

Public Document Pack

30 November 2018

Our Ref O and S 11.12.18
Your Ref.
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillors Cathryn Henry, Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg, Ian Albert, Kate Aspinwall, Sam Collins, Steve Deakin-Davies, Jean Green, Steve Jarvis, Ben Lewis, Gerald Morris, Ian Moody, Michael Muir, Helen Oliver, Janine Paterson, Val Shanley and Martin Stears-Handscomb

Substitutes: Councillors Ruth Brown, Val Bryant, Bill Davidson, Simon Harwood, Terry Hone, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

You are invited to attend a

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

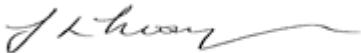
to be held in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY

On

TUESDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 2018 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,



Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community

Agenda **Part I**

Item	Page
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. MINUTES - 24 JULY 2018 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 24 July 2018.	(Pages 1 - 10)
3. MINUTES - 18 SEPTEMBER 2018 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 18 September 2018. The Minutes will be dispatched on 7 December 2018.	
4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chairman of other business which they wish to be discussed by the Committee at the end of the business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chairman will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wished to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions and presentations from members of the public.	
7. URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS The Chairman to report on any urgent or general exception items which required his agreement. At the time of printing the agenda, the Chairman had not agreed any urgent or general exception items.	

- 8. CALLED-IN ITEMS**
To consider any matters referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to a call-in of decision. At the time of printing the agenda, no items of business had been called-in.
- 9. ANNUAL REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK (2017-18)** (Pages 11 - 20)
REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING TEAM LEADER

To receive and comment on the annual report of progress made against the Council's fulfilment of the statutory duty to maintain an effective safeguarding function with regard to children and adults at risk.
- 10. INFORMATION NOTE: HALF YEAR UPDATE ON COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS (3CS)** (Pages 21 - 36)
INFORMATION NOTE OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

To update members of the Committee on the half year position in regards to the Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3Cs) for the Council and the Contractors that provide services on our behalf. Followed by Social Media Analytics.
- 11. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2019 - 2023** (Pages 37 - 70)
REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

To consider the proposed North Hertfordshire District Council Communications Strategy 2019 - 2023, which sets out the strategic direction for the Council's communications over the next five years prior to consideration by Cabinet.
- 12. PRESENTATION BY THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - COMMERCIAL**
To receive a presentation from the Service Director- Commercial regarding his directorate.
- 13. 2018/19 QUARTER 2 PI DATA** (Pages 71 - 78)
REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

To consider the Performance Indicator data for Quarter 2 of 2018/19.
- 14. 2ND QUARTER MONITORING REPORT ON KEY PROJECTS FOR 2018-19** (Pages 79 - 98)
REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES

To provide a 2nd quarter update on the delivery of the key projects for 18/19, first identified to the Committee in March 2018.

- 15. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS** (Pages 99 - 100)
To receive and respond to any questions from Members either set out in the agenda or tabled at the meeting.
- 16. RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** (Pages 101 - 108)
REPORT OF THE ACTING SCRUTINY OFFICER
To consider the outcome of Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolutions.
- 17. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2018/19** (Pages 109 - 124)
REPORT OF THE ACTING SCRUTINY OFFICER
To consider the issues that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee plans to review at future meetings and the activities of its sub-groups.

Agenda Item 2

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES,
GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY
ON TUESDAY, 24 JULY, 2018 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors Cathryn Henry (Chairman), Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg (Vice-Chairman), Ian Albert, Sam Collins, Steve Deakin-Davies, Jean Green, Steve Jarvis, Ben Lewis, Gerald Morris, Michael Muir, Oliver, Janine Paterson, Val Bryant (In place of Martin Stears-Handscomb) and Sue Ngwala (In place of Kate Aspinwall).*

In Attendance:

Jeanette Thompson (Service Director - Legal and Community), Reuben Ayavoo (Senior Policy Officer), Sarah Kingsley (Communications Manager), Jo Dufficy (Customer Services Manager), Kirstie Wilson (Temporary Scrutiny Officer) and Hilary Dineen (Acting Committee and Member Services Manager)

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kate Aspinwall and Martin Stears-Handscomb.

Having giving due notice Councillor Sue Ngwala advised that she would be substituting for Councillor Kate Aspinwall.

Having giving due notice Councillor Val Bryant advised that she would be substituting for Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb.

17 MINUTES - 12 JUNE 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2018 were tabled. Members agreed that these should be agreed and signed at the next meeting

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 June 2018 be agreed and signed at the next meeting.

18 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chairman welcomed Kirstie Wilson (Temporary Scrutiny Officer);
- (2) The Chairman thanked those who met earlier in the evening to discuss a Scope for a Waste Task and Finish Group;
- (3) The Chairman reminded those present that, in line with Council policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (4) The Chairman asked Members to speak into the microphones;

- (5) The Chairman drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no presentations by members of the public.

21 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

No urgent or general exception items were received.

22 CALLED-IN ITEMS

No items had been called-in since the last meeting of the Committee.

23 CORPORATE PLAN 2019 - 2024 AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES FOR 2019-2024

The Senior Policy Officer presented the report entitled Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024 and Corporate Objectives 2019 – 2024.

He advised that the Corporate Plan informed the Corporate Business Planning process.

Since the report was published, it had been amended and an updated version had been tabled.

Minor amendments had been made to the objectives as follows:

Objective 1

Ensure the phrase “disadvantaged people” is used consistently throughout.

Objective 2

To read “To promote sustainable growth both within and where it affects our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities, whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage.”

The Senior Policy Officer advised that the plan reflected changes in legislation, capacity of the authority, financial constraints, population changes and patterns and location of areas of deprivation.

The Corporate Plan, at Appendix A, recognised the daily activity that the Council undertook

The objectives had remained the same for the last 3-4 years, however the aim was to review and refresh the document for the 2019/20 new Civic year.

The current Corporate Plan was a living document and minor amendments had been made to the published and current Corporate Plan as follows:

Percentage of Household Waste sent for Reuse, Recycling and composting.

The target for 2018/19 had been reduced from 60% to 55%, as the 60% target was aspirational and, although in the future this might be achieved, recent forecasting indicated that performance this year would be lower.

Crime Figures

North Herts had moved from fourth to third lowest in the county.

Third Party reporting Centre

Clarity around what a third party reporting centre is.

CAB

The significant support that NHDC provides to CAB seeks to address the needs of those that live in areas of deprivation

Local Plan

The Submission Local Plan was subject to an extensive Examination in Public, potential sites were subject to individual and group representations made to the Inspector. The forthcoming Modifications put forward by the inspector will be subject to a further consultation process.

We recognise that tensions exist in creating opportunities for growth both to sustain the local population and to meet the growth aspirations of neighbours, including the impact on rail and road networks and the green and open spaces so important to our residents.

- We will review both existing and future green space provision.
- We will represent the authority with regard neighbours plans, policies and aspirations such as with the expansion of London Luton Airport, the growth envisaged within the Oxford/Milton Keynes/Cambridge Arc and London.

Go Local Policy

Expenditure under the Go Local Policy increased 16% to 38%

Town Centres

Acknowledgement of the challenges facing high street/town centre retail and Local plan – social housing provision

Commercialism

Appointment of the Service Director - Commercial in June to drive this agenda for the council.

The progression of the building control company (Herts Building Control)

Highlight of the excellent work of Careline and its expansion across the districts with 16,000 service users.

Areas of Deprivation

Added clarity to identify the areas of deprivation in North Herts.

Financial

Readiness for future reductions that could arise from Business rates retention models, fair funding and new homes bonus allocations.

Members were generally disappointed with the Corporate Plan and were concerned that the document appeared to be a list of past achievement rather than a forward facing aspirational document that included details of future plans and expressed concern that the document was just an amended version of last years Plan

A number of suggestions were made regarding items that should be included in the Corporate Plan including:

- How the Council will continue to address air quality issues across the District;
- Inclusion of aspirational targets rather than Targets that were achievable, so as to encourage improvement;
- More reference to supporting equality and diversity throughout North Herts including work undertaken with LGBT groups;
- More detail on how objectives and targets would be achieved;

- Acknowledgment of changing risks to employment opportunities in surrounding areas such as Stevenage;
- More detail regarding the issues that would have an impact on the organisation and its budget and how these would be overcome.

In response to questions the Service Director – Legal and Community confirmed that it was planned to refresh the Plan in time for the 2020 Civic Year and work would likely start in September 2018 regarding this that would include Member workshops and that the new document could potentially look very different.

Most Members felt strongly that the Corporate Plan was not fit for purpose and needed to be refreshed and there was lively debate as to the appropriate timing for this to happen, with some Members demanding an immediate rewrite, and that there should be more Member involvement, at an earlier stage, in the development of the Plan, possibly through a Member workshop.

Some Members commented that the Corporate Plan had not included some of the most important issues in past years, such as the retendering of the Waste Contract. Decision making was being led by financial issues rather than by this document. In response to a question the Senior Policy Officer advised that the drawing up of a brand new Plan would take a large amount of Officer time.

RESOLVED: That the report entitled Corporate Plan and Corporate Objectives 2019-2024 be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers that the current Corporate Plan Document is a record of past achievements rather than a plan for the future, and that it should be revised to clearly set out plans to achieve Council's objectives.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Urges Cabinet to revise this Plan at the earliest opportunity.

REASON FOR DECISION: To consider the report entitled Corporate Plan and Corporate Objectives 2019-2024 prior to consideration by Cabinet.

24 **INFORMATION NOTE - FULL YEAR UPDATE ON COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS (3Cs)**

The Committee received an information note entitled Full Year Update on Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3Cs).

The Customer Services Manager advised that this was the annual update regarding the 3Cs and drew attention to the following:

- The format of the report had changed 18 months ago and was a more visual style.
- The number of 3Cs had mostly decreased.
- In 2013/14, there had been a significant increase, but the numbers had steadily decreased since that time so that the level was now reasonably consistent.
- During 2017/18 there had been an increase in the number of comments, which was mainly regarding the planned changes to the waste service and the removal of dog waste bins.
- The leisure centres had received increased feedback following installation of feedback machines.
- All feedback was welcomed and encouraged.
- Complaints were usually responded to within 10 days.

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- Nine complaints were escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman,
- One complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman was upheld relating to Planning and Development, this had previously been reported to the Committee.
- Nationally the Local Ombudsman upheld 60 percent of complaints referred to them.

In response to queries and comments from Members, the Customer Service Manager advised that social media comments and complaints were not formally logged, although complaints were picked up and dealt with.

The Communications Manager advised that analytic data regarding social media use could be produced and there had been a significant increase in social media traffic recently.

Many of the social media posts were not making specific points or complaints, but were mainly people making their voice heard, which could not be recorded under 3Cs. However, if specific issues or complaints were made, the customer was asked to direct message the Council and the issue would then be taken forward and recorded.

A protocol regarding social media was being developed which would address issues such as:

- The Council is not available 24 hours a day to respond to social media enquiries and comments;
- What the Council would tolerate in terms of comments from users;
- How we would deal with comments and complaints

Members expressed concern that the comments, compliments and complaints made via social media were not included in the data and suggested that more sophisticated social media analytic applications should be invested in and utilised.

They were concerned that the protocol for recording comments and compliments seemed less stringent than that for recording complaints and that the protocols used for 3Cs should be reviewed to ensure they were fit for purpose whether the numbers of contacts were small or large.

Members noted that the complaints page on the NHDC website did not mention social media and suggested one of the methods of making a complaint to be by fax. They suggested that this page should be reviewed.

The Customer Services Manager advised that obtaining the right technology, including analytical capabilities, formed part of their future plans.

In response to further comments and questions the Customer Services Manager advised that:

- The web pages regarding complaints would be reviewed.
- The policy stated that third party complaints, such as those from Councillors, would not be recorded, although the customer would be contacted and, if they made a complaint directly, this would be recorded.

Members were concerned that complaints made on behalf of residents by Councillors were not recorded, as the public viewed Councillors as being the Council.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Executive Member be requested to consider obtaining the right technology to ensure that comments, compliments and complaints made via social media, as well as those received by other methods, are able to be analysed, progressed and recorded effectively;

- (2) That the Customer Services Manager be requested to review the NHDC website pages regarding complaints and update it as necessary.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the full year update regarding Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3Cs).

25 A NEW APPROACH TO SERVICE PLANNING

The Service Manager – Legal and Community presented the report entitled A New Approach to Service Planning.

She advised that the Senior Management Team had reviewed the approach taken in regard to service planning and how this would be presented and agreed that there would be an overarching 4 year Service Delivery Plan with service areas providing input into individual service actions plans all of which would be updated annually.

The new Service Delivery Plan and Action Plans were available on the NHDC website

In response to queries from Members the Service Director –Legal and Community advised that the service action plans had been provided to SMT, who then included any corporate actions in those documents in the Service Plan, the service specific/operational items were then published as the Service Action Plans.

The Communications Manager advised that, as part of the service planning process, SMT considered that latest results of the District Wide Survey, specifically regarding how well informed people felt, whether NHDC consulted with people regarding what they want, whether NHDC engaged with local communities and whether NHDC fully consulted with people, all of which had received less positive results in this survey.

In response to the results of the District Wide Survey, the Communication Team were looking at using new channels of communication and would be introducing an Ebulletin service, where people can subscribe to specific topics, and a digital magazine.

Whilst awaiting the expected Task and Finish Group on Consultation, there had been an interim review of the Consultation Strategy which had considered:

- Staff awareness of the Consultation Strategy;
- How well consultations and feedback was publicised;
- Use of the Citizens Panel.

The Communications Manager further advised that she would be offering the Senior Managers Group a session regarding consultation that would remind Service Managers of the Consultation Strategy, what it is, what the principals are and how consultations should be carried out.

They were also considering how the Citizens Panel could be used more effectively and whether people would like to leave their email address so that feedback could be given on consultations that they had taken part in and the decision taken following that consultation.

Members asked who best the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could support and engage with the development of the Consultation Strategy.

The Communications Manager advised that, her main focus would be on developing the Citizens Panel as they were a group of willing volunteers who could provide a lit of useful information.

Members welcomed the introduction of an e-magazine and queried whether, once introduced, the printed magazine could then be discontinued.

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The Communications Manager informed Members that the number of editions of Outlook had been reduced and there were no plan to stop this paper magazine. Outlook was widely read and well received however it was acknowledged that not everyone read it and that it appealed to a specific demographic.

The purpose of the e-magazine was to reach audiences that were not already reading the magazine and would be much more community focussed. Social media users tended to be a different group of people from those already engaging with us.

Members commented that the list of activities at Section C of the Plan were not prioritised, nor were resources for these activities identified and in respect of service action plans, these appeared to be business as usual topics and again they were not prioritised.

They queried how many people were on the Citizens Panel and whether they were representative in age/gender/diversity etc to the residents of the District.

The Communications Manager advised that that historically the Citizens Panel was recruited when the District Wide Survey was undertaken and it was not representative of the District, however if the Citizens Panel were used more frequently, the limitations would have to be recognised.

The Service Director – Legal and Community agreed to feedback the comments regarding the prioritising of actions plans and that they need to consistent in their content.

In response to queries, the Service Director – Legal and Community advised that the Service Delivery Plan provided a link between the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy and the targets set with staff during Regular Performance Reviews. It was part of the 'golden thread' that linked the Council's priorities with the work of individual members of staff.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the new approach to service planning be noted;
- (2) That the interim review of the Council's Consultation Strategy be noted;
- (3) That the Committee requests that the review of the Consultation Strategy (see 2 above) be taken into account by the Task and Finish Group which considers the subject of Consultation.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is aware of the processes in place with the organisation in respect of service planning;
- (2) To inform the Overview and Scrutiny of the interim review of the Consultation Strategy prior to the Task and Finish Group on consultation which will of course produce its own recommendations in due course.

26 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

No questions had been submitted.

27 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Temporary Scrutiny Officer presented the report entitled Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and drew attention to the following:

Complete Resolutions

A number of resolutions had been marked as complete and would be removed for the next report.

Minute 111 – March 2017 - Resolutions Report –Task and Finish Groups

A training proposal had been received from the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

This consisted of a 2.5 hour training course for all Members and a suitable date for the delivery of the course was being sought.

Minute 31 – July 2017 – Resolutions Report for July 2017

A workshop was still in progress regarding improving relations between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the actions resulting from the resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted;
- (2) That the Temporary Scrutiny Officer be requested to canvass the Members of this Committee in order to ascertain the most appropriate date for the Centre of Public Scrutiny training course.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review and monitor the progress of resolutions made.

28 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2018/19

The Temporary Scrutiny Officer presented the report entitled Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and drew attention to the following:

Topics to be scheduled

Paragraphs 8.4 and 8.5 of the report detailed topics that had yet to be scheduled into the work programme.

The Waste Contract

A small group of Members met before this meeting to develop a scope for a proposed Task and Finish Group on the new Waste Contract, this would be presented to the Committee at a late meeting.

The Service Manager – Waste and Recycling indicated at the meeting in June 2018 that she needed a bit of time to gather data and information and to let the contract settle down and it was now time to consider how and when the Waste Contract would be reviewed by the Committee.

Members acknowledged that the contract was not yet of a standard that warranted officers being taken from their duties to report to this Committee, yet there was a timing imperative, as a key officer was due to go on maternity leave and her input would be invaluable.

They were concerned that the Committee had the opportunity to establish whether there were ongoing problems and ask questions as to why they were ongoing.

Councillor Dennis-Harburg (Chair of the Task and Finish Scoping Group) advised that the group had been trying to identify the ongoing issues and prepare a list of questions that could be used as a basis for the Service Manager's report and presentation to the Committee in September. This initial review could then, if required be followed by a more detailed Task and Finish Group.

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Members agreed that the Service Manager – Waste and Recycling, the Executive Member for Waste, Recycling and Environment and a senior Manager from Urbaser should be invited to the September meeting of this Committee.

Members noted that the contract in East Herts was operating smoothly and the reasons for the differences between the areas should be identified.

They agreed that the September meeting should be, as far as possible, a single issue meeting, with scheduled business being moved to a late meeting.

Communications Strategy

The Chairman suggested that, rather than a Task and Finish Group on Consultation, volunteer Members of this Committee be requested to meet with the Communications Manager to advise on the Consultation Strategy and Citizens Panel.

The following Members volunteered:

Councillors Sam Collins, Steve Deakin-Davies and Sue Ngwala.

The group was asked to update the Committee once the work was complete.

Local Plan Modifications

The Service Director – Legal and Community advised that the Inspector did not anticipate coming back to the Council to request further documentation until mid September 2018 and was unlikely to go to Cabinet or Council in September 2018.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme be noted;
- (2) That the meeting due to be held on 18 September 2018 be, as far as possible, a single issue meeting focussing on the waste contract, with scheduled business being moved to a later meeting;
- (3) That the Waste Contract Scope be finalised and agreed by the scoping group in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (4) That, in place of the proposed Task and Finish Group on Consultation, the Temporary Scrutiny Officer be requested to facilitate a meeting of Councillors Sam Collins, Steve Deakin - Davies and Sue Ngwala and the Communications Manager to discuss the Consultation Strategy and the Citizens Panel and that those Councillors be requested to report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee once the work is completed.
- (5) That the group considering the Consultation Strategy and Citizens Panel (see 4 above), be requested to take into consideration the Interim Review of that Strategy (see Minute 25(3))

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to plan and carry out its workload efficiently and effectively.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm

Chairman

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 DECEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: ANNUAL REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK (2017-18)

REPORT OF: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING TEAM LEADER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PROSPER AND PROTECT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council has robust procedures in place that govern how staff and members deal with concerns about children and adults at risk in order to maintain our statutory duty to safeguard their welfare. Work is ongoing to ensure that these procedures are understood and followed throughout the organisation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee be recommended to:

- 2.1 Receive and comment on the annual report of progress made against the Council's fulfilment of the statutory duty to maintain an effective safeguarding function with regard to children.
- 2.2 Receive and comment on the annual report of progress made against the Council's fulfilment of the statutory duty to maintain an effective safeguarding function with regard to adults at risk.
- 2.3 Agree that sufficient and robust processes are in place at NHDC for application and review of safeguarding processes, and that an annual review and presentation to this committee should continue.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendation(s) contained within paragraph 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 are made due to this being the best course of action that can be accommodated within the approved budget and officer resources, that will fulfil our statutory and lawful obligations but also ensure that a regular, corporate review exists.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4. None applicable.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

5.1 The Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health (adult safeguarding) has been consulted and has endorsed the content of the report.

5.2 The Executive Member for Community Engagement and Rural Affairs (child safeguarding) has been consulted and has endorsed the content of the report.

6. FORWARD PLAN

6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

7.1 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on all statutory agencies working with children and young people to 'safeguard and promote their welfare'. The duty means that key people and bodies must make arrangements to ensure their functions are discharged with full regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This also includes responsibility to monitor sufficient arrangements in services they contract out to others.

7.2 The Care Act 2014 came into effect on 1st April 2015 and places a statutory duty on top tier local authorities to provide services to meet the needs of adults who require care and support. A duty to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board in every local authority area was introduced and a duty placed on Districts Councils and other local organisations to cooperate fully with the board. This duty involves both referring concerns and providing information when requested to assist with investigations. District Council representation is maintained on both the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Children's Board and Hertfordshire Districts Safeguarding Group.

7.3 Our statutory function remains that of referring concerns to the relevant agency for necessary action. When making a formal referral, the Council should receive notification as to whether the referral has met the threshold for further enquiry or not. An officer who has significant dealings with the victim could be asked to contribute to a case conference and/or provide further information. Where this is not the case, we would rarely be informed of further action.

7.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an annual report detailing safeguarding activity undertaken by the Council over the previous year and significant actions that will be undertaken in the coming year.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Between April 2017 and March 2018 the Council made 114 referrals to agencies where there was a safeguarding concern.

