

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



04/03/22

Our Ref    Overview                      and                      Scrutiny  
                 Committee/15/03/2022  
Contact.    Committee Services  
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To:    Members of the Committee: David Levett (Chair), Daniel Allen (Vice-Chair), Kate Aspinwall, Mike Hughson, Tony Hunter, Nigel Mason, Jim McNally, Ian Moody, Lisa Nash, Carol Stanier, Claire Strong and Terry Tyler

Substitutes: Councillors Clare Billing, Morgan Derbyshire, Terry Hone, Gerald Morris, Sam North and Kay Tart

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A**

**MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

to be held in the

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,  
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY**

On

**TUESDAY, 15TH MARCH, 2022 AT 7.30 PM**

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson  
Service Director – Legal and Community

**\*\*MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL  
AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION  
ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING\*\***

## **Agenda**

### **Part I**

<b>Item</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	Members are required to notify any substitutions by midday on the day of the meeting.  Late substitutions will not be accepted and Members attending as a substitute without having given the due notice will not be able to take part in the meeting.	
<b>2. MINUTES - 18 JANUARY 2022</b>	To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 January 2022	(Pages 5 - 10)
<b>3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS</b>	Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II 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 Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
<b>4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	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 Chair 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, wishing 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.	
<b>5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b>	To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.	
<b>6. URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS</b>	The Chair to report on any urgent or general exception items which required their agreement. At the time of printing the agenda, the Chair had not agreed any urgent or general exception items.	
<b>7. CALLED-IN ITEMS</b>	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.

- 8. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** (Pages 11 - 20)  
To consider and comment on the Annual Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2021/22 prior to its presentation to Full Council.
- 9. RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** (Pages 21 - 22)  
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND SCRUTINY MANAGER  
  
To consider the outcome of Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolutions.
- 10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 23 - 28)  
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND SCRUTINY MANAGER  
  
To consider the issues that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee plans to review at future meetings and the activities of its sub-groups.
- 11. 3RD QUARTER MONITORING REPORT ON KEY PROJECTS FOR 2021-22** (Pages 29 - 46)  
An update on projects to support delivery of the Council Plan 21-26
- 12. 3RD QUARTER UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE INDICATORS** (Pages 47 - 58)  
An update on progress against PI targets as at 31 December 2022
- 13. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MEASURES 2022-23** (Pages 59 - 80)  
A report setting out the Performance Management Measures for 22-23
- 14. SHARED WASTE SERVICE GOVERNANCE** (Pages 81 - 94)  
The shared client team for waste services has been in operation with oversight from the Joint Partnership Board for waste since December 2017. This report identifies options around governance of the shared service to support future partnership working and service resilience.
- 15. GREENSPACE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022-27** (Pages 95 - 136)  
To provide strategic direction for the Greenspace Service for the next 5 years and also linking with other strategies and policies within the Council
- 16. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**  
To receive and respond to any questions from Members either set out in the agenda or tabled at the meeting.

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

## NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON ROAD, LETCHWORTH

ON TUESDAY, 18TH JANUARY, 2022 AT 7.30 PM

#### MINUTES

**Present:** *Councillors: Councillor David Levett (Chair), Councillor Daniel Allen (Vice-Chair), Mike Hughson, Nigel Mason, Jim McNally, Ian Moody and Claire Strong*

**In Attendance:** *William Edwards (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and Nurainatta Katevu (Legal Regulatory Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer)*

**Also Present:** *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 1 member of the public, including registered speakers.*

#### 65 WELCOME

*Audio recording – 29 seconds*

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting that was being held in the Council Chamber and advised that the meeting was being streamed live on the Council's YouTube channel and some Officers were joining online.

The Chair invited the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer to explain how proceedings would work.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer undertook a roll call of those officers joining the meeting online to ensure that they could hear and be heard and gave advice regarding the following:

- Rules of Debate;
- Voting; and
- Covid Risk Assessment Measures.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor David Levett started the meeting proper.

#### 66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 16 seconds*

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kate Aspinwall, Tony Hunter and Carol Stanier.

Councillors Lisa Nash and Terry Tyler were absent.

Having given due notice, Councillor Morgan Derbyshire substituted for Councillor Tony Hunter.

**67 MINUTES - 14 DECEMBER 2021**

*Audio Recording – 2 minutes 53 seconds*

Councillor David Levett, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Morgan Derbyshire seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 14 December 2021 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

**68 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

*Audio recording – 3 minutes 26 seconds*

There was no other business notified.

**69 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Audio recording – 3 minutes 30 seconds*

- (1) The Chair advised that the meeting would be audio and video recorded in line with Council policy.
- (2) The Chair reminded Members that interests should be declared prior to an item and the detailed explanation of this was included on the agenda.

**70 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*Audio recording – 3 minutes 56 seconds*

There was no public participation.

**71 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 02 seconds*

There were no Urgent or General Exception Items.

The Chair advised that he had agreed to two Delegated Authority decisions owing to urgency. These were the Additional Restrictions Grant and Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant, which required applications by end of February 2022 and grant funds would be awarded by March 2022.

**72 CALLED-IN ITEMS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 44 seconds*

There were no Called-In Items.

**73 CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 50 seconds*

Sarah Pateman, Survivors Against Domestic Abuse (SADA), gave a presentation on the work SADA are currently undertaking and how this relates to North Herts. This included:

- The aim of the service was to empower people to make decisions on their own relationships. This meant offering support across various areas, including tailored 1-to-1 support, death and benefits guidance, legal advice and support, housing support, amongst others.
- Around 150 champions had been trained across various partner organisations, including schools, doctors and Housing Associations.
- A forum was held every 3 months, with feedback at these meetings being relayed to the board and used to shape SADA policies and services.
- Schools and nurseries in North Herts had shown an interest in training sessions.
- A referral service working with men and woman affected by Modern Slavery had been established.
- 3 training session on Domestic Abuse had been given to North Herts District Council staff in 2021 and 3 further Modern Slavery training sessions were arranged for 2022.
- Every 6 weeks a panel of internal and external stakeholders and partners would come together to discuss the non “high-risk” cases, in order to identify early intervention strategies to stop them becoming high risk.
- The pandemic had given the opportunity to expand into virtual support, which had helped people engage as service times were better suited around lifestyles and working patterns.
- A newly refurbished refuge was soon to be opened, which would offer 2 family rooms and 2 smaller rooms and this will be available for North Herts residents to use. Food would be provided to residents and, working with food banks, it was hoped this would be fresh produce, not just tinned or frozen.
- There were soon to be 24 safe spaces, with 9 in North Herts, which were homes for those fleeing domestic violence to move into immediately. These were available for dads with children, as well as women.
- An out of hours service was available for around the clock support for service users.
- Detailed referral statistics were provided on the accompanying presentation, including specific data on North Herts.
- SADA also offered a Perpetrator Support Programme, which offered 1 to 1 support to those who had a history or were identified at risk of committing domestic violence.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor David Levett

In response to questions Sarah Pateman advised that:

- The perpetrator scheme was run alongside prison, youth and other services to identify where the perpetrators are and refer them into the scheme.
- Most of the users of this service are referred from other organisations, but some are self-referred.
- Most stay beyond the 8-week programme and some were still involved now having been referred from the start of the scheme in 2013.

Councillor Claire Strong thanked Sarah for her presentation and noted that the work they were doing was vital, albeit disappointing that it was required. She requested that the presentation and contact details for SADA be shared with other Members not on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee via MIS.

Councillor Nigel Mason commented that the presentation was very enlightening and was positive to hear that support services were out there. He also expressed disappointment that this service was required.

## **74 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*Audio recording – 26 minutes 02 seconds*

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the report entitled Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and drew attention to the following:

- The Task and Finish Group on Community Engagement had been placed under review, owing to the duration of the pandemic and the uncertainty around working from home advice without changes to remote meeting legislation.
- Recommendations on Integrated Performance Management would be taken at Council in January.
- Recommendations around Q2 Performance Indicators on waste communications would be taken at Cabinet in January.
- The environmental concerns at the Harkness Court project would be considered at Cabinet in January. However, decisions regarding commercial viability were taken by the Cabinet Sub Committee in November and this cannot be revisited for 6 months.
- When updates were received on the Local Plan this would be passed onto Members.

Councillor David Levett advised that following the comments on Harkness Court made by the Overview and Scrutiny Members the Service Director – Commercial would explore the heating systems and ways to improve the energy rating. This was currently a work in process and would come back to Members once work had been conducted.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Strong

In response to questions, the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer advised that the Planning Team were still working on a relatively open deadline regarding the receipt of the Local Plan.

Councillor Claire Strong proposed and Councillor Nigel Mason seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the report entitled 'Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee' was noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review and comment on actions and feedback received regarding resolutions previously made.

## 75 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

*Audio recording – 30 minutes 15 seconds*

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the report entitled Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and drew attention to the following:

- There had been no substantial updates to the report as written.
- Attendance of the Local Enterprise Partnership had not been secured for this year, but would continue to request the attendance of the LEP for the civic year 2022/23.
- Highlighted the Forward Plan included as a supplementary item on this agenda and suggested the Future Waste Infrastructure Report and Greenspace Management Strategy be included as items on future O&S agendas.
- Requested Members advise if there were any further topics they would like to consider.

Councillor David Levett commented that the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan item should be brought to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, but only when this can be brought alongside updates on the Local Plan.



Councillor Claire Strong agreed that the two suggested topics made by the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager should be included, as well as the suggestion made by the Chair.

Councillor David Levett advised that the agenda for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in March was fairly full and suggested that the Crime and Disorder item be delayed to a future meeting. Councillor Levett requested Members provide detailed requests for discussion items under this topic to either himself or the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager.

Councillor Claire Strong proposed and Councillor Jim McNally seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Committee prioritises proposed topics for inclusion in the work programmes attached as Appendix A and, where appropriate, determines the high-level form and timing of scrutiny input.
- (2) That the Committee, having considered the most recent iteration of the Forward Plan, suggested the Greenspace Management Strategy, Housing Delivery Test Action Plan and Future Waste Infrastructure items to be considered at its meeting on 15 March 2022 and beyond.
- (3) That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan Extract as attached at Appendix B was considered.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** 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.

## **76 ANNUAL RIPA REPORT**

*Audio recording – 34 minutes 15 seconds*

The Legal Regulatory Team Manager presented the report entitled Annual RIPA Report and advised of the following:

- There had been little change in the use of RIPA since January 2021 and therefore there was no update on the Council's current policy regarding RIPA.
- There had been a new legal update regarding covert surveillance and details the type of organisations and bodies which can take advantage of these changes, but Local Authorities were not included.
- The policy attached as an appendix to the report would be deleted, as it did not have an impact on the work done by the local authority.

Councillor Mike Hughson proposed and Councillor Claire Strong seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the report entitled 'Annual RIPA Report' was noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To comply with best practice guidance and the Committee's Terms of Reference.

**77 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

*Audio recording – 36 minutes 50 seconds*

No questions had been submitted.

The meeting closed at 8.06 pm

Chair

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> <b>15 MARCH 2022</b>
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<b>*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT</b>
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**TITLE OF REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2021/2022**

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2021/2022

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: NOT APPLICABLE

COUNCIL PRIORITY: BE A MORE WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COUNCIL / BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES / RESPOND TO CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT / ENABLE AN ENTERPRISING AND CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To consider the Annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the 2021/2022 Civic Year.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Committee consider and comment on the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021/2022 as attached at Appendix A prior to consideration by Council.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To enable Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider and comment on the report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the work of the Committee in the 2021/2022 Civic Year prior to consideration by Council.

**4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. None.

**5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 5.1. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have had the opportunity to consider and comment on the report prior to this meeting.
- 5.2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to consider and comment on the report prior to consideration by Council

## **6. FORWARD PLAN**

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

## **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports each year to Annual Council giving a brief overview of the work undertaken by that Committee in the previous Civic Year.

## **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 The report at Appendix A sets out the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the Civic Year 2021/2022.
- 8.2 Members should note that the statistics in the report cannot be completed until after the meeting on 15 March 2022.
- 8.3 Members are asked to comment on the draft Annual Report prior to consideration by Council.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Although it is not specifically referred to in the Constitution and is not a legal requirement, Full Council has routinely received an Annual Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no capital or revenue implications arising from the content of this report.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no direct risk implications arising from this report.

## **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 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 There are no direct Human Resource Implications arising from this report.
- 14.2 The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Team supports the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 14.3 The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager undertakes the role of Scrutiny Officer.

## **15. APPENDICES**

- 15.1 Appendix A – Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021/2022.

## **16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

- 16.1 William Edwards  
Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager  
William.edwards@north-herts.gov.uk  
ext 4295
- 16.2 Melanie Stimpson  
Democratic Services Manager  
[Melanie.stimpson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Melanie.stimpson@north-herts.gov.uk)  
ext 4208
- 16.2 Jeanette Thompson  
Service Director – Legal and Communities  
[jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk)  
ext 4370

## **17. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 17.1 Reports to and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the Civic Year 2021/2022.  
  
<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>

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**North  
Herts**  
Council

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2021/2022**

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DRAFT



## **1. Overview and Scrutiny in North Hertfordshire District Council**

1.1 The depth and breadth of the Council's work means that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has to use its resources efficiently and effectively in order to scrutinise topics in the time available. It does so by:

- Considering a number of issues during its Committee meetings and making recommendations to Cabinet;
- Appointing dedicated task and finish groups which can examine issues in depth and make recommendations to improve services;

## **2. Methods of Scrutiny**

2.1 The Committee can scrutinise issues in a number of ways:

- By considering reports from, and questioning officers and Executive Members about different aspects of the Council's business;
- By submitting written questions which require a written answer, and which members can follow up by asking supplementary questions in Committee;
- By interviewing and questioning Executive Members about their portfolios;
- By calling in decisions which are of great concern to members or to the public;
- By inviting representatives from outside bodies to talk about topics of interest to the public in North Hertfordshire.

## **3. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

3.1 There were six scheduled meetings this year and all proceeded as planned, in person in the Council Chamber, making effective use of the facility for officer presentations to be delivered remotely.

3.2 The Committee has considered a range of topics including scrutinising key decisions going to Cabinet, checking whether the Council has met its performance indicators and reviewing other issues which the Committee has decided would benefit from closer scrutiny.

## **4. Call-In**

4.1 The call-in process allows the Chair of the Committee, or five members of the Council, to call in a decision which is the responsibility of the Executive, which has been made but not implemented. The Committee can ask the Executive to reconsider the decision or can refer it to Council.

4.2 There have been no called in items this year.

## **5. Presentations by Executive Members**

- 5.1 The Committee has continued with its decision not to invite Executive Members to speak on their portfolios on a rolling basis and to instead invite them only to address specific issues or to present reports that were of interest to the Committee.
- 5.2 Executive Members are also welcomed when attending meetings and encouraged to take part in the meeting when appropriate.
- 5.3 The Committee are grateful to the following Executive Members for making presentations and attending meetings this year:
  - Councillor Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg;
  - Councillor Sam Collins;
  - Councillor Judi Billing;

## **6. Crime & Disorder Scrutiny**

- 6.1 The Committee is also the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee for North Hertfordshire which is required to meet at least once a year.
- 6.2 The Committee chose this year to invite Sarah Pateman, Survivors Against Domestic Abuse to discuss:
  - The aims of the SADA service;
  - Training delivered to North Herts Council staff;
  - New refuge facilities
  - Referral statistics including detailed data from North Hertfordshire;
  - A Perpetrator support and rehabilitation programme

## **7. Safeguarding**

- 7.1 The Committee continued to take a close interest in safeguarding matters and received its annual update on the Council's safeguarding performance in July 2021
- 7.2 The Committee took a particular interest in mental health, domestic abuse and related issues arising in connection with the pandemic, and praised the Council's work in partnership with local organisations to offer support to residents.

## **8. Statistics**

- 8.1 In total, the Committee has considered 34 items at its scheduled meetings this year.
- 8.2 It has made 10 recommendations on 4 topics to Cabinet and 1 recommendation to Full Council. At every meeting the Committee also considered the resolutions previously made and the work programme.
- 8.3 No written questions were submitted this year.

## **9. Task and Finish Groups**

- 9.1 The ongoing resource implications of the pandemic and recent staffing changes has meant it was not possible to allocate the officer time required to undertake successful Task and Finish Group Reviews, and owing to the length of time between the completion of those Task and Finish Groups and any proposed review it was not deemed a priority project.
- 9.2 Proposals for new Task and Finish Groups on topics including Communication and Engagement and the Waste Contract have been reviewed, in light of the continued pressures of COVID-19 and legal uncertainty around remote meetings regulations and work from home orders as they relate to Task and Finish Groups, and alternative avenues to progress these topics in 2022/23 are being considered.

## **10. Public Participation**

- 10.1 The scrutiny process is open to involvement by local people and the Committee encourages public participation.
- 10.2 Three members of the public attended the Committee's scheduled meetings to make presentations this year.
- 10.3 Although attendance at the actual meetings was extremely low, recordings of the meetings on YouTube have received a total of 334 views, with an mean average of 21 viewers watching live or on the day of the meeting. The average view duration of a recording was 12 minutes 14 seconds.
- 10.4 Some of the ways for the public to get involved include suggesting a topic for investigation as a task and finish group; providing evidence to or at a meeting; and being co-opted on to a topic group. The Committee is keen to see more public participation both in its task and finish groups and in its committee meetings.

