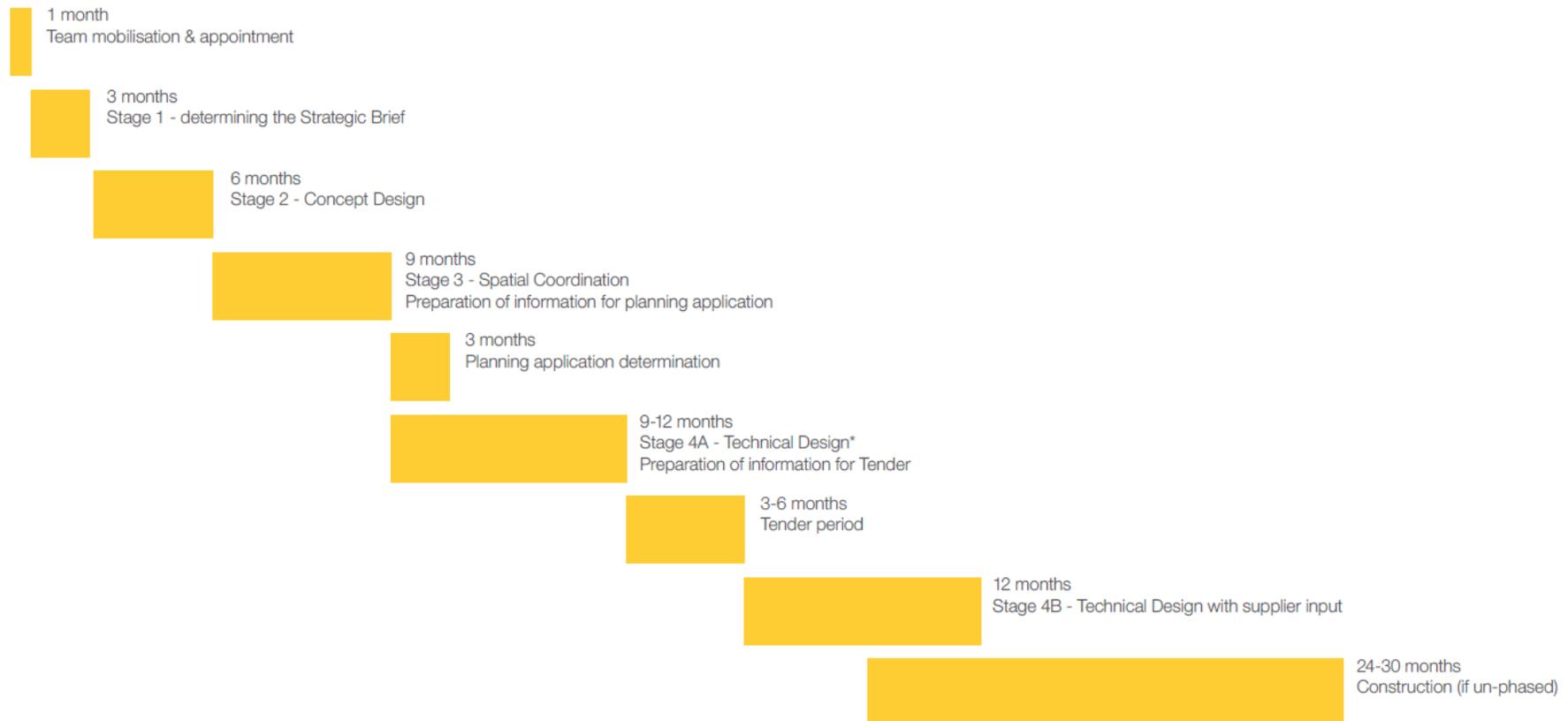
Once the services have moved into the buildings the existing facilities would be decommissioned and demolished freeing up sites for the residential development phase of the project to commence.

The programme below gives an indication of timescales for each stage of the project from design through to construction and completion. This is indicative, and the actual durations are dependent on multiple factors including the timing and success of stakeholder engagement, funding, purchase of the Healthcare Centre land, procurement method and processes. All timescales would need to be coordinated with and verified by

other design disciplines, and construction periods by a project manager and a suitably qualified main contractor.

The opportunity of the funding from OPE Round 8 to cover various these activities over the next 11 months is focused on giving the Partners and Stakeholders further detail to agree their own business cases and secure approvals – thereby enabling the scheme to ultimately move forwards to potential design and planning during 2022.