- 19 children were referred to social care due to concerns that they were experiencing abuse. These involved 13 different families and involved a mixture of physical and emotional abuse and concerns of neglect.
- 7 referrals were made to the Hertfordshire Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or the Hertfordshire IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) about an adult experiencing domestic abuse where no children were present in the family.
- 60 domestic abuse notifications were made where children were referred to social services because they were present in a household where domestic abuse was taking place. This referral is automatic and does not require the consent of the parent/carer. Adults however do have to provide consent to be referred themselves to the MARAC or IDVA for support with domestic violence.
- 13 adults were referred to social care due to concerns that they were experiencing abuse. To make this referral an adult has to provide consent unless the referring professional believes the adult lacks the mental capacity to make an informed decision about this.
- 6 adults were referred to the Hertfordshire Single Point of Access (SPA) due to a concern that they had an unmet mental health need. As above, unless the adult is deemed to lack mental capacity they must consent to this referral.
- 2 adults were referred to the Prevent Channel panel due to concerns that they were potential victims of radicalisation. Adults have to provide consent to be referred for support if they are deemed to be at risk of radicalisation.
- 7 children were referred to social care because a decision was made that their parent/carer was intentionally homeless. This referral is automatic when a family is deemed to be intentionally homeless and children are present in the household.
- In addition, officers logged concerns about 8 children and 19 adults that did not meet the threshold for a concern. Early help will have been offered to individuals or families and/or referrals made to other agencies who can offer early intervention and support. All concerns are logged in a central database, allowing us to cross reference new concerns and make a referral if and when the threshold is reached.
- The number of total referrals made by the Council has steadily risen over the last 5 years. Across the same period, referral rates into social care have remained fairly static and fluctuate up and down between quarters. Developments at the Council such as a central database of all referrals, corporate safeguarding training and numerous awareness raising campaigns have likely resulted in both an increased awareness and confidence amongst staff as well as improved corporate oversight about the safeguarding actions undertaken across the organisation. This has resulted in a greater number of recorded referrals.

8.2 The following data is intended to provide context on the prevalence of safeguarding cases in Hertfordshire, using the most current and relevant data available. When District ranking is shown, 1st indicates the District with the highest prevalence and 10th indicates the lowest.

- At the end of 2017, North Hertfordshire ranked 5/10 in the Hertfordshire Districts for the rate of domestic abuse notifications where children were present. The figures for the District as a whole have fluctuated between 90 to 149 notifications per quarter. These statistics include referrals made by all agencies as well as members of the public.
- At the end of 2017, North Hertfordshire ranked 7/10 in the Hertfordshire Districts for numbers of children's social care referrals (1/10 representing the District with the lowest referral rate). The figures for the District as a whole have fluctuated between 91 to 150 referrals per quarter. These statistics include referrals made by all agencies into children's social care as well as members of the public.
- At the end of 2017, 533 children in Hertfordshire were subject to a child protection plan. This figure has been steadily reducing.
- The most recent quarterly data from the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board reported 1977 adults across Hertfordshire were referred for safeguarding concerns. This resulted in 1296 enquiries being pursued. In the case of the remaining 681 adults referred, they were deemed not to meet the threshold for an enquiry.
- During the same quarter, North Hertfordshire as a whole ranked 3/10 for safeguarding referrals for adults, at a rate of 65 referrals per 10,000 population.

8.3 Actions completed April 2017 to March 2018:

- Following a corporate learning needs analysis, all posts have been assessed as to the level of safeguarding training required for both adults at risk and children.
- Level one and two safeguarding training has been delivered to all relevant officers.
- Mental Capacity Act training was delivered to all Designated Safeguarding Officers and housing staff to support staff to determine when an adult has the capacity to refuse consent for a safeguarding referral.
- The Safeguarding Children and Adults e-learning package has been updated. The Senior Management Team designated this as essential for all staff.
- A Domestic Abuse policy and referral procedure has been published alongside a dedicated information page on the intranet.
- All Designated Safeguarding Officers received training from Operation Tropic on Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking.
- Improvements have been made to simplify the referral process for housing staff to avoid duplication of forms.
- The Safeguarding Support Officer now attends the corporate induction to give a safeguarding briefing to all new starters.
- Representation has been maintained at the Hertfordshire District Safeguarding group which brings together all ten districts and the adults and children's boards.
- The Corporate Safeguarding group continues to meet twice a year.
- An annual compliance audit was completed for the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

- An annual compliance audit of our learning and development opportunities was completed for the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board.
- Following a recommendation from the adult board, statements were added to the job description of every Designated Safeguarding Officer and an action added to their Regular Performance Review.

8.4 Work planned for April 2018 to March 2019 (some already completed):

- A corporate action plan (appendix A) is to be published outlining the Council's approach to addressing Modern Day Slavery. Actions include mandatory e-learning or awareness training for all staff. These opportunities have also been offered to all members. *(Action now completed)*
- Continued attendance at the Hertfordshire District Safeguarding Group and Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Forums.
- Continued delivery of corporate safeguarding learning and development programme to ensure all new starters receive a corporate induction briefing, a learning needs assessment and the relevant level of training.
- Continued maintenance of the corporate safeguarding database, including responses to Section 17 and 47 enquiries for children and information sharing requests for adults.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Council's Constitution at paragraph 6.2.7(y) states that the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee includes to "Consider reports relating to the authority's safeguarding responsibilities".
- 9.2 The relevant legislation includes the Children Act 2004, the key points of which are:-
- Section 11 places a statutory duty on key people and bodies – including district councils to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
 - Section 10 outlines the duty to promote inter-agency cooperation between named agencies (including district councils).
- 9.3 Legislation to reform multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children formed part of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, which sets out new safeguarding duties. Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSBC's) will be abolished and new requirements have been placed on top tier local authorities, the police and health to make arrangements for safeguarding children in their local area. Hertfordshire is currently undergoing a transition with the LSCB still in operation. However plans to establish a Multi agency Safeguarding Arrangement (MASA) are underway and we await detail as to how District Council's will be involved in this.

9.4 The Care Act 2014 came into effect on 1st April 2015 and places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide services to meet the needs of adults who require care and support. A duty to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board in every local authority area was introduced and a duty has been placed on Districts Councils alongside other local organisations to cooperate fully with the board.

9.5 The key responsibility for safeguarding in Hertfordshire lies with the County Council and it is important to remember that it is not the responsibility of any District Council member, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider to determine whether abuse is being experienced, or has taken place, or indeed the nature of any abuse.

The role of the member, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider is to inform and report concerns, not to investigate or judge. A District Council is not responsible for investigating any safeguarding incidents or allegations, involving children, young people or adults at risk, but provides the local 'eyes and ears' to enable a route to report any concerns.

9.6 In respect of modern day slavery, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 places two specific duties on local authorities under sections 43 and 52 of the Act, to co-operate with the Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner and a duty to identify and refer victims through to the National Referral Mechanism, or Home Secretary (for non-consenting adult victim situations), respectively. Modern day slavery will be treated as falling under the over-arching area of Safeguarding and reported through to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as part of the annual report accordingly.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Currently, the corporate training budget provides funding for all levels of safeguarding training. However it should be noted that there are increased training needs for both staff and members in response to the national agenda e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation, Prevent, domestic abuse which may in future place additional pressure on learning and development budgets. In addition, we continue to source training opportunities that are provided free of charge by partners such as Hertfordshire Constabulary.

10.2 There are no capital implications.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Progress on implementing and reviewing "Policies for Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm" is assessed on the risk register via risk entry RR278. The latest assessment of the identified risks, completed in March 2018, scored the Impact as being "High" but the Likelihood as being "Low".

11.2 NHDC's safeguarding policies and procedures outline the various steps taken by the Council to reduce the risk to employees, children and adults at risk accessing our services, including procedures for safe recruitment, learning and development for employees and reporting procedures for employees with concerns.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 Due to their age, development and dependency on adults including in the delivery of services, children are vulnerable and therefore often more open to abuse. They have a legal right to be protected and for organisations to take appropriate action to prevent and report suspected abusive behaviour. The Equality Act supports the Children Act 2004 to provide this protection to vulnerable children.
- 12.3 Equally, adults who are more vulnerable, either through decreased mental capacity/age related dementia, learning difficulties, or their personal domestic situation i.e. changing from one residential care home to another, have a legal right to be protected and for organisations to take appropriate action to prevent and report suspected abusive behaviour.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The Human Resources role in safeguarding is, in the main, covered by processes contained in the Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Disclosure Barring Service Employment Checks Policy. HR also assist with learning and development and there are no additional human resource implications to this report.

15. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Modern Day Slavery Action Plan 2018-2021

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

16.1 Helen Rae, Community Health and Wellbeing Team leader
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Gemma Mitchell, Safeguarding Support Officer
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Reuben Ayavoo, Senior Policy Officer
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Anne Miller, Group Accountant
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Tim Everitt, Performance and Risk Officer
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Kerry Shorrocks, Corporate Human Resources Manager
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James Ellis, Advisory and Litigation Lawyer
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Jeanette Thompson, Service Director – Legal & Community
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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Appendix A: North Herts District Council Modern Day Slavery Action Plan 2018-2021

ACTION & EXPECTED OUTCOME	TIME FRAME	LEAD
<p>MONITORING AND REPORTING To have an effective corporate monitoring and reporting process</p>		
<p>Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) to oversee and monitor compliance with modern day slavery and human trafficking duties (MDS) requirements and report / make recommendations to Community Safety Manager/ Service Director: Legal & Community on proposed changes. Decision then taken as to reporting through to Senior Management Team (SMT) and other relevant Council body.</p> <p>To include within Annual Safeguarding report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p>	Ongoing	Corporate Safeguarding Group/ Community Safety Manager/ Community Health and Wellbeing Team Leader /Service Director: Legal & Community
<p>POLICY AND PROCESS To ensure that legal duties are met and where relevant reflected/ embedded in other corporate policies/ procedures and guidance. Support of victims.</p>		
<p>Incorporate modern slavery requirements in Safeguarding Policy.</p>	Safeguarding Policy by October 2018 Other relevant policies: by October 2019	Community Safety Manager/ Community Health and Wellbeing Team Leader / Senior Policy Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of MDS guidance notes. • Development of MDS procedure notes for reporting and referral process. • Centralised log of all NRM or MS1 referrals established. • Monitoring of NRM / MS1 forms. • Inclusion in annual Safeguarding report/ and any audits. • Amend Safeguarding intranet page to include MDS. 	By September 2018	Community Health and Wellbeing Team Leader / Safeguarding Support Officer
<p>Update procurement and contract procedure rules to ensure, where possible, MDS applicable and compliant (to obtain assurance for MDA compliance for relevant contracts).</p>	By December 2018	Contract Procurement Group/ Contract and Procurement Lawyer and Procurement Officer

<p>The Homelessness and Housing Advice Manager to provide potential victims of MDS with advice on their housing options (including homelessness services) and to signpost to other specialist support agencies as appropriate.</p> <p>The Homelessness and Housing Advice Manager will support the police and partners in Operation Tropic activities through the provision of an on-site housing options service (including homelessness advice), as required.</p>	Ongoing	Strategic Housing Manager
<p>COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING To ensure that employee and Members are aware</p>		
<p>• Senior Management Training; • Senior Management Team endorsement of Action Plan • Member awareness through MIS and invites to training sessions; • Staff Briefing and Anti-Slavery awareness day (18 October 2018)</p> <p>Support of annual Anti-Slavery 18 October: Internal: information on intranet, Insight/ again raising awareness and highlighting forthcoming briefing training sessions External: Communications raising using social media to raise public awareness</p> <p>• Senior Management Group external trainer; • Regular awareness sessions for the Corporate Safeguarding Group.</p> <p>• Embed (where possible) in compulsory staff training modules/ delivery. Staff training – series of 1 hour briefing sessions with external trainer (e.g. police) for those staff identified to be arranged for end of October and end of November (new staff to do e-learning, and to be monitored by CSG).</p>	<p>August 2018 2 October 2018 12 October 2018 17 October 2018 (& repeat 18 October annually)</p> <p>24 October 2018</p> <p>End October/ early November and ongoing</p>	<p>Community Safety Manager/ Safeguarding Support Officer Communications team</p> <p>Safeguarding Support Officer/ Learning & Development officers</p>
<p>PARTNERS To ensure links between partner organisations</p>		
<p>To work with Hertfordshire Modern Slavery Partnership</p> <p>To work with the North Herts Community Safety Partnership.</p>	Ongoing	Community Safety Manager/ Chief Executive

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
11 DECEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: HALF YEAR UPDATE ON COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS (3CS)

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER– COUNCILLOR MRS LYNDA NEEDHAM

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This information note is to update members of the Committee on the half year position in regards to the Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3Cs) for the Council and the Contractors that provide services on our behalf. This briefing note accompanies the 3Cs dashboards at Appendix A and B.

2. INFORMATION TO NOTE

2.1 3Cs, and in particular comments and complaints, have increased significantly during this six month period; the increase is attributed to the changes in the garden waste service and issues with the new waste and recycling contract. The table below gives a high level comparison of 3Cs for the same period of the last three years; this includes 3Cs received both at NHDC and by our contractors who provide key front line services on our behalf.

	Comments	Compliments	Complaints	Total
Apr 2018 - Sep 2018	755	294	1336	2385
Apr 2017 - Sep 2017	200	319	397	916
Apr 2016 - Sep 2016	114	214	373	701

2.2 The significant increase in 3Cs during this period related to the implementation of the new waste and recycling contract, including the introduction of the garden waste subscription service and weekly food collections. The new contract with Urbaser started in May and initial operational issues saw a huge increase in contact to the Council and Urbaser, along with an increase in comments and complaints. This matter has previously been considered by this Committee and has been the subject of reports to both Cabinet and Council. The volumes relating specifically to waste are shown below.

	Comments	Compliments	Complaints	Total
Apr 2018 - Sep 2018	552	34	1110	1696

- 2.3 The outgoing contractor Veolia did not provide their 3Cs data for April, therefore the data we have from Urbaser covers just the five month period of May to September.

The table below provides a breakdown of 3Cs by type and by service area.

	Comments	Compliments	Complaints	Service Totals	Area
Chief Executive	1	0	0	1	
Electoral Services	1	0	0	1	
Communication	1	0	0	1	
Customer Service Centre	4	6	6	16	
Grounds Maintenance	1	7	12	20	
Leisure	0	2	3	5	
Parking Services	1	0	7	8	
Parks & Open Spaces	1	1	2	4	
Waste Management	140	13	638	791	
Benefits	1	1	11	13	
Post & Administration	0	4	1	5	
Revenues Technical	2	0	1	3	
Revenues Billing & Recovery	2	3	8	13	
Careline	0	39	0	39	
Enforcement	0	0	1	1	
Environmental Health - Commercial	0	2	3	5	
Environmental Health - Protection	0	1	5	6	
Housing Needs	0	2	5	7	
Licensing & Enviro Crime	0	1	8	9	
Planning Control & Conservation	0	2	17	19	
Planning Policy	0	0	3	3	
NHDC totals	155	84	731	970	
Urbaser	412	21	472	905	
John O'Conner	0	0	14	14	
North Herts Leisure Centre	56	100	50	206	
Hitchin Leisure and Swim Centre	74	51	48	173	
Royston Leisure Centre	58	38	21	117	
Contractor Totals	600	210	605	1415	
COMBINED TOTALS	755	294	1336	2385	

- 2.4 The Local Government Ombudsman received three complaints during this period; two were relating to Planning and Development Control and were the same complaint from two customers, although the LGO decision was recorded as upheld – maladministration no injustice. Our own 3Cs process had already identified that an administrative error had occurred and been rectified. The LGO decision was as follows: *“A condition added to a planning permission was not necessary or relevant but this fault has not caused a significant enough injustice to warrant further investigation”*

The third case related to Benefits and was not investigated as it had not been through our own process.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 3Cs performance will continue to be monitored and reported to SMT quarterly and Overview and Scrutiny six monthly.

4. APPENDICES

- 4.1 Appendix A – 3Cs Dashboard
- 4.2 Appendix B – Waste only Dashboard
- 4.3 Appendix C – Social Media Analytics, to be presented by Sarah Kingsley.

5. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 5.1 Jo Dufficy
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Johanne.dufficy@north-herts.gov.uk
01462 474555

Howard Crompton
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01462 474247

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 None

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3Cs Performance Summary - 01 April 2018 – 30 September 2018



3CS RECEIVED DIRECTLY AT NHDC – 6 MONTHLY COMPARISONS

	2016 Apr - Sept	2017 Apr - Sept	2018 Apr - Sept
Number of Comments received	42	67	155
Number of compliments received	101	71	84
Number of complaints received	126	85	731
% resolved within 10 working days	70%	68%	44%
Complaints received by the LGO	3	6	3

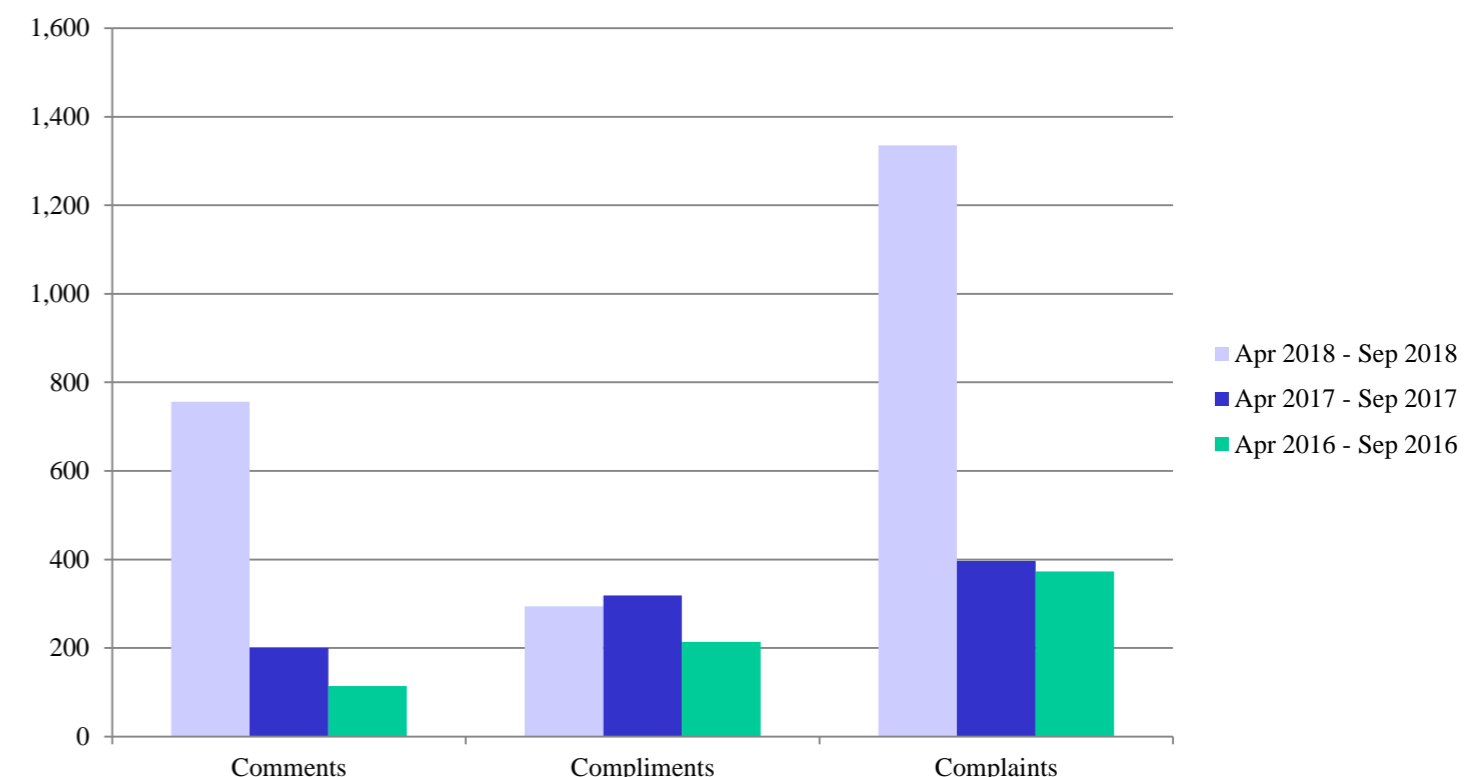
Contractor Complaints Data

	2016 Apr - Sept	2017 Apr - Sept	2018 Apr - Sept
Number of Comments received	72	133	600
Number of Compliments received	113	248	210
Number of Complaints received	247	312	605

Combined Totals

	2016 Apr - Sept	2017 Apr - Sept	2018 Apr - Sept
Number of Comments received	114	200	755
Number of Compliments received	214	319	294
Number of Complaints received	373	397	1336

Annual 3Cs comparisons NHDC & Contractor
Combined 01 Apr- 30 Sept



Local Government Ombudsman Complaint Decisions

Service Area (LGO Classification)	LGO Decision
Benefits & Tax (Council Tax)	Not investigated - premature
Planning x 2 (same complaint – 2 complainants)	Upheld maladministration – no injustice

Waste and Recycling Data (combined)

	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
April – September 18	552	34	1110

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3Cs Performance Summary Waste Only- 01 April 2018 – 30 September 2018

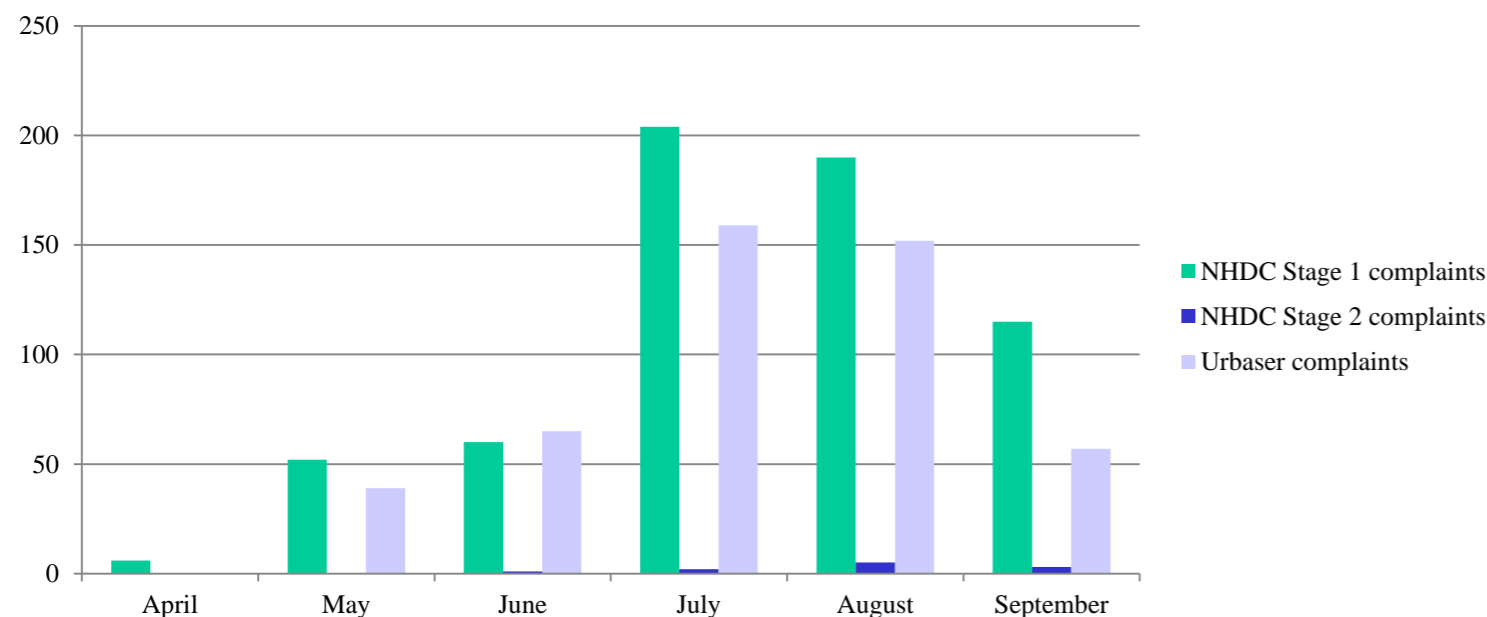


3CS RECEIVED DIRECTLY AT NHDC – 6 MONTHLY COMPARISONS

	NHDC	Urbaser	Total
Number of Comments received	140	412	552
Number of compliments received	13	21	34
Number of Stage 1 complaints received	627	472	1110
Number of Stage 2 complaints received	11	N/A	11
% resolved within 10 working days	41%	N/A	41%
% of complaints justified	89%	N/A	89%

Volumes by Month

Waste & Recycling complaints by month



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Resolution Performance against target (NHDC only)

	<10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41+
Number	259	262	63	41.3	9
%	42.9	41.8	10.1	3.6	1.4

Complaints by type (NHDC only)

The vast majority of complaints (approximately 85%) received by NHDC were relating to collection issues, most related specifically to the non collection of brown bins and / or food caddies, however grey and purple bins were also affected for some residents. There were a number of complaints relating to issues with the assisted collection service and also non delivery of bins and food caddies to some properties. There were also a high number of complaints from residents who were unable to get through to Urbaser by phone and a smaller number of complaints regarding the communication of the changes. Many complaints were related to more than one matter.