## **11. Peer Review 2020**

- 11.1 A peer review took place in January 2020.
- 11.2 Their initial findings included:
- Executive Members should lead and be accountable for decisions;
  - Meetings should be focused with fewer agenda items;
  - Membership of the O&S committee is perceived to be too large;
  - All scrutiny members to complete formal scrutiny training;
  - Use the task and finish programme to support early involvement with policy making;
  - Review finish time and location of the meeting;
  - Clarify the governance arrangements between O&S and Cabinet Panels;
  - Ensure forward work plan includes scrutiny of external partners and contractors.
- 11.3 The Committee reviews these recommendations at each meeting and considers what has been complete and what actions could be taken in order to work towards those recommendations not yet complete

## 12. Further Information and Membership

12.1 Further information about the work of scrutiny and contact details can be found at:

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/overview-and-scrutiny>

12.2 Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2021/2022:

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillor David Levett (Chair)

Councillor Daniel Allen (Vice  
Chair)

Councillor Kate Aspinwall

Councillor Mike Hughson

Councillor Tony Hunter

Councillor Nigel Mason

Councillor Jim McNally

Councillor Ian Moody

Councillor Lisa Nash

Councillor Carol Stanier

Councillor Claire Strong

Councillor Terry Tyler

**Substitutes:**

Councillor Clare Billing

Councillor Morgan Derbyshire

Councillor Terry Hone

Councillor Gerald Morris

Councillor Sam North

Councillor Kay Tart

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

REF	RESOLUTION	RESPONSE/OUTCOME	STATUS
	<b>Task and Finish Group on Community Engagement</b>		
June 20 Min 9 (3)	That the scope of the proposed Task and Finish Group on communication in relation to the Waste Contract be widened to encompass Communication and Engagement generally.	<p>This Task and Finish Group was due take place once social distancing and other pressures regarding the Covid Pandemic had eased.</p> <p>When the Task and Finish Group was initially conceived it was not expected that the Covid pandemic would last as long as it has. Officers are investigating alternative avenues to progress this work including but not limited to assignment of the topic to an Executive Member</p> <p>The legal status of Task and Finish Groups in light of the requirement to work from home and without changes in remote meeting legislation is an unresolved issue.</p>	Under Review.
	<b>Integrated Performance Management</b>		
Dec 21 Min 57 (2)	Recommended to Council that the proposed changes to the Constitution as set out in Section 9 of the report be approved to improve the current processes that are in place for Performance Management and review which do not seem to be well integrated with each other or the Council Plan.	This recommendation was also made by Cabinet and was approved by Full Council on 20 January 2022	Completed.
	<b>Q2 Performance Indicators 2021-22 – Communications around Waste</b>		
Dec 21 Min 58 (2)	Recommended to Cabinet to consider further messaging and communications, not exclusive to social media, to clarify the process for residents regarding food waste and the missed collection protocol.	<p>This recommendation was referred to Cabinet in January 2022.</p> <p>A response to the questions raised by the Committee was received prior to the Cabinet meeting and was deemed satisfactory by the Chair.</p>	Completed.

REF	RESOLUTION	RESPONSE/OUTCOME	STATUS
	<b>Harkness Court Project</b>		
Dec 21 Min 62 (2)	Recommended to Cabinet to review the Harkness Court project in light of Overview and Scrutiny comments and concerns in relation to the climate emergency (greener solutions instead of the proposed gas installation), whether there are more commercially viable options to the leasing of the flats, as is currently proposed, to generate a better financial return, and if the approach taken remains the most suitable or if other options should be explored. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee request that the Cabinet report back to the Committee.	<p>This recommendation will be put to Cabinet in January 2022.</p> <p>The Business Case for the let of Harkness Court was approved by the Cabinet Sub-Committee (Local Authority Trading Companies Shareholder) on 24 November 21. The issue cannot be revisited for 6 months from the date it was taken.</p> <p>The main avenue of exploration available is around the Climate Change Strategy and any environmental impact assessment made for the project.</p> <p>As the majority of discussions regarding this item are commercially sensitive, they take place in Part 2.</p> <p>The recommendations were put to Cabinet in January and Cabinet noted the concerns of the Committee and confirms the issues raised have been considered.</p>	In progress
	<b>LOCAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION</b>		
Mar 21 Min 93 (4)	<b>Recommended to Cabinet:</b> That a Member working group be arranged to discuss the Design and Sustainability SPDs prior to consideration of these by Cabinet	This recommendation was agreed by Cabinet The Strategic Planning Team will organise this when appropriate to do so	In Progress

## PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021-22

13 July 2021	Presentation by Settle (To be confirmed) Resolutions Report Work Programme 3Cs End of Year report Council Plan and Objectives 2021/23 Housing Delivery Test Action Plan Developer Contributions SDP Community Revenue Grants Criteria Review
14 September 2021	Resolutions Report Work Programme 1st Quarter Performance against PIs 1st Quarter Key Projects Discussion on the recovery of the Town Centres following the pandemic Customer Service Strategy
14 December 2021	Resolutions Report Work Programme Annual review of Safeguarding Commercial Update 3Cs Half Year Report
18 January 2022	Crime and Disorder Matters Resolutions Report Work Programme Priorities for the District – Key Projects Half Year Monitoring 2nd Quarter Performance against PIs
15 March 2022	Resolutions Report Work Programme Annual Report Commercial Update New PIs for 2021/22 Priorities For The District – Key Projects 2021/22 3rd Quarter PIs 3rd Quarter Key projects
	<b>To be Scheduled.</b> Invitation to: LEP Devolution & Recovery White Paper Update (Once White Paper is published)

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EXTRACT OF ITEMS ON THE CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN THAT RELATE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

		Recommendation	Action	Led by	Timescale	Update
<b>ONGOING ACTIONS</b>						
28	Organisational Leadership and Governance	Peers understand that the full performance report is sent to councillors one month before O&S to provide the opportunity for requesting the appropriate lead executive member and officer to attend O&S to be accountable for questioning. This opportunity has never been requested and should be used in order to strengthen the debate and challenge at O&S.	Agreed. Chair of Overview and Scrutiny to remind committee members of this opportunity	Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Controls, Risk and Performance Manager	Ongoing	Members receive the Performance Indicator report one month before the meeting. Members are reminded to contact the Controls, Risk and Performance Manager at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting date if they wish a particular indicator to be considered in more detail
54	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Future meetings would benefit from taking a longer-term view of the key issues for the district (not just focussing on the next immediate meeting), fewer, more targeted agenda items, and be focused on key areas informed by performance reports and a forward work plan. Fewer agenda items will support more allocated time for meaningful scrutiny and related debate.	Agreed. To be taken forward as part of the training for the committee members	Chair and vice chair of O+S Scrutiny support	Ongoing	The Committee to bear this in mind when considering the work programme

56	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	It is recommended that all O&S members undertake formal training to ensure a robust base of skills and expertise can be deployed in the O&S environment.	Formal scrutiny training has previously been provided to the Committee, but given changes to committee membership agree it makes sense to put in place further training and ensure that any new members receive training in the future	Chair and Vice Chair of O+S Scrutiny support Member training champions	Pending	Various training options are being explored for provision in the new Civic Year.
57	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Use the task and finish programme to support early engagement and involvement with policy making.	Agreed. To be taken forward by the Leader (on behalf of Cabinet) and Chair and vice chair of Overview and Scrutiny, to discuss work programme	Leader Chair and Vice Chair of O+S Scrutiny support	Ongoing	The Chair and Vice-Chair have met with the Leader. The Chair to provide an update
58	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	It is recommended that finish times should be agreed in the constitution and meetings end promptly at those times. There was a concern around individual personal effectiveness, accessibility, external public perception and health & safety / personal welfare of both members and officers from such excessively long and late meetings.	<p>Moving meeting times is not supported politically at the current time due to concerns it may dissuade people with caring responsibilities from standing to be Councillors.</p> <p>Alternative of allowing officers to attend meetings virtually from home to be explored</p> <p>A 'guillotine' provision on committee meetings is not supported politically at the current time due to concerns it might stifle debate. It is proposed that this is considered once the other recommendations have been</p>	Service Director Legal and Community Member training champions	Pending	

			<p>implemented regarding work programme, training and chairing of meetings to establish whether it remains an issue or has been resolved by other action.</p> <p>Training is provided to Chairs and Vice Chairs, but this could be reviewed to ensure that Chairs and Vice Chairs are able to confidently manage meetings to ensure they proceed in a timely manner</p>			
59	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Peers recommend clarification of the governance arrangements between O&S and cabinet panels.	Proposal to Full Council to clarify relationship	Group Leaders Monitoring Officer	Annual Council (May/June 2020)	
60	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Ensure the O&S forward work plan includes scrutiny of external partners and contractors as a contribution to the leadership of 'place'.	Agreed as recommendation	Chair and Vice Chair of O+S Scrutiny support	Immediate & Ongoing	The Committee have identified two partner organisations. Further work is needed to consider the format and timing.

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<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> <b>15 MARCH 2022</b>
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<b>*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT</b>
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**TITLE OF REPORT – 3rd QUARTER MONITORING REPORT ON KEY PROJECTS FOR 2021 - 22**

REPORT OF: THE CONTROLS, RISK AND PERFORMANCE MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITY: BE A MORE WELCOMING INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT COUNCIL / BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES / RESPOND TO CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT / ENABLE AN ENTERPRISING AND CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY / SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF GOOD QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE HOMES

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This monitoring report provides a 3rd quarter update on the delivery of the key projects for 21/22, first identified to the Committee in March 2021.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. That delivery against the key projects for 21/22 be noted and commented on by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. To enable achievements against the key projects for 2021/22 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 16 March 2021.

**6. FORWARD PLAN**

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

## 7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. This report provides details on the status of the key projects for 21/22. 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. 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 this year or has not reached due date
	Project Completed.

## 8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. The 3rd Quarter monitoring report against key projects for 2021/22 is included in Appendix A.
- 8.2. Appendix A includes the original milestones which were reported to this Committee in March 2021 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. For Q3, 13 projects are being reported, 7 with Green status, 4 with Amber status and 2 projects marked as complete.
- 8.4 **Renovate Play area, Howard Park, Letchworth - Complete**– Work completed and the park was made available for use on 20 December 2021. The project will therefore be removed from any future monitoring reports.
- 8.5 **Local Plan – Amber** - The Inspector has advised that he is not at this point going to be drawn into any further forecasting about when his report may be completed. However, the Council and all other participants can be assured that his aim is to release a robust report as soon as possible.  
All information has been added to the Councils website

- 8.6 **Preparation of a Cycling and Walking Strategy – Moved to Amber** - The project is taking a little longer than originally planned. HCC's consultants now expect to be issuing a draft for consultation around March 2022 before final adoption by the HCC Highway and Transport Panel. We are waiting for HCC to advise on the updated programme, and it is unlikely that it will be completed within 2021/22 given the lead time for committee reports etc. Although the due date has currently been estimated as 30 June 2022, the project could be completed earlier dependent on confirmation of the revised programme from HCC in the new year.
- 8.7 **Refurbishment of Lifts at Lairage Car Park – Project Complete** – The lifts were signed off as complete on 17 February.

## **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 2021/22 that was undertaken in 2020/21. A number of these projects formed part of the Council's capital programme for 2021/22.
- 10.3. The Council continues to face difficult spending decisions in view of the expected 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. Any major projects are identified as Corporate Risks for the Council and these are monitored by Risk Management Group and the Finance Audit and Risk Committee. These include the Local Plan.

## **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 2020/21 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 enables the Council to fulfil a number of obligations arising from the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report. Environmental Impact Assessments will be undertaken where required for individual projects.

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 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.

## **16. APPENDICES**

- 16.1 Appendix A – 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Monitoring against Key Projects for 2021/2022

## **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**





18.1 None.





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## Appendix A – 2021/2022 reporting against Projects identified in the Council Plan – as at 02/03/2022

For **Q3 2021/2022** North Herts Council is reporting against 13 Projects to support the Council Plan 2021 - 26







### Key for the Report









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 year / has not reached due date
	Project Completed.




Status	Q3	Q2	Q1	Summary of Movement this Qtr.
	0	1	1	Crematorium project ceased and removed from reporting
	4	3	3	Preparation of a Cycling and Walking Strategy
	7	10	10	
	2	0	0	Renovate Play area, Howard Park, Letchworth/ Refurbishment of Lifts at Lairage Car Park
Total	13	14	14	


- Where projects are b/f from previous years, their status is retained until they are complete – to ensure transparency






## Projects supporting the Council Plan 2021/2026

	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
<b>Status – COMPLETE - 2</b>						
Renovate play area Howard Park, Letchworth  (capital programme b/f from previous year)	Environment & Leisure	Build Thriving & Resilient Communities	Consultation on Design   Complete renovation	10/08/2020  30/11/2021		
Refurbishment of lifts at Lairage Car Park – <b>Project will span more than 1 year</b>  (capital programme)	Finance and IT	A More Welcoming and Inclusive Council	Determine requirements   Procurement of Contractor   Practical completion 	Summer 2020  Dec 2020  December 2021		Milestone complete  Contract signed 11/12/2020  The lifts were signed off as completed in February.


	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
<b>Status – GREEN 7</b>						
Set up Community Tree Planting Programme (Council Plan)			Order Trees 	30/04/2021		The trees have been delivered and full promotion of the scheme is underway. The first event was held in Royston on 7 December 2021, with four more events held across the district before Christmas. Distribution of the trees will continue over the coming months, with required distribution arrangements being kept under review.
			Finalise arrangements for receipt and storage of tree stock 	12/05/2021		
			Commenced initial promotion of scheme – expressions of interest 	25/06/2021		
			Investigate options and finalise distribution arrangements 	31/08/2021		
			Commence full promotion of scheme 	01/09/2021		
			Receipt of tree stock 	30/11/2021		
			Distribution of trees to the community – 01/12/21 to 31/03/22	31/03/2022		
Trial / Experimental EV			Adoption of EV Strategy and associated Action	December 2021		Following a report to PLB phase 1 has commenced with the starting of the initial



	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
Charging Points in North Herts (Council Plan)			<p>Plan in accordance with the Review and adoption of NHDC Climate Change Strategy. </p> <p>Details of approach and related actions to be presented to PLB </p> <p>Procurement of a private sector partner</p> <p>Grant application submitted</p> <p>Further milestones will be added upon the outcome of the grant application</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>March 2022</p> <p>April 2022</p>		procurement work to find a private partner. The partner will assist with a grant submission to the Energy Savings Trust to seek to secure part government grant funding for the provision of EV chargers to Council owned car park(s) within each of the four towns. The criteria requirements of the grant seek to establish additional chargers for residents to use who do not have the ability to charge at home. There will be secondary benefits for other car park users.
Roll out separated recycling across the district, including bins in Parks and Green Spaces	Waste, Recycling & Environment		<p>Roll out recycling bins in Great Ashby</p> <p>Investigate funding options for further roll out in towns and rural areas</p>	March 2022		The dual recycling bins have now been received (delayed due to Brexit and covid). The installation for both Gt Ashby and Baldock, commenced on Jan 22, with a target completion of end Feb. Further work will be considered in




	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
(Council Plan)  Project will span more than one year.						liaison with EHC, dependant on future budgets.  Recycling bins have been installed in the parks originally identified. Priory Memorial Gardens Royston, Avenue Park Baldock, Howard Gardens Letchworth and Bancroft Hitchin. Each location has 5 recycling litter bins and were chosen due to the presence of the splash pads and the high levels of use over the summer months.
Provide Housing at Market Rents  (Capital Programme)	Enterprise and Co-operative			01/04/2022		The intention is for NHDC to lease the entire block to NHDC's company, which will then lease out the four individual flats to four separate private tenants under Assured Shorthold Tenancies at full market rents. NHDC will retain the freehold. We are aiming for the start of the forthcoming Financial Year, but it depends on how soon the building becomes habitable. Property Services and Estates are closely monitoring progress by statutory undertakers to install the various mains services and


	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
						meters. As we cannot influence their timescales it is difficult to be precise on when the block will be ready, but 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 is the current target date.
Introduce a North Herts Community Lottery	Enterprise and Co-operative		Obtain License  Run engagement events  Go Live 	31/10/2021 12/11/2021 31/01/2022		Lottery was launched to good causes on 18 <sup>th</sup> January. Organisations are now invited to sign up and advertise to their members/supporters and ticket sales went live on 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb. The first draw is planned for 19 March.
Disposal of surplus assets  (Remove maintenance obligation and generate capital receipts)  Will span more than one Financial year. (capital programme)	Enterprise and Co-operative	Enable an Enterprising & Co-operative Economy	Land at Clare Crescent, Baldock	31/03/2022		A record of decision under delegated authority was made in January with no call in. The granting of authority has been communicated to NHDC's solicitors and the land buyer to facilitate the remaining process towards disposal completion. It is anticipated that completion will take place by the end of this Financial year.



	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
			Land adjacent 1 North End, Kelshall; 	31/03/2021		NHDC sold its freehold interest on 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2021 achieving above market value. Sale subject to a restrictive covenant to restrict use to garden land and help NHDC secure a proportion of value uplift should the land be sold or used/developed for a higher value use by the new owner in the future
			Land adjacent 9 North End, Kelshall.	31/03/2022		Outline planning consent for a single dwelling was granted at NHDC's Planning Committee in September 2021. NHDC is in the advanced stages of appointing a local marketing agent to advertise the site for sale, with outline planning permission in place. The intention is to commence marketing in early March 2022 for a period of 4 – 6 weeks inviting bids by informal tender. The marketing period may be extended. The aim is to dispose of NHDC's freehold interest and achieve a capital receipt. It is difficult to be certain on a timeline, but currently anticipate sale completion by end of Quarter 1 of 2022/23 perhaps moving into Quarter 2. The overall objective is to achieve best consideration for taxpayers.

	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
			Land at The Green, Ashwell Road, Newnham. 	31/08/2021		The sale of land adjacent to The Green, Ashwell Road, Newnham completed on 29 June 2021.
Acquisition of Property investments  (capital programme)	Enterprise and Co-operative	Enable an Enterprising & Co-operative Economy	Continue to explore opportunities to improve the financial viability of property letting company and seek to explore other opportunities for trading companies.  The commercial team will explore acquisition opportunities, if they meet the acquisition criteria each one will require a business case to seek approval for the Council to proceed.			The Commercial team continue to explore acquisition opportunities within the District. Due diligence will be completed for each potential acquisition and relevant Executive Members will be regularly updated on progress made. Each successful acquisition will be subject to Full Council.