Figure 9.1 Indicative Programme





Section 10 – Summary

10. Summary

It is clear from this detailed study and the overall options appraisal that investment into replacement facilities for leisure, health, library, adult and children's services should continue to be focus for the new Unitary Authority. The proposed development of the new Community Health and Wellbeing Hub is in direct alignment with national NHS policy for the Integrated Care System bringing together the wide range of services and has received continued support via the detailed consultation process from member of the local community, key partners and stakeholders, the service providers delivering on the site and also the leading organisations who will be influential in the funding, development and delivery of this exciting and ambitious scheme. This includes the CCG, NHFT and the emerging ICS for Northampton.

The project is also very closely aligned to new national policy from Sport England which continue to place significant importance on the link between greater levels of physical activity and physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing and community development. The proposals for Weston Favell strengthen the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, with the end goal of more people experiencing the benefits of, and becoming advocates for, an active life. The Sport England strategy highlights sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together, connecting communities and having direct positive impacts on people's lives and life chances.

This project closely aligns with the strategic objectives of OPE given the ultimate aim of co-location of these vital services and organisational change with the partners and service providers looking to collaborate and work together to improve service delivery whilst generating revenue savings, potential capital receipts and facilitating much needed housing growth. The ability of this project to address the needs of the OPE strategy is further

strengthened by the securing of OPE8 funding towards the next stages as highlighted in Section 9 previously.

The study report has set out the leading options for consideration and the full financial appraisal focusing on the full delivery costs from both a capital, revenue and financing perspective. The starting point for the Council is clearly to examine the overall affordability of such a large-scale project and redevelopment of these important facilities and services. There remains some degree of uncertainty at this stage over the most commercially viable route for the delivery of such a complex site and the options to develop the site. This report has set out some initial thoughts within the Outline Business Case as well as the next steps and programme which will require more detailed scrutiny and review.

The Consultant Team have however demonstrated that the provision of a new Community Health and Wellbeing Hub, alongside significant enhancements to the open space and opportunities for residential development at the site, can and should be, a deliverable aspiration for West Northants Council.

Whilst any decisions regarding the potential redevelopment will be governed by further financial viability and affordability assessments, the wider social and health benefits and ability that the proposed new development has to play in helping the Council meet their aspirations across a wide range of agendas should not be overlooked.

This is exactly what the development at Weston Favell is intended to address, providing the facilities to enable integration in a way that is focused on what residents want and need in order to manage their own health. The other key policy driver is the development of Primary Care Networks and the new roles within the PCNs. Weston Favell will provide a hub for the Northampton PCNs and flexible space for staff to engage with residents in a setting that is not perceived to be a traditional 'health centre'. This will

reduce patients' reliance on NHS services, easing pressure on acute and primary care services.

The Consultant Team are of the opinion that the opportunities for securing external funding for physical activity, health, social care and children's services will very much be present for the Council alongside the wider regeneration funding opportunities linked to the whole site's redevelopment.

The significant contribution by the Community Health and Wellbeing Hub and the development of this leading site within Northampton to a wide range of priorities for national partners requires further exploration and work by the Council and its partners using the evidence base that is detailed in this full study report. The future of the Weston Favell Community Hub and the evident priorities and needs for the provision of improved leisure, health, library, adult and children's services will require some key actions and decisions to be taken by West Northants Council building on the evidence and initial direction provided within this study report and as presented in the previous section.

The Consultant Team consider that the main issues and key challenges associated with the overall project, and the actions that need to be taken to assess the full commercial viability and reduce the affordability gap in the first instance, are all within the sphere of influence of the Council and it is clear that there is a strong desire and will to deliver extended leisure, health, library, adult, children's services and overall community offer within Weston Favell and for Northampton that meets the needs and demands of a growing population and this evolving and developing town for many years to come.

Throughout our consultation on this study the area surrounding Weston Favell and the Easter district of Northampton has been seen as a forgotten part of the town, suffering from years of under-investment and always

playing second fiddle to investment and focus on the town centre. The local community partners we have engaged with talk of low aspirations of residents, low expectations and limited opportunities to break out from this negative cycle of low paid employment, poor health and limited access to good quality community facilities and support services.

This study has been delivered under the shadow of a global pandemic which has devastated lives and will have a lasting impact on our economy. The pandemic has also shown that at the end of a decade of austerity it has exposed further the underlying inequalities within our society.