In some cases multiple contacts were received from the same customer, additionally there will have been some duplication of logging of complaints between NHDC and Urbaser.

Stage 2 complaints

A small percentage of complaints escalated to stage 2 of our complaints process mostly due to dissatisfaction of the handling of the stage 1 complaint.

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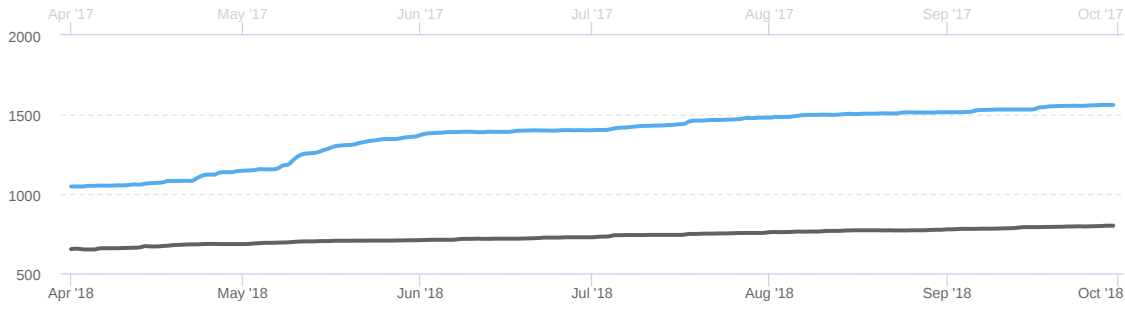
Facebook Dashboard

■ Apr 01 - Sep 30, 2018

■ Apr 01 - Sep 30, 2017



f Fans



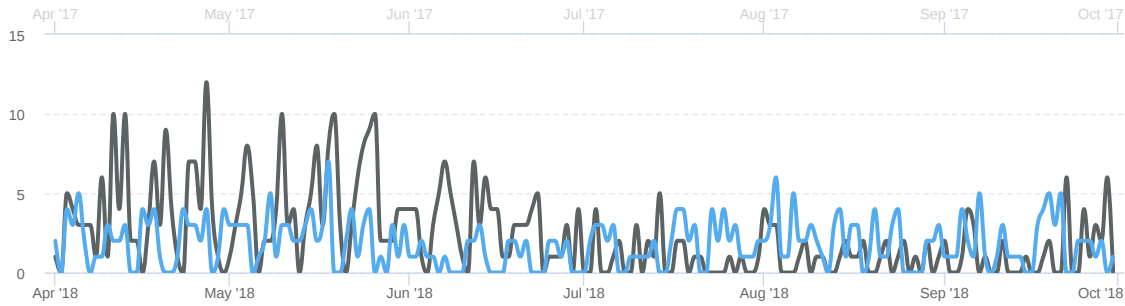
f New Fans

570

new fans

↑399 from 171

f Posts



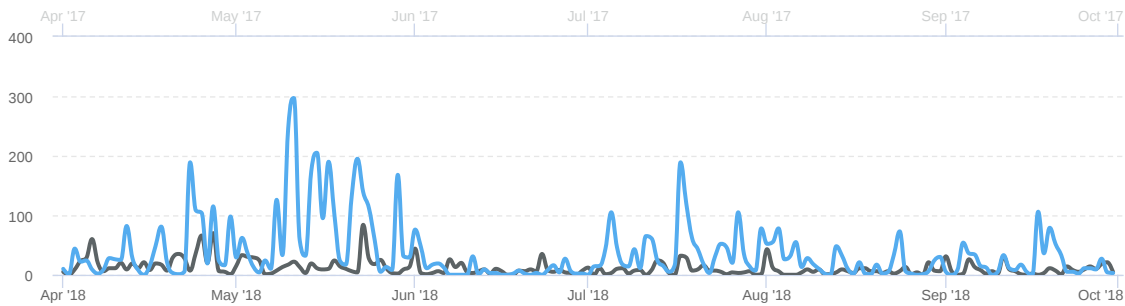
f Posts

333

posts

↓106 from 439

f Engagement



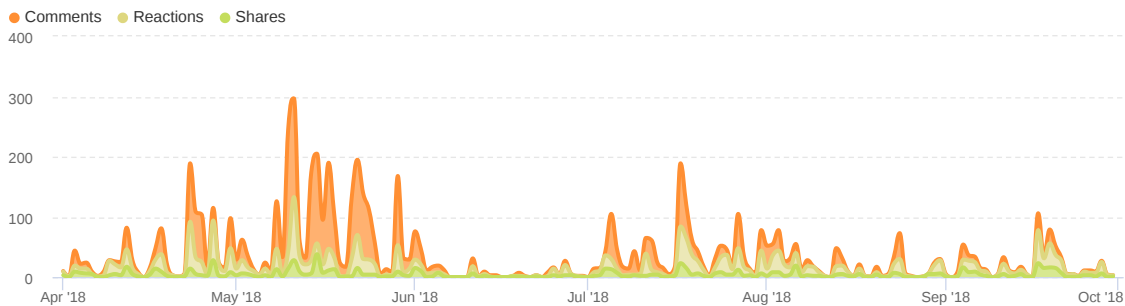
f Engagement

6.8K

engagements

↑4.7K from 2.1K

f Engagement by Type



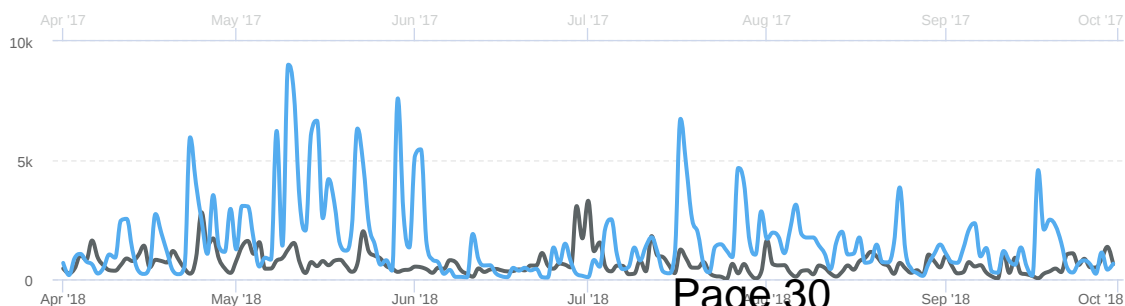
f Engagement by Type

Comments ↑3.1K **3.7K**

Reactions ↑1.3K **2.3K**

Shares ↑208 **821**

f Total Reach

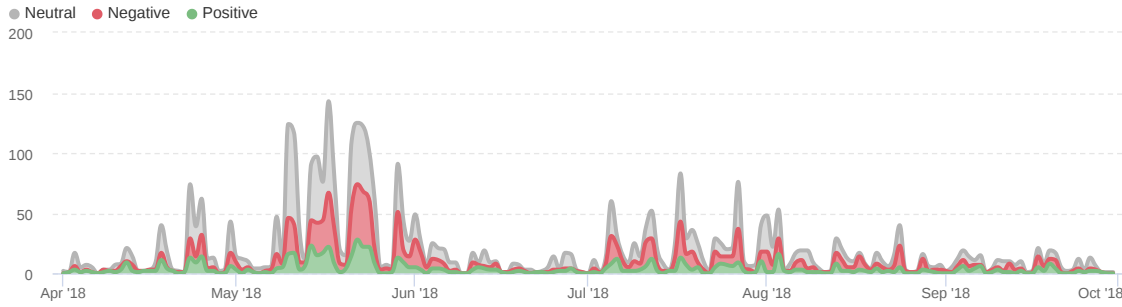


f Post Reach

384K

impressions

f Inbound Messages by Sentiment

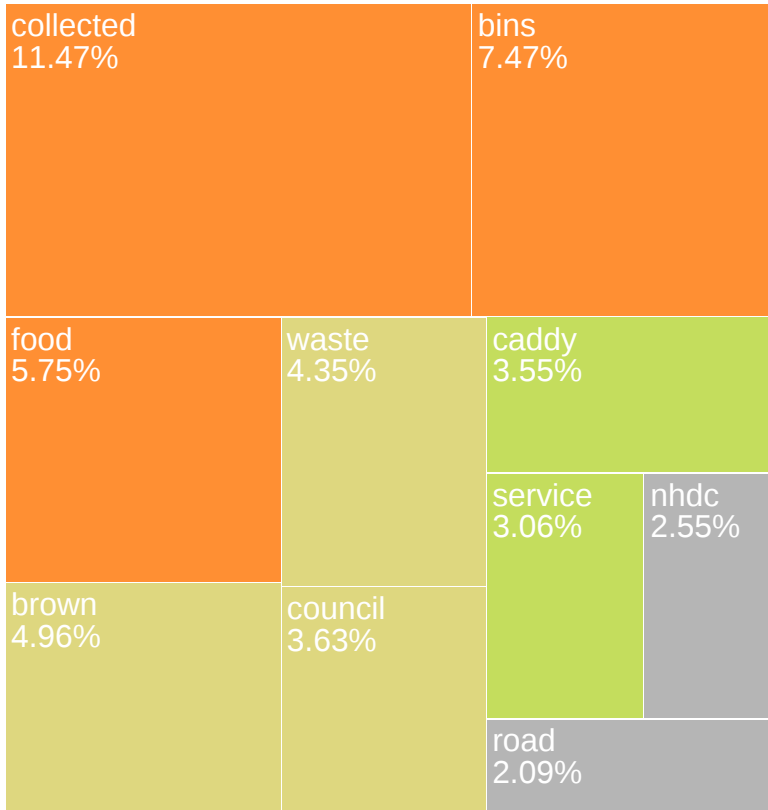


f Inbound Messages

4.1K
messages

↑3.6K from 438

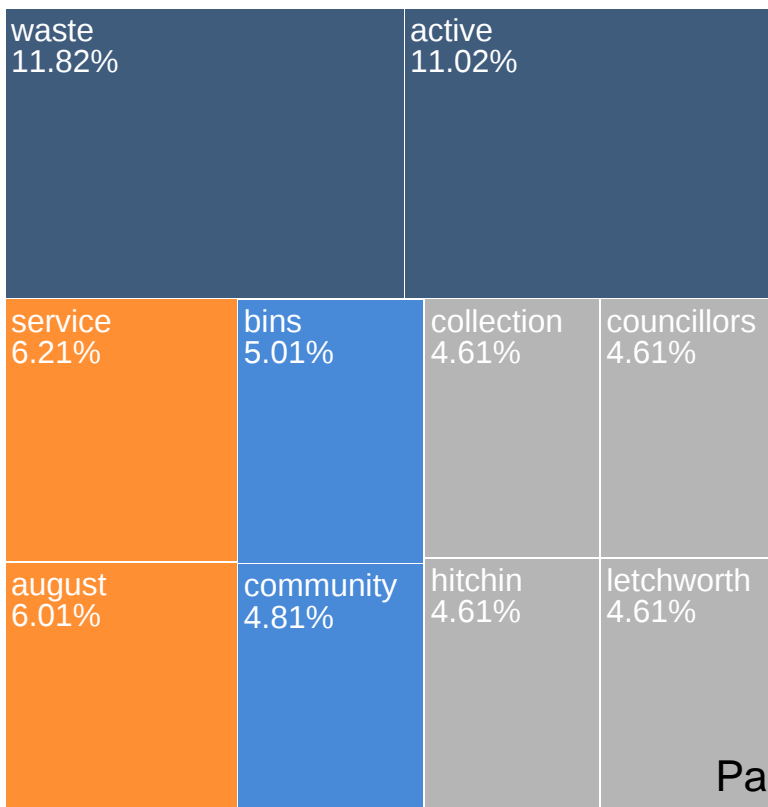
f Inbound Messages by Topics



f Inbound Messages by Tag

Waste - Food	156
Waste - Missed Bins	113
Waste - Garden	63

f Posts by Topics



f Posts by Tag

external events	35
Parks, playgrounds and natur...	31
Health	28

Posts Table

Date	Message	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Ow.ly Clicks
North Hertfords... May 11, 12:15	From next week, we will start collecting household batteries on your grey bin mixed #recycling collection day. Household batteries (AAA, AA, B, C, D) should be placed in tied plastic bags and placed on the lid of your grey recycling bin for collection. Waste - recycling	53	43	24	
North Hertfords... Jul 31, 12:10	#Hitchin's Lavender fields are currently ready for picking! Take your little ones along this week and enjoy the sights and smells of this amazing crop. Entrance fee includes a bag each that you can fill with lavender and take home. Contact Hitchin Lavender for more info: http://ow.ly/vxZB30lb2vg #NorthHerts #schoolsoutforsummer external events	32	10	3	42
North Hertfords... Jul 11, 11:42	We're proudly flying the flag of St George today in support of England in the World Cup semi-final against Croatia tonight! Communications	30	9	1	
North Hertfords... Jul 18, 12:00	Our Environmental Crime Officer was called out to this fly-tipping on Green Lane, near #Kimpton Mill, #Codicote. If you recognise who any of the items might belong to or if you witnessed anything to do with this crime, report it here: http://ow.ly/c1rO30lOnQ9 or call 01462 474000 Enviro Crime - flytipping	26	12	13	5
North Hertfords... Apr 23, 12:15	Serial fly-tipper who dumped waste throughout North Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire handed two year custodial sentence following a successful prosecution by NHDC & South Cambridgeshire District Council: http://ow.ly/xKCCc30jCXik #scrapflytipping Enviro Crime - flytipping	26	7	5	141
North Hertfords... Sep 17, 09:15	This week we're highlighting a fly-tipping hot spot & need your help to catch those involved. Since January, 14 fly-tips have occurred in the Wymondley area. Wymondley Woods & fields off Graveley Lane have been targeted. If you know anything report it here: http://ow.ly/7t4Y30lP7a2 Enviro Crime - flytipping	23	12	20	16
North Hertfords... May 22, 13:30	The much loved outdoor pools in #Hitchin and #Letchworth open their doors for the season this Saturday: http://ow.ly/vs7P30k7y08 leisure	23	4	0	17