	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
<b>Status – AMBER - 4</b>						
Examination and Adoption of the Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (b/f form previous year)	Planning and Transport	Build Thriving & Resilient Communities	<p>Milestones and dates will depend on the Planning Inspectorate</p> <p>Letter from the Inspector</p> <p>Full Council for adoption of the Local Plan</p>			<p>The Inspector has advised that he is not at this point going to be drawn into any further forecasting about when his report may be completed. However, the Council and all other participants can be assured that his aim is to release a robust report as soon as possible.</p> <p>No further update has been received from the Inspector.</p> <p>All information has been added to the Councils website at the link below.  <a href="http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/localplan">www.north-herts.gov.uk/localplan</a></p>
Develop and Implement a cohesive Empty Homes Strategy  (project will span more than 1 year)			<p>Develop draft Strategy</p> <p>Identify external funding for additional resource to work on Strategy</p> <p>Cabinet adopt Strategy</p> <p>Further Milestones to follow on.</p>	<p>30/03/2022</p> <p>31/03/2022</p> <p>31/03/2023</p>		<p>Certainty on resources has prevented finalisation of the strategy at this time. The 2022/23 budget process includes a post to be able to deliver the actions out of an adopted strategy, however the post has no funding, and would be reliant on securing external funding. The milestones for the project have been updated to reflect what could be achieved by the end of this Financial year.</p>
Preparation of a Cycle and Walking Strategy	Planning & Transport		Working in partnership with HCC on the Preparation of Local	Nov 2021		The project is taking a little longer than originally planned. HCC's consultants now expect to be issuing a draft for

	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
(Capital Programme)			Cycling, Walking & Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) – with identified schemes for implementation post 2021.			consultation around March 2022 before final adoption by the HCC Highway and Transport Panel. We are waiting for HCC to advise on the updated programme, and it is unlikely that it will be completed within 2021/22 given the lead time for committee reports etc. Although the due date has currently been estimated as 30 June 2022, the project could be completed earlier dependent on confirmation of the revised programme from HCC in the new year
Develop long term museum storage solution  To equip the museum service with a sustainable storage solution suitable for the effective management of the collection for the foreseeable future.	Enterprise and Co-operative	Build Thriving & Resilient Communities	Develop Fully Costed Proposal  Further Milestones to follow	Nov 2020		Having explored a number of options, officers are now finalising the Business Case and accompanying Report for what is the most effective use of the overall site. This will include a fully costed museum collections storage facility alongside a commercial self-storage facility, generating a long-term income stream for the Council.  The proposal will begin the approvals process in April 2022 and pending favourable decisions from Councillors, we hope to apply for planning permission and begin work on the project in Summer 2022

	Portfolio	Corporate Objective	Milestones for Completion in 2021 Year	Due Date Where available	Status	Comments
(capital programme)  Project will span more than 1 year						
<b>Status RED - 0</b>						

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## 2021/22 Quarter 3 PI Data

For 2021/22, North Herts Council will report 21 corporate performance indicators. This report presents these indicators and displays data for the latest period that officers have updated and activated on Pentana. Performance indicator data is cumulative and represents performance between 1 April 2021 and the latest reporting period. Where available, the commentary for an indicator will include national benchmarking data. When annual targets were set, any relevant national minimum requirements were considered.

### Key for the Report





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
N/A	A direction of travel is not applicable, as data for the performance indicator commenced in 2021/22

### Summaries





Status Summary – Q3 2021/22		Direction of Travel Summary – Q3 2021/22	
	5 (Q2 = 4)		10 (Q2 = 9)
	3 (Q2 = 2)		8 (Q2 = 9)
	1 (Q2 = 3)		2 (Q2 = 2)
	11 (Q2 = 11)	N/A	0 (Q2 = 0)



Reporting for one indicator (REG3) is currently suspended.







Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
<b>Executive Member for Finance and IT</b>								
1	RES 1	Electricity and gas energy consumption (kWh) - 100% of reported energy consumption is from green energy sources	Q3 2021/22	1,608,214	1,722,862		 Q3 20/21 1,545,565	Electricity = 900,005 (49 properties/services) Gas = 708,209 (11 properties) The energy consumption for Q3 (three-month period) is lower than the previous two years. However, the year-to-date consumption is higher than this time last year, which is to be expected as the buildings move back into occupation. However, it's worth noting that consumption is down when compared to 2019/20 (pre-Covid). The district council office had solar PV installed towards the end of the third quarter, so this does not account for any reduction in consumption to Q3. A number of factors can impact energy usage across the portfolio, including temperature fluctuations from year to year and building use and occupation.
2	MI P&R 001	Percentage of raised sales invoices due for payment that have been paid	Dec 2021	95.57%	97%		 Dec 20 84.77%	As of 31 December 2021: Total value of invoices raised by NHC - £7,195,349 Total value of invoices raised by NHC that were not due for payment yet - £769,434 Total value of payments received for invoices raised by NHC - £6,141,335 Collection rates are slightly below target; however, we are showing an improving position on this time last year. The Governments moratorium regarding collection of commercial rents continues to impact on our performance.









2021/22 Quarter 3 PI Data





Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
3	BV 9	Percentage of council tax collected in year	Dec 2021	81.97%	81.5%		 Dec 20 82.13%	£80,546,429/£98,260,736
4	BV 10	Percentage of NNDR collected in year	Dec 2021	76.34%	78.5%		 Dec 20 77.67%	£24,591,191/£32,213,592 Although performance was below the target level at the end of Q3 2021/22, the position improved to above the target level with a positive direction of travel by the end of January 2022.



Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary						
Leader of the Council														
5	BV 12a	Working days lost due to short-term sickness absence per FTE employee	Dec 2021	2.85	2.40		 Dec 20 1.50	889.51 FTE short-term sickness days 311.90 average FTEs <b>National Benchmarking</b> Source: LGA Workforce Survey Latest Quarter - Three-Month Period Sample - Participating English district local authorities <table><tr><th>Period</th><th>North Herts</th><th>Top Quartile</th></tr><tr><td>Q2 2021/22</td><td>0.8 days</td><td>0.0 to 0.6 days</td></tr></table> North Herts ranked joint 20 <sup>th</sup> out of 52 (3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile) Prior to the pandemic short term absence levels were low, and levels declined further as the majority of employees were working from home. It is likely that the Covid restrictions and high levels of home working (and the subsequent lower levels of social contact) helped to reduce the number of sickness bugs and infections being passed between individuals. In 2021 absences started to increase again with case of the Covid 19 omicron variant being a significant factor from October onwards. In addition, we have also seen an increase in absences for common infections including colds, almost double the levels in 2020.	Period	North Herts	Top Quartile	Q2 2021/22	0.8 days	0.0 to 0.6 days
Period	North Herts	Top Quartile												
Q2 2021/22	0.8 days	0.0 to 0.6 days												











Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
6	BV 12b	Working days lost due to long-term sickness absence per FTE employee	Dec 2021	2.59	Not Applicable		 Dec 20 2.28	806.62 FTE long-term sickness days 311.90 average FTEs <b>National Benchmarking</b> Source: LGA Workforce Survey Latest Quarter - Three-Month Period Sample - Participating English district local authorities <b>Period</b> <b>North Herts</b> <b>Top Quartile</b> Q2 2021/22    1.0 days      0.0 to 0.8 days North Herts ranked joint 21 <sup>st</sup> out of 52 (2 <sup>nd</sup> Quartile)
<b>Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health</b>								
7	REG 1	Rate of homelessness prevention	Q3 2021/22	50.00%	Not Applicable		 Q3 20/21 67.40%	During Q1-Q3 2021/22, there were 126 cases where a Prevention Duty ended. Of these, 63 ended with a positive outcome, i.e., where homelessness was prevented. The success rate for each quarter was Q1 38% (15/39), Q2 60% (24/40) and Q3 51% (24/47). 43 cases went on to be owed a Relief Duty. <b>Hertfordshire Benchmarking</b> Source: HCLIC Percentage of Prevention Duty positive outcomes Rolling average for latest four quarters <b>Period</b> <b>North Herts</b> <b>Hertfordshire</b> Q2 2021/22    65%      47%
8	REG 2	Rate of homelessness relief	Q3 2021/22	26.59%	Not Applicable		 Q3 20/21 34.29%	During Q1-Q3 2021/22, there were 267 cases where a Relief Duty ended. Of these, 71 ended with a positive outcome, i.e., where the Relief Duty ended because households were successfully rehoused. A further 95 cases were subsequently owed a

Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary						
								<p>main housing duty, under which the Council must provide suitable long-term accommodation.</p> <p><b>Breakdown of the 196 relief cases that ended in a non-accommodation outcome by reason:</b></p> <p>56 days elapsed – 146 households</p> <p>Contact lost – 25</p> <p>Application withdrawn/applicant deceased (category retired from Q2) – 10</p> <p>No longer eligible – 1</p> <p>Local connection referral accepted by other authority – 1</p> <p>Applicant deceased (new from Q2) – 1</p> <p>Withdrew application (new from Q2) - 12</p> <p><b>Final outcomes for the 146 cases where the Relief Duty ended because 56 days elapsed:</b></p> <p>Main housing duty owed – 95 households</p> <p>Found to be not in priority need – 42</p> <p>Found to be intentionally homeless – 6</p> <p>Not homeless – 2</p> <p>Awaiting decision - 1</p> <p><b>Hertfordshire Benchmarking</b></p> <p>Source: HCLIC</p> <p>Percentage of Relief Duty positive outcomes</p> <p>Rolling average for latest four quarters</p> <table><tr><th><u>Period</u></th><th><u>North Herts</u></th><th><u>Hertfordshire</u></th></tr><tr><td>Q2 2021/22</td><td>28%</td><td>34%</td></tr></table>	<u>Period</u>	<u>North Herts</u>	<u>Hertfordshire</u>	Q2 2021/22	28%	34%
<u>Period</u>	<u>North Herts</u>	<u>Hertfordshire</u>												
Q2 2021/22	28%	34%												



Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
9	LI 035a	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	Q3 2021/22	94	Not Applicable		 Q3 20/21 120	94 households were in temporary accommodation as of 31 December 2021, of which, 17 were in hotel accommodation. <b>Hertfordshire Benchmarking</b> Source: HCLIC Number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the period <b>Period</b> <b>North Herts</b> <b>Hertfordshire Average</b> Q2 2021/22    98                      113
10	REG 3	Percentage of Environmental Health programmed inspections completed	Data collection and reporting is currently suspended.					Reporting of REG3 data is currently suspended due to resources being diverted to Covid related work and covering long-term sickness absence. Reporting will recommence when resourcing has returned to a “business-as-usual” position. We intend to recommence the planned food inspection programme in accordance with guidance from the Food Standards Agency, recommencing inspections during Q1 2022.
<b>Executive Member for Planning</b>								
11	DC 001a	Number of planning applications taken to appeal due to ‘non-determination’ within the statutory time period, which were allowed	Q3 2021/22	0	Not Applicable		 Q3 20/21 0	Between April and December 2021, there was one appeal decision relating to non-determination of an application to vary a condition (i.e., not an application for planning permission) and this appeal was dismissed.
12	DC 002	Number of planning applications where the fee has been refunded due to the application not being determined within 26 weeks	Q3 2021/22	0	0		 Q3 20/21 0	No fees have been refunded.

Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary																								
13	LI 032a	Number of allowed planning appeal decisions	Q3 2021/22	9	Not Applicable		 Q3 20/21 2	Out of 20 appeal decisions, nine were allowed. The other appeals were dismissed. Of the nine appeals allowed, five related to Member decisions that went against officer recommendations and four related to a decision that was in line with the officer recommendation.																								
Executive Member for Environment and Leisure																																
14	MI LI 015	Number of visits to leisure facilities	Dec 2021	612,373	359,546		 Dec 20 181,270	<table><tr><td>Facility</td><td>2021/22</td><td>2020/21</td></tr><tr><td>North Herts LC</td><td>247,783</td><td>76,001</td></tr><tr><td>Fearnhill</td><td>5,854</td><td>845</td></tr><tr><td>Letchworth OP</td><td>32,187</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Hitchin SC</td><td>109,408</td><td>28,830</td></tr><tr><td>Archers</td><td>67,632</td><td>24,143</td></tr><tr><td>Royston LC</td><td>149,509</td><td>51,451</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>612,373</td><td>181,270</td></tr></table>	Facility	2021/22	2020/21	North Herts LC	247,783	76,001	Fearnhill	5,854	845	Letchworth OP	32,187	0	Hitchin SC	109,408	28,830	Archers	67,632	24,143	Royston LC	149,509	51,451		612,373	181,270
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Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary						
Executive Member for Recycling and Waste Management														
15	NI 191	Kg residual waste per household	Q3 2021/22	270kg	247kg		 Q3 20/21 293kg	<p>The calculation of the Q3 figure includes some estimated tonnages, as we are still waiting for the actual tonnage data to be confirmed.</p> <p>Consumer habits continue to be affected by the pandemic, affecting both residual waste and recycling tonnages, and it is unlikely that the NI191 target will be met for the foreseeable future. Our communications work will focus on food waste, which still makes up most of the residual waste bin. However, communication work is limited predominantly to social media. Working from home is likely to be a significant contributor to additional kg in NI191 reporting. For NI192 (reported below), Q4 performance will depend in part on whether we experience an early or late spring growing period.</p> <p><b>National Benchmarking</b> Source: LG Inform Latest Quarter - Three-Month Period Sample - Participating English district local authorities</p> <table><tr><th><u>Period</u></th><th><u>North Herts</u></th><th><u>Top Quartile</u></th></tr><tr><td>Q2 2021/22</td><td>90.30kg</td><td>35.13kg to 95.04kg</td></tr></table> <p>North Herts ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of 32 (1<sup>st</sup> Quartile)</p>	<u>Period</u>	<u>North Herts</u>	<u>Top Quartile</u>	Q2 2021/22	90.30kg	35.13kg to 95.04kg
<u>Period</u>	<u>North Herts</u>	<u>Top Quartile</u>												
Q2 2021/22	90.30kg	35.13kg to 95.04kg												

Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary																		
16	NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, and composting	Q3 2021/22	58.80%	58.5%		 Q3 20/21 56.25%	See commentary above for NI191. <b>National Benchmarking</b> Source: LG Inform Latest Quarter - Three-Month Period Sample - Participating English district local authorities <table><tr><th>Period</th><th>North Herts</th><th>Top Quartile</th></tr><tr><td>Q2 2021/22</td><td>59.29%</td><td>55.16% to 62.28%</td></tr></table> North Herts ranked 4 <sup>th</sup> out of 34 (1 <sup>st</sup> Quartile) Source: Lets Recycle 2019/20 - North Herts ranked 24 <sup>th</sup> out of 341.	Period	North Herts	Top Quartile	Q2 2021/22	59.29%	55.16% to 62.28%												
Period	North Herts	Top Quartile																								
Q2 2021/22	59.29%	55.16% to 62.28%																								
17	FW 1	Overall tonnage of food waste collected	Q3 2021/22	3,410	Not Applicable		 Q3 20/21 2,921	Regarding the direction of travel, it should be noted that in April 2020, there were no food waste collections.																		
18	GW 1	Overall tonnage of garden waste collected	Q3 2021/22	8,757	Not Applicable		 Q3 20/21 7,714	Regarding the direction of travel, it should be noted that in April 2020, there were no garden waste collections.																		
19	PLA 01	Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of domestic household waste	Dec 2021	50	Not Applicable		 Dec 20 79																			
20	PLA 02	Number of reported missed domestic waste collections (valid complaints)	Dec 2021	2,916	Not Applicable		 Dec 20 4,068	<table><tr><td>April 2021</td><td>546</td></tr><tr><td>May 2021</td><td>368</td></tr><tr><td>June 2021</td><td>427</td></tr><tr><td>July 2021</td><td>249</td></tr><tr><td>August 2021</td><td>284</td></tr><tr><td>September 2021</td><td>258</td></tr><tr><td>October 2021</td><td>368</td></tr><tr><td>November 2021</td><td>182</td></tr><tr><td>December 2021</td><td>234</td></tr></table>	April 2021	546	May 2021	368	June 2021	427	July 2021	249	August 2021	284	September 2021	258	October 2021	368	November 2021	182	December 2021	234
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Row No.	PI Code	Title	Last Update	Data Value	Target	Status	Direction of Travel	Commentary
21	PLA 03	Total number of domestic waste collections (figures vary according to the number of collection days in the month)	Dec 2021	5,827,314	Not Applicable		 Dec 20 5,151,109	April 2021 649,943 May 2021 587,001 June 2021 679,299 July 2021 662,595 August 2021 635,362 September 2021 729,145 October 2021 617,761 November 2021 642,433 December 2021 623,775

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**CABINET  
22 MARCH 2022**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN FOR 22-23**

REPORT OF: REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST, SUSTAINABILITY, A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents the Council Delivery Plan for 22-23, which includes

- The setting of key Council projects
- The identification of risks relating to delivery of the projects and
- The setting of Performance Indicators (PIs) to measure progress

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. That Cabinet considers and formally approves the Council Delivery Plan and any associated targets, to be monitored throughout 2022/2023 by Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. An approved Council Delivery Plan provides the Cabinet with assurance that progress against achievement of the Council Plan objectives, will be monitored throughout 2022/23.

**4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. None Considered.

**5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 5.1. The Council Delivery Plan was compiled in consultation with Executive Members who were consulted on the elements relating to their area of responsibility.

- 5.2. The Plan is reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Finance Audit and Risk Committee, who can make recommendations to Cabinet.

## **6. FORWARD PLAN**

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision first notified on the Forward Plan on the 14 January 2022.

## **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1. In December 2021, Cabinet reviewed the proposal to introduce an integrated Performance Management Framework for 22-23 onwards. The proposal was approved.
- 7.2. Previously, only Performance Indicators were approved by Cabinet with no clear link to projects being undertaken or the risks being managed within the Service areas.
- 7.3. The new approach requires Cabinet approval for the projects, risks, and performance indicators to support the delivery of the Council Plan.