Despite the challenges facing public sector finances, the purpose and focus of the new Unitary Authority is to influence, facilitate and deliver systematic change to reduce those inequalities and improve the wellbeing and lives of the residents of both Weston Favell and the whole of West Northants. The proposals presented within this study can not only create a focal point for these very improvements but will result in systematic change in the way health and wellbeing is accessed, delivered and improved for many thousands of residents of West Northants leading to system-wide savings and longer-term positive impact on the lives of everyone that accesses the services proposed in the new development.

Significant and hard-won support has been generated throughout this study during a very challenging 12 months. The new Unitary Authority needs to ensure momentum is maintained with the leading stakeholders and partners and confirmation of on-going senior level support within the Council will be key to continuing to facilitate these positive changes.

The new Unitary Authority is committed to investing in the future of Northampton and despite the key economic and budget challenges being faced in the public sector, the proposals for the development of the new Community Health and Wellbeing hub represent an exciting and achievable opportunity to deliver on that commitment.



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

30 June 2022

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

Report Title	Chief Officer Appointment
Report Author	Alison Golding, Assistant Director HR, alison.golding@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

Monitoring Officer	Catherine Whitehead	10/06/2022
Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer)	Martin Henry	14/06/2022
Communications Lead/Head of Communications	Becky Hutson	17/06/2022

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Council's Pay Policy Statement is produced in accordance with the requirements of Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and covers Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer roles.
- 1.2 Where any appointment, including an interim agency appointment, proposes a remuneration package that could exceed £100,000, approval will be sought from Full Council.
- 1.3 This report seeks approval for the appointment of Sally Burns as Director of Public Health (DPH) for West Northamptonshire Council and for a proposed remuneration package in excess of £100,000.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Following Cabinet approval in December 2021, the blueprint for service delivery was amended from 31st March 2022 to include a separate DPH for North and West Northamptonshire Councils. Both Councils had an Interim DPH in post ahead of the planned disaggregation of Public Health Services post April 2022 and creation of the new Integrated Care System (ICS) planned for July 2022.
- 2.2 Cabinet received an update in March 2022 advising that a review of the Public Health staff base and the management of the disaggregation process would be required. Issues including the joint model for supporting the population health management work and outcomes framework within the ICS and how we jointly staff the ongoing joint intelligence unit were also highlighted.
- 2.3 An external organisation, Kornferry, was used to independently job evaluate DPH role post vesting day. This method of job evaluation was the same scheme as the other tier 1-3 roles had been evaluated under. The job evaluated score determined the appropriate level of pay.
- 2.4 As a result of the job evaluation outcome the salary for the new role of Director of Public Health was set at a rate equivalent to the NCC Local TUPE payscale, £102,514 – 116,279. A recruitment process was undertaken for the role and the proposed salary package is within the pay scale.
- 2.5 External benchmarking was also carried out and this level of pay is commensurate with other DPH roles being advertised across the country.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Council approve the proposed appointment and remuneration.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1 To meet the legal requirements in relation to the appointment and remuneration of staff.
- 4.2 To provide consistency with previous decisions in respect of pay for other Tier 1-3 roles.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 It is a statutory requirement under the Localism Act 2011 for the Authority to approve and publish a Pay Policy Statement. The Localism Act aims to increase transparency in local government. This includes a requirement that local authority pay policy is openly approved by democratically elected councillors.
- 5.2 This extends to a requirement to publish the salaries of senior officials, to support the aim of helping local residents better understand how public money is spent in their area. The Policy Statement requires approval by Full Council for any remuneration package over £100,000.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The recommendation to appoint to the new role and the proposed level of remuneration is in line with the Council's pay policy.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 Additional costs for the separate DPH roles in West and North Northants were approved by Cabinet and are covered by the Public Health Grant.

7.2 Legal

The requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance are set out in paragraph 5 of the report. There are no legal implication arising from the appointment as the Council will continue to provide statutory functions associated with the DPH role.

7.3 Risk

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

7.4 Consultation

- 7.4.1 Members of the Cabinet have been consulted on the proposed appointment and no objections were raised.

7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

This report has not been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7.6 Climate Impact

- 7.6.1 There is no climate impact to consider in relation to the recommendation.

7.7 Community Impact

- 7.7.1 None specific.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 None

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