Twitter Dashboard

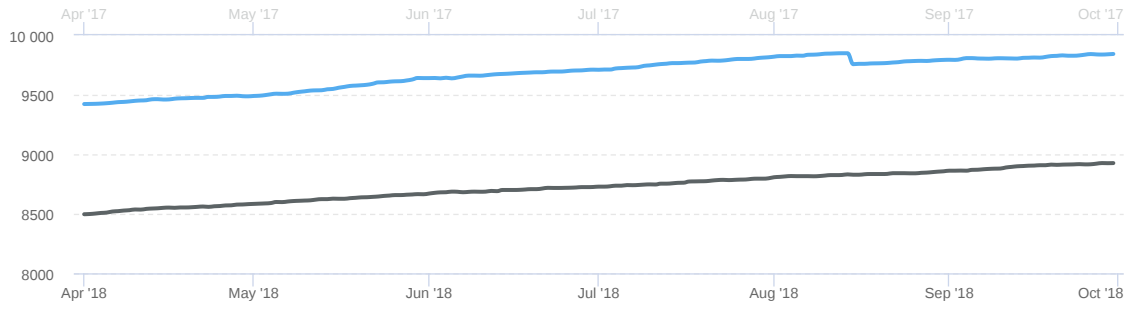
■ Apr 01 - Sep 30, 2018

■ Apr 01 - Sep 30, 2017



@NorthHertsDC

Followers

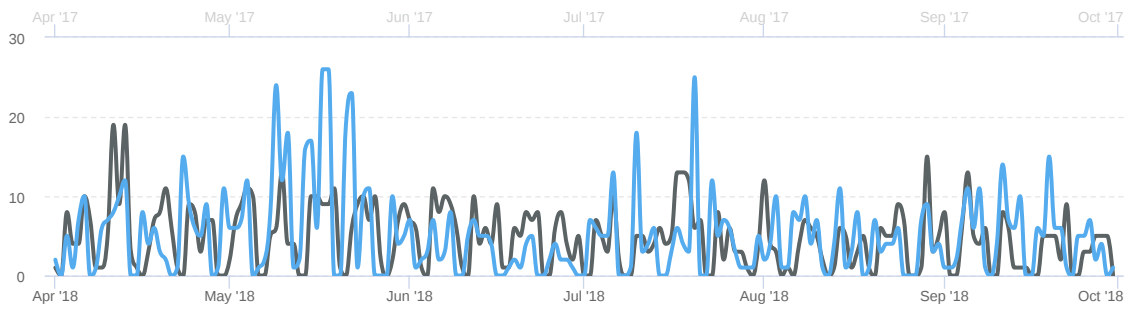


Net New Followers

420
followers

↑420 from 0

Tweets

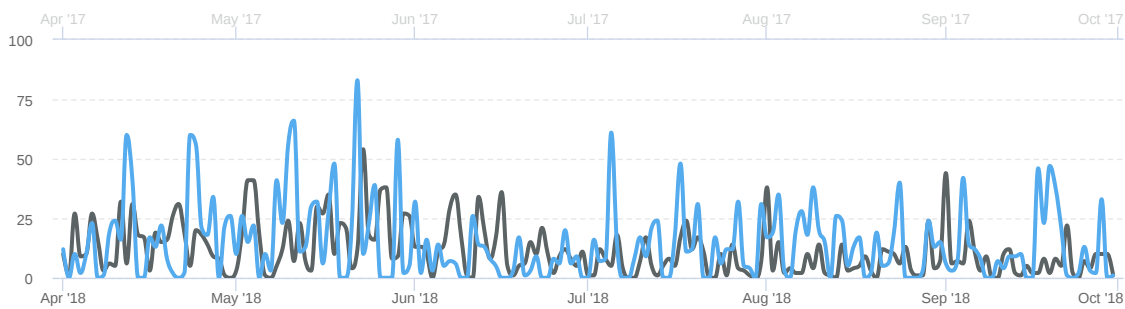


Tweets

929
tweets

↑66 from 863

Engagement

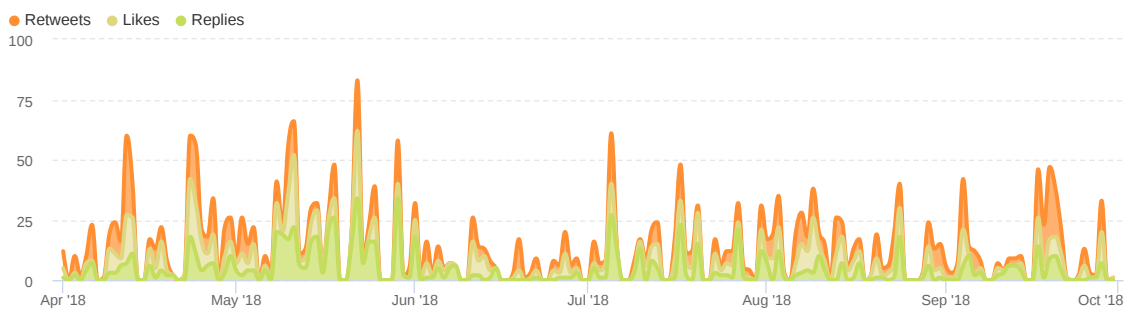


Post Retweets

989
retweets

↑68 from 921

Engagement by Type

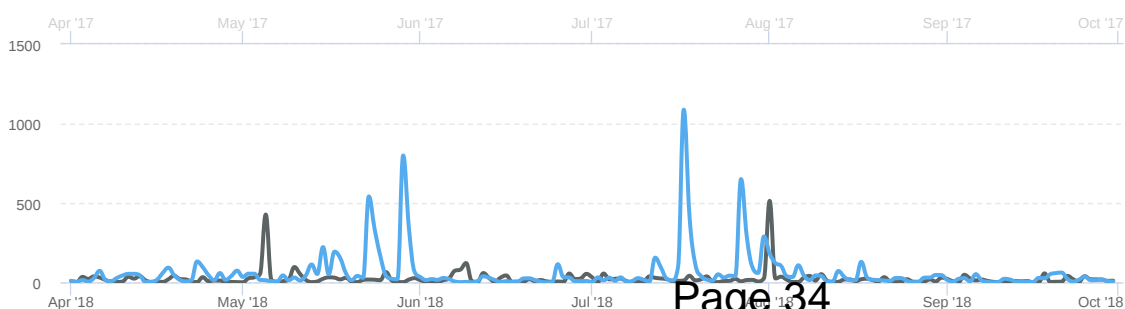


Post Likes

824
likes

↑81 from 743

Total Clicks



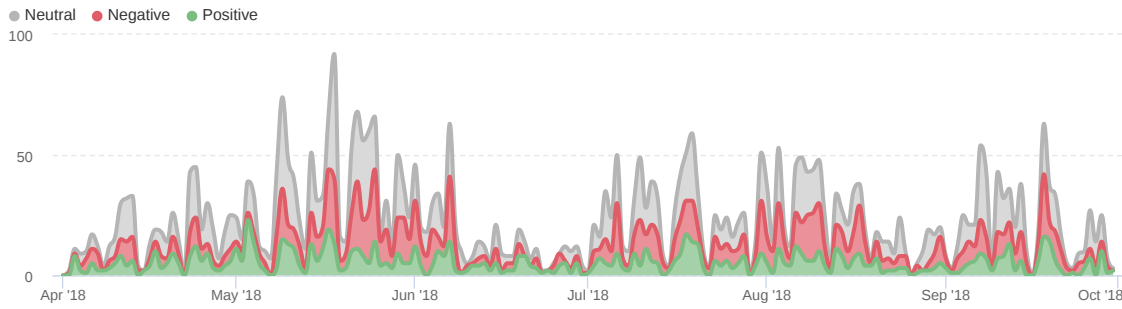
Total Clicks

11K
clicks

↑6.7K from 4.1K

Inbound Messages by Sentiment

Inbound Messages

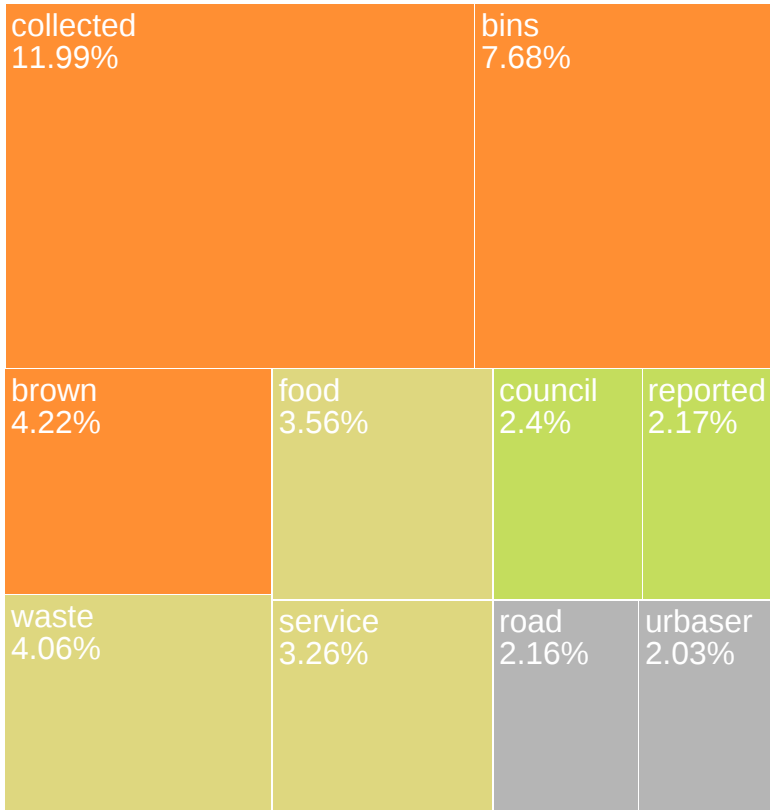


4.6K
messages

↑3.2K from 1.5K

Inbound Messages by Topics

Inbound Messages by Tag



Waste - Missed Bins

1.4K

Waste

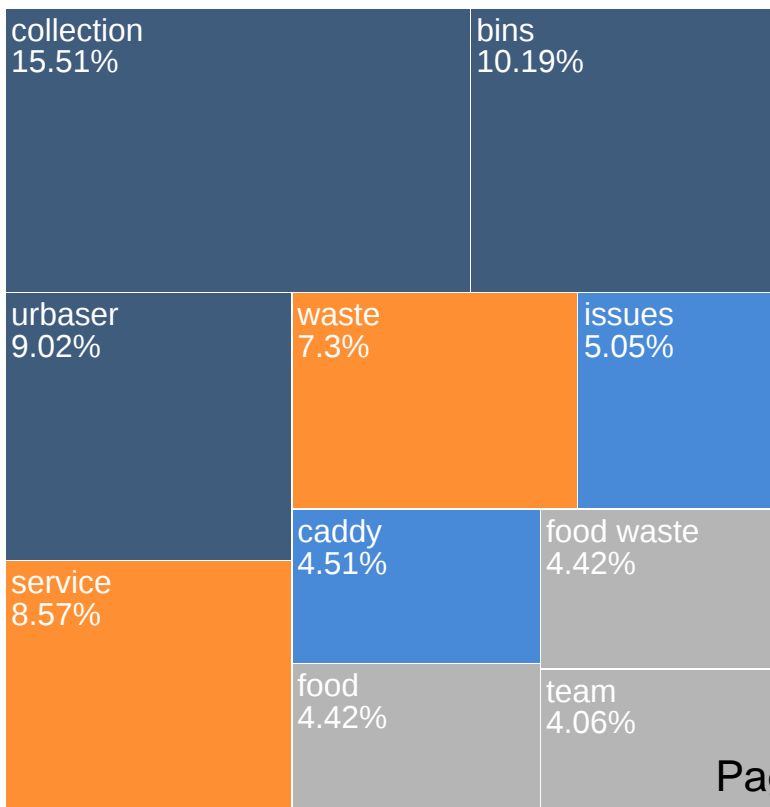
203

Waste - Food

136

Tweets by Topics

Tweets by Tag



Waste - Missed Bins

62








external events

36

Parks, playgrounds and natur...

35

 Tweets Table

Date ↕	Message	↻ Retweets ↕	↩ Replies ↕	♥ Likes ↕	👉 Ow.ly Clicks
 <p>@NorthHertsDC Apr 12, 18:01</p>	<p>Know of a local charity, voluntary group or not for profit organisation that needs funding? Applications are being invited for a share of a nearly £90,000 grant funding pot. Deadline to apply is 4 May. Please share to help spread the word! More info here: http://ow.ly/qKXn30jpS4F https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC/status/984491666492067841/photo/1</p> <p>area committee grants</p>	22	1	10	32
 <p>@NorthHertsDC Sep 28, 14:15</p>	<p>The Wymondley area has become a fly-tipping hot spot lately. We're working with organisations like @HertsPolice @LetchworthGC and @HFRS to spread the word that flytipping waste is a crime that can harm people, animals and the environment. #SCRAPflytipping http://ow.ly/igOh30m0Qqk https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC/status/104567833963629...</p> <p>Enviro Crime - flytipping</p>	13	6	12	7
 <p>@NorthHertsDC Apr 29, 18:00</p>	<p>On Thursday 3 May residents in North Herts will go to the polls to vote on who represents them at a local level. Local government elections select councillors who make decisions on running your Council services. Find out who is running where you live here: http://ow.ly/wa9l30jqOoj https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC/status/990652158520459265/photo/1</p> <p>Democratic Services</p>	12	3	7	154
 <p>@NorthHertsDC Apr 13, 09:00</p>	<p>Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of items. If your waste is fly tipped, by you or by someone else on your behalf, you could face a £400 fixed penalty notice or an unlimited fine. If it's your waste it is your responsibility #SCRAPflytipping http://ow.ly/5Mcl30jsglT https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC/status/984718010966597632/photo/1</p> <p>Enviro Crime - flytipping</p>	12	2	7	7
 <p>@NorthHertsDC Sep 04, 07:45</p>	<p>The #Hitchin and #Letchworth outdoor pools close this Sunday 9 September, so make the most of the sunny weather and enjoy a final dip or two while you still can ☀️ * https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC/status/1036882849641758720/photo/1</p> <p>leisure</p>	12	2	11	
 <p>@NorthHertsDC May 02, 12:45</p>	<p>The North Herts #localelections take place tomorrow. Polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm. If you're not sure where your local polling station is you can look it up or view it on a map here: http://ow.ly/qk4G30jN7Xq https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC/status/991659867747340288/photo/1</p> <p>Elections</p>	11	1	6	73
 <p>@NorthHertsDC</p>	<p>Last collections of brown bins in the current service will be either week commencing 30 April or 7 May, depending when your recycling week falls. Only households subscribed to the chargeable garden waste service will have their brown bins emptied after that time. https://twitter.com/NorthHertsDC/status/988334258359099393/photo/1</p>	11	10	1	

**CABINET
18 DECEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2019 - 2023

REPORT OF: COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: CLLR LYNDA NEEDHAM, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider and adopt the proposed North Hertfordshire District Council Communications Strategy 2019 - 2023, which sets out the strategic direction for the Council's communications over the next five years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet adopts the North Hertfordshire District Council Communications Strategy 2019 - 2023
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees the delegation for creating the Action Plan and the annual review of the Action Plan contained in the Communications Strategy, to the Communications Manager in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To allow the Council's communications team to carry out a programme of relevant communications activities, in line with an agreed strategic approach, ensuring residents and other stakeholders are well informed about the work of the Council and about relevant activities in the District.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Alternative approaches could be to emphasise different aspects of the communications strategy (for example print first rather than digital first), however it is considered that the approach proposed is the most effective for the Council.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the Leader of the Council and with Political Liaison Board. The results from questions about the Council's current communications mechanisms from the District Wide Survey of residents and staff surveys were also used to help inform the strategy.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on 2 November 2018.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The Council's current Communications Strategy spans the period 2014 - 2018, therefore the revised Communications Strategy attached as Appendix A is an updated version to cover the period 2019 - 2023. The strategy sets out how the Council will plan and manage communications activities over the next five years.
- 7.2 The Communications Strategy is an overarching document that applies across all functions of the Council. It is intended to provide a strategic overview to the Council's approach to delivering communications over the next five years. The strategy addresses the Council's approach to communications and the various communications channels which we will use to communicate how the Council is delivering on its three corporate objectives, as well as the day to day business of the organisation.
- 7.3 The strategy does not cover explicitly corporate consultation which is covered by a separate strategy, due for review in 2020, although there is linkage between the two strategies.
- 7.4 The Council's Communications team is responsible for implementing and driving forward the Communications Strategy and delivering the outputs of the associated action plan. The team are the first port of call for all media enquiries and public relations activity. They also produce Outlook magazine, the quarterly magazine which is delivered to 56,000 households across the District. Recently, the team have launched a new digital magazine 'NH Now' and a new e-bulletin service '@NorthHerts.' The team are also responsible for internal communications to staff including the publication of the monthly 'Insight' magazine.' The team also manage the Council's social media presence and the Council's website.
- 7.5 The Strategy also sets out how we will monitor and evaluate our communications activities to ensure they are effective, provide value for money and remain fit for purpose.
- 7.6 While the Strategy covers the next five years, some flexibility over the channels used will need to be retained as the communications landscape is changing so rapidly. The action plan will therefore be reviewed annually by the Communications Manager in conjunction with the Leader of the Council and will be incorporated into service planning for the Communications team.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Legal constraints on Local Government communications

- 8.1.1 The strategy sets out the confines within which we can carry out our communications, specifically with reference to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Government Publicity, now strengthened in legislation in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and so amending the Local Government Act 1986. The 1986 Act contained the statutory power for the Secretary of State to issue a Code of Recommended Practice, the additional amendment in the 2014 Act enables the Secretary of State to direct compliance with the issued Code.

8.1.2 The Publicity Code provides guidance on the content, style, distribution and cost of local authority publicity. Local authorities are required by legislation to consider the Code in coming to any decision on publicity, which is defined as any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public or a section of the public. It also contains provisions on appropriate communications during pre-election periods.

8.2 Perceptions of the Council

8.2.1 The 2017 District Wide Survey, carried out in September and October, showed there has been a decrease in overall satisfaction with the Council from 82% in 2015 to 75% in 2017 and a decrease in agreement levels on how well informed residents feel about the Council (see Appendix A). This research is valuable in helping guide the approach outlined in the Communications Strategy.

8.3 Growth of Digital communications

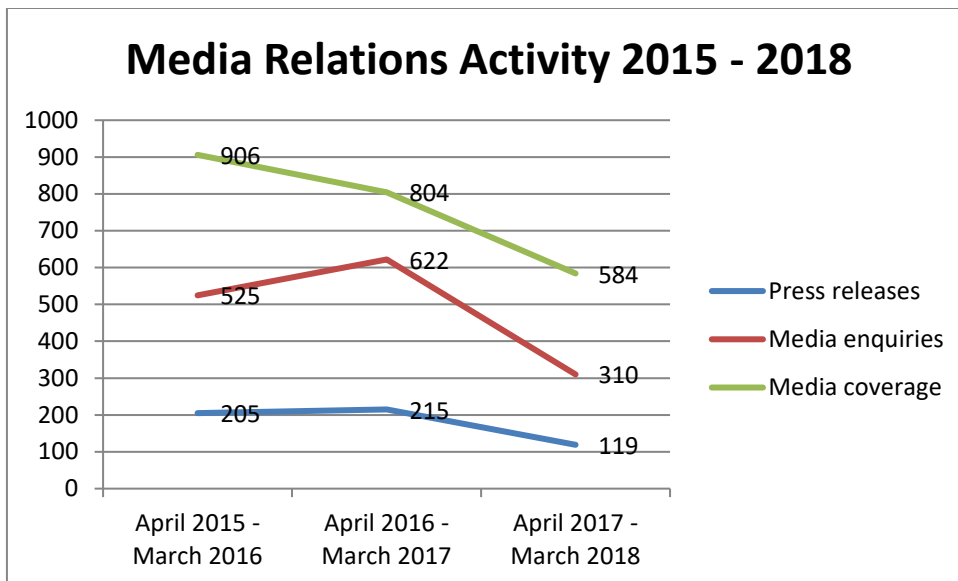
8.3.1 In recent years, we have seen a marked shift in how residents communicate and interact with the Council, with visitor numbers to both the website and our social media channels constantly increasing. We now have almost 10,000 followers on Twitter and over 1,500 on Facebook. Alongside this we have around 160,000 visits to our website every month.

8.3.2 The importance of social media to the Council can not be overstated . As an example, 2,997 people engaged with (liked, shared or commented on) a Facebook post regarding the introduction of the garden waste service. As a result, that post had the potential reach of 13,534 people, due to the post potentially being seen by friends of those people who engaged with the post.

8.3.3 Social media also has potential negatives for the Council, in that there are many private groups which we are aware of where people comment on issues regarding the Council and we have no direct way of influencing those conversations. This can mean that inaccurate information is sometimes circulated through these sites and we have no means of correcting this. There are also potential resource issues with managing social media. At the height of the waste contract problems, a large proportion of the communications team's time was spent dealing with social media on waste issues.

8.4 Decline of media relations activity

8.4.1 In the last three years we have seen a significant decline in the amount of media enquiries and media coverage which we receive, as can be seen by the graph below.



The decline in coverage is due in part to one of our key publications, the Midweek Mercury, no longer being in circulation and also less interest from the Comet in some of our stories, perhaps due in part to editorial changes at the paper.

8.4.2 It is important to consider why the number of press releases has dropped so significantly. The main reason for the number of press releases falling is that, simply due to our financial situation, the Council can no longer do all of the activities that it used to. For example we no longer put on many of the ‘play’ activities we used to e.g. Play Rangers. We also don’t have as many events, such as Community Reassurance Events, due to lack of resource. Similarly in waste services there is less capacity to go to roadshows and put on WEEE events. It is important to bear this in mind for our future strategy, as positive PR opportunities are more limited than they used to be.

8.4.3 There are large areas of the district which aren’t covered by the distribution of the Comet or the Royston Crow, and not everyone will read their local newspaper. Of course, while the local press remain important to the Council, their influence and importance is not as great as it was and we therefore need to be concentrating our efforts on reaching residents by different mechanisms.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Cabinet has within its terms of reference to prepare and agree to implement policies and strategies other than those reserved to Council.

9.2 The legislative framework governing local authority publicity is set out in Part II of the Local Government Act 1986, which as set out in the body of the report, has been amended by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The strategy has been prepared taking into account the legislative framework.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The delivery of the Communications Strategy (Appendix A) does not increase the Council's current budget estimates for this financial year or future years. To ensure the Communications team can adopt the 'digital first' approach outlined in the Strategy, application of Strategic Priorities fund resource has been approved for the development of the digital magazine 'NH Now', the e-bulletin service @NorthHerts and for a fixed term Digital Engagement Officer post. An interim review of the Strategy will be carried out at the end of the two year period to establish the effectiveness of the new channels, at which point future funding options will be considered.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Managing Communication is an integral part of Risk Management, and is particularly important in relation to the Council's Corporate risks, such as Hitchin Town Hall and Museum and the Waste Project.
- 11.2 The revised Communication Strategy will ensure that the Council continues to operate in line with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Government Publicity and the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
- 11.3 Failure to acknowledge the decline in levels of satisfaction highlighted by the District Wide Survey 2017 may lead to a risk of reputational damage. The Strategy needs to address the shift in how residents communicate and interact with the Council and the decline of traditional print media if the Council is to avoid a further drop in levels of satisfaction among residents.
- 11.4 Incorporating the action plan into the Communications Service planning process, and reviewing annually, will help to mitigate the risk of reputational damage to the Council, and ensure that Communications remain relevant.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 Good communication is essential in supporting our aim for openness and transparency whilst engaging with our residents, including those that have a protected characteristic and those that don't. Effective internal and external communication is also important in ensuring that our residents and partners are engaged, informed and understand our role and what we do.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 To ensure that the Communications team can effectively deliver the outputs of the Communications Strategy and adopt the 'Digital First' approach as described in Appendix A, funding has been approved on a fixed term basis for a full-time Digital Engagement Officer.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Communications Strategy 2019 – 2023
- 15.2 Appendix B – NHDC Communications Strategy Action Plan 18-19 - 19-20
- 15.3 Appendix C– Social Media Strategy and Policy 2018

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 2017 District Wide Survey Key Findings Report
www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/consultations/district-wide-survey

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2019 – 2023



1. INTRODUCTION

Communications is at the heart of everything the Council does. This strategy outlines how we will plan and manage our communications activities over the next five years. It sets out our approach to communicating with residents, partners, businesses, with staff and Councillors. The corporate Communications Strategy is relevant to all service areas and functions of the Council.

The Council has achieved 3.6 million of savings since 2014/15 and we have had to radically rethink how we can continue to deliver quality services, while facing an uncertain financial future. Embedding commercialisation into the organisation's culture is now fundamental to our future strategy, as well as considering further opportunities to make efficiencies.

Meanwhile, the way in which residents want to communicate with us has also changed, with digital communications continuing to evolve and grow in importance. Our approach will always be inclusive, using a range of channels to reach as many residents as possible, however we are now at a stage where we need to put more resource and thought into our proactive digital communications activities.

This revised communications strategy reflects the changing landscape that we operate in. In uncertain financial times and with huge challenges ahead for local government, the role of communications in explaining what we stand for, how we will deliver services and provide value for money is critical.

The Communications Strategy supports the Council's corporate objectives which are set out in the Corporate Plan which can be found here: www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-data-and-performance/corporate-plan

We will focus our efforts on communicating how the Council is delivering on those objectives and on projects which fall under those objectives e.g. the Local Plan, regeneration of Churchgate Centre, Green Space Strategy and the completion of the North Hertfordshire Museum and Hitchin Town Hall project. By communicating about what the Council stands for and how we deliver on our priorities and policies, we can successfully build on our organisational reputation.

Aside from communicating strategic messages, we won't forget the basics and will ensure we provide effective information on the core services that people value the most, including waste and recycling, parks and open spaces, street cleaning and housing services.

We will also ensure that our Communications operate within legal boundaries and consider the seven principles of the Government's Code of Recommended Practice on Local Government Publicity (2011). The principles state that:

Publicity should:

- Be lawful
- Be cost-effective
- Be objective
- Be even-handed
- Be appropriate
- Have regard to equality and diversity
- Be issued with care during periods of heightened sensitivity

2. BACKGROUND

The 2017 District Wide Survey (DWS) of North Hertfordshire residents, carried out in September and October, showed there has been a decrease in overall satisfaction with the Council from 82% in 2015 to 75% in 2017. More recently, issues with the new waste and recycling contract and introduction of a charge for collection of garden waste have undoubtedly had an impact on the reputation of the Council. Although things are now a lot better, the reputational effect will take some time to resolve.

As part of the DWS, residents were also asked how well informed they feel about a range of issues. Only around four in ten residents feel informed about how to get involved in local decision making (39%), what the Council spends its money on (39%) and how well NHDC is performing (41%). There have been significant drops in how well informed residents feel about these measures since 2015.