## **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 The Council Delivery Plan (Appendix A), has been compiled by the Leadership Team, in consultation with Executive Members and brings together all the elements of Integrated Performance Management (Projects, Risks and Performance indicators) into one plan.
- 8.2 The Projects outlined in the Delivery Plan are detailed in the Council Plan 2022-27, or clearly linked to the Council Plan priorities and themes. The Council will also carry out other projects, that are linked to a statutory duty or support the delivery of Council functions. These other projects have been included if they are significant in terms of impact (e.g., in relation to staff or financial resources), but the focus is on what contributes towards delivering the Council Plan. For longer term projects, milestones will be used to monitor progress achieved during the year.
- 8.3 The Risks, are those that could impact on the delivery of the Council Plan or the Projects linked to the Council Plan. They include the level of likelihood and impact, and the mitigations to be put in place to minimise the level or risk.
- 8.4 The Performance Indicators will be the means to show us how well we are doing at achieving the priorities within the Council Plan, including measures linked to the projects detailed above.
- 8.5 The existing Risk and Performance Indicator entries on Pentana (the Council's Risk and Performance Monitoring software), have been cross referenced to the Council Delivery Plan and matched where appropriate. Any entries which do not match, will no longer be included in the Committee reports, but will be monitored by Service areas. These entries are detailed in Appendix B.

- 8.6 Once approved, the Council Delivery Plan will form the basis of quarterly reporting to Overview and Scrutiny to monitor Performance for the 2022-23 year. It is expected that they will make recommendations to Cabinet throughout the year.
- 8.7 Finance Audit and Risk Committee will no longer receive regular reports on specific risks but will receive reports in relation to the effective development and operation of risk management. They have been given the opportunity to comment on the Plan at the formulation stage.
- 8.8 As this is the first year of operation of this new way of considering integrated performance, the approach may need to evolve during the year. Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet will be able to consider any changes as part of the quarterly review reports.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The constitution determines the role of Cabinet as including: “To take decisions on resources and priorities, together with other stakeholders and partners in the local community, to deliver and implement the budget and policies decided by the Full Council. To monitor performance and risk in respect of the delivery of those policies and priorities” (paragraph 5.6.3) .
- 9.2 The constitution determines the role of Overview and Scrutiny as including: “To review performance against the Council's agreed objectives/ priorities and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/ or service area. To consider risks to the achievement of those objectives/ priorities. To make recommendations to Cabinet” (paragraph 6.2.7 (s)).
- 9.3 The constitution determines the role of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee as including: “to monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance, agree actions (where appropriate) and make recommendations to Cabinet” (paragraph 10.1.5 (u)).

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Where efficiencies or investments may make a difference to service levels these are indicated in the budget proposals so they can be taken into consideration when considering the budget for the forthcoming year.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The Council Delivery Plan aims to support the risk management process by directly linking the risks to projects being undertaken. The aim of these proposals is to strengthen the link between performance and risk and make risks more current. This should provide an improved perspective of the risks that the Council faces. It also enables Service Managers to get value from the risk monitoring process as a useful component of service management.

## **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 Performance reporting provides a means to monitor whether the Council is meeting the stated outcomes of the district priorities, its targets or delivering accessible and appropriated services to the Community to meet different people's needs.

### **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 There will continue to be a need to align Council and Service objectives with available people resources to be able to achieve them. The Council Delivery Plan will help to make that link clearer.

### **15. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report. However, a number of the projects to be monitored throughout the year are related to key environmental issues.

### **16. APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Council Delivery Plan 22-23

Appendix B – List of Risks and PIs not reported for 22-23

### **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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**20. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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Risk Level – Low (1-3)	
Risk Level – Medium (4-6)	
Risk Level – High (7-9)	

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
<b>COVID RECOVERY</b>								
<b>Museum/ HTH Recovery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To rebuild visitor numbers at the museum to pre-pandemic levels.</li> <li>To rebuild interest in hiring Hitchin Town Hall back to pre-pandemic levels.</li> <li>To rebuild overall income levels at the facility to pre-pandemic levels.</li> </ul>	1/7/2022  1/8/2022  31/3/2023	Brighter Future Together	1 - All these milestones carry the risk of new emerging variants or a worsening covid picture; separately, the booking of Hitchin Town Hall and income levels may be impacted by the rising cost of living and the reduced levels of disposable income. 2 - lack of interest in the facilities following extended period of closure and restrictions. 3 - Inability to generate income as well as hoped and to the levels targeted.	5	1 - Increased use of advertising and new website.	1	Museum Visitor numbers  HTH Booking enquiries  Income generated to be measured through financial monitoring reports.	37,500  400
<b>Tourism Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint Consultants</li> <li>Review and approve draft strategy</li> </ul>	31/7/2022 31/3/2023	Brighter Future Together	1 -Risk of delay in procuring consultants and subsequent delay to production of strategy	1	1 - Ensure specification for procurement is sufficiently robust and written in a timely manner. 2 - Regular meetings to be set up with consultants.	1	n/a in this year	n/a
<b>Business Recovery: Grants</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued promotion of available business support</li> </ul>		Brighter Future Together	1 - Lack of Resources available to deliver grant schemes.	1	1 - Utilise additional resources where possible.	1	All grant applications to be processed and paid within	100%

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
grants and business rate reliefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete all Government returns for reconciliation processes</li> </ul>	Up to 30/4/2022  31/3/2023				2 - Shadowing within the team to increase resilience		Government stipulated timescales. These differ for each grant type.	
<b>Town Centre Recovery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>completion of economic recovery study for the 4 towns</li> <li>Liaise with HCC and other key stakeholders with regard the experimental traffic orders for town centres</li> <li>Development of permit scheme for experimental traffic orders, sub-delegate to appropriate body, enforcement to be with NHDC</li> </ul>	30/04/2022  ongoing  31/03/2023	Brighter Future Together	1 - Resourcing the project – limited budget available  2 - Town Strategy not yet in place	3	1 - Look for external grants 2 – Planning applications to be taken through masterplanning route	1	Monitored via achievement of project milestones	n/a
<b>Health Inequalities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding from Herts County Council (Public Health)</li> </ul> Other milestones dependent on funding achieved.	ASAP	People First	1 – Inability to achieve funding. 2 – Delays in achieving funding affects delivery of outcomes. 3 – Terms of any funding affects what can be delivered.	7	1 - Apply for funding and then determine what is deliverable.	3	Can only be measured on commencement of project. Likely to include: Number of Homes benefitting from 'green grants'. Number of Empty properties brought back in to use.	n/a
<b>Economic Development Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete on-going recovery work funded by High Street Recovery Fund</li> <li>Utilise feedback from recovery work to develop an Economic Development</li> </ul>	1/4/2022  1/8/2022	Brighter Future Together	1 – Uncertainty over focus of the strategy. 2 – Determination of level of priority and the funding to be allocated from 2023/24.	5	1 - Develop Strategy options and then seek a steer on desired focus. 2 - Secure resource beyond 22/23 to deliver any strategy	3	To be measured from 2023/24 onwards. Likely to include measures related to job creation and new business start-ups.	n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
Strategy for the four towns. Consult and develop an Economic Development Strategy for the rural community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop budget bid to deliver proposed Economic Development Strategy</li> </ul>	1/9/2022							
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b>								
<b>Overarching PI- not linked to any one project</b>							Electricity and Gas Energy consumption for all Council managed buildings	2,543,620
<b>Resident/ Public EV Charging in our Car Parks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify private sector partner to assist with grant application and to provide 25% of funding not met by grant as well as being responsible for on-going maintenance and future proofing</li> <li>Establish detailed costings for grant application</li> <li>Submit grant application to OZEZ for 75% of cost, with private partner providing the remaining 25%</li> </ul> Any remaining milestones will be dependent on grant funding awarded.	31/3/2022          31/5/2022  31/7/2022	Sustainability	1 – Not successful in obtaining grant funding. 2 - Unable to identify / procure a private sector partner.	5	1 - Look at alternative methods of delivery e.g., offer land with no Council involvement.	1	Number of charging units.  Charging point usage.	TBC, depends on grant awarded
<b>Cycling Network</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with HCC on the production of a draft Local Cycling &amp; Walking Infrastructure Plan</li> </ul>	30/6/2022	Sustainability	1 –Resourcing for NHDC and HCC 2- Timing and adoption of LCWIP by HCC transport panel	3	1- Regular communication with HCC	1	Measured through achievement of milestones	n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
(LCWIP) - for formal consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following adoption of LCWIP by Highways Transport Panel will then inform work on NHC cycle strategy</li> </ul> Other milestones dependent on LCWIP	30/11/2022		3 – Limits to what can be achieved in this financial year					
<b>EV Charging for Council Vehicles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install 2 charging points in DCO rear car park (charging for 4 vehicles)</li> </ul>	31/5/2022	Sustainability	1- Lead-in time from supplier could cause delays 2- number of options available makes it difficult to determine optimal option	5	1 - Analyse available options from suppliers 2 - Award contract with set delivery timeline	1	Miles driven by full electric vehicles (displacement of petrol mileage)	35,000 miles
<b>Royston Leisure Centre Solar Thermal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design Specification</li> <li>Complete procurement and appoint Contractor</li> <li>Meet with contractor to programme schedule of works</li> <li>Installation of Solar Thermal (due date dependant on project plan from contractor)</li> </ul> <p>The final delivery date will differ to the date in the Council Plan. To ensure solar thermal technology was compatible with the existing mechanical and electrical system at RLC specialised consultants were commissioned to carry out a detailed survey which caused a delay to the original project completion date.</p>	31/5/2022 01/8/2022 15/8/2022 31/3/2023	Sustainability	1 - Tender returns over budget 2 - Delays to project plan	5	1 - Regular project meetings to be held with contractor.	5	None for RLC this year, to develop a measure of energy use savings	n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
<b>TOWN CENTRES</b>								
<b>Town Centre Strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultants appointed to prepare High Level Town centre Recovery Action Plans for each town centre</li> <li>Once completed a scoping report will be prepared to agree overall project and governance arrangements for progression of Town Centre Strategies</li> <li>Commencement of work on Letchworth Town Centre Strategy, details TBC following outcome of milestone above.</li> </ul>	30/4/2022  30/6/2022	Sustainability	1 – Lack of available resource to produce and deliver identified strategies	5	1 - Ensure resource is available to deliver Strategies. 2 – Look for external funding 3 – Take applications through masterplanning process.	1	Achievement of project milestones	n/a
<b>Finalise Pay on Exit Parking Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultants appointed to produce Feasibility Study to be reported to Exec Member &amp; Deputy</li> <li>Recommendations to be reported to Cabinet to agree Next Steps</li> </ul> Milestone above to determine further milestones.	31/7/2022  30/9/2022	Brighter Future Together	1 – Budget implications of selected scheme	1	1 – Produce detailed business case and go through approval process 2- Retain / replace existing machines and software	1	Future indicator to be monitored from 23/24- Car park usage	n/a
<b>Replacement of Royston Town Hall Annexe</b> (project will span more than 1 year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ascertain, acquire, and address rights &amp; restrictions on the site</li> <li>Market test site for leasing &amp; sale on non-committal basis. Undertake options</li> </ul>	30/11/2022  31/10/2022	People First	1 - Cost and time in acquiring rights or addressing restrictions are prohibitive. 2 - Planning permission refused or subject to unviable conditions. 3 - Desire to retain partial community use impinges on viability. 4 - Build cost inflation impinges on viability.	5	1 - Proactive and frequent discussion with key site stakeholders. 2 - Engage reputable local & national agents to garner wide audience for marketing and generate maximum interest. 3 - Frequent communication with	2	Range, number & geographical spread of expressions of interest.  Future indicator relating to rental/ capital value.	n/a  n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
appraisal. Seek Cabinet decision. Other actions relating to planning and completing a lease will be in 2023/24 onwards. The timetable shows a slight delay compared to the Council Plan					Town & NHDC Ward Councillors. 4 - Consider adopting modern methods of construction.			
<b>IMPROVING HOW CUSTOMERS ACCESS OUR SERVICES</b>								
<b>Customer Portal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researching options for development of My Account</li> <li>Transformation programme considers options for development</li> <li>Implementation of agreed options</li> </ul>	31/3/2022  31/5/2022  31/3/2023	People First	1 - Additional modules are not forthcoming	5	1 - Link to transformation programme and use of Tquila to develop ideas utilise suppliers experience with other Councils	5	Future PI to be monitored - Increase in sign- ups for My Account (currently just under 4000)	n/a
<b>Help residents make payments at convenient locations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete procurement and appoint supplier</li> <li>obtain IIN number and update documentation</li> <li>Send test file and payment</li> <li>Go live and Communication</li> </ul>	31/3/2022  31/8/2022  31/10/2022  30/11/2022	People First	1 -resourcing issues delay progress 2 - unexpected costs affect viability of business case 3 - residents fail to use the service provided	5	1 - Set up regular project meetings to advance project 2 - Options allow for phased implementation if costs are an issue 3 - Communication plan to be drawn up	3	Percentage of payments collected by electronic methods  Percentage of Council Tax collected in year  Percentage of NNDR collected in year  Percentage of Sales Ledger income collected in year	99.3%  95%  93%  97%
<b>Supplier self-service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore available options in the market and determine cost/ viability</li> <li>Procure system and set up project team</li> <li>Portal set up and testing</li> <li>Go live and Communication</li> </ul>	31/8/2022  31/12/2022  28/2/2023  31/3/2023	People First	1 - failure to find viable solution 2 - resource issues delay progress 3 - suppliers do not submit invoices via the portal, fail to achieve efficiencies 4 - data security issues	5	1 - Carry out data impact assessment 2 - Set up regular project meetings to advance project 3 - Communication plan to make suppliers aware of benefits	3	% of invoices imported through the portal	0% for 22-23 / target will be 60% by end of 23/24

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
<b>IMPROVING THE SUPPLY AND TYPES OF HOUSING ACROSS THE DISTRICT</b>								
<b>Empty Homes Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of strategy and resources.</li> <li>Adoption of Strategy</li> <li>Implementation of Strategy</li> </ul>	31/5/2022  31/7/2022 1/9/2022	Sustainability	1 – Resourcing further actions following adoption of the strategy 2 – Availability of empty homes that we can take forward under the strategy 3 – Cost to council of maintaining empty properties 4 – Potential reputational risk	4	1 – Funding bids for additional resource – (linked to health inequalities) 2 – Charge over property where possible to recover costs	3	Future indicator to be monitored - Empty homeowners engaged to return to occupancy	n/a
<b>New Ways of delivering housing on Council land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine a way forward/ Partnership agreement with current provider and start to consider other options for delivery.</li> <li>If unsuccessful, prepare a tender exercise based on the 4 plots of land already determined.</li> <li>Select supplier and move forward into the planning and delivery phase. Obtain relevant approval.</li> <li>Move to construction phase.</li> </ul>	31/3/2022  01/07/2022 01/09/2022 01/12/2022	Brighter Future Together	1 - Being able to develop a viable project. 2 - Housing development subject to planning. 3 - Working with the right supplier for the Council. 4 - Demand to provide more homes across the District.	5	1 - Work closely with the Finance team and selected supplier to try to develop a viable project. Factor in borrowing costs. 2 - Work closely with relevant service areas and selected supplier to ensure the proposed developments are in line with expectations. 3 - Work with the Procurement and Legal team to run a successful tender that will allow us to work with the right supplier. 4 - Align relevant policies and company values when selecting supplier.	5	Future indicators relating to number of homes delivered and income (revenue and/or capital) achieved.	n/a
<b>Work with stakeholders to increase accommodation for single homeless people</b>	All tbc	People First	1 - An excessive demand from the public for housing services.	8	1 - Dedicated homelessness	5	Usage of Hotel and B&B accommodation	n/a data only

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Haven First to secure development of hostel accommodation in Letchworth</li> <li>Work with other partners to secure accommodation for those with specific support needs</li> <li>Work with Partners to secure general accommodation for homeless people</li> <li>Application and utilisation of grant funding to secure specialist provision e.g., rough sleeper outreach worker.</li> </ul>			2 - A lack of alternative housing options. 3 - An increase in the levels of homelessness. 4 - An increased use of hotel accommodation for homeless households 5 - Major difficulties for some members of the public to access the private rented sector 6 – High levels of support for some clients		accommodation for single persons 2 – Obtain grant funding to facilitate new sites and support mechanisms			
<b>Local Plan Implementation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receipt of Inspectors letter</li> <li>Adoption of Plan by Full Council</li> </ul>	Milestones to follow - All dependent on first milestone, which is not in our control	Brighter Future Together	1 - Delay in inspectors report on the new Local Plan, resulting in a longer period without appropriate guidance 2 - Increased uncertainty of planning policy base 3 – Delay or failure to adoption / implementation of the new local plan 4- Legal challenge to Local Plan 5 - Intervention by the Secretary of State, i.e., issuing a holding direction 6 – ‘Hostile’ applications in areas not designated within the Local Plan	9	1 - Ongoing advice sought from PAS, Counsel and DLUC 2 - Regular Project Board meetings 3 - Ongoing recruitment to vacant Planning Officer posts	5	N/a	n/a
<b>Master Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with developers and identify the Council's expectations with regard master planning</li> </ul>	All tbc	Brighter Future Together	1 – Failure to secure funding to resource the process 2 – Inspector's report modifies master planning policy	5	1 - Inspector's report recommending modifications 2 - Adoption of Local Plan by Full Council	3	N/a	n/a



Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding for master planning through the development of Planning Performance Agreements to seek to cover NHDC and HCC costs as far as is practicable</li> <li>Present master plans to Project Board for comment and support to forward onto Full Council or Planning Committee as appropriate for approval</li> </ul>			3 – non adoption of the Local Plan 4 – reduction in pre-application income and delay to income from planning applications		3 – Secure funding for resources through Planning Performance Agreements			
<b>FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>								
<b>Financial Sustainability/ balancing our budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to expected consultation on funding reform</li> <li>Medium Term Financial Strategy (aligned to Council Plan) approved by Council</li> <li>Budget for 2023/34 approved by Council</li> </ul>	31/7/2022  30/9/2022  28/2/2023	Sustainability	1- funding reductions as a result of new funding formula 2- loss of sales, fees, and charges income due to continuing impact of COVID-19 3- not able to make the required decisions to deliver budget savings required 4- increases in costs (reductions in income) when contracts are renewed and as a result of inflationary increases	9	1 - Revise funding projections as a result of formula changes MTFS sets out a strategy for addressing funding gaps, including how difficult service funding decisions will need to be made 2 - Regular budget monitoring to highlight any issues (including extent and speed of COVID recovery, and impact of inflation)	5	Budget reporting to FAR and Cabinet-overall variances, plus income performance indicators (including parking tickets purchased , garden waste sign-ups)	n/a
<b>Full review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage Consultant to support the project</li> <li>Options appraisals conducted and consultation carried out with public and major preceptors</li> <li>Reports to Committees, September December, and January</li> </ul>	31/03/2022  31/08/2022  31/01/2023	Sustainability	1 - Lack of resources and specific skills to deliver	5	1 - Commission consultant to provide expert support to the project.	3	improvement in administration of applications	n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheme implemented</li> </ul>	31/03/2023							
<b>GOVERNMENT RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY</b>								
<b>Response to Government resources and waste strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial member consultation and service design</li> </ul> <p>Actions in relation to new contract and finalising service design will follow in 2023/24 onwards,</p> <p>The final delivery date will differ from the Council Plan. The delay is due to the government having not yet released the outcomes from the consultations on Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Schemes, and consistency. Officers will progress discussion in Q2 on contract design even if the outcomes are unknown. This will be based on best practice and any anticipated outcomes.</p>	01/8/2022	Sustainability	1 - Delays in confirmation of government strategy or legislation 2 - Protracted decision making 3 - Lack of interest from suppliers 4 - Increased cost uncertainty 5 - Reduced income from chargeable services 6 - Protracted Contract negotiations 7 - Confusion by residents over new services 8 - Reduction in resident satisfaction due to requirements to recycle more etc. 9 - Impact on Council reputation due to difficult service change mobilisation 10 – Failure by Government to honour 'New Burdens' doctrine	9	1 - Development of plans and service design based on most likely outcomes, best practice, and financial sustainability. 2 - Regular cross party Member engagement. 3 - Early negotiations with Urbaser and parallel soft market testing.	5	To be developed, as KPIs might change due to government strategy changes  Kg Residual waste per household  Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, and composting	350kg  56.50%
<b>GREEN SPACE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</b>								
<b>Green Space Management Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installation of interactive play</li> <li>Wilding Project</li> </ul> <p>Other projects (e.g., play area renovations) have not been individually included.</p>	31/8/2022  31/3/2023	People First  Sustainability	1 – Tenders received are not within budget.	1	1 - Set up regular project meetings to advance project 2 - Options allow for phased implementation if costs are an issue 3 - Communication plan to be drawn up	1	n/a	n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
The delivery date for the Interactive play equipment differs to the Council Plan. Project delivery has been delayed due to a number of factors beyond our control. Firstly, this type of play equipment requires a power supply and detailed site surveys had to be undertaken to identify suitable options. We have had to work with UK Network Utilities to install dedicated power provision. These works are now nearing completion which will allow for the required works to be commenced to install the interactive play equipment. Further issues have compounded the delays such as longer than expected supply periods and the impacts of Covid with the contractors' staff being ill after the New Year								
<b>CHARNWOOD HOUSE</b>								
<b>Charnwood House</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploration of options</li> <li>• Market site for leasing as community hub, on non-committal basis. Undertake options appraisal. Seek Cabinet decision.</li> <li>• Negotiate terms with selected tenant. Seek Cabinet decision. Complete lease.</li> </ul>	31/03/2022  31/10/2022  Milestone completion in 2023/24	People First	1 - Covenant restriction on use 2 - Statute restriction on use. 3 - Viability of Listed Building consent conditions 4 - Demand for community hub 5 – Delays due to Asset of Community Value (ACV) listing	5	1 - Proactive and frequent discussion of community hub proposals with covenant beneficiary and local interest groups. 2 - Public communication (possibly including further open days) to market research intricacies of demand for community hub.	1	Future indicator relating to daily visitor numbers as a proportion of seats or floor area available after period of establishment. User feedback.	n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
Other actions relating to planning and building works will be in 2023/24 onwards.					3 - Selection of architect with verifiable Listed Building experience. Review ACV legislation and timelines.			
<b>MUSEUM STORAGE</b>								
<b>Museum Storage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise Business Case and seek approvals.</li> <li>Agree the design and submit planning application along with seeking other required permissions.</li> <li>Meanwhile, the existing bury mead site will be cleared to Hitchin Museum.</li> <li>Move to construction phase will commence in 23-24</li> </ul> <p>There has been a delay to the project due to sourcing consultants to complete the business case and obtaining indicative pricing from contractors.</p>	30/6/2022  30/9/2022	Brighter Future Together	1 - Funding the project. 2 - Unforeseen issues with the development. 3 - Lower utilisation of the commercial storage opportunity than expected.	5	1 - Approval for the project, along with progress in line with potential grant bid submissions. 2 - Ensuring preliminary reports and surveys are carried out and that the main developer is accepting of certain risks. 3 - Scrutinising Business Plans and consultants reports and ensuring all reasonable due diligence around forecasting and modelling has been carried out.	3	Future indicator relating to uptake of commercial storage.	n/a
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW</b>								
<b>Local Government Boundary Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of any additional information to LGBCE on warding patterns</li> <li>Consultation on warding patterns by LGBCE with Council, Political Groups &amp; General public</li> </ul>	May 2022  18/10/2022  10/1/2023	Brighter Future Together	1 – Failure to meet set deadlines.	3	1 - Continued use of AEA consultant; ensuring that sufficient information and responses to consultation provided to LGBCE. 2 - Continuing use and oversight via Project Board	1	Monitored via achievement of milestones	n/a

Projects			Linked Risks				Linked Performance Indicators	
Description and milestones	Due Dates in 2022/23	Main Council Plan priority	Description	Current Risk level	Risk Mitigations	Target Risk Level	Description	Target for 22-23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation on draft recommendations with Council, Political Groups and General public</li> </ul>								

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**2021/22 Corporate PIs – will no longer be reported**

PI Code	Title	Comments
BV 12a	Working days lost due to short-term sickness absence per FTE employee	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
BV 12b	Working days lost due to long-term sickness absence per FTE employee	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
REG 3	Percentage of Environmental Health programmed inspections completed	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
DC 001a	Number of planning applications taken to appeal due to 'non-determination' within the statutory time period, which were allowed	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
DC 002	Number of planning applications where the fee has been refunded due to the application not being determined within 26 weeks	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
LI 032a	Number of allowed planning appeal decisions	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
MI LI 015	Number of visits to leisure facilities	To incorporate into quarterly financial monitoring and link to the budget impact
PLA 01	Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of domestic household waste	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
PLA 02	Number of reported missed domestic waste collections (valid complaints)	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
PLA 03	Total number of domestic waste collections (figures vary according to the number of collection days in the month)	More appropriate to monitor as a service/operational indicator
FW 1	Overall tonnage of food waste collected	Focus on residual and reuse, recycling, and composting tonnages
GW 1	Overall tonnage of garden waste collected	Focus on residual and reuse, recycling, and composting tonnages
REG 1	Rate of homelessness prevention	Focus on use of hotel and B&B accommodation
REG 2	Rate of homelessness relief	Focus on use of hotel and B&B accommodation

**2021-22 Corporate Risks – will no longer be reported**

Title	Comments
National and Regional Planning Issues	Corporate focus is on Local Plan and Master Planning
Neighbouring Authorities	Corporate focus is on Local Plan and Master Planning
Cyber Risks	Whilst not directly linked to any Council projects, this is a significant and current risk. The impact of a successful cyber-attack would affect the delivery of projects, due to the reliance on IT availability. This will be monitored as a service risk, but with a high level of focus and oversight.
Brexit (EU Transition)	Risk levels have reduced. To monitor residual risks at service level.
Covid-19 - Leisure Management Contracts	To monitor at service level, with the financial impact captured as part of the financial sustainability risk.
Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) - Recovery	To monitor as part of specific risks and projects (Corporate and Service level).

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**DRAFT CABINET**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> March**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: Shared Waste Service Governance**

REPORT OF: *Shared Service Manager – Waste Management*

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Amy Allen

COUNCIL PRIORITY: Sustainability

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The shared client team for waste services has been in operation with oversight from the Joint Partnership Board for waste since December 2017. This report identifies options around governance of the shared service to support future partnership working and service resilience.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. The Cabinet agree to the new overarching aim of the shared services and principles outlined in 8.10 and 8.12
- 2.2. That the Cabinet endorses the formation of a joint cross party working group. The terms of reference for which are outlined in Appendix A and the outline work programme described in 8.19
- 2.3. That the Cabinet agrees to explore the future options for governance of the Shared Waste Service, including consideration of a joint committee consisting of representation by both East Herts Council and North Herts Council

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Waste services are one of the largest services provided to residents in both Councils, a “one service” approach promotes resilience and flexibility ensuring residents and customers receive a high-quality service. The recommendations are being made to enable the further alignment of services, through joint decision making, and consequently the long term efficient and optimal management of the services.
- 3.2 A new aligned governance structure would promote a unified, stable and long-term strategic vision for the shared service and ensures:
  - a service that is agile and responsive to changes
  - reduction in customer confusion
  - better engagement/ use of skills/talent and retention of staff and therefore service delivered to customers
  - continuous improvement within the services

- improved resource visibility and flexibility
- aligned timeframes and increased speed for decision making
- greater consistency and stability leading to greater interest and competitiveness from the market.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. To retain existing governance structures, without changes to decision making processes, however this has led to unilateral decisions being made which are contrary to the principles of the shared waste service as outlined in 7.5.
- 4.2. Existing arrangements for governance are informal but underpinned by a legally binding Inter Authority Agreement. The existing Waste Partnership Board has no decision making powers.
- 4.3. The setting up of a Joint Waste Authority would involve the creation of a new local authority concerned specifically with the delivery of prescribed waste functions of the partner authorities. A Joint Waste Authority is a statutory body in its own right and will require an establishment order by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and for this reason is currently excluded from consideration.
- 4.4. The current structure retains independent decision making for the Councils and is relatively inexpensive to operate as it fits within the existing committee framework for each authority.

#### **5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 5.1 Members at the Joint Partnership Board identified concerns that the shared service is not wholly aligned in its operation and administration and requested officers explore mechanisms to facilitate the alignment of services.

#### **6. FORWARD PLAN**

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

#### **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1. East Herts Council (EHC) and North Herts Council (NHC) entered into a Shared Service arrangement in 2017 and a joint contract was let beginning in May 2018.
- 7.2. A Councillor led Joint Partnership Board for waste meets twice per year and monitors the performance of the contract.
- 7.3. The service comprises a 'client' management structure located at the Buntingford Depot and two operational hubs comprising separate management teams and separate workforces for East and North Herts Councils.
- 7.4. The Contractor is responsible for the collection of waste and recycling from approximately 124,000 households and over 1920 commercial customers.

- 7.5. In 2014 the Councils agreed to progress from a Strategic Outline Case to an outline Business Case for the shared service specifically exploring potential additional savings in joint contracts, savings in client overheads including depot costs, governance and management proposals and jointly agreed policies to form the basis of a joint specification.
- 7.6. Prior to the formation of the shared service client team in December 2017, both Councils made unilateral decisions on the service offering to residents for waste, recycling and street cleansing services which formed the basis of the joint contract with Urbaser.
- 7.7. The independent decision making at each authority led to different decisions being made by North Herts Council and East Herts Council regarding the provision of services to residents, despite an original commitment to joint policies.
- 7.8. In some areas service differences are considered minimal. e.g. EHC do not permit collection staff to collect side recycling whereas NHC do. However, the most significant at the time was the decision by North Herts Council to charge for garden waste collections and the decision by East Herts Council not to.
- 7.9. In almost all cases differences have led to differing operations, differing administrative requirements and have contributed to differences in recycling performance and/or cost and will contribute to the culture and ethos surrounding the service for each authority.
- 7.10. During changes to services the clients focus will be on one authority where the change is not being made by both, this can mean that resources are unbalanced. Undertaking projects at differing times of the year, for example route optimisation means that no efficiencies were found across the contract and that the client was involved in a protracted project timeline taking away from day-to-day customer queries and proactive educational campaigns which help manage recycling stream contamination and increase participation in services.
- 7.11. If we were to wholly align service efficiencies could be found in marketing and campaign work, planning consultations and customer enquiries all leading to an increased ability for the client to support the services and increase promotion of both domestic and commercial services.
- 7.12. Administrative efficiencies could be found in the financial management of services, procurement, data reporting, tonnage allocation, invoicing, variation processing, performance management, and complaint handling through standardisation of responses and policies.
- 7.13. As a short summary the list below identifies some examples of areas of the current services which are not aligned.

Public conveniences	EHC part of waste contract	NHC separate contract
Parish Litter picking grants	EHC only	
Commercial clinical waste services	EHC only	
Dual recycling litter bins		NHC only
Separate weekly food waste collection		NHC only

Residual waste collection	EHC 240l black bin	NHDC 180l purple bin
Services at flats		NHC separate weekly food waste
Recycling (Paper and Textiles) Bring Banks	EHC only	
Kerbside textile collections		NHC only
Kerbside battery collections		NHC only
Customer Service	EHC in house	NHC in contract
Garden Waste in sacks	EHC only	
Leaf fall collection		NHC only
Paper Box provision	EHC 45l inner caddy (55l option with optional lid)	NHC 55l box
Extra recycling collection	EHC larger bins policy	NHC collection of 'side' recycling

- 7.14. The lack of alignment in some areas has meant that some operational inefficiencies exist. It is hoped that with further alignment opportunities can be explored for cross boundary working, potentially reducing the carbon impact of the services.
- 7.15. At the moment our contractor has little choice but to run services independently for each authority and although some synergies can be found from a joint contract, such as the sharing of spare vehicle resources, it is not currently possible to fully optimise the collections or administrative processes.
- 7.16. The consistency agenda is a key topic in the government's resources and waste strategy and has so far been the subject of two government consultations. It is clear that there is a driving desire from central government to see consistency across service provision with the primary aim of ensuring that services provided to the public are simple to use.
- 7.17. In other areas the lack of alignment creates additional administrative burdens, which if reduced should ensure that the client is able to more effectively manage the contract and deliver services.
- 7.18. For example, the client team are currently managing two separate garden waste portals, with two separate pricing structures and differing service delivery models.
- 7.19. Governance of waste services is wholly the responsibility of the individual authorities with the Waste Partnership Board set up to review the performance of the contract and services.
- 7.20. An Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) exists between East Herts Council and North Herts Council which outlines the responsibilities of each party.
- 7.21. This report explores the aim and principles of the shared waste service and how service design should be reviewed and agreed in the future, exploring opportunities related to a joint waste committee.

## **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Shared Service Aims and Principles**

- 8.1. The shared waste service currently operates as one client team operating two separate service specifications. Although the overall performance of the contract for both authorities is good, operational and administrative efficiencies would exist should further alignment be agreed.
- 8.2. Although administrative efficiencies could be realised in the short and medium term, it is unlikely that genuine operational efficiencies (to the benefit of the Councils) could be realised prior to 2025 when the contract is due for renewal or extension.
- 8.3. Taking a long-term strategic look at where the services need to be in 10-20 years time and reflecting back on the necessary changes which need to be implemented to ensure the Council reaches these goals will future proof the service, develop the workforce to respond accordingly and promote a culture that focusses on waste minimisation.
- 8.4. A further strategic consideration is the performance level for each strand of the service and whether the councils long-term aim would be to maintain standards or want to meet (or exceed) government targets or performance norms.
- 8.5. In 2020/21 Hertfordshire achieved its highest recycling rate to date with an overall recycling rate of 52.4% with EHC achieving 51.5% and NHC achieving 55.9%.
- 8.6. In terms of national performance NHC is currently ranked 28<sup>th</sup> and EHC is ranked 87<sup>th</sup> out of 338 Councils/waste partnerships.
- 8.7. As identified in 8.5 recycling rate performance for both authorities currently differs significantly. Much of this difference is as a consequence of EHC operating residual waste services with a 240L wheeled bin and NHC operating residual waste collections with a 180L wheeled bin, meaning residents are more likely to recycle everything they can. The shared service wishes to develop a mechanism to support services transitioning to alignment in the long term.
- 8.8. In June 2016 the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service agreed to the aggregation of recycling and waste performance for official reporting to the Government's national Waste Data Flow system, our current service differences mean this is not possible for EHC & NHC. This change came about after South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council agreed to align services, (South Cambs got rid of their separate paper box) and this demonstrates how the alignment of services through shared services can lead to wider administrative efficiencies.
- 8.9. In consideration of the ability of EHC and NHDC to align services which differ significantly without significant additional Capital costs it will be necessary to determine the long-term vision, aims and service design rather than only consider immediate and restrictive options for change.

- 8.10. It is therefore proposed that the shared service should operate under the a new overarching aim of, ***‘Delivering high quality and well performing services which are both financially and environmentally sustainable.’***
- 8.11. A set of principles is suggested, by which, the shared service should operate and decision making be based, to encompass both EHC’s and NHDC’s aspirations for the future of the shared service.
- 8.12. The principles proposed are:
- a. Maintain and/or improve service standards through efficient working.
  - b. Achieve service improvements, greater resilience, efficiencies, cost reductions or better performance through service alignment
  - c. Deliver service changes aligned with the government’s Resources and Waste Strategy which demonstrate a net environmental benefit
  - d. Work in partnership with contractors to develop and evolve a carbon management plan identifying how operations can deliver year on year carbon savings and move towards services with net zero carbon emissions.
  - e. Improve efficiencies and enhance the offering for chargeable waste and recycling services and explore commercial opportunities
  - f. Work in partnership with contractors to explore new opportunities to reduce costs and ensure the delivery of financially sustainable services
  - g. Providing residents and customers with improved and enhanced online self-serve opportunities delivering any service changes with this in mind
  - h. Work in partnership with contractors to improve and modernise working practices and make our services an attractive place to work
  - i. Work with the Herts Waste Partnership and other partners to share knowledge, best practice, reduce waste and embed circular economy principles in service delivery.

### **Resources and Waste Strategy – Service Design**

- 8.13. In December 2018 the government released its Resources and Waste Strategy. There have subsequently been a number of government consultations linked to this strategy. The industry is currently waiting for the outcomes of these consultations and any subsequent policy or legislative updates.
- 8.14. Outcomes are expected shortly in relation to these recent government consultations on the Resources and Waste Strategy and it is anticipated that some outcomes will impact on the current services and change the way services will need to be delivered in the future.
- 8.15. The joint waste and street cleansing contract is due for extension or re-procurement for 2025 and it is therefore necessary for the shared client team to develop a new service design and specification for this in the coming months.
- 8.16. In order for the shared client team to develop a service design reflective of the principles set out in 8.12 and which meets the anticipated changes in legislation from the Resources and Waste Strategy, it is proposed to set up a joint cross party working group between EHC & NHC.