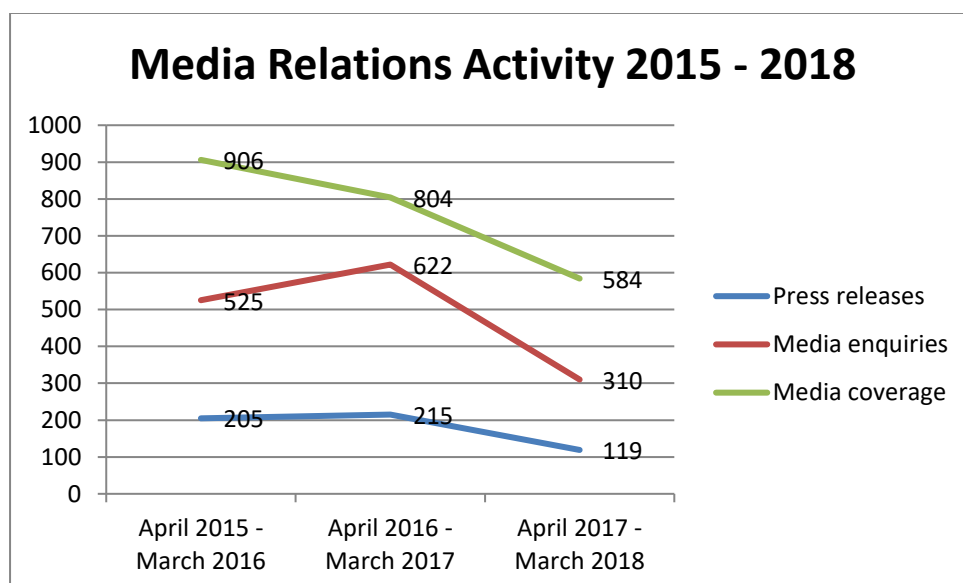
The District Wide Survey also found that those who have seen a copy of the residents magazine ‘Outlook’ are significantly more likely than those who have not, to be satisfied with the Council overall (77% cf. 69%). This suggests that the more informed people feel about the work of the Council, the more satisfied they are.

This research is valuable to help with understanding where we need to focus on building our communications efforts – namely around building on our reputation with residents and ensuring we are reaching as wide an audience as possible with our messages.

3, REVIEW OF LAST STRATEGY PERIOD 2014-2018

Media Relations: In 2015 we developed a media relations protocol which sets out how we work with the media and what they can expect from us. This is published on our website: www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/customer-services/publications-and-consultations/media-relations-protocol

In the last three years we have seen a significant decline in the amount of media enquiries and media coverage which we receive, as can be seen by the graph below.



The decline in coverage is due in part to one of our key publications, the Midweek Mercury no longer being in circulation and also less interest from the Comet in some of our stories.

The number of press releases being issued has also dropped significantly. The main reason for this is that due to pressure on finances, the Council can no longer do all of the activities which it used to. For example due to lack of resource, we no longer put on as many of the

play activities we used to e.g. Play Rangers, or events such as Community reassurance events, or waste roadshows and Waste electrical recycling events.

Also of note is that while the Comet does still have good circulation locally, there are large areas of the district which aren't covered by the distribution of the Comet or the Royston Crow, and not everyone will read their local newspaper. While the local press remain important to the Council, we can no longer be as reliant on them to help communicate our messages and we therefore need to be concentrating our efforts on reaching residents by different mechanisms.

Social media: In recent years, we have seen a marked shift in how residents communicate and interact with the Council, with interaction with our social media channels constantly increasing. We now have almost 10,000 followers on Twitter and over 1,500 on Facebook. We have developed a social media strategy and social media policy (attached as Appendix B) which sets out our approach to managing social media and also gives the public an overview of how we manage and respond to contact on social media. The policy will be published on our website. We also introduced Hootsuite – software to help us effectively manage our presence on social media and capture useful analytics data.

Website: In 2015 we redeveloped the Council's website, deleting approximately one-third of the content, simplifying the language and making the layout easier to navigate. We have also worked on developing our online offer, so that people can readily pay for, apply for, or report a problem with a service. During this strategy period, responsibility for the website was transferred to Communications from IT, given its vital role as a communications channel.

New Channels: In Autumn 2018 we introduced two new digital channels to help communicate our messages to a wider audience. NH Now, is the Council's new digital magazine, which will be published three times a year at alternate times to Outlook magazine and promoted page by page via social media. @NorthHerts is the Council's new e-bulletin service. Subscribers can receive email alerts on topics of interest to them including waste and recycling, events, North Hertfordshire Museum, jobs and careers and Active North Herts. The e-alerts system will allow us to communicate messages in a timely manner without being tied to a particular publication schedule.

Internal Communications: The Council's quarterly staff magazine and monthly corporate cascade briefing were replaced in 2016 with a single monthly magazine for staff, which is sent via email to all staff. Over 200 people view the magazine each month, with 2,185 page

views for the October edition. To improve visibility of senior management, monthly staff briefings were also introduced in January 2018.

Corporate Identity: Corporate identity guidelines were produced and distributed to all staff in October 2014. The document covers use of logos and the look and feel of all of our communications including emails, letters, presentations etc. It also contains advice on language to ensure it is professional and consistent across the organisation. These will be reviewed and refreshed during the next strategy period.

3. OUR COMMUNICATIONS PRINCIPLES

Our communications will be:

- Honest, accurate and transparent
- Carried out in line with relevant legislation and the Council's own communications protocols and guidance
- Accessible and tailored to meet the needs of a wide cross-section of the community
- Delivered using multiple channels e.g. media, social media, web, print
- Two-way
- Cost-effective
- Developed in line with our corporate style and identity guidelines

4. OUR COMMUNICATION AIMS

- To enhance the reputation of the Council by proactively positioning ourselves as a community leader, promoting both the work of the Council and celebrating everything that makes North Hertfordshire a great place to live, work and prosper.
- To ensure that the information we communicate is timely, accurate, responsive and relevant to the audience we are communicating to.
- To maintain a strong and consistent brand identity for the Council
- To strive for balanced reporting about the Council's policies, decisions and procedures
- To retain a committed and motivated workforce by implementing a programme of effective internal communications

5. AUDIENCES

Our key audiences include:

- North Hertfordshire residents
- Those working in / visitors to the District
- Community groups including charities and voluntary organisations
- Local businesses and potential investors, including BIDS and LEPs
- Councillors
- Council staff
- Town and Parish Councils
- Neighbouring district authorities and Hertfordshire County Council
- Partner organisations e.g. Herts Constabulary, Herts Fire and Rescue Service
- Housing Associations e.g. settle, Howard Cottage
- Central Government departments
- Print, online and broadcast media
- Social media influencers

6. OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH FOR 2019 – 2023

There are two core themes to the Communications Strategy approach:

- **Positive and Proactive**
- **Digital First**

Positive and Proactive

Our core objective for the next five years is to focus on improving our reputation and restoring public confidence in the Council. In order to do this we need to position ourselves as community champions, promoting and celebrating all that is good about North Hertfordshire, the people, community groups, businesses and place, as well as our own work.

Over the last year, much of the work of the communications team has focused on managing the Council's reputation with regards the new waste and recycling contract. A core component of this strategy is to re-focus our effort on delivering positive and engaging communications, across a range of channels. We will do this by:

Changing the narrative: In our new digital magazine, NH Now, we adopt a new tone – focusing on great community stories, celebrating what is great about North Herts, the people, the parks and open spaces, the towns and villages. We will also adopt this approach across other channels e.g. on social media we will engage with community groups and promote the places and people that make North Herts a great place. We will maintain a proactive PR calendar, which focuses on engaging content which can be repurposed across a range of channels. As part of this work we will continue to work alongside the Council's Economic Development Officer to identify opportunities for promoting North Hertfordshire to businesses and visitors.

While there is clearly an important place for traditional corporate communications and to inform residents about our work and performance, given the decline in satisfaction levels among residents and the decline of traditional print media, we also need to think of new ways of being seen as a positive community leader.

Developing campaigns – We will develop campaigns around specific themes and focus our communications efforts on those areas. For example, we could look at campaigns around priorities for the Council such as channel shift, health and well-being and environmental issues such as reducing use of plastics.

Entering into awards – We will proactively seek out opportunities across the Council for entering into awards. The Communications team will assist service areas by offering help with writing award entries and promoting achievements if shortlisted, or if we win. We have in the past had some success, particularly with waste and green space awards, but there is scope to expand this across other services

Working with the media – There is clearly still a place for working with the local press as opinion influencers and we will continue to maintain good working relationships with them. As part of the Strategy we will also pursue opportunities for opinion pieces, for example in the Local Government trade press or in service specific trade press. The Council has an opportunity using these sorts of pieces to position itself as a thought leader on local and national issues. We will also organise regular media training for Cabinet members to ensure they are equipped with the skills needed to act as spokesmen for the Council.

Photo Rangers: We have recently recruited Photo Rangers – officers in the Council who are willing to take photos while out and about in the district that we can use in our social media and traditional communications activity. The aim of this initiative is to show the breadth of what the Council does and also show off the best parts of the district. We hope

that this initiative will also get Council staff engaged, wanting to show off the great work they do. This could also potentially be expanded to include NHDC Councillors if there is interest.

Developing our filming offer - One area which could have a positive effect on the Council's image and reputation as well as generate income, is to develop our filming offer. In particular, Hitchin town centre is fast becoming a popular location for filming, however there are also our parks and open spaces and other properties such as Hitchin Town Hall which have the potential to be used for filming. As part of the Strategy we will build up a location library i.e. pictures of assets which location managers can readily access online when looking for a venue. We will also develop a filming policy and an indicative schedule of charges for filming.

Developing our consultation offer - Although the consultation strategy is covered separately, it is worth mentioning here, as the way the Council consults (or is perceived to consult) has also had a significant impact on its reputation in recent years. 2017 DWS results found that 41% of people disagree that the Council makes an effort to find out what local people want and 32% of people disagree that the Council fully involves or consults residents on important issues. While there are numerous reasons for these results, such as the decision to introduce a charge of garden waste, they prove an important barometer of public opinion.

One area under consideration to help improve our consultation activity is the expansion of the Council's Citizens Panel – a group of people willing to take part in surveys which we carry out. There is scope for building membership to the panel and using them more regularly, consulting them in a light-touch way on issues affecting them, to help people feel engaged with the Council. Membership of the panel could then be promoted via our usual communications channels. There may well also be other mechanisms we can look at, including digital focus groups and offering advice on wording and structure of consultations for service specific consultations.

Digital First

We will continue to utilise a range of channels to reach a wide audience, however in line with our channel shift strategy and with how many people now expect to receive communications, we will always try and adopt a 'digital first' approach.

A growing number of our residents use social media and expect to engage with us – both in terms of service requests and general communications. Social media will continue to

signpost residents to the council's website where additional information and advice will be hosted and services can be accessed or requests raised.

We will enhance our digital communications by:

Extending our range of channels - Work on this has already started with the introduction of the new NH Now digital magazine in October 2018 and the introduction of the e-bulletin service, @NorthHerts. Both channels will allow us to reach new audiences and in particular, the e-bulletin service will mean we can adopt a very flexible and timely approach to sending messages out. We will focus on building our subscriber base for @NorthHerts and building awareness of NH Now through targeted social media activity.

Devise engaging content: In the world of digital communication we cannot just rely on a simple piece of written communication to get our messages across. We will be building on the types of content we can offer, including videos, animations, infographics etc.

Improving engagement on social media: Our new Social Media Strategy sets out how we manage social media and during this Strategy period, the importance of social media will grow further. As well as engaging with customers who now want to use social media for their service requests etc, we intend to build positive engagement by developing specific campaigns on social media and encourage people to have a two-way conversation with us.

We already receive positive engagement around some of our social media activity e.g. we put together a calendar of summer activities which were going on in North Hertfordshire (not just Council activities) and this was well received. We have also promoted similar activities in the past including recycling tips at Christmas and fly-tipping campaigns. These themed proactive posts work very well and so we will look at expanding that side of our social media, as well as devising campaigns and engaging multi-media content.

Enhancing our website offer – we will introduce a Find My Nearest facility on the website and expand and refine our e-forms. We will also consider introducing options such as web chat and AI technology, through our corporate channel shift project. We will also consider the introduction of website advertising to help generate income, as long as this does not compromise the integrity of the content on the site.

Putting in place appropriate resource: To ensure we are maximising the opportunities available to us from our digital channels, we have secured temporary Strategic Priorities funding for our e-news bulletin service, our digital magazine and a new Digital Media and Engagement Officer.

7. EVALUATING OUR COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Strategy is expected to help enable the following outcomes:

- Well informed and engaged residents who feel listened to and respected
- Recognition and improved perception of the Council and its services among residents and our other key audiences
- Pride in North Hertfordshire as a place to live, work and visit

We evaluate our communications in a number of ways:

Media monitoring - We operate a media monitoring system which records all press releases, media enquiries and media coverage for the Council. We monitor both the quantity and quality of media coverage. For example we consider an item's tone and the Council's share of voice in any coverage. Media monitoring reports are regularly presented to Senior Management Team.

Social media monitoring - We use social media monitoring software 'Hootsuite' to manage our presence on social media and to provide useful analytics data. This information is currently reported to Senior Management Team and a monthly summary is also provided in What the Media Says – a round up of media coverage, distributed to all Councillors and senior management. It is also proposed to include information on social media interactions alongside the Customer Service Manager's reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Comments, compliments and complaints.

Website analytics - We use Google Analytics to record and analyse visitor traffic across the NHDC website, intranet and additional sub-sites. Analytics data is used to monitor demand and usage of content and provide reports for service areas. This can be used to adjust or update content to ensure it fully meets the needs of visiting users.

We use Google analytics to monitor the performance of our website.

Reputation surveys - The District Wide Survey measures overall satisfaction with the Council as well as trends in how well informed people feel about the Council. It also tracks satisfaction with the Council's Outlook magazine. We will continue to use the results of the survey to identify changing trends in customer behaviour and aspirations so that we can adapt our communications accordingly.

We conduct a survey of staff every two years which includes a section on our internal communications. We will use the results of the survey to gain feedback on the effectiveness of our communications and identify emerging channels.

Benchmarking data and sharing best practice - We subscribe to a national local authority communications group which provides a forum for sharing best practice and annual benchmarking data. It is a useful forum for testing ideas and understanding the local government communications landscape. The Communications Manager also regularly attends a Hertfordshire communications group for all 10 districts and Herts County Council. The purpose of the group is to identify any cross-county communications issues, share best practice and identify joint working opportunities.

8. CONTACT OFFICER

Sarah Kingsley

Communications Manager

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Tel: 01462 474552

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NHDC COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY: OUTLINE ACTION PLAN 2018/2019, 2019/20			
Corporate Objective	Communications Objective	Key Actions	Key dates
Attractive and Thriving	Promote North Hertfordshire as a great place to live, work and visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and manage key themed campaigns as well as maintaining regular PR calendar Seek out awards opportunities Develop location library for filming opportunities Arrange media training for Cabinet members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing Winter / Spring 2019 Spring 2019
Responsive and Efficient	Consider ways of generating income through communications activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider cost / benefits of introducing advertising on digital channels e.g. website, NH Now magazine and e-bulletins Develop filming policy and indicative schedule of charges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision on web advertising in Jan/Feb 2019
Attractive and Thriving	Reach new audiences through digital engagement activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit Digital Engagement officer Devise programme of social media campaigns including development of interactive content. Develop NH Now and promote through social media Develop Find My Nearest Facility for Council website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January / February 2019 Ongoing As per agreed content schedule Spring 2019

<p>Responsive and efficient</p>	<p>Ensure the Council's brand is effectively portrayed in external and internal communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit use of NHDC Brand across channels / teams • Refresh corporate identity guidelines and style guide on use of appropriate language / tone etc as well as design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn / Winter 2019 • Spring 2020
<p>Responsive and efficient</p>	<p>Ensure staff feel motivated and engaged with the organisation and its priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse staff survey results (Autumn 2018) and produce corporate action plan • Review Internal communications mechanisms and consider new ways of engaging with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dec 2018 / January 2019 • Regular review of analytics of Insight magazine and feedback from staff briefings



North Hertfordshire District Council

Social Media Strategy

2018-2021

DATE: September 2018

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Social media is a powerful means of informing and listening to residents across the district, and as such plays an increasingly important role for the Council. It is therefore important that it is managed well from within the organisation, and to set out our objectives and expectations to the public to ensure it is successful. This strategy sets out how the Council currently uses social media, and proposes potential new arrangements to improve its outcomes.

2 Introduction

2.1 Social media networks offer the ability to reach a large number of people almost instantaneously, which makes them an invaluable communications tool.

2.2 They are a useful means of informing residents and customers about Council news, projects, services and events. By building a base of followers through frequent publishing of news and updates, it becomes possible to reach a far larger number of people that would be possible relying on either traditional print media, or visitors to the website.

2.3 Social media also has the advantage of reaching people who may not usually engage with their local authorities, and having no restrictions when it comes to timing: updates can be published at any time, multiple times, in order to reach the widest possible audience. The sites are also generally free to use.

2.4 Social media is managed by the North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) Communications team and certain officers in the Customer Service Centre through an online software package called Hootsuite.

3 Objectives for using Social Media

- 3.1 To give residents a convenient digital way of being able to stay informed about the work of the Council and a means of getting in touch.
- 3.2 To be an informative, helpful and friendly online presence.
- 3.3 To deal with customer queries in a timely manner.
- 3.4 To share information about events and opportunities in the district.
- 3.5 To champion North Hertfordshire as a place to live and work.
- 3.6 To provide updates on services when they are disrupted or during an emergency situation.

4 Current Situation

4.1 NHDC has a corporate presence on the following social media platforms:

Social network	Date joined	Main activities
Twitter	2009	News, promotional activities, customer interaction
Facebook	2014	News, promotional activities, customer interaction
YouTube	2010	Video and audio file hosting
Flickr	2010	Photo sharing
Instagram	2018	Photo sharing, promotional activities
LinkedIn	2015	Job vacancy publicity

4.2 Facebook and Twitter

The bulk of our focus currently lies with Twitter and Facebook, two of the most popular social networks worldwide. We have nearly 10,000 followers on Twitter and are approaching 1,500 likes on Facebook. We actively engage with residents and other users on these networks by posting links to news updates, community events, and regional and national social awareness campaigns. We also respond to individual customer queries on these channels where possible.

4.3 Analytics data allow us to measure the success of our posts in terms of the number of views they receive and their click-through rates. We can also track engagement levels, for example those people who have commented on or liked our posts. We are also able to track sentiment of posts. This analytical data in turn allows us to judge when future posts should be scheduled to reach the largest possible audience and helps us tailor future messages according to what our followers are most interested in.

4.4 Flickr, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn

The other social networks we have a presence on allow us to broadcast information, but with no expectation of individual interaction or customer service.

- 4.5 Flickr is a photo sharing site aimed at photography enthusiasts and professionals. In the past we used to post photos to Flickr as a means of promoting the district as a vibrant and attractive place to live and work. In particular we used it to show the progress in the construction works for Hitchin Town Hall and Museum. However, Flickr's decline as a social media force has meant we no longer actively use it.
- 4.6 Instagram is a photo and video sharing social network, and is particularly popular among young people. Since February 2018 we have been experimenting with using Instagram instead of Flickr as a means of sharing images to promote the district. We have quickly grown a base of over 500 followers, though it is difficult to quantify the impact our posts have as yet.
- 4.7 YouTube is a well known and widely used video sharing website. Though NHDC has had an account for several years, it has not published a great deal there, due to the time and cost required in developing good quality video content. Recently the audio recordings of the Local Plan Examination hearings were uploaded there as an easy solution to making them publicly available. The communications team are also actively looking at opportunities to create or share video content so that we can improve our digital offer to residents.
- 4.8 LinkedIn is a business professional social networking site, and is one of the most popular services for job hunting. NHDC's profile page sets out who we are and what we do, and we regularly post updates promoting vacancies currently available.
- 4.9 Certain NHDC services such as the North Herts Museum and Herts Careline, also maintain their own social media profiles. This is done with the agreement of the Communications team, who determine if there is a legitimate case for a new social media presence, and that levels of resourcing have been fully considered. A policy on use of social media by staff for work purposes can be found on the Council's Intranet.
- 4.10 In general, it is preferable for the main corporate social media accounts to act on behalf of other services and publish their messages, to ensure engagement is properly managed and resourcing is available. It is accepted however, that there are some circumstances which make a distinct social media presence

desirable.

4.11 In the case of the services in the table below, they already operate or promote themselves to the public at arm's length from the Council, or work in an area more akin to a commercial environment and therefore benefit from a more independent presence online. The Communications team support these services by offering advice and guidance when needed, and sharing their content on the main corporate accounts.

Service	Social networks
North Herts Museum	Twitter Facebook Instagram
Herts Careline	Twitter Facebook
Hitchin Town Hall	Facebook Instagram

5 Management and Development of Social Media

5.1 Management of initial response and assigning enquiries

5.2 Currently the Communications team lead on all engagement on social media – publishing all general outbound messages, and assigning all inbound enquiries and messages to its own team or to the Customer Service Centre if the query relates to a straightforward customer service enquiry.

5.3 Generally this arrangement works well, as by assigning messages, it can easily be seen that one person is dealing with a particular message, however as volumes of enquiries increase, both teams need to ensure they have enough resource that can be dedicated to dealing with enquiries.

5.4 If volumes of straightforward customer enquiries increase, it may make sense in the longer term for the Customer Services team to take the lead on assigning queries, however often posts have a potential wider reputational impact and therefore it makes sense currently for the Communications team to do so.

5.5 When responding to individual customer enquiries on social media, it is common practice among organisations for the responder to sign or initial their reply (e.g. adding “^GM” at the end) so that the customer is assured that their query is being handled by a real person. It also improves accountability by making it easy to see who participated in any customer interaction. Though NHDC does not currently initial its responses, it is a positive course of action which should improve customer satisfaction on social media, and should therefore be implemented or trialled.

5.6 Dealing with comments on other Facebook groups

5.7 As an organisation we have a corporate page on Facebook rather than an individual profile. Therefore we are unable to monitor or respond to comments made about North Hertfordshire District Council on other pages or groups e.g. ‘We are from Hitchin, Hertfordshire’. Unfortunately on occasion inaccurate information is circulated via these sites and there is little we can do to correct this. We could set up individual profiles to do so, however the resource involved

in monitoring them would be extremely time intensive. We should therefore only respond to queries directly posted on our own social media pages.

5.8 Monitoring and reporting interaction with customers on social media

5.9 Customer feedback through normal channels (e.g. telephone calls) is monitored and recorded by the Customer Service team for reporting purposes, and categorised in to comments, compliments and complaints (also known as the 3Cs). Social media is not included as part of this activity, largely for logistical reasons; the sheer quantity of comments and interactions would make it extremely time-consuming to compile and analyse the data. It is also partly due to the conversational and informal nature of social media: users discussing or mentioning NHDC do not always expect or require a response. They may discuss their customer experience of NHDC in a positive or negative way, but social media is an open space for public discussion – very different from raising a complaint (or comment or compliment) directly with the Council.

5.10 Customers can of course interact directly with NHDC on social media to raise a specific issue; however this is dealt with quickly and informally where possible. Queries of a personal nature may be moved to a more appropriate channel, where it would be treated as a standard customer service query or a 3Cs interaction. Queries received through social media are not currently subject to response time targets in the same way as other channels.

5.11 Interaction with users on social media is monitored instead through regular dashboard reporting to SMT. These includes key data such as engagement (replies, likes, etc.), mentions, tags (each post is assigned a tag, such as Waste, Grounds Maintenance, Council Tax, etc.) and follower numbers.

5.12 Factors to consider when evaluating a new social network

5.13 Social media is a continually growing and evolving environment, as new networking sites take off in popularity while others decline. As such it would be difficult, if not futile, to set out any hard and fast rules for when NHDC should look at creating a new presence on a social network.

5.14 In general however, the following can be considered as useful questions to ask if joining a new social network is being contemplated:

- Is there likely to be a regular flow of content to publish to justify creating the presence?
- Does the social network have a sufficient number of users to make it worth spending the time and effort in maintaining a presence there?
- Is it particularly popular among an audience with whom the Council wishes to increase engagement e.g. young people, older people?
- Is it possible to monitor the reach of posts published on the site, to determine how widely viewed they are?
- Can messages drafted for an existing social network be easily adapted to fit the new site, in order to minimise the extra work required to publish posts?
- Could the site be used to communicate updates during an emergency situation or a period of service disruption?

5.15 Policy for publication on website

5.16 It is common for organisations to publish a social media policy or code of practice on their website in order to set out clearly how that organisation uses social media, what users can expect from it, and what it expects from users in return.

5.17 The aim of the policy is to help avoid unpleasant or unacceptable treatment of staff, and to protect the organisation's reputation. From NHDC's perspective it is important to clarify how we aim to help anyone who contacts us via social media, but also that it may not always be possible or suitable to do so.

5.18 A policy for the NHDC website is attached to this strategy in section 6. It sets out:

- How to find our social media channels
- What we use social media for
- When we monitor social media
- How to contact us
- What we view as unacceptable behaviour
- How we deal with unacceptable behaviour

6 Social media policy for use on website

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 We can be found on the following social media networks:

- [Follow us on Twitter](#)
- [Like us on Facebook](#)
- [Follow us on Instagram](#)
- [Follow us on LinkedIn](#)

6.1.2 We post messages about the services we provide to over 125,000 residents, as well as information about events and opportunities in the district.

6.1.3 Our aim is to raise awareness of all that the Council and North Hertfordshire have to offer.

6.1.4 We monitor our social media pages between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday. We do not monitor or respond to posts outside of normal office working hours.

6.2 Contacting us

6.2.1 We try and reply to every customer query and message we receive but, due to high volumes, this is not always possible. Due to very high volumes, we do not respond to all comments made on our social media platforms, only to those where residents are asking us to deal with a service request or asking a customer service query.

6.2.2 We aim to initially respond to questions and requests for service within one working day. On some occasions during busy periods this may not be possible, but we will respond to you as soon as we can.

6.2.3 For general enquiries we recommend you contact us via our website's Do It Online portal which you can find at www.north-herts.gov.uk or using our customer service centre 01462 474000 (open 9am-5pm Monday to Friday).

- 6.2.4 In an emergency and outside of office hours, please use our [emergency contact details](#).
- 6.2.5 During an emergency or during times of significant service disruption, it is our policy to post all latest service or situation updates on our website and this would be the main channel of communication that we direct customers to for information. In this scenario we may post messages outside of our normal hours, but it is unlikely we will be able to reply to individual queries, as resources to man social media channels would be limited and may need to be diverted to other contact channels. In these instances we reserve the right to direct customers to other channels to complete their service request or query, as this will often be the most efficient and quickest way of speaking to us.
- 6.2.6 If your enquiry needs further investigation or is of a sensitive nature, we may direct you to other, more suitable contact channels. This is done so that your enquiry can be answered by the most appropriate officer, as well as to ensure your data is properly handled.

6.3 Our social media policy and process

- 6.3.1 Our social media accounts are managed by real people. We strive to be helpful and understand you may have frustrations with our services or those of our contractors and partners. We encourage public debate and people are free to share their views about the Council. We have no intention of stifling discussion about us as an organisation. However, we ask that you are respectful. Abuse will not be tolerated.
- 6.3.2 The vast majority of people who use social media do so with tolerance and respect, however a small minority can spoil it for everyone. This policy aims to protect our employees, councillors and residents from unacceptable use of social media. Unacceptable behaviour includes (but is not limited to) abusive or bad language, degrading remarks, or attempts to provoke or upset other users. We reserve the right to take action in relation to social media posts or messages which:
- are abusive, harassing or threatening
 - use sexist, racist or other unacceptable language which are intended to cause concern / harm

- are defamatory or libellous
- may be in contempt of court
- break any other law or incite someone else to break the law
- contain inappropriate material (including images or video)
- are spam.

6.3.3 In the event of unacceptable behaviour we will follow a set process:

- Firstly we will record the name and handle of the account, the date, social media post and why it is unacceptable
- We will delete or hide any posts which we view to be offensive. Following this we will usually issue a written warning, after consulting with the Communications Manager and/or the relevant Service Director. This will usually be by means of a private direct social media message in the first instance with a link to our social media policy
- If unacceptable behaviour continues or is extreme, the Council will consider blocking the user from interacting with us on social media. After 12 months the owner of the account can appeal the decision to block. Any decision to reverse the block will be made in conjunction with the Chief Executive. We reserve the right to block any user from interacting with us on social media at any time.
- If we block any social media user the Communications team will record the decision and make the Chief Executive aware. We may also report the matter to the Police where behaviour amounts to abuse or harassment or a criminal offence is suspected.

6.3.4 This policy adheres to the principles set out in the Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy Statement, published on the Complaints page of the NHDC website. The policy states:

- All customers will be dealt with in a fair, honest and consistent way.
- Services are accessible to all customers. However we may restrict or change access to services when a customer behaves in an unacceptable way.
- We will make sure that the physical and emotional safety of customers, visitors and Council employees is not at risk from any customer who behaves in an unacceptable way.

- We will alert the Police if it is considered that there is an immediate danger to staff or customers.

6.3.5 Queries on this policy should be directed to pressoffice@north-herts.gov.uk.



2018/19 Quarter 2 PI Data

For 2018/19, NHDC will report 21 corporate performance indicators. This report presents the **red and amber** performance indicators, as well as other indicators to note, and displays the latest period that officers have updated and activated on Pentana Performance. The full report can be found on the intranet at the following location.

<http://intranet.north-herts.gov.uk/home/doing-business/performance-and-risk-management/performance-management>

Performance indicator data is cumulative and represents performance between 1 April 2018 and the end of the latest reporting period. The report will indicate if any performance indicator data relates to a different reporting period. Where available, National Benchmarking data is included in the Commentary for indicators, and when targets are set, national minimum requirements will be taken into account.

Key for the Report







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Status	
	Data value has met or exceeded the target figure
	Data value has not achieved the target figure but it is within the agreed tolerance range
	Data value has not achieved the target figure and it is outside the agreed tolerance range
	Data value is for information only and a traffic light status is not applicable

Direction of Travel	
	Data value has improved compared with the same time last year
	Data value has deteriorated compared with the same time last year
	Data value has not changed compared with the same time last year





Summaries



Status Summary		Direction of Travel Summary	
	8 (Q1 – 8)		3 (Q1 – 4)
	0 (Q1 – 2)		11 (Q1 – 11)
	4 (Q1 – 2)		3 (Q1 – 2)
	9 (Q1 – 9)	Not Applicable	4 (Q1 – 4)









Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
Leader of the Council								
5	BV 12	Working days lost due to overall sickness absence per FTE employee (both short-term and long-term)	September 2018	3.60	Not Applicable		 Sept 17 1.86	1008.96 FTE sickness days 280.21 average FTEs National Benchmarking Source: LG Inform Latest Quarter - Three-Month Period Sample - Participating English district local authorities Period NHDC Top Quartile Q1 2018/19 1.7 days 0.5 to 1.5 days NHDC ranked joint 19th out of 51 (Second Quartile)
Page 72	BV 12a	Working days lost due to short-term sickness absence per FTE employee	September 2018	1.82	1.58		 Sept 17 1.35	510.46 FTE short-term sickness days 280.21 average FTEs There has been a good take up of the annual Flu vaccinations.
7	BV 12b	Working days lost due to long-term sickness absence per FTE employee	September 2018	1.78	Not Applicable		 Sept 17 0.51	498.50 FTE long-term sickness days 280.21 average FTEs There has been a higher caseload of long-term absence, with more serious illnesses of our staff and members of their family. Regrettably, this has resulted in some sad losses.





Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health								
Page 73	LI 034	Percentage of Environmental Health and Licensing programmed inspections completed	Q2 2018/19	84.5%	95%		 Q2 17/18 87.2%	Officers completed 262 out of the 310 planned inspections. Inspections not completed: - 15 Food Safety inspections - 3 Caravan Sites inspections - 6 House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) inspections - 4 Industrial Installations inspections - 5 Animal Establishments inspections - 4 Gambling Act 2005 inspections - 2 Scrap Metal inspections - 9 Taxi Licensing inspections Overall, the inspection performance has improved significantly from Q1 (66%), albeit that it is still below target. The licensing inspection performance, in particular, has recovered well from the Q1 outcome and now stands at 84.6%. This might have been higher but for work pressures preparing for the new animal licensing regime that came into effect from 1 October. As part of the post restructure measures, the SDL&C/Licensing Manager will be reviewing the PI with the Executive Member, so that it records all inspections undertaken and better reflects priority ones. In the meantime, licensing shall re-focus on inspections for Q3 (subject to any influx of applications). The inspection performance by the environmental health service was below target in Q2 due to other work demands but remedial steps have been taken to address this. It is expected that the overall performance will meet the target by the year-end.

2018/19 Quarter 2 PI Data

Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
9	REG 1	Rate of homelessness prevention	Q2 2018/19	56.25%	Not Applicable		Not Applicable	REG1 is a new performance indicator for 2018/19. 64 cases where a Prevention Duty ended during Q1 and Q2 2018/19 - 36 cases (56.25%) ended with a positive outcome. Of the remaining cases, 22 went on to be owed a Relief Duty, of which nine had outcomes in Q1 and Q2 2018/19. These have also been included in the return for REG2 (Rate of homelessness relief). National Benchmarking – awaiting first release of new H-CLIC homelessness data
Page 74	REG 2	Rate of homelessness relief	Q2 2018/19	35.11%	Not Applicable		Not Applicable	REG2 is a new performance indicator for 2018/19. 94 cases where a Relief Duty ended during Q1 and Q2 2018/19 - of these, 33 cases (35.11%) ended with a positive outcome. National Benchmarking – awaiting first release of new H-CLIC homelessness data
11	LI 035a	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	Q2 2018/19	76	Not Applicable		 Q2 17/18 76	76 as at the end of September 2018, including four placements in bed and breakfast accommodation. This was the total number of households accommodated under the relevant legislation by the Council, although placement was with a third party. National Benchmarking – awaiting first release of new H-CLIC homelessness data



Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary						
Executive Member for Planning, Enterprise and Transport														
12	NI 157ai	Percentage of major planning applications determined within the relevant statutory or agreed time periods	Q2 2018/19	77.27%	80%		 Q2 17/18 100%	<p>17 out of 22 major applications were determined within the relevant statutory or agreed time periods.</p> <p>Whilst officers always seek to agree extended time scales with the applicant this is not always possible, as this is sometimes seen incorrectly as agreeing to delaying the application. This PI should be cross referenced with DC001a and DC002. As can be seen no applicants appealed to the Inspectorate with regard non-determination and no fees were returned.</p> <p>National Benchmarking Source: LG Inform Latest Year – Full Year Sample – All English district local authorities</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>Period</u></td> <td><u>NHDC</u></td> <td><u>Top Quartile</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017/18</td> <td>85%</td> <td>96% to 100%</td> </tr> </table> <p>NHDC ranked joint 126th out of 201 (Third Quartile)</p>	<u>Period</u>	<u>NHDC</u>	<u>Top Quartile</u>	2017/18	85%	96% to 100%
<u>Period</u>	<u>NHDC</u>	<u>Top Quartile</u>												
2017/18	85%	96% to 100%												

Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
13	NI 157e	Percentage of all planning applications determined within the relevant statutory or agreed time periods	Q2 2018/19	78.92%	82%		 Q2 17/18 80.16%	<u>Majors</u> 17 out of 22 <u>Minors</u> 91 out of 132 <u>Others</u> 505 out of 583 <u>Applications not included in the categories above</u> 364 out of 501 This gives an overall figure of 78.92% (977 out of 1,238) We have transitioned from staff shortages to a full team. New members of the team have picked up some very old cases and determined these outside of the relevant periods. Performance should now improve as the backlog is reduced and the new staff gain a larger workload. This has been shown by the improvement from Q1 (75.49%)
14	DC 001a	Number of planning applications taken to appeal due to 'non-determination' within the statutory time period, which were allowed	Q2 2018/19	0	Not Applicable		 Q2 17/18 0	During April 2018 to September 2018, no appeal decisions (allowed or dismissed) related to appeals that were submitted due to non-determination within the statutory time period.
15	DC 002	Number of planning applications where the fee has been refunded due to the application not being determined within 26 weeks	Q2 2018/19	0	0		 Q2 17/18 0	No fees have been refunded.
16	LI 032a	Number of allowed planning appeal decisions	Q2 2018/19	1	Not Applicable		 Q2 17/18 3	1 of 8 appeals allowed (12.5%), there are no policy implications to this decision.

Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary						
Executive Member for Waste, Recycling and Environment														
18	NI 191	Kg residual waste per household	September 2018	175kg	179kg		 Sept 17 180kg	<p>Q2 2018/19 return is currently a provisional figure, as full Q2 data is unavailable for a number of waste streams.</p> <p>National Benchmarking Source: LG Inform Latest Quarter - Three-Month Period Sample - Participating English district local authorities</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Period</td> <td>NHDC</td> <td>Top Quartile</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2018/19</td> <td>95.33kg*</td> <td>68.07kg to 96.53kg</td> </tr> </table> <p>NHDC ranked 7th out of 36 (Top Quartile)</p>	Period	NHDC	Top Quartile	Q1 2018/19	95.33kg*	68.07kg to 96.53kg
Period	NHDC	Top Quartile												
Q1 2018/19	95.33kg*	68.07kg to 96.53kg												
19	NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	September 2018	58.35%	58%		 Sept 17 60.65%	<p>Q2 2018/19 return is currently a provisional figure, as full Q2 data is unavailable for a number of waste streams.</p> <p>National Benchmarking Source: LG Inform Latest Quarter - Three-Month Period Sample - Participating English district local authorities</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Period</td> <td>NHDC</td> <td>Top Quartile</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2018/19</td> <td>58.99%*</td> <td>57.43% to 66.28%</td> </tr> </table> <p>NHDC ranked 7th out of 38 (Top Quartile)</p>	Period	NHDC	Top Quartile	Q1 2018/19	58.99%*	57.43% to 66.28%
Period	NHDC	Top Quartile												
Q1 2018/19	58.99%*	57.43% to 66.28%												

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2018/19 Quarter 2 PI Data

Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
20	FW 1	Overall tonnage of food waste collected	September 2018	2,369	Not Applicable		Not Applicable	No targets were set for 2018/19, as the first year of the new performance indicators and contract will be used to establish baseline data. The combined food and garden waste tonnage for April to September 2017 was 9,587 tonnes.
21	GW 1	Overall tonnage of garden waste collected	September 2018	5,647	Not Applicable		Not Applicable	

Waste – only provisional figures – some information currently being queried with HCC.

Recycling targets were reduced for this year (from 60% to 55%) to pick up the anticipated teething problems with the waste contract, maybe more achievable now.

NI 191 – no change in target – still 360kg

NI192 – reduced from 60% to 55%

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**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 DECEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: 2nd QTR MONITORING REPORT ON KEY PROJECTS FOR 2018-19

REPORT OF: THE SERVICE DIRECTOR: RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL: LYNDA NEEDHAM

COUNCIL PRIORITY: ATTRACTIVE AND THRIVING / PROSPER AND PROTECT / RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This monitoring report provides a 2nd quarter update on the delivery of the key projects for 18/19, first identified to the Committee in March 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That delivery against the key projects for 18/19 be noted and commented on by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To enable achievements against the key projects for 2018/19 to be considered.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 There are no alternative options as this is a monitoring report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS





5.1 No external consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report as it is a monitoring report. Members will, however, be aware that a report setting out the key projects was brought to this Committee on 20 March 2018.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 This report provides details on the status of the key projects for 18/19. It does not include any projects initiated after the document was agreed and is not a full report on all the projects that the Council is undertaking.
- 7.2 This report summarises the status of each of the key projects. Overall, where the delivery has been solely down to the Council good progress has been made. The following symbols have been used to summarise progress.

Status key	
	Project Halted / funding not available/ Extremely Late
	Project behind original due date/ unlikely to hit original due date.
	Project not due for completion in 2018/19 or has not reached due date
	Project Completed.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The 2nd Quarter monitoring report against key projects for 2018/19 is included in Appendix A.
- 8.2 Appendix A includes the original milestones for reporting progress which were reported to this Committee in March 2018 and progress made against those actions. In addition, updates may have been provided to Executive Members and where relevant through the Members Information Service. Progress against some, will also have been monitored through the Capital monitoring reports to the Finance Audit and Risk Committee and to Cabinet.
- 8.3 At the Overview & Scrutiny committee meeting in December 2017 it was agreed that completed projects would be removed from the report, once they had been reported to O&S. In line with this, the Office Accommodation Project, the Community Centre Leases and Working with Health Partners projects have been removed from future monitoring reports.

- 8.4 At the September meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny meeting it was requested that the Service Manager- Waste be requested to publish details of the statistics regarding reports of missed bins and calls made regarding this and communicate the details publicly. In order to fulfil this request, a more detailed update on the Waste Project will be provided in Appendix B for future reports.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 No direct legal implications arise from this report. Legal implications for the projects listed in Appendix A are considered as part of those projects and will include (but are not limited to) governance, property, planning and contractual issues. Under the Local Government Act 2000 there is a legal requirement for Councils operating Executive arrangements to appoint an overview and scrutiny committee with remit to review decisions and other actions.
- 9.2 Overview and Scrutiny's terms of reference include at paragraph 6.2.7(s) of the Constitution "to review performance against the Council's agreed priorities and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or service areas". This report gives the Committee an opportunity to comment on progress made against the projects that have been identified for delivery against the Council's objectives.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific revenue implications.
- 10.2 The actions identified were resourced through the corporate business planning process cycle for 2018/19 that was undertaken in 2017/18. A number of these projects formed part of the Council's capital programme for 2018/19.
- 10.3 The Council continues to face difficult spending decisions in view of the reduction in government support in future years and the availability of funding continues to impact on the projects that can be undertaken.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Lead Officer for each project is responsible for identifying any risks to the successful delivery of the Project.
- 11.2 Some of these major projects have been identified as Top Risks for the Council and these are monitored quarterly by the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee. These include:
- Local Plan
 - Hitchin Town Hall
 - Asset Management
 - Waste and Street Cleansing Contract Renewal

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 By reporting delivery against the key projects for 2018/19 this provides a means to monitor whether the council are meeting the stated outcomes of the district priorities, its targets or delivering accessible and appropriate services to the community to meet different people's needs. This assists the Council to fulfil a number of its obligations arising from the Public Sector Equality Duty.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no additional human resource implications arising from this monitoring report. The resources needed to deliver projects should be considered through the Corporate Business Planning process.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – 2nd Quarter Monitoring against Key Projects for 2018/19
Appendix B – Waste Project Update.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk & Performance Manager, Tel 474606, email Rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.2 Ian Couper, Service Director, Resources Tel 474243; email ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.3 Howard Crompton, Service Director, Customers Tel 474247, email Howard.crompton@north-herts.gov.uk

- 16.4 Ian Fullstone, Service Director, Regulatory, Tel, 474480, email ian.fullstone@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.5 Kerry Shorrocks, Corporate Human Resources Manager, Tel, 474224, email kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.6 Vaughan Watson, Service Director, Place, Tel 474641 email Vaughan.watson@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.7 Jeanette Thompson, Service Director, Legal & Community. Contact Tel 474370 jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 None





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2018/2019 reporting against Projects identified in the Corporate Plan – as at 16/11/2018



For Q2 2018/2019 North Hertfordshire District Council is reporting against 10 Projects identified in the Corporate Plan 2018-23



Key for the Report


Status key	
	Project Halted / Project extremely late.
	Project behind original due date/ unlikely to hit original due date.
	Project not due for completion in 2018/19 or has not reached due date
	Project Completed.