- 8.17. Each authority would nominate cross-party members to participate in the working group and help shape the proposals for service design going forward. The Portfolio holders for each authority would also be invited. A report with key recommendations will then either be presented to a potential joint waste committee or respective meetings of the councils' Cabinet.
- 8.18. A key aim of the joint cross party working group will be to secure further alignment of services which will in turn present operational and administrative efficiencies over the medium and longer term.
- 8.19. The key areas intended for consideration by the working group are proposed as:-
- a. Customer Services
  - b. Street Cleansing Non-Core Services
  - c. Street Cleansing Core Services
  - d. Chargeable Garden Waste Collections
  - e. Waste & Recycling Non-Core Services e.g. textiles collections
  - f. Waste and Recycling Core Services
  - g. Chargeable Waste & Recycling Services
- 8.20. Draft terms of reference for the joint cross party working group are attached in Appendix A.

### **Delegated Decision Making**

- 8.21. For the 2021/22 financial year both Councils agreed to the alignment of commercial waste and bulky waste charging across the two authorities by discussion and liaison with Executive Members and Chief Finance Officers. This was ratified at Full Council at each authority.
- 8.22. In order to achieve swift aligned decision making in the future it may be necessary to explore opportunities to amend the delegations for Executive Members in some areas to ensure consistency between each Councils decision making processes. However, until wider consideration of opportunities around aligned decision making is explored this is not proposed.

### **Joint Committee**

- 8.23. An alternative to further delegation of decision making to the Executive Members would be to form a joint committee between the two Councils with Members from each authority.
- 8.24. The purpose of the joint committee is to act as a combined decision-making body for a the two local authorities. However, as joint committees do not have separate legal personality, they are not capable of owning assets, employing staff or of being a party to a contract.
- 8.25. One partner authority (often called the 'administering' authority) employs staff, holds assets and enters into any contracts for and on behalf of all of the member authorities. The joint committee can, in effect, act as the client to any contracts with third parties or act as the governing body for a joint staff team, but it will be the administering authority that will enter into contracts or act as the employer.

- 8.26. As well as service design the joint committee could potentially make decisions into the necessary assets needed to operate services for the benefit of the whole joint service, potentially achieving benefits from economies of scale and more sharing of resources.
- 8.27. It would still be necessary to have and maintain an Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) to ensure that the roles of the administrative authority, the partner authorities and key staff are defined.
- 8.28. In addition, an IAA would identify how risk is allocated to the partner authorities and the provision of indemnities.
- 8.29. The IAA would identify how arrangements for budget setting and adopting business/service plans are made and how costs are to be shared. At the moment this is done separately by each authority with separate financial management systems being administered by the shared client team.
- 8.30. Formal joint scrutiny of executive decisions delegated to a joint committee is not possible under current local government law. This means that the ultimate power of individual authority scrutiny committees to call-in decisions of the joint committee under the provisions of their own constitutions would continue.
- 8.31. In theory, this could lead to a convoluted decision-making process whereby a decision could be called in several times by different scrutiny committees before ultimately coming into force. A possible approach towards joint scrutiny would be for the partner authorities to form a separate joint committee with delegated authority to scrutinise the partnership's decisions and operation.
- 8.32. A less formal alternative would be for the chairs of the relevant scrutiny committees in each partner authority to meet regularly with the aim of keeping local committees up to speed with the joint committees' activities and help to minimise risk of call-in.
- 8.33. It is common for partnerships to seek to limit the role of the administering authority (in a similar way to current limitations agreed under the current IAA) to strictly administrative duties in order to ensure that, on the substantive strategic, policy and operational service issues, all partner authorities have an influence commensurate with their relative membership of the joint committee. In practice, the administering authority will generally take day-to-day responsibility for HR, finance and legal issues, as well as acting as employer, contracting authority and holder of assets and liabilities on behalf of the partnership.
- 8.34. The membership of the joint committee would need to be agreed but would likely be a number of members appointed by each authority. Voting would normally be in accordance with usual local authority principles of simple majority with chair acting as casting vote.
- 8.35. A key advantage of a joint committee is quicker decision making under a tried and tested model. It ensures that 'key' decisions, as a consequence of them affecting all wards can be heard and decided to ensure the swift implementation operationally mid contract. It would also ensure joint decision making during times of service disruption (such as



Covid) can be made jointly and residents across East and North Herts can see consistency in service delivery and resilient business continuity planning.

- 8.36. Almost all decisions regarding the Shared Waste Service could be key decisions as they will most often affect all wards. From time-to-time decisions regarding relatively small changes to service design may be required. For which a decision by the Cabinet may be considered overly onerous or unnecessary for example where a change does not adversely impact on the provision of services but may be being made to improve operational performance, service delivery or reduce costs.
- 8.37. Decisions made jointly by committee regarding fundamental service design would ensure the most effective and financially sustainable model is agreed for the shared service and ensure the long-term aspirations of the service are not lost.
- 8.38. In a scenario where a joint committee is formed, this would also open up the opportunity for consideration of a new limited company or Limited Liability Partnership to act on its behalf, rather than establishing a lead/administering authority.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. Any proposed changes to the constitution at each Council require approval by Council at NHC and the Executive at EHC. Changes to the constitution regarding charging policies require approval by Full Council.
- 9.2. The Cabinet may establish a joint committee with the other respective authority to exercise functions of the Cabinet, and currently only Executive Members may be appointed to the proposed joint committee. Under the Constitution either the Council or the Cabinet can set up a joint committee. The joint committee may then appoint subcommittees for purposes determined by it.
- 9.3. The creation of a joint committee may require Council approval depending on what decision making powers/remit the proposed joint committee will have. Decisions relating to the budget are reserved to Council, therefore if the joint committee will have budgetary control the appointment may have to be made by Council.
- 9.4. Meetings of the Committee will be conducted in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules. The Council or the Cabinet will set out the terms of reference of the joint committee (including any limitations on its powers) upon its establishment, which may be reviewed annually.
- 9.5. Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 9EA, 9EB and to the extent necessary section 105 of the Local Government Act 2000 permit two or more local authorities to appoint a joint committee to discharge any of their functions jointly.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. The revenue implications associated with this report predominantly sit with Committee Services at one of the authorities and the need for the resources and budget to manage an additional cycle of committees, this would be determined, and options discussed with both authorities, should the recommendations be agreed. Other short term revenue

implications are considered negligible however in the medium-term alignment of services should see economies of scale in some areas of service provision.

- 10.2. The longer-term influence of changes to decision making may impact on the revenue position for each authority in the future. The principle of maintaining financially sustainable services is therefore paramount.
- 10.2 There are no capital implications associated with this report.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1. Regardless of the decision making processes agreed; each authority will retain a level of control due to the contribution of the Executive and other elected Members in all scenarios. It is however likely that an element of compromise may be required when certain decisions are being taken and it is therefore necessary to ensure the risks of unfair or unsustainable decision making is mitigated in all options by robust principles set out in the Inter Authority Agreement.
- 11.2. There may be the risk of a decision being made which is on balance the most advantageous solution for the partnership but may not be the most advantageous solution for an individual authority.
- 11.3. Risks associated with business continuity should reduce as a consequence of more alignment and a combined workforce to deliver services.

## **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. There are no equalities implications for this report.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 Current governance arrangement require a level of duplication of work for the shared client team which could reduce in a joint committee scenario.

- 15.2 The management of an additional cycle of committees will have resource implications for Committee Services at one authority

## **16. APPENDICES**

- 16.1 Appendix A – Draft terms of reference – Cross Party Joint Working Group

## **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 18.1 [2020/21 overall performance - letsrecycle.com](https://letsrecycle.com)

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## **Draft Terms of Reference – Waste Cross Party Joint Working Group**

1. Identify the core aims and priorities in terms of service performance, identifying our current performance levels and how these are benchmarked, considering the long-term objectives of both Councils.
2. Consider the impending changes to legislation, including environmental and financial pressures. Reviewing the current service design in relation to these factors.
3. Identify best practice and where opportunities may exist to transition towards best practice where this is both financially and environmentally sustainable.
4. Seek to achieve consensus and greater consistency of services endeavouring to benefit from greater stability and efficiencies from a common contract.
5. Identify opportunities for financial efficiencies and cost reduction in service design and delivery.
6. Consider and identify the optimal long term service design options for the Councils and how these will deliver the Councils objectives and aims and principles of the shared service.
7. Specifically, the working group will focus on:
  - a. Customer Services
  - b. Street Cleansing Non-Core Services
  - c. Street Cleansing Core Services
  - d. Waste & Recycling Non-Core Services e.g. textiles collections
  - e. Waste and Recycling Core Services
  - f. Chargeable Garden Waste Collections
  - g. Chargeable Waste & Recycling Services

## **East Herts Council Priorities**

- **Sustainability at the heart of everything we do**
  - We will make changes to how the council manages its own premises, people and services
  - We will use our regulatory powers to promote action by others
  - We will influence and encourage others to be more environmentally sustainable
- **Enabling our communities**
  - We will invest in our places
  - We will ensure all voices in the community are heard
  - We will support our vulnerable residents
- **Encouraging economic growth**
  - We will develop new sources of income
  - We will support business growth
  - We will create viable places
- **Digital by Design**
  - We will improve the customer experience for those who use council services
  - We will work with partners to ensure our communities are digitally enabled

## North Herts Council Priorities

- **People First** - People make North Herts work. We value all our residents, businesses, staff, contractors, councillors, and other partners, and place them at the heart of everything we do.
- **Sustainability** - We recognise the challenges our towns and district face and are committed to delivering services which are relevant and sustainable. In doing so we will place our environmental responsibilities, as well as sound financial planning, at the centre of our policy making.
- **A brighter future together** - We are far-sighted and plan for the long term to secure the best outcomes for our people, towns and villages, and the local economy, ensuring North Herts continues to thrive.

### Waste Shared Service Aim

Delivering high quality and well performing services which are both financially and environmentally sustainable.

### Waste Shared Service Principles

- a. Maintain and/or improve service standards through efficient working.
- b. Achieve service improvements, greater resilience, efficiencies, cost reductions or better performance through service alignment
- c. Deliver service changes aligned with the government's Resources and Waste Strategy which demonstrate a net environmental benefit
- d. Work in partnership with contractors to develop and evolve a carbon management plan identifying how operations can deliver year on year carbon savings and move towards services with net zero carbon emissions.
- e. Improve efficiencies and enhance the offering for chargeable waste and recycling services and explore commercial opportunities
- f. Work in partnership with contractors to explore new opportunities to reduce costs and ensure the delivery of financially sustainable services
- g. Providing residents and customers with improved and enhanced online self-serve opportunities delivering any service changes with this in mind
- h. Work in partnership with contractors to improve and modernise working practices and make our services an attractive place to work
- i. Work with the Herts Waste Partnership and other partners to share knowledge, best practice, reduce waste and embed circular economy principles in service delivery.

**Cabinet**  
**22 March 2022**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: GREENSPACE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022-2027**

REPORT OF: Service Manager, Greenspace

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Environment and Leisure

COUNCIL PRIORITY: BE A MORE WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT COUNCIL /  
RESPOND TO CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

To agree the proposed Greenspace Management Strategy (GSMS) 2022 – 2027 as the basis for the Council's future strategic approach to maintaining the Greenspace provision in North Herts

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. That Cabinet is recommended to:

Adopt the Vision, Objectives and Aims for managing Greenspace as detailed at 7.5 below.

2.2. Review and adopt the Greenspace Management Strategy 2022-27 at Appendix A.

2.3. Agree the delegation for creating an Action Plan arising from the GSMS and an annual review of the Action Plan to the Greenspace Manager in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure and the Service Director - Place.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1. These recommendations are put forward to ensure there is an ongoing proactive and pragmatic approach for the future management and maintenance of Greenspace within North Herts for the period April 2022 – March 2027.

3.2. Additionally, the GSMS 2022 – 2027 provides the strategic link between the previous Greenspace strategies and the future demands placed upon North Herts Council, specifically; managing the environment and biodiversity, finance and planning while delivering high quality greenspace services to our existing and newly developed infrastructure.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. The alternative of not reviewing the GSMS would create a void for the future direction of Greenspace provision. This would potentially lead to conflict between various elements of demand resulting in an illogical application of decision making in the future. Therefore, no alternative options have been considered.

#### **5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 5.1 The Executive Member for Environment and Leisure chaired the Project Board associated with the GSMS. The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Leisure was also consulted on the development of the strategy. Additionally the Council's Political Liaison Board was consulted on 1 March 2022.
- 5.2 A consultation exercise was undertaken during January 2022 using online software. It was promoted via means of a press release, e-bulletin, website article and social media posts. The survey was also directly emailed to 31 stakeholders such as Friends of groups Parish Councils etc and to all councillors.
- 1082 responses were received and a copy of the report can be found as Appendix B .
- 5.3 When asked what they value the most about our parks and open spaces, over 80% of respondents said being in a natural environment, 46% said watching wildlife and 39% said somewhere to relax.
- 5.4 When asked what the council's top priorities for greenspace should be, 62% of respondents said to continue to maintain high standards of maintenance, 52% said to improve biodiversity by allowing more areas to go wild and 51% said managing litter.
- 5.5 Respondents were also asked if the council had to make savings in one area what would that be. 23% of respondents said grass cutting, 22% said paddling pools and 20% said flower beds.
- 5.6 Within the survey there were options for respondents to comment on what they feel the council's priorities should be regarding greenspace and also to highlight any concerns they have. Some key themes have been identified and our response to those can be seen in the table below:

##### **Key themes of consultation responses**

Theme	Comment	Response
Litter and dog fouling	Volume of litter and dog fouling	NHC runs regular campaigns about litter and dog fouling and has a good level of bin provision across the district. We will continue our awareness raising campaigns throughout the lifetime of the new strategy.
Allotments	Not sufficient provision and should be a priority	We will develop an allotment strategy and work with Planning to



		identify provision within future developments
Children's play areas	Poor quality / concerns over particular items of equipment.	The GSMS is increasing the capital budget for play areas from £75,000 to £180,000 annually. This will allow two play areas to be renovated annually
Anti-social behaviour and safety	Concern about personal safety, vandalism	We will work with colleagues and partner organisations to manage this issue as and where it is identified.
Biodiversity & wilding	Concern about the environment and wanting to do more	The contract review has identified areas to be amended that will reduce our carbon impact and are beneficial to the environment – these changes will commence in April 2022 with a reduced frequency of grass cutting in some locations
Future Development	Development on greenbelt	While development on areas of greenbelt is outside this strategy, officers are working with the planners and developers to ensure that where open space is adopted it is appropriate and at an acceptable standard, in the right location.

## 6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on 14 January 2022.

## 7. BACKGROUND

The review process was set up with a Project Board that consisted of the Executive Member Cllr Steve Jarvis and Deputy Executive Member Cllr Adem Ruggiero-Cakir. It also included officer representatives from across a number of directorates including planning, policy, finance and Place.

- 7.1 The previous GSMS expired at the end of March 2021. At this time and due to financial pressures, the review of the GSMS was placed on hold for 12 months pending a review of the Grounds Maintenance contract with John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Ltd. The outcomes of the contract review were agreed at Cabinet June 2021, with many of its recommendations being implemented from 1 April 2022.
- 7.2 Significant financial savings were made as part of the contract review, however these have primarily been environmentally focused, for example reducing the frequency of highway verge cutting, which will in turn encourage biodiversity. This approach to considering environmentally sustainable actions has also been carried over into the GSMS.

7.3 A review of our existing principles for management of green spaces was carried out and in addition the GSMS also takes into consideration three key influences upon this service area which are:

- Planning - regarding the implications of future housing development from the Draft Local plan
- Our policy approach to meeting our climate change commitments and biodiversity aims
- Financial Pressures

7.4 It is proposed to adopt a new vision, objectives and aims for the delivery of the greenspace service.

### **Vision**

Our vision is to provide high quality, well managed green spaces to meet the needs of our communities and which contribute positively to our sustainability priority

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the GSMS flow from the overarching council priorities:

- To manage our greenspaces in an environmentally sustainable way, while also providing value for money for residents
- To provide a wide range of greenspaces which can be used for many recreational purposes
- To ensure greenspaces for future developments are developed with the needs of communities and sustainability in mind and deliver long term benefits.

### **Aims**

Aim 1	To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the District's health and well-being.
Aim 2	Provide and maintain quality green spaces in appropriate locations and ensure they are protected for future generations.
Aim 3	Use green spaces as a community resource that encourages active outdoor participation.
Aim 4	Promote the important role that green spaces play in contributing to the biodiversity, climate change, sustainability, culture and heritage within the District.
Aim 5	Allow local people to understand and influence the way the Green Spaces are developed and managed

Aim 6	Agree objectives for good design, management and maintenance, and provision in new housing sites.

## **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1. On 21st May 2019, the Council passed a climate emergency motion which pledged to do everything within its power to achieve zero carbon emissions in NHDC's district by 2030 As such the aims of the GSMS are aligned with the council's climate change strategy.
- 8.2. The GSMS will also need to provide clarity for future policies regarding the adoption of new green spaces through development and how these areas are to be maintained.
- 8.3. The GSMS builds upon the previous strategy and takes forward the Vision, Objectives and Aims of the Greenspace Service regarding the management and maintenance of our existing Greenspace infrastructure

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. Within Cabinet's terms of reference at 5.6.1 are: "to prepare and agree to implement policies and strategies other than those reserved to Council" and "to approve those major service developments or reductions which also constitute Key Decisions." The Green Space Management Strategy falls within Cabinet's remit and this project has been noted on the Council's Forward Plan as a key decision.
- 9.2. The Council provide parks, recreation grounds and open spaces under its discretionary powers. Section 164 on the Public Health Act (1875) and Sections 9 and 10 of the Open Spaces Act Open spaces grant power to local authorities to acquire land for or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them.
- 9.3. Section 23 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act (1908) places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide a sufficient number of allotment plots.
- 9.4. The Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 ('the Act') places a statutory duty on local authorities to arrange for a burial or cremation where no suitable alternative arrangements are being made.
- 9.5. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation as part of the policy and decision making, commonly referred to as the 'Biodiversity duty'.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. The Council's revenue budget for 2022/23 reflects the savings achieved through the changes to the grounds maintenance contract. The resultant budget is sufficient for the current levels of service and maintenance of existing green space. Any additional levels of provision (e.g., additional provision within existing green space or extending the

amount of green space) would require additional budget. The strategy sets out the priorities for the adoption of new green space and references that this could be linked to property growth, and therefore funded from some of the growth in the Council tax base. The Council is currently forecasting an annual 0.5% growth in its tax base. In the medium term it is expected that tax base growth would be more than this, but the prudent assumption is that some of the growth will be required to fund growth in service provision (e.g. green space) beyond the direct costs of household growth (e.g. waste collection). This will need to be kept under review, as property growth and the need to fund additional service provision will not be directly correlated (i.e. in amount or timing). There may also be additional costs linked to the delivery of the Council's climate change strategy. Those costs will need to be agreed as part of the Council's budget process and will need to balance the cost with the environmental benefits, particularly when comparing to other climate change projects.