Status	Q2	Q1	Summary of Movement
	1	2	Royston Leisure Centre extension removed from reporting
	2	1	Investigating a range of options to improve use of company assets.
	7	8	
	0	3	
Total	10	14	Office Accommodation / Community Centre Leases / Working with Health Partners/ Royston Leisure Centre

- Where projects are carried over from 1718 their status is retained until they are complete – to ensure transparency


Description in Corporate Plan	Corporate Objective	Portfolio	Milestones – current year and beyond	Due Date	Overall Status	Comments
Status – RED - 1						
Complete the fit out and open the North Hertfordshire Museum and Community Facility	Prosper & Protect	Leisure	<p>Continue to negotiate on possible acquisition of 14/15 Brand Street.</p> <p>Report to Cabinet on proposed way forward.</p> <p>Complete fit out of Museum.</p>	<p>Original due date 30 September 2015</p> <p>31/07/2018</p> <p>September 2018 </p>		<p>Cabinet received a report on 25 September 2018 and its decision was:</p> <p>2.2 - That Cabinet agrees that the Settlement Agreement appended to the Part 2 report as Appendix B will be provided as a final offer to HTHL/HTHF. HTHL would be required to fully accept the Settlement Agreement by holding an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) by the 31st October 2018. Subject to agreement in principle and HTHL having set a date for their EGM, a date would then be arranged for mid-November for an extraordinary Cabinet meeting and a Cabinet Sub-Committee (Council Charities) meeting to consider the final Settlement Agreement.</p> <p>2.3 - Cabinet agrees that in the event that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HTHL/HTHF do not agree to the Settlement Agreement; or • HTHL does not agree to take the Settlement Agreement to an EGM by the 31st October 2018; or • the Settlement Agreement is not approved at an EGM of HTHL by 31st October 2018; <p>the Settlement Agreement and current Purchase Price offer will be withdrawn by the Council. A date for an extraordinary meeting of Full Council will be set to</p>



						<p>consider the use of Compulsory Purchase powers in relation to 14/15 Brand Street, as soon as possible.</p> <p>At it's EGM on 30 October 2018, HTHL agreed to the sale of 14/15 Brand Street with one minor amendment to the Terms of Agreement. Formal approval for the Agreement now has to go to an extraordinary meeting of Cabinet on 20 November, after which we will be in a position to get on with the final fit out and get the Museum open next year.</p>
Status – AMBER - 2						
<p>Development of a Crematorium in North Hertfordshire - subject to approval by Cabinet March 2017</p> <p>NOT Prince II</p>	Prosper & Protect	Waste, Recycling & Env	<p>Obtain outline planning permission from Central Beds.</p> <p>Agree the Heads of Terms and Options Agreements with our nominated partner.</p> <p>Prospective tenant exercises the option and enters into an agreement for lease (the prospective tenant will be responsible for applying for detailed planning permission).</p> <p>The prospective tenant enters into a lease, in accordance with the Heads of Terms, following the grant of detailed planning</p>	<p>July 2018</p> <p>July 2018 </p> <p>31 Dec 2018</p> <p>31 Mar 2019</p>	<p></p>	<p>The Options agreement was completed and signed on 30 April 2018. The Central Beds decision on outline planning is now to be made by Committee rather than by Officers only. Work is ongoing to provide further information to supplement NHDC's submission, as requested by CBC.</p> <p>Therefore the date for the decision has been put back and we now expect to receive this by the end of December 2018</p> <p>The prospective tenant will be responsible for delivering the project, once outline planning received.. The estimate for practical completion was December 2020, although recent delays regarding outline planning permission now mean that this is more likely to happen in spring 2021.</p>



			permission			
			Practical Completion of Crematorium			December 2020
Investigating a range of options to improve use of Council assets NOT Prince II from 1718	Responsive & Efficient	Various	Report to Cabinet Shareholder Sub-Committee on potential options Obtain Cabinet approval to establish a Property Company Set up Property Company	15 March 2018 31 Mar 2018 Mid 2018		Draft legal documentation has been prepared, including the articles of association and a shareholders agreement. These documents will provide governance for the Company and set out the relationship between the Company and the Council. Officers are also producing a business plan for the Company and once this is complete, the legal paperwork will be finalised. The Council is also in the process of agreeing a name for the Company. Once all this work is completed, the Council will apply to Companies House. Therefore, it is anticipated that the Company will be registered and ready for business by the end of March 2019. Although this is behind the original target date (30 September 2018), this does not impact on the need for a company, as the first piece of work that requires a company is the letting of Harkness Court, which is currently programmed to complete in autumn 2019

Status – GREEN -7						
Submission of a Local Plan for North Herts	Prosper & Protect	Planning & Enterprise	<p>Consultation on major modifications (timescale dependant upon Planning Inspectorate)</p> <p>Publication of Inspectors Report (timescale dependant upon Planning Inspectorate)</p> <p>Adoption of the new local plan report to Full Council (timescale dependant upon Planning Inspectorate)</p>	<p>Late 2018</p> <p>Early 2019</p> <p>Early 2019</p>	▶	<p>The scheduled Examination hearing sessions were completed on 27 March 2018. The timescales for subsequent milestones are dependent upon the Planning Inspectorate</p> <p>The Inspector has written to the Council saying that the Main Modifications, the 'homework' and 'other work' produced by the council should be on the website by the 20 November 2018.</p> <p>A Cabinet meeting has been arranged for 10 December 2018 in order to seek approval to go to public consultation. This is in anticipation of a further letter from the Inspector indicating these as the next steps.</p>
<p>Renewing our waste and street cleansing contracts, continuing to provide an efficient and effective service</p> <p>Prince II Date of Last Project Board – 08 August 2018 Exception report since last Quarter – None</p>	Attractive & Thriving	Waste, Recycling & Env	<p>Tenders returned</p> <p>Inter Authority agreement signed</p> <p>Contract Award</p> <p>Contract Commencement</p>	<p>July 2017</p> <p>July 2017</p> <p>Sept 2017</p> <p>May 2018</p>	▶	<p>The new shared waste contract commenced on time in May 2018, so the status of the project has been left as green. However, due to the current issues, the project has not yet been signed off by the Project Board, so cannot be marked as complete. Officers are working closely with the Contractor in order to get the issues resolved. Once this sign off takes place, the project will move into the Contract Management stage and be officially marked as complete.</p> <p>A further detailed update for Waste has been provided in Appendix B.</p>

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<p>Designating air quality management areas in Hitchin to address the improvement of the air quality – Stevenage Road and Paynes Park. (5 Year Plan commenced 2018)</p> <p>Not Prince II</p> <p>Page 90</p>	<p>Attractive & Thriving</p>	<p>Housing & Env Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Development of ECOstars scheme for business to reduce emissions from freight deliveries •Investigate options for extending and improving electric vehicle recharging facilities in the district •Anti-idling campaign to encourage drivers to switch off when stationary, including investigation of enforcement options •Review of on-street parking in air quality management areas •Participate in National Clean Air Day •Contribute development of Air Alert texting scheme with HCC and other partners 	<p>To be confirmed</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>2019</p> <p>2019</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>Late 2018</p>		<p>Unfortunately the Council were not successful with a bid to DEFRA for a grant to progress this scheme. Officers are reviewing alternative funding options.</p> <p>Officers are negotiating with developers through the planning process to implement charging points within new homes.</p> <p>Initial planning work has commenced on how this item will be delivered</p> <p>Not yet commenced</p> <p>Completed for 2018</p> <p>HCC are supporting NHDC to promote the scheme implementation and target audience. This is a joint Herts/Beds initiative led by NHDC. A contract has been placed in conjunction with a number of other authorities to provide the proposed text service. It is hope that it will start operating by the end of the year. There will be publicity about this service coming out once the 'go live' date is confirmed.</p>
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<p>Churchgate</p> <p>Project will span more than one financial year</p> <p>Once actual project commences will be Prince II</p> <p>Date of Last Project Board n/a</p> <p>Page 91</p>	<p>Attractive & Thriving</p>	<p>Commercialisation</p>	<p>Full Council approval obtained to principle of joint venture funded by the Council. Further work required to look at detail of proposals before reporting back to Full Council.</p> <p>Develop Heads of Terms with SPG and seek Full Council Approval</p> <p>Subject to agreed Heads of Terms, develop full final agreement with SPG and seek Full Council approval.</p> <p>Report to Cabinet March 2018 on Market management</p>	<p>Mid/Late 2018</p> <p>Autumn 2018</p> <p>December 2018</p>		<p>Public Consultation took place in March and April.2018 The results showed widespread support for a scheme to improve the Churchgate centre and the market.</p> <p>Discussions with Shearer Property Group are moving towards finalising a draft Heads of Terms that balance the risk and rewards for both parties. Expert consultancy advice has been procured in relation to retail, financial (including tax) and legal.</p> <p>Report to Full Council 22 November 2018, will also be considered by Cabinet and Hitchin Committee.</p>
<p>Delivering identified projects from the adopted Green Space Strategy (Report to Cabinet 24/01/2017)</p> <p>Construction of pathway and Roadway at Wilbury Hills Cemetery, Letchworth (£35,000)</p>	<p>Attractive & Thriving</p>	<p>Leisure & Environment</p>	<p>Procurement Exercise</p> <p>Completion of Works</p>	<p>Sept 2018</p> <p>March 2019</p>		<p>We have struggled to identify 3 contractors willing to provide a quotation for this work. However we are now in the process of securing the third and final one. We will be able to evaluate the results and award the works once we have received the outstanding information</p>

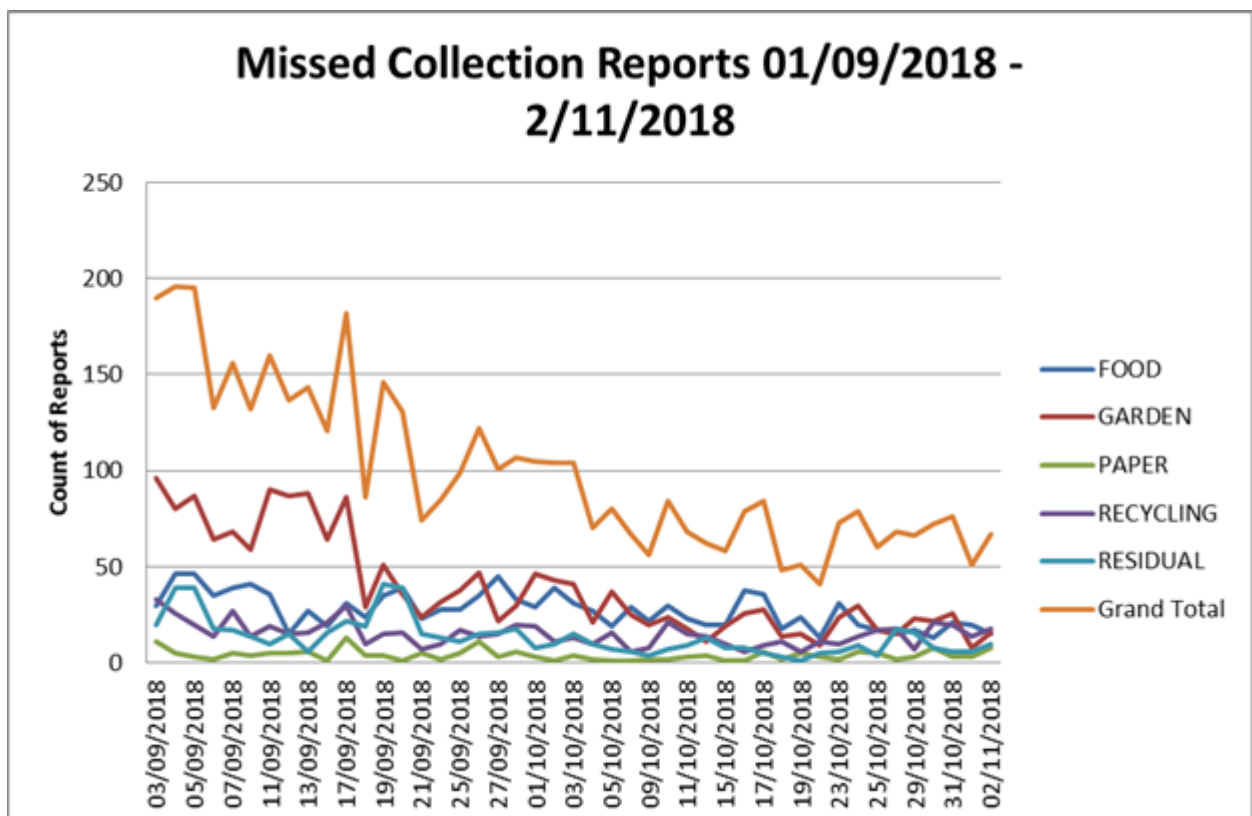
Not Prince II						
Bancroft recreation ground MUGA (£170,000) Subject to securing Sport England grant Not Prince II	Attractive & Thriving	Leisure & Environment	Procurement Exercise Completion of MUGA	Oct 2018 July 2019		£60k grant secured from Sport England. Initial research has highlighted that due to technical reasons the lamp columns to illuminate the proposed facility will need to be at least 5 metre's high. Anything over 4 metre's requires planning approval, Consultation has taken place with colleagues. A spec is being developed on the basis that the lighting will be 5 metre's high which will be put to tender once we have planning approval incorporating any planning conditions.
Renovation of Play area, District Park, Great Ashby (£75,000) Not Prince II	Attractive & Thriving	Leisure & Environment	Consultation on design Carry out procurement exercise Completion of Works	Sept 2018 Nov 2018 July 2020		A Public Consultation event was held on 8 September to inform design. The consultation results have been evaluated and we are now preparing the specification. The final proposals will be published in the near future with procurement being progressed as planned.
Status – COMPLETE -0						

Page 0/3

Waste Project Q2 Update

Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Panel in September we have seen a number of measurable improvements relating to the Urbaser contract. Efforts have continued to be invested in the previously problematic areas of; repeated missed bins, telephone contacts and complaints.

Missed bin reports have decreased in number as shown in the table below and the backing data provided. The data is currently provisional and subject to further reconciliation with Urbaser. The improvement can be directly attributed to previous glitches in software systems being managed and fixed appropriately. As promised, a business support manager was brought into the Urbaser team (at Urbasers' cost) who has assisted with these fixes. This work has been carried out alongside collection crew and supervisory training.



We have seen a steady decline in the number of telephone contacts made to both the Urbaser and North Herts District Council customer service centres. Urbaser have now installed a new telephone system as promised, which can place callers in a queue and notify them of this in particularly busy periods.

Multiple avenues for complaints and service requests does not provide the efficiencies and improvements we are aiming to achieve going forward and with the number of customer contacts steadily reducing to a more manageable level, we are now reverting back to the Urbaser contact centre as the main channel for service requests. This relieves some of the pressure on our own customer contact centre, creates efficiencies with services and reduces double handling. We will continue to review this arrangement.

Work continues to reduce the number of repeat complaints with properties being monitored by both Urbaser and the Client Team. In broad terms, there have been some residual / intermittent and a number of repeated missed bins since the last Scrutiny meeting, but in cases such as these,

we are in direct communication with the address to reassure them of our attention and determination to improve.

A report is being taken to the Council's Cabinet meeting on 20 November, recommending two initiatives that the Council hopes will give residents some tangible evidence that it is taking the issue and the inconvenience caused to residents extremely seriously. Two proposals will be discussed before a formal recommendation is made to full Council on 22 November.

Count of Service Type	Column Labels					Grand Total	Weekly Tot
Row Labels	FOOD	GARDEN	PAPER	RECYCLING	RESIDUAL	Grand Total	Weekly Tot
01/08/2018	27	36	6	22	13	104	
02/08/2018	48	49	14	28	23	162	
03/08/2018	50	33	9	27	32	151	417
06/08/2018	40	41	11	24	13	129	
07/08/2018	47	66	15	42	28	198	
08/08/2018	74	81	22	55	23	255	
09/08/2018	46	43	18	53	21	181	
10/08/2018	67	59	20	65	17	228	
11/08/2018	39	44	20	42	10	155	1146
13/08/2018	56	53	22	65	11	207	
14/08/2018	86	79	28	54	13	260	
15/08/2018	98	99	25	57	18	297	
16/08/2018	72	77	21	61	19	250	
17/08/2018	120	96	15	73	25	329	1343
20/08/2018	49	59	11	36	22	177	
21/08/2018	58	52	9	23	25	167	
22/08/2018	64	89	12	20	34	219	
23/08/2018	47	87	12	33	26	205	
24/08/2018	29	30	2	11	18	90	858
28/08/2018	49	49	20	40	38	196	
29/08/2018	60	52	9	26	24	171	
30/08/2018	56	50	18	24	26	174	
31/08/2018	52	37	8	34	15	146	687
03/09/2018	30	96	11	33	20	190	
04/09/2018	46	80	5	26	39	196	
05/09/2018	46	87	3	20	39	195	
06/09/2018	35	64	2	14	18	133	
07/09/2018	39	68	5	27	17	156	870
10/09/2018	41	59	4	14	14	132	
11/09/2018	36	90	5	19	10	160	
12/09/2018	15	87	5	15	15	137	
13/09/2018	27	88	6	16	6	143	
14/09/2018	19	64	1	21	16	121	693
17/09/2018	31	86	13	30	22	182	
18/09/2018	24	29	4	10	19	86	
19/09/2018	35	51	4	15	41	146	
20/09/2018	39	36	1	16	39	131	
21/09/2018	23	24	5	7	15	74	619
24/09/2018	28	32	2	10	13	85	
25/09/2018	28	38	5	17	11	99	
26/09/2018	35	47	11	14	15	122	
27/09/2018	45	22	3	15	16	101	
28/09/2018	33	30	6	20	18	107	514
01/10/2018	29	46	3	19	8	105	
02/10/2018	39	43	1	11	10	104	
03/10/2018	31	41	4	13	15	104	
04/10/2018	27	21	2	10	10	70	

05/10/2018	19	37	1	16	7	80	463
08/10/2018	29	25	1	6	6	67	
09/10/2018	22	20	2	8	4	56	
10/10/2018	30	24	2	21	7	84	
11/10/2018	23	18	3	15	9	68	
12/10/2018	20	11	4	14	13	62	337
15/10/2018	20	19	1	10	8	58	
16/10/2018	38	26	1	6	8	79	
17/10/2018	36	28	6	9	5	84	
18/10/2018	18	14	2	11	3	48	
19/10/2018	24	15	5	6	1	51	320
22/10/2018	13	9	3	11	5	41	
23/10/2018	31	24	2	10	6	73	
24/10/2018	20	30	6	14	9	79	
25/10/2018	17	17	5	17	4	60	
26/10/2018	15	15	2	18	18	68	321
29/10/2018	17	23	3	7	16	66	
30/10/2018	13	22	8	21	8	72	
31/10/2018	21	26	3	20	6	76	
01/11/2018	20	8	3	14	6	51	
02/11/2018	15	16	8	18	10	67	332
43409	17	23	5	22	7	74	
43410	10	22	2	4	3	41	
43411	16	18	8	5	11	58	
43412	22	12	9	15	5	63	
43413	11	11	4	8	6	40	276

Monthly Total

4451

2696

1441

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 DECEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

(A) APPROACH ROAD TO NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn asked the following question on 20 March 2018:

“Noting the inconvenience caused to residents and damage caused to public space by the construction traffic servicing the development in Lucas Lane, Hitchin and the potential increased use of unsuitable and sometimes dangerous routes to development sites in the District, which will increase following the adoption of the District Local Plan, will the Scrutiny Community investigate whether an approach to new developments which identifies access problems at an early stage is possible?”

An answer has been requested from the Executive Member for Planning, Enterprise and Transport.

(B) LEGAL CHALLENGE REGARDING RAIL SERVICES

Cllr Sam Collins has asked the following question:

“St. Albans District Council has set aside a 50,000 fighting fund for a potential legal challenge relating to the appalling rail service on the GTR operated lines in our area. It has states that it plans to approach neighbouring local councils to also contribute - has NHDC been approached, and does NHDC plan to contribute to this effort?”

An answer has been requested from the Executive Member for Planning, Enterprise and Transport.

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 DECEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF THE ACTING SCRUTINY OFFICER

Please refer to the attached schedule detailing the outcomes of the resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: AS AT 11 DECEMBER 2018

SECTION 1: COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

Ref	Resolution	Response/Outcome	Status as at 21.11.2018
Min 111 Mar 17	<p>Resolutions Report: Task & Finish Groups That Chairman be authorised to look into the issue of actions taken following Task and Finish Groups and report back to this Committee on her conclusions.</p>	Pending training delivery.	Training delivery taking place in Dec 2018 & Feb 2019
Min 16 June 17	<p>Work Programme That the Chairman, Chief Executive and Scrutiny Officer be requested to develop the outline for a workshop that would enable Members to identify issues and topics for discussion at future meetings of this Committee</p>	This is covered in the December training session which looked at scrutiny work methods and delivering scrutiny outcomes.	Complete Dec 18
Min 31 July 17	<p>Resolutions Report for July 2017 That the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meet with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to discuss holding an externally facilitated workshop for all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet to ascertain effective methods of Overview and Scrutiny that result in added value and impact on decisions.</p>	A workshop with Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet is being arranged for February 2019.	Arrangements made for Feb 2019.
Jul 18 Min 27	<p>Resolutions Report for July 2018 That the Temporary Scrutiny Officer be requested to canvass the Members of this Committee in order to ascertain the most appropriate date for the Centre of Public Scrutiny training course.</p>	The training has been arranged for 11/12/18, prior to the Dec Overview & Scrutiny Committee.	Complete – Dec 18
Min 32 July 17	<p>Work Programme That all planned Task and Finish Groups be deferred until after the planned workshop on effective methods of Overview and Scrutiny (Minute 31 refers) has been held.</p>	See above – Minute 111 and Minute 16	See above
Jul 18 Min 24	<p>Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3Cs) That the Executive Member for Customer Services be</p>	The Executive Member for Customer Services	Complete Dec 18.