- 10.2. The Council's capital projections for 2022-27 (and further high-level forecasts for 2028-33) include the forecast capital costs required to deliver the strategy as set out. Some of the projects will have third party funding contributions, and this is included in the capital spend forecasts. Some of the capital schemes will be contingent on that funding being available, and therefore maybe delayed until it is available.
- 10.3. The Strategy reflects the financial savings that have been achieved as part of the recent contract renewal, which have also delivered other environmental benefits. The Strategy is then generally based on continuing with the same cost base moving forwards. As set out in financial forecasts, the Council could be required to deliver annual budget savings of £1.5m within the next 5 years. It will be for the Council to determine how those savings would be delivered, and there has been a commitment to carry out public consultation as part of that decision process. This may mean that there will need to be further changes to the Green Space contract/ strategy within the 5-year period. Those changes could be focused on any areas that are lower priority within the strategy.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1. The adoption of a Strategy helps to determine the priorities for Green Space within the District. In turn that helps to ensure that resources are effectively employed to deliver those priorities. In general the Strategy is in line with the existing Strategy and does not introduce any new significant risks. The increased capital investment in play area refurbishment would tend to reduce the risk to the Council.

## **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.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.2. Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken. This Strategy has been considered and no relevant adaptations mitigation measure that could be applied that have not been considered already as part of ongoing Planning considerations or already covered in the previous Grounds Contract Review

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 There are no direct Human Resource impacts as a result of this report.

## **16. APPENDICES**

- 16.1 Appendix A Greenspace Management Strategy 2022 – 2027

- 16.2 Appendix B Summary of consultation responses

## **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 18.1 Greenspace Management Strategy 2017 - 2022



## **Greenspace Management Strategy Proposed Document Layout**

1. Forward
2. Introduction
3. Background
4. Review of Greenspace management strategy 2017-2021
5. Looking forward – Vision, aims and objectives
6. Specific areas of focus
  - Environment and Biodiversity
  - Planning
  - Finance
7. Conclusions and Outcomes

## **1. Forward**

Greenspaces, whether they are parks, commons, playing fields, woodlands or nature reserves are one of the things that make North Herts such a great place to live and work. Our health and wellbeing, our sense of pride in our local area and our enjoyment of being outdoors are all affected by the quality of these spaces which is why it is so important that they are managed properly.

Of course, apart from contributing the quality of our lives green spaces also make a major contribution to the wellbeing of other species, increasing biodiversity at a time when this is under so much pressure and helping to reduce the impact of carbon emissions and air pollution.

Surveys show that 82% of residents use our parks and open spaces. You will find many reasons for this highlighted in this document. This strategy sets out how we intend to continue to maintain the quality of North Hertfordshire's green spaces into the future. Like councils across the country, we have to do this with ever reducing resources, but plans set out here will enable us to do that as well as increasing the contribution that they make to the wider environment of the district.

People in North Herts are proud of the green spaces available to them, and I am proud to be able to present a strategy that will maintain and improve those spaces for future generations.

Councillor Steve Jarvis



## **2 Introduction**

This strategy sets out our vision, aims and strategic objectives for the management of our greenspaces for the period 2022-27.

The strategy relates to the management of greenspace that is owned by North Herts Council, or that we maintain on behalf of third parties. It also includes the management and provision of all services within those greenspaces such as play areas and burials.

This strategy sets out high level principles for management of greenspace. It does not cover day to day maintenance of our parks and open spaces. The delivery of this service is carried out under a contract with John O'Conner Ltd. The contract was reviewed in 2021 and a new contract period will operate from April 2022 to March 2027. The contract review identified options for financial savings while delivering positive outcomes for improving biodiversity and reductions in carbon emissions. This is in line with the aims of this Strategy.

Through the vision, strategic aims and objectives outlined the aim is to ensure that the Greenspace Service continues to be regarded as a high quality and highly valued service of North Herts Council, delivering best value for our residents.

### **3. Background**

#### **What is Greenspace?**

- 3.1 Greenspace is the natural environment that provides the setting in which we live, work and play. It makes a major contribution to raising the quality of life of both residents and visitors. This is made up of our parks and open spaces, highway verges, woodlands, outdoor sports facilities and all the small incidental areas found between buildings and highways.

#### **Why is greenspace important?**

- 3.2 Greenspace is an important component to create a balance between the urban and rural environments found in North Herts and has been recognised as having an essential role for the “quality of life” found in the District through:
1. Promoting healthier communities and reducing health inequalities
  2. Enabling children and young people to develop social skills, test their boundaries, explore, and learn about nature and wildlife
  3. Improving the life chances of people living in more deprived areas
  4. Creating safer and stronger communities
  5. Improving the image of and pride in the different settlements
  6. Creating cleaner and greener communities
  7. Enhancing biodiversity
  8. Mitigating and adapting to climate change
  9. Recognising the value of the historic environment
  10. Avoiding, managing and reducing flood risk.
- 3.4 Historically North Herts Council has predominately provided the maintenance and development of green space within its four urban towns of Hitchin, Letchworth, Baldock and Royston.
- 3.5 In 2009 the Council launched its first Green Space Management Strategy (GSMS). There have been subsequent updates and revisions with the latest being 2017 – 2021. This strategy will take forward the principles of best practice for greenspace management into the future from 2022 – 2027.

#### **4. Review of Previous Greenspace Strategy 2017 – 2021**

- 4.1 As part of the last Greenspace Management Strategy, a series of policies on different aspects of the service were agreed. These can be found as Appendix 1. below. These policies have all been reviewed as part of the development of the new strategy.
- 4.2 The last Strategy was developed against a backdrop of challenging economic circumstances for the Council and therefore while continuing to invest in play areas, this was limited to only one play ground per year. Equipment was also removed from some of the less frequently used play areas following consultation.
- 4.3 Greenspace investment in the last period was prioritised in our four key urban areas of Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston and this can be demonstrated by the investment in some of our urban parks and open spaces, as shown in the table below.
- 4.4 Working with partners has been critical to the successful management of our open spaces, in particular with Countryside and Rights of Way who manage some of our local nature reserves on our behalf. Working alongside volunteer groups has also been a highly successful approach.
- 4.5 We have prioritised high standards of maintenance across the district and this is evidenced through our approach to seeking Green Flag accreditation at five of our sites.

#### 4.6 Key Achievements of the last strategy period ....

The Greenspace Strategy for 2017-21 delivered the following actions

Item	Cost
Extend the roadways and footpaths at Wilbury Hills Cemetery Letchworth	£35,000
Extend the car park at Walsworth Common Hitchin	£30,000
Renovate the play area at Jackman's Central Letchworth	£75,000
Equipment replacement at Brook View play area Hitchin	£10,000
Renovate the play area at Great Ashby District Park	£75,000
Renovate the play area at Chiltern Road Baldock	£10,000
Renovate play area at King George 5 <sup>th</sup> Rec Hitchin	£35,000
Renovate play area at Howard Gardens Letchworth	£75,000
Renovate play area at Holroyd Crescent Baldock	£10,000
Renovate play area at Archers Way Letchworth	£10,000
Football pitch improvements at Walsworth Common Hitchin	£110,000
Provide a new Multi Use Games Area at Bancroft Hitchin	£180,000
Renovate and improve footpaths and entrances at Pryor's Wood Great Ashby	£25,000
Introduced new fitness equipment to Priory Memorial Gardens play area Royston	£35,000*
Introduced new fitness equipment to Baldock Road Rec Letchworth	£35,000*
Replaced historical perimeter bollards to Butts Close Hitchin	£20,000*
Replaced the benches Butts Close Hitchin	£10,000*
Brought Hill End and Barkway Chalk Pits back into public use and safe access	£15,000*
Norton Common Skate park and flood lights	£210,000*
Introduced drinking fountains to 4 Town Centre Parks	£25,000*
Partially replaced fencing around the bowling greens at Norton Common, Letchworth	£15,000
Introduced permanent Pickleball Courts to Norton Common, Letchworth	£4,000
Facilitated re-leveling works to the bowling greens at Norton Common, Letchworth	£4,000

\* Figure quoted was possible due to external funding opportunities

## **5. Looking Forward – Vision, aims and objectives**

### **5.1 Vision**

Our vision is to provide high quality, well managed green spaces to meet the needs of our communities and which contribute positively to our sustainability priority.

### **5.2 Objectives**

The Council has set three new priorities for 2022-27 which are:

- People first
- Sustainability
- A brighter future together

The objectives of the GSMS flow from these priorities:

- To manage our greenspaces in an environmentally sustainable way, while also providing value for money for residents
- To provide a wide range of greenspaces which can be used for many recreational purposes
- To ensure greenspaces for future developments are developed with the needs of communities and sustainability in mind and deliver long term benefits.

### **5.3 Aims of the strategy**

5.4 The overarching aim of the GSMS is to build on our achievements and provide focus for the Greenspace service for the period 2022-27 and beyond.

5.5 Specifically the GSMS will focus on:

- Supporting the council's Local Plan with regards public open space provision within new developments or providing offsite improvements.
- Optimising our current public open space provision to a high standard
- Ensuring our services provide value for money for residents
- Managing environmental and climate influences that may require seeking new ways to deliver the service
- Identifying opportunities to generate income

5.6 The aims of the GSMS 2022 – 2027 are set out below:

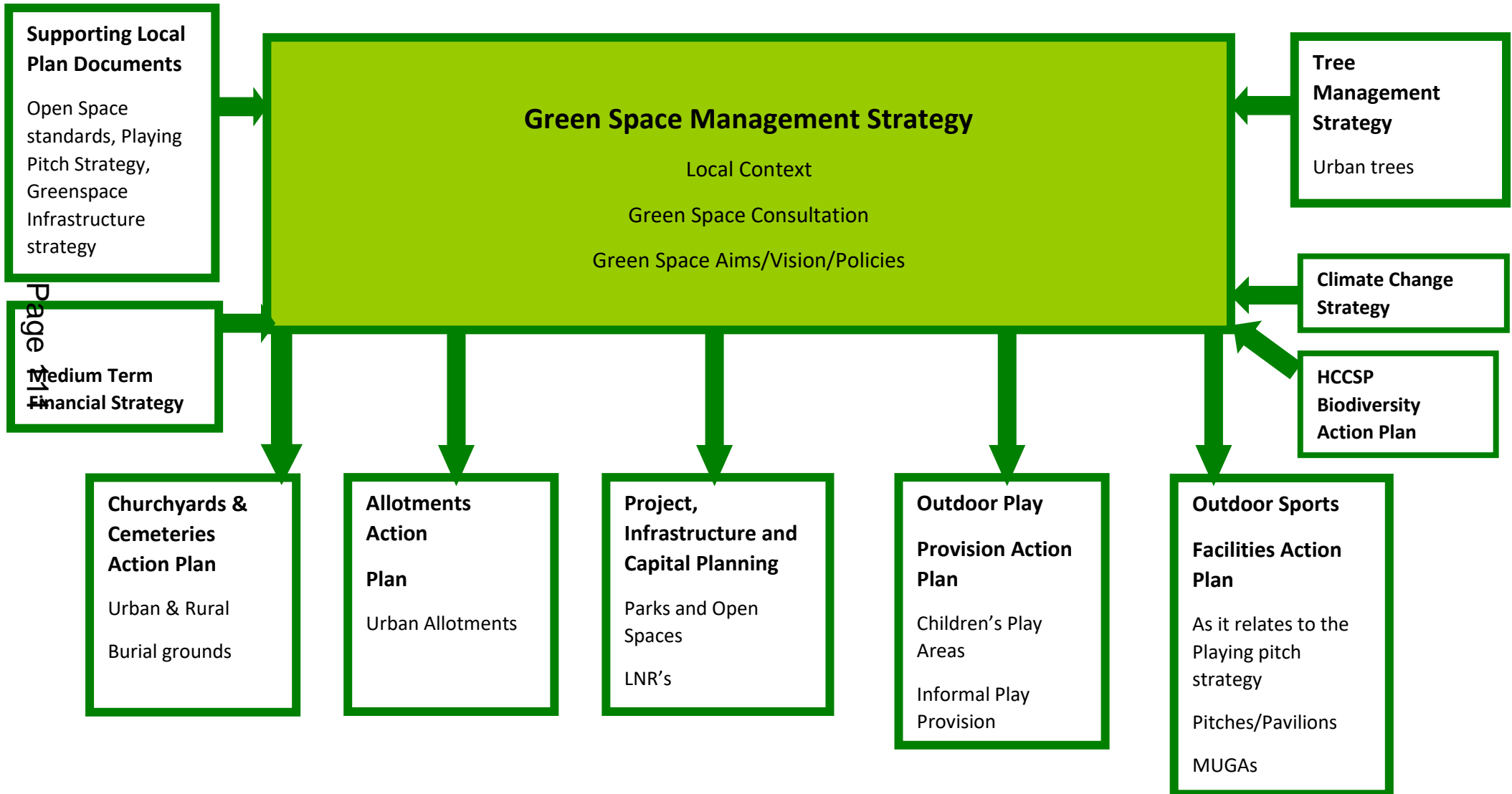
Aim 1	To promote the central role that greenspaces play in contributing to the District's health and well-being for all residents.
Aim 2	Provide and maintain quality green spaces in appropriate locations and

	ensure they are protected for future generations.
Aim 3	Use greenspaces as a community resource that encourages social interaction, contact with nature and active outdoor participation.
Aim 4	Promote the important role that green spaces play in contributing to biodiversity, while adapting to climate change, improving sustainability, culture, and heritage within the district.
Aim 5	Allow local people to understand and influence the way that greenspaces are developed and managed
Aim 6	Agree objectives for good design, greenspace planning, management and maintenance, and provision in new housing sites that reflect the landscape, townscape and heritage character and qualities of the district.

## 6 Specific areas of focus

Diagram showing links to the GSMS and to identify where the GSMS sits in association with existing strategies and policies

Green Space Management Strategy Flow Chart



- 6.1 In order not to limit or constrain other evolving policies or strategies, the above diagram depicts where the GSMS will sit in relation to other strategies, action plans or policies that affect the greenspace service. For example, the Playing Pitch Strategy is due to be updated separately by colleagues and therefore the link with the GSMS is only identified at this stage.
- 6.2 This strategy has three key areas of focus:
- Planning
  - Environment & Biodiversity policy
  - Finance
- 6.3 The other areas identified in the diagram above e.g. allotments and outdoor play, will also require their own strategies and action plans. These will be reviewed as part of the action plan arising from this strategy.
- 6.4 Planning**
- 6.5 The importance of good quality green space or 'green infrastructure' in the planning system has significantly increased over recent years. The climate crisis, biodiversity crisis and impacts of the Covid pandemic means we need multi-functional green space now more than ever to address the challenges of the physical and natural environment we live in.
- 6.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires strategic policies in local plans to set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation. (NPPF para 20).
- 6.7 National Planning Practice guidance promotes the following benefits of green infrastructure:
- Building a strong competitive economy
  - Achieving well-designed places
  - Promoting healthy and safe communities
  - Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change
  - Conserving the natural environment
- 6.8 Green infrastructure also has an important role in enhancing the setting of, access to and revealing of heritage assets within the landscape.
- 6.9 The planning system plays an important role in environmental protection, with one of its three overarching objectives enshrined in national planning policy being to protect and enhance the environment.
- 6.10 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
- 6.11 Meanwhile, the Environment Act 2021 will (through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) create a statutory and mandatory requirement for all new developments to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain. The Council will be responsible for securing this provision and also have regard to Nature Recovery Networks, a



national network of wildlife-rich places which will be planned on a strategic scale to increase and restore nature.

- 6.12 There are several strategic policies in the emerging local plan which seek to protect and enhance the district's green infrastructure and ecological network. The Council has approved the use of the Fields in Trust (Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play. Beyond the Six Acre Standard) November 2020 open space standards in determining the amount of type of new green space required in new development.
- 6.13 A series of evidence base documents supports the implementation of these policies, the key ones being:

***Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan 2018***

***Open Space Review 2016***

***North Herts Local Cycling & Walking Plan (LCWIP)***

***North Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2009***

- 6.14 These documents inform the decision -making process on what, how much and where new green space/infrastructure should be located to support new development. The needs and demands for open space, sport and recreation facilities can change over time. As such existing studies will require reviewing and updating alongside consultation with local organisations to ensure local evidence is robust and can effectively inform decision-making on the location, type and amount of new green space required through new development. Consultation with the relevant national governing bodies and Sport England will be undertaken in relation to playing pitch and outdoor sports provision. As part of the review process, a new Green Infrastructure Strategy is due to be put in place, which will mean it is necessary to update the Green Space Management Strategy to reflect investment and management needs

## **6.15 Environment and Biodiversity**

### **North Herts Council Climate Change Strategy**

- 6.16 North Herts Council declared a climate emergency on 21 May 2019 asserting commitment toward climate action. The Council's [Climate Change Strategy](#) (reviewed in 2021) acts as a foundation upon which actions arising from other service areas across the council are built.
- 6.17 The key objectives of this strategy are:
- Achieve Carbon Neutrality for the Council's own operations by 2030 (at least Scope 1 and Scope 2).
  - Ensure all operations and services are resilient to the impacts of climate change
  - Achieve a Net Zero Carbon district by 2040
  - Become a district that is resilient to unavoidable impacts of climate change
- 6.18 The Council's Climate Change Strategy primarily focuses on carbon reduction, and greenspaces have an important role to play in carbon capture through vegetation and soils. This carbon capture provides opportunities to offset emissions, and the Council's Climate Change Strategy's Proposed Actions sets out actions relating to offsetting opportunities presented by greenspace management . Forward planning

will ensure that the greenspace management service will align with the Council's target to achieve carbon neutrality across all Council operations by 2030.