Ref	Resolution	Response/Outcome	Status as at 21.11.2018
(1)	requested to consider obtaining the right technology to ensure that comments, compliments and complaints made via social media, as well as those received by other methods, are able to be analysed, progressed and recorded effectively;	has been sent this resolution.	
Jul 18 Min 24 (2)	Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3Cs) That the Customer Services Manager be requested to review the NHDC website pages regarding complaints and update it as necessary.	The Customer Services Manager plans to complete a full review by the end of October 2018, but in the meantime has located the reference to a fax on the NHDC website page and had it removed.	In progress
Jul 18 Min 28 (3)	Work Programme That the Waste Contract Scope be finalised and agreed by the scoping group in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;	The timing and process for agreeing the Waste Contract Scope to be agreed by the Committee, following publication of the SIAS review (see Sept 18, Min 37).	In progress
Jul 18 Min 28 (4)	Work Programme That, in place of the proposed Task and Finish Group on Consultation, the Temporary Scrutiny Officer be requested to facilitate a meeting of Councillors Sam Collins, Steve Deakin - Davies and Sue Ngwala and the Communications Manager to discuss the Consultation Strategy and the Citizens Panel and that those Councillors be requested to report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee once the work is completed.	The Communications Manager emailed the nominated Councillors with 5 date options in Nov 18 for this meeting. She did not receive a response from Cllr Sue Ngwala and Cllr Sam Collins. Confirmation is sought on whether the Committee still wish involvement with this?	In progress
Jul 18 Min 28 (5)	That the group considering the Consultation Strategy and Citizens Panel (see 4 above), be requested to take into consideration the Interim Review of that Strategy (see Minute 25(3))	This will be included in the above meeting.	In progress
Sept 18 Min 37 (4)	Waste Contract (1) That a Task and Finish type review of the waste contract be undertaken shortly following the publication of the SIAS review of the service; (2) That the following issues be referred to the Task and Finish review mentioned in (1) above:	(1) The SIAS review of the service is due to take place in the early months of 2019. (2) To be included within the Task & Finish Scope, see Min 28 (3).	Pending following the SIAS review in January 19 In progress

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Ref	Resolution	Response/Outcome	Status as at 21.11.2018
Page 104	<p>(i) Why a decision was made to mobilise the contract in an unreasonable timescale;</p> <p>(ii) Why, when there was such a short mobilisation period, was a decision made to make major changes to the service in what were already challenging circumstances, rather than delay the implementation of changes to the service for one year;</p> <p>(iii) Why sufficient staff resources were not made available prior to implementation of the contract;</p> <p>(iv) What happened when high volumes of calls were received in terms of systems and staff;</p> <p>(v) Consider the differences between area where the service worked well and those where the service was poor.</p> <p>(3) That the Service Manager- Waste be requested to publish details of the statistics regarding reports of missed bins and calls made regarding this and communicate the details publicly;</p> <p>(4) That the Service Manager Waste be requested to develop a communication strategy that includes Members that ensures they are kept updated on a regular basis and enables them to bring issues to the attention of Urbaser and/or the waste team;</p>	<p>(3) A Waste Project Update is now included within the Controls, Risk & Performance Manager's Performance monitoring reports</p> <p>(4) Resolution sent to the Service Manager Waste for comment; awaiting reply.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>
Sept 18 Min 37 (4)	(1) That all efforts are made to ensure that staff resources within NHDC are sufficient to meet the needs of the service;	Response from Cabinet on 25/09/18: That all efforts be made to ensure that staff resources within NHDC are sufficient to meet the needs of the service;	Complete – Dec 18
Sept 18 Min 37 (4)	(2) That a plan demonstrating the actions to be taken in order to bring the Waste and Recycling Service to a "business as usual" status be published and communicated publicly;	Response from Cabinet on 25/09/18: That a plan demonstrating the actions to be taken in order to bring the Waste and Recycling Service to a "business as usual" status be published and communicated publicly;	Complete – Dec 18

Ref	Resolution	Response/Outcome	Status as at 21.11.2018
Sept 18 Min 37 (4)	(3) That Cabinet confirm that a contingency plan detailing what will happen should the current contract continue to underperform is in place;	Response from Cabinet on 25/09/18: That it be confirmed that a Business Continuity Plan is in place.	Complete – Dec 18

SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS OF TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

Ref	Resolution	Response/Outcome	Status as at 24.05.2018
Min 50 Sept 15 Page 106	<p>Task and Finish Group on the Commercialisation of Council Services</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group made 9 recommendations which were considered by Cabinet on 10 November 2015. Its recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council should appoint a senior commercial manager to lead and coordinate its commercial activities; and to identify and develop new commercial opportunities. 2. The Council should appoint a high level commercial board comprised of councillors, officers and others with commercial experience. The board can advise the Cabinet about the feasibility of commercial opportunities and review the performance of existing ones. 3. The Council should pursue income generation opportunities where it has the skills, experience and resources to do so. These should be compatible with the Council's strategic objectives, and at a level of risk which would not threaten the Council's core services in the event of an enterprise's failure. 4. The Council should explore the possibilities of property investment as a means of generating revenue. 5. The Council should use the expertise of its strategic partners to help manage its property portfolio. 6. The Council should review its assets register to understand whether any of them could be used for property development or other commercial purposes. 7. Commercial activities should bear the true cost - but no more than that – of any support they receive from the Council. 8. The Council should review its training programmes for senior and other key staff to include more commercial training, networking and mentoring activities. 9. The Council should have a scheme that recognises officers who make useful commercialisation proposals or make significant contributions to their success. 	<p>The newly appointed Service Director Commercialisation has been tasked with developing a Commercialisation Strategy.</p> <p>It is suggested that Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider adding the scrutiny of this Strategy to their work programme.</p>	<p>Complete - 12 June 2018</p> <p>Members consider the scrutiny of this Strategy as part of the 2018/19 work programme</p>

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 DECEMBER 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2018/19

REPORT OF THE ACTING SCRUTINY OFFICER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: NOT APPLICABLE

COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report highlights items scheduled in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2018/19 and includes details of those that have yet to be assigned to a specific meeting.
- 1.2 The work programme includes both items previously agreed by the Committee and those that the Committee is required by the Constitution to consider.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee prioritises proposed topics for inclusion in the work programme and where appropriate, determines the high level form and timing of scrutiny input.
- 2.2 That the Committee agrees the list of items to be considered at its meeting of 11 December 2018.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To allow the Committee to set a work programme which provides focussed Member oversight, encourages open debate and seeks to achieve service improvement through effective policy development and meaningful policy and service change.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Committee has varied its approach to overview and scrutiny activity over recent years. Currently it seeks to enter the process of policy development at an early stage and consequently may consider items associated with service action plans.
- 4.2 The need to observe Constitutional requirements and monitor the Forward Plan for appropriate items to scrutinise remains a key aspect of work programming.

- 4.3 The Committee may wish to review and adjust its approach following delivery of the agreed training event.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 Each Committee meeting includes the opportunity for Members to comment on and input to the Committee's work programme.

- 5.2 A training proposal has been received from the Centre for Public Scrutiny which addresses amongst others:

- the identification and prioritisation of issues and topics for scrutiny review (minute 16, June 2017)
- the maximisation of the benefits of scrutiny (minute 31, July 2017)
- effective methods of overview and scrutiny (minute 32, July 2017)

The proposal has been agreed by the Chair of this Committee and the first of the training sessions took place before this evening's Committee. A second training session, which is being proposed as a joint workshop with O&S Members and Cabinet, is being arranged for February 2019. This workshop is in response to the following resolution:

- that the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meet with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to discuss holding an externally facilitated workshop for all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet to ascertain effective methods of Overview and Scrutiny that result in added value and impact on decisions (minute 31, July 2017)

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

- 6.2 The Committee is asked to review the Forward Plan at each regular meeting to identify potential issues for inclusion in the work programme. Identification of a focus for the Committee's future activity should be identified at this stage wherever possible.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 Executive Members no longer deliver regular general presentations on a rotational basis. Rather they are invited to either speak on an issue of specific interest or present a report being considered for constitutional reasons.

- 7.2 The Committee now considers a wide range of issues, where appropriate, commencing its reviews early in the policy development process. By doing this it seeks to ensure assumptions are challenged at an early stage, mistakes are avoided and eventual outcomes provide optimal benefit to the community.

- 7.3 The Committee seeks to ensure that consideration of agenda items minimises additional burdens on staff resources. Wherever possible, requests are made for the presentation of documents already in existence rather than the production of new documents specifically for the Committee.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Work Programme

- 8.1 A work programme is set out at Appendix A for the Committee's consideration.

Forward Plan

- 8.2 The Forward Plan for 20 November 2018 is attached at Appendix B.

Other Topics for Consideration

- 8.3 Potential topics for consideration and inclusion in the Committee's work programme will be considered as part of this meeting. When considering additional topics, their risk assessment and prioritisation will ensure that the most appropriate items are taken forward to the work programme.
- 8.4 An additional topic regarding a review of the Hitchin Town Hall / District Wide Museum Project has been added to the work programme since the last meeting of this Committee.

Waste Contract

- 8.5 Following the single item meeting on Waste at the September Committee, the review into the Waste contract will be undertaken following the completion of the SIAS review of the service. The SIAS review is expected to take place in January 2019. Following this, the scope for the review will be agreed by the scoping group in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and as per the new resolutions contained in the Resolutions Report.

Commercialisation

- 8.6 The Commercial Service Director is attending the December Committee to provide an overview of the Commercial department since its recent formation, explain how commercialisation will be implemented through the organisation and provide an overview of the Commercial Strategy whilst it is in its development phase, to allow opportunity for Members' comments. He will then attend again at the January Committee to present the finished Commercial Strategy. Following the strategy presentation at the January Committee the decision on the timings and format of scrutiny input into the topic of commercialisation will be made.
- 8.7 The Commercial Strategy will focus on four strands
- Why we need a Commercial Strategy
 - What we want to achieve
 - How we will deliver the strategy
 - How we will measure success

8.8 Consultation Strategy and Citizens Panel

The Task and Finish into this topic was removed following the Chairman's suggestion at the July Committee that a meeting is instead held with the Communications Manager and the following volunteered Councillors: Sam Collins, Steve Deakin-Davies and Sue Ngwala, to advise on the Consultation Strategy and Citizens Panel. The group were contacted by the Communications Manager to attend a meeting in November; 5 date options were provided however not all Members provided a response. Confirmation is therefore sought on whether the Committee still wish involvement with this topic.

8.9 Review into Hitchin Town Hall / District Wide Museum Project

Following the agreement for full ownership of Hitchin Town Hall, the review into the project can commence. In view of this, a meeting took place on 6 November 2018, to discuss the outline approach for the review. The Chair, Vice Chair and Group Leaders were in attendance at the meeting and agreed in principle the scope of the review as: 'Hitchin Town Project Review: How the Council worked with community partners'. A copy of the meeting minutes is provided in Appendix C, and a report on the review process will be brought to January's Overview & Scrutiny committee.

9. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Under Section 6.2.5 of the Constitution, the Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme. However, it must ensure it retains sufficient capacity within the programme to meet its statutory obligations.
- 9.2 Section 6.2.7 (u) of the Constitution allows the Committee "to appoint time limited task and finish Topic Groups to undertake detailed scrutiny work and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to make recommendations to the Cabinet."

10. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Dependent on how they are applied in practice, the scope of the options presented in Sections 7 and 8 have the potential to be wide reaching. As detailed Section 14, Human Resource Implications, the wider the reach, the more significant the impact on officer time in terms of report writing, data analysis and committee meeting attendance. Given recent funding pressures and the consequent reduction in officer numbers, significant requests to support scrutiny work will limit officer time available to spend on activities such as identifying and delivering cost reductions, income generation and project management.
- 10.2 Although not significant, a committee attendance allowance of £24.68 per officer per meeting is payable to officers below Senior Management level in attendance. This is in addition to providing time off in lieu.
- 10.3 Attention is drawn to the fact that a cost in the region of £900 will be incurred for the externally provided training event.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Effective overview and scrutiny of policy, administrative, service delivery and expenditure decisions helps reduce the risk of an inappropriate decision being made. The scope and time frame for scrutiny interventions should be considered in the light of the potential impact of inappropriate scrutiny leading to decisions not being made, inappropriately made or not made at the right time.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no direct equality implications arising from the report. Effective scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that local government remains transparent, accountable and open which ensures that the delivery of public services benefits all aspects of the community, where practical.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The widening of the reach of scrutiny reviews has the potential to significantly impact on officer time in terms of the reprioritisation of already agreed projects, their scope or timetabling and resources. There is also the potential for additional resource requirements in relation to report writing, information collection and analysis and committee attendance. Delivery of service plans to achieve the Council’s agreed Corporate Plan objectives might, therefore, be potentially negatively impacted.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Work Programme for future Committee meetings
- 15.2 Appendix B – Forward Plan for 20 November 2018
- 15.3 Appendix C – HTH / District Wide Museum Meeting Minutes 6 November 2018

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Acting Scrutiny Officer: (Kirstie Wilson) ScrutinyOfficer@north-herts.gov.uk
- 16.1 Jeanette Thompson Service Director – Legal and Community 01462 474370
jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk

Sarah Kingsley, Communications Manager, 01462 474243
sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk

Jamie Sells, Shared Service Manager, Waste & Recycling
Jamie.sells@north-herts.gov.uk

Steve Crowley, Commercial Director, 01462 474211
Steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk

Reuben Ayavoo, Senior Policy Officer, 01462 474212
reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk

Human Resources: HRhelp@north-herts.gov.uk

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 Previous reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and forward plans.

PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2018-19

<p>22 Jan 2019</p>	<p>Crime and Disorder – presentation from Insp. Richard Lilley. Presentation of the Council’s Commercialisation Strategy Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act – Annual Review 3Cs Half Year Report Response to question of 20 March raised by Cllr Martin Stears-Hanscomb Report on Hitchin Town Hall review process Resolutions Report Work Programme</p>
<p>19 Mar 2019</p>	<p>Leader of the Council Presentation Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act District Wide Survey Performance Indicators Report Key Projects Monitoring Report New Performance Indicators for 2019/20 New Key Projects for 2019/20 Resolutions Report Work Programme</p>
	<p>To be Scheduled</p> <p><u>Parking Strategy</u> Second all Member and key stakeholder workshop held at the end of Nov 18, with plans for O&S Members to be emailed a copy of the strategy post workshop but pre-Cabinet. Does Scrutiny wish a further form of input?</p> <p><u>Review of the Waste Contract</u> The decision on whether to carry out a more detailed Task and Finish on Waste, is to be made following the September Committee.</p> <p><u>Task and Finish Group Report: Communication in a Crisis</u> Terms of reference to be determined.</p> <p><u>Review of Annual MOU Grants</u> Members might wish to a review of one of the following aspects: * The effectiveness of the new MOU arrangements * Review the effectiveness of the Capital Grants Panel * The effectiveness of the area committee grant process</p> <p><u>Review of the Community Facility and District Museum at Hitchin Town Hall Project</u> Task and Finish Group. Terms of reference to be determined.</p> <p><u>Effectiveness of the Community Halls Strategy</u> Form and timing of scrutiny input to be determined.</p> <p><u>Commercialisation Strategy</u> Form and timings of scrutiny input to be determined.</p> <p><u>Complaints Procedure and its Implementation</u> Form and timing of scrutiny input to be determined.</p>

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 20 November 2018

The Forward Plan contains brief details of Key Decisions that the Council is likely to take over the next four month period and beyond. You will also find details of contacts who can provide further information and hear your views. **Please note that the dates of some of the decisions may change from month to month, please check with Committee Services on 01462 474353 before deciding to attend a meeting.**

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
WASTE CONTRACT – UPDATE (22.10.18)		Cabinet	20 Nov 2018		Vaughan Watson, Service Director - Place vaughan.watson@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
REGENERATION OF CHURCHGATE SHOPPING CENTRE (22.10.18)		Cabinet	20 Nov 2018		Anthony Roche, Deputy Chief Executive anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE MUSEUM AND HITCHIN TOWN HALL - ACQUISITION OF 14/15 BRAND STREET, HITCHIN – UPDATE (04.10.18)		Cabinet	20 Nov 2018		Anthony Roche, Deputy Chief Executive anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
AMENDMENT OF THE EXISTING ANIMAL LICENSING POLICY TO REMOVE ALL ASPECTS OTHER THAN DANGEROUS WILD ANIMAL AND ZOO LICENSING (30.08.18)			Not before 30th Nov 2018		Steve Cobb, Licensing Manager steven.cobb@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
LOCAL PLAN MODIFICATIONS (22.10.18)		Cabinet	10 Dec 2018		Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2019 – 2023 (01.11.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Sarah Kingsley, Communications Manager sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
ROYSTON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) RENEWAL (01.11.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Stuart Izzard, Communities Manager stuart.izzard@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT POLICY (25.04.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Jeanette Thompson, Service Director - Legal and Community jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
APPROACH TO DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS IN NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE (25.04.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Nigel Smith, Principal Strategic Planning Officer nigel.smith@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
DRAFT ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION FOR EMPLOYMENT AREAS (25.04.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Nigel Smith, Principal Strategic Planning Officer nigel.smith@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY AND INDOOR SPORTS STRATEGY (19.09.17)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (25.07.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Howard Crompton, Service Director - Customers howard.crompton@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
SECOND QUARTER TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT 2018/19 (12.10.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
SECOND QUARTER CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2018/19 (12.10.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
SECOND QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2018/19 (12.10.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
OUTBOUND MAIL CONTRACT (01.11.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Howard Crompton, Service Director - Customers howard.crompton@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
BUSINESS RATES RETAIL RATE RELIEF SCHEME (01.11.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Howard Crompton, Service Director - Customers howard.crompton@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
CORPORATE BUSINESS PLANNING - DRAFT BUDGET 2019/20 (12.10.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
THE CONTRACTING OUT OF HOMELESSNESS REVIEW DECISIONS (22.10.18)		Cabinet	18 Dec 2018		Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
SETTING OF COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2019/20 (12.10.18)		Council Tax Setting Committee	10 Jan 2019		Howard Crompton, Service Director - Customers howard.crompton@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
INTRODUCTION OF CHARGES FOR EVENTS (20.11.18)		Cabinet	29 Jan 2019		Andrew Mills, Service Manager - Grounds Maintenance andrew.mills@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
COMMERCIAL STRATEGY (20.11.18)		Cabinet	29 Jan 2019		Steve Crowley, Service Director - Commercial steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
OPTIONS FOR 55 HARKNESS COURT SG4 OBS (20.11.18)		Cabinet	29 Jan 2019		David Charlton, Senior Estates Surveyor david.charlton@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
SCRAP METAL LICENSING POLICY (25.07.18)		Cabinet	26 Mar 2019		Steve Cobb, Licensing Manager steven.cobb@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
ADOPTION OF A NEW HOUSING STRATEGY (22.10.18)		Cabinet	26 Mar 2019		Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCRUTINY OF HITCHIN TOWN HALL/ DISTRICT WIDE MUSEUM PROJECT

NOTES/ ACTIONS 6th NOVEMBER 2018

PRESENT: Anthony Roche (Chair); Cllr Lynda Needham; Cllr Martin Stears-Handscomb; Cllr Paul Clark; Cllr Cathryn Henry; Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg; Jeanette Thompson; Ian Couper; Steve Crowley; Kirstie Wilson

OVERVIEW

The above attendees met to discuss the outline approach for the scrutiny review of Hitchin Town Hall and the District Wide Museum Project. Following the meeting's discussions the following conclusions were made.

1. SCOPE OF REVIEW

The scope of the review was agreed as the '**Hitchin Town Hall Project Review: How the Council worked with community partners**'. Within this scope the Council's relationships with voluntary organisations on this project would be included. A positive focus is sought from the review, centred on lessons learnt for future partner working relationships.

2. REVIEW PROCESS

A panel¹ hearing approach was suggested for the review process, with the panel providing a written report of conclusions and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Due to the potential high number of witnesses available, it was suggested that the panel would do a call for evidence prior to the panel hearing, in the form of witness statements. The panel will then review the statements and from these, decide who they wish to hear from at the hearing. By following this format, it will allow the panel to only select the evidence that fits within the defined review scope.

A period of 2 working days will be timetabled for the panel to hear all the evidence from their selected witnesses. The purpose of the oral evidence sessions is to give the panel the opportunity to ask questions of the witnesses. On completion of this, the panel will review the evidence obtained and write up their report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Throughout the panel hearing period and the subsequent evidence analysis stage, officers will be available to provide additional support, as required. A senior officer will be approached for leading the provision of this officer support (likely to be the Democratic Services Manager), with the Scrutiny Officer co-ordinating the additional support returns to the review panel.

Whether or not the review will be done in the form of a Task and Finish Group or as a separate review process outside of the usual Scrutiny methods is to be decided.

It was noted that this review process is separate to the internal end of project review that will take place under the Council's project management framework, when the project is fully complete.

3. TIMING

The review will begin once full ownership of Hitchin Town Hall is obtained. It is anticipated that this will be achieved by the end of December 2018, with the review able to commence

¹ This to follow any available guidance – in the absence of which rely on task and finish.

shortly after, in the early months of 2019. The review starting promptly once the Council has full ownership of the building was highlighted as being of key importance in the meeting, in order to demonstrate the Council's commitment to stakeholders on investigating the issues associated with this project.

[NB 1 The Acting Scrutiny Officer will prepare a draft timeline for the review, with it taking place over the 2019 calendar year. The timeline will cover items from the initial approval of scope; the call and gathering for witness statements; the scheduled panel hearing; through to the evaluation and end reports being submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.]

4. PANEL

A Panel consisting of 4 Councillors, with an independent chair, to make a total of 5 individuals, was agreed. The membership of the panel will loosely reflect the political proportionality of the authority. The method of selection of the 4 Councillors will be based on those with the necessary investigative skills that will engage constructively and assist in a successful review being achieved. A proposal will be formulated and presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

For the appointment of the independent chair suggestions will be sought for potential candidates. Contact will be made with the Governance Services department for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, to enquire if their Independent Person, Ian Dobson, would be willing to Chair. All potential individuals identified will be assessed by the Council *[NB2 relevant senior officer in consultation with Group Leaders]* for their suitability in chairing the review.

[N32 Should a Task and Finish approach be undertaken for the review, there is no formal process for co-option of the independent chair to the panel, as under the Local Government Act 2000 there is no set legal provision for co-option to Task and Finish groups. The process followed however will be transparent in line with best practice recommendations].

If an independent review, outside of a Task and Finish format, is selected, then this will follow its own specific remit and processes that are best placed for achieving the scope of the review.

Discussion on whether a retainer would be paid to the independent chair then took place, with the attendees agreeing one would likely be required to ensure a chair with appropriate skills and ability would be available to carry out the role.

[NB4 this to be investigated further.]

It was agreed that the proposal for this process and the timeline associated with it would be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, making clear that the Group Leaders had all been consulted on, and had agreed to, the process.