- 6.19 Greenspaces can have an indirect impact upon carbon emissions and can contribute to the Council's target to achieve a net zero carbon district by 2040. For example, paths and cycle lanes through safe and accessible greenspaces can encourage a shift to active transport. Greenspaces are also proven to assist in the regulation of temperature, reducing the urban heat island effect by providing shade and evaporative cooling. This has the potential to reduce the need for heating and air conditioning and the emissions they produce.
- 6.20 Local greenspaces will have a role to play in adapting to the impacts of climate change in the district. The predicted impact of climate change locally includes hotter and drier summers, warmer and wetter winters, and more extreme weather events. Over the past ten years, the UK has already experienced a variety of climate-related extremes including major floods and heatwaves. As well as the ability to regulate temperatures, green spaces have the potential to intercept, store and filter water. This can reduce the risk of flooding and improve water quality in streams, ponds and rivers.
- 6.21 The impacts of climate change are likely to affect the district's nature and greenspaces. To ensure resilience, consideration must be given to heavy precipitation, flooding, damage caused by excessive heat, and other climate related impacts on local plant species and greenspace operations. It is critical that the service and operations remain flexible as the future impacts of climate change are uncertain and the potential for more extreme weather may not be easily planned for.
- 6.22 Whilst the Climate Change Strategy relates primarily to the reduction of carbon emissions, the Council is enabled to address a wider range of issues relating to climate change. These include mitigation, adapting to the impacts of climate change and environmental matters through its other policies and plans, its membership of county-wide partnerships, and its process of assessing the environmental implications of new decisions and actions. Given the intrinsic link between the environment, climate change, and greenspaces, the environmental implications assessment process will play an important role in ensuring that greenspace management will continuously assess environmental implications to identify positive impacts and adapt to minimise negative impacts as much as possible.

### **HCCSP Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan**

- 6.23 North Herts Council is part of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) which is comprised of all ten district councils within Hertfordshire; Hertfordshire County Council; and the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The partnership's aim is to work collaboratively to deliver action on climate change and environmental issues within Hertfordshire.
- 6.24 In relation to the Greenspace Management Strategy, the HCCSP has produced a [Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan](#), which is also the principal strategic level document relating to biodiversity for North Herts.
- 6.25 Biodiversity refers to the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat or area, where a high level of diversity is typically considered to be preferable. Biodiversity is important because having a wide range of animals, plants and microorganisms helps keep the ecosystems that we all rely on for clean water and

air, food, medicines, and protection against disease and extreme weather events, functioning and healthy.

- 6.26 The Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan was produced in response to continuing declines in species and habitat, both locally and nationally, and seeks to initiate urgent action to help restore and enhance biodiversity across Hertfordshire.
- 6.27 In recognition of the important role that local authority greenspace has to play in supporting biodiversity, the Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan includes actions relating to the procurement of trees and plants so as to ensure biosecurity; the minimisation and exclusion by local authorities of peat compost and pesticides; a review of allotment strategies to ensure biodiversity-positive behaviours are promoted; identification and implementation of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and pollinator habitats; and a review of opportunities to increase tree canopy cover.

### Financial Pressures

- 6.28 The Council uses two funding streams for green space. **Revenue** which is similar to money held in a current bank account is used for the day-to-day maintenance of green space. **Capital** which is similar to money held in a savings account is used for improvements to green space (e.g. adding new infrastructure, facilities or equipment, or extending the life of what is already there
- 6.29 The current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) reflects the funding forecasts for the Council, which are highly uncertain. The expectation is that the Council may be faced with a significant reduction in the revenue funding that it receives, whilst dealing with the impact of inflation on our costs and uncertainty over our income (particularly in relation to the continuing impacts of Covid-19).
- 6.30 Over the medium term (within the next five years) it is expected that the Council will need to start borrowing to fund its capital spend, as it will have used up its capital reserves. This will mean that there will be a revenue cost associated with capital expenditure. This will be an annual cost of around 3-5% of the borrowing required.
- 6.31 The MTFS recognises the financial challenges that the Council faces, and determines the following key strategies to address these pressures:
- Deliver existing services at a lower cost, where efficiencies are available and especially linked to the use of automation and technology
  - Generate (new or additional) income from the services that we are able to charge for
  - Generate income from commercial activities
  - Where necessary, reducing the level of service
- 6.32 Given the revenue impacts of capital spend, it is also necessary to challenge the need for capital expenditure. If the capital expenditure is being incurred to generate income, then the income must exceed the revenue cost of that capital spend.

- 6.33 It is possible that achieving a balanced budget will require consideration to reduce the level(s) of service that the Council currently provides. So, the MTFS states that when the future funding of the Council is more certain (and therefore the scale of the funding gap is known), that the public will be consulted on the various options available to achieve a balanced budget. That feedback will be considered in making those difficult decisions.

## **7. Conclusions and Outcomes**

7.1 An annual action plan will be created which will detail the key activities relating to the Strategy. The action plan will be considered by the Executive Member and Service Director to direct the work programs for the Greenspace team on an annual basis.

7.2 The table below highlights changes to previous policies as well as where existing policies will be carried forward.

### 7.3 Table of Actions/Conclusions – Outcomes as a Comparison against the previous strategy

Item	Previous Strategy 2017 - 2021	New (to be adopted) Policies 2022 - 2027
Parks and Gardens	Town Centre Parks remain the highest priority for future investment and maintenance	To continue
Playground provision	Renovate one site annually with a budget of £75,000	Increase budget to £180,000 annually and identify sites annually with the agreement of the Exec Member and Service Director
Amenity Greenspace	To retain the value of green space and trees. Within financial constraints provide adequate infrastructure for other activities	To continue and to promote the value of our existing green space. To continue to deliver high standards of maintenance that can also be extended into any new green space adopted through development gains
Burials	Wilbury Hills Cemetery is the District Wide provision for burials as existing resources reach capacity	This is to continue To include updating of the previous Cemeteries Strategy
Environment & Biodiversity	Local Nature Reserves and Green Corridors	In addition, to continuously consider the environmental impacts, either positive or negative, of our actions to maintain our parks and open spaces. This could include the expansion of areas left uncut and only mown once annually as an example  To continuously review the options and opportunities to reduce or cease the use of Pesticides, specifically Glyphosate based herbicides. Therefore, to consider alternative methods of weed control.  To continue to explore opportunities to introduce more habitats to improve biodiversity and therefore increase the areas maintained on a wilding basis.  To consider and work proactively to deliver the positive gains that can be delivered through biodiversity net gain
Accreditation	Annual submission for Greenflag accreditation at 5 sites	This is to continue

Planning and New Developments	Adoption of developed open spaces will <u>not</u> be undertaken by the District Council unless there is a specific reason to do so, such as sensitive environmental habitat or contribution to our existing provision beyond the area of development. Otherwise, it is expected that open spaces within a new development will be maintained by a private management company.	<p>In the planning for new development the District Council will continue to aim for all sections of the community to have access to green space and experience its multiple benefits. Green space should be freely accessible to all the public and not be reserved for the private use of residents.</p> <p>The Council will consider the adoption and management of new strategic green space in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is located within the four main towns of Baldock, Letchworth, Hitchin and Royston (and Great Ashby) and complements existing service maintenance operations</li> <li>• The green space is meeting a current deficiency and new provision would meet the needs of existing and new residents</li> <li>• The green space is meeting a strategic gap in the green space network and improving the quantity, quality and connectivity of the district's green space network</li> <li>• Where longer term revenue streams such as Council tax can be effectively recycled back into the locality as part of place investment</li> <li>• Where other corporate objectives can be met such as climate change, biodiversity and health and well-being</li> </ul> <p>For smaller green spaces and new green space in other settlements other options should be considered and agreed on a site by site basis such as Parish Councils and private management companies.</p> <p>The greenspace manager (and officers leading on climate change and biodiversity) will work collaboratively with planning colleagues regarding new green space provision in large development projects through the master</p>
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		planning process. The aim will be to identify optimal green space improvements and provision to improve or diversify the existing portfolio of biodiversity)
Allotments	To provide a cost neutral provision while promoting the benefits of having an allotment	<p>To continue but also to manage existing resources to improve the infrastructure within our existing allotment provision and to ensure that comparable standards of service are available across all allotment sites managed by NHC. Consequently, update the former Allotment Strategy.</p> <p>To work with other providers of allotments within the District such as Town Councils, Parish Councils and local associations to retain and expand allotment provision in the future where a demand has been identified.</p> <p>To work with colleagues in Planning to monitor fluctuations in demand especially those increases brought about through development to ensure that new provision is provided to meet that demand in the most appropriate location.</p>
Natural and Semi Natural Greenspace	To support key partners such as Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) and to work with volunteers to deliver the actions agreed for site specific management plans.	To continue
Green Corridors	To support key partnerships such as with Herts Highways and CRoW and work with stakeholders to provide habitat and recreational improvement to greenspace	To continue
Rivers & Culverts including Kimpton	Not included within document	to continue to manage the risk by working with external partners and ensuring that our locations of responsibility are managed appropriately to minimise the risk of flooding. In addition to maintain existing ditches, culverts and water courses so their flooding risk is managed. To



		also recognise the importance of chalk streams and work towards improving the habitats they support
Trees	Regime of inspection and maintenance in accordance with the Tree Strategy	Review and update the Tree Strategy as appropriate
Project Management	Pre-determined list of works as agreed at the commencement of the strategy	<p>Practical projects to be funded from Capital, S106 or External Grant sources are to be planned to use the 10-year forecasting model that will be updated annually. This model will support decisions made for the Service and Financial Planning process, support Planners with their negotiations with developers and aid the applications for external grant funding</p> <p>The forecasting model will allocate funding for Capital investment into at least two playgrounds annually. The locations to receive this investment will be selected via consultation with the Executive Member and Service Director with recommendations based upon the Annual Play Inspection Surveys, usage, and vandalism.</p> <p>To consider any opportunities that will generate income for the District Council.</p>
Outdoor Sport Pitch Provision	To take into consideration the Playing Pitch Strategy, retain adequate key green space sporting facilities to meet the needs of the local community within available budgets.	<p>To continue provide the current levels of provision to support local need. However, this will not increase in volume without significant evidence of increased demand. Standards of maintenance will be sufficient for the provision of community facilities. Where individual clubs require standards of provision above our baseline, the club will be able to invest in the required improvements at their cost. However, the facility will remain open to public use when not in use by the club for their activities.</p> <p>Facilities will be considered for removal if demand reduces to such a level that facilities are not used for any period.</p>

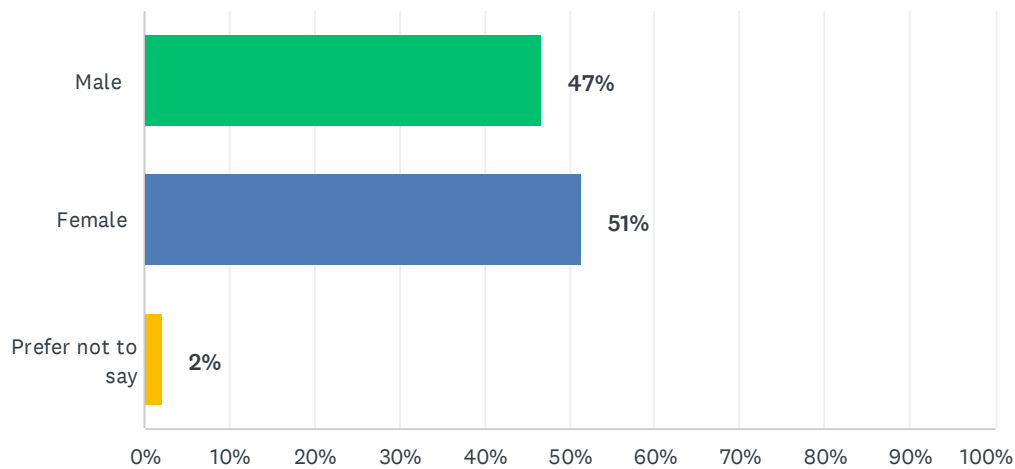
		To work with colleagues in Planning to update and progress the Playing Pitch Strategy and its outcomes
Highways and Settle Housing	To maintain consistency across the urban areas of Royston, Baldock, Letchworth and Hitchin & Great Ashby a uniform standard of grass cutting is applied. Herts Highways finances six cuts annually, however the current standard applied by NHDC is for up to 12 – 14 cuts depending upon the growing season.	To continue with the exception that following a contract review (Cabinet June 2021) grass cutting on highway locations will be reduced to a maximum of 9 cuts and a minimum of 6 cuts depending upon the growing season.
Income Generation	<p>This is achieved via three main routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herts Highways Agency Agreement</li> <li>• Settle Service Level Agreement</li> <li>• Burials</li> </ul> <p>In addition, income is also achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Howard Park Kiosk</li> <li>• Production of Land Licenses</li> <li>• Ice cream concessions</li> <li>• Fairs and Circuses</li> <li>• Hire of Multi Use Games Areas (Muga's)</li> <li>• Dog bins for parishes and Settle Housing</li> <li>• Roundabout sponsorship</li> <li>• Allotments</li> <li>• Fitness groups and business hire of open spaces</li> </ul>	To continue

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# Q1 What is your gender?

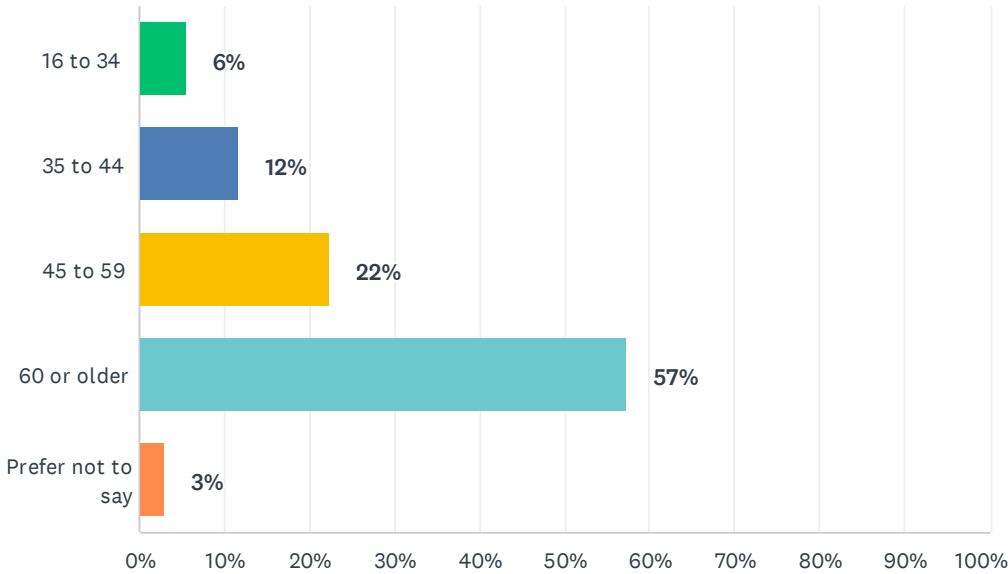
Answered: 1,082    Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	47%	505
Female	51%	555
Prefer not to say	2%	22
TOTAL		1,082

## Q2 What is your age?

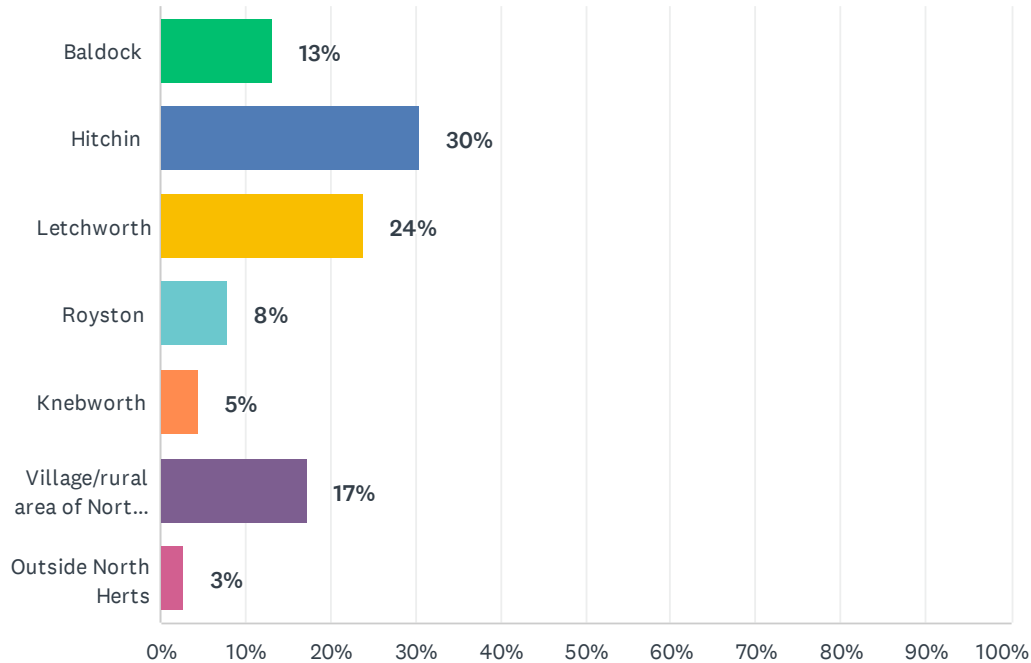
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
16 to 34	6%	60
35 to 44	12%	126
45 to 59	22%	243
60 or older	57%	620
Prefer not to say	3%	33
TOTAL		1,082

## Q3 Where do you live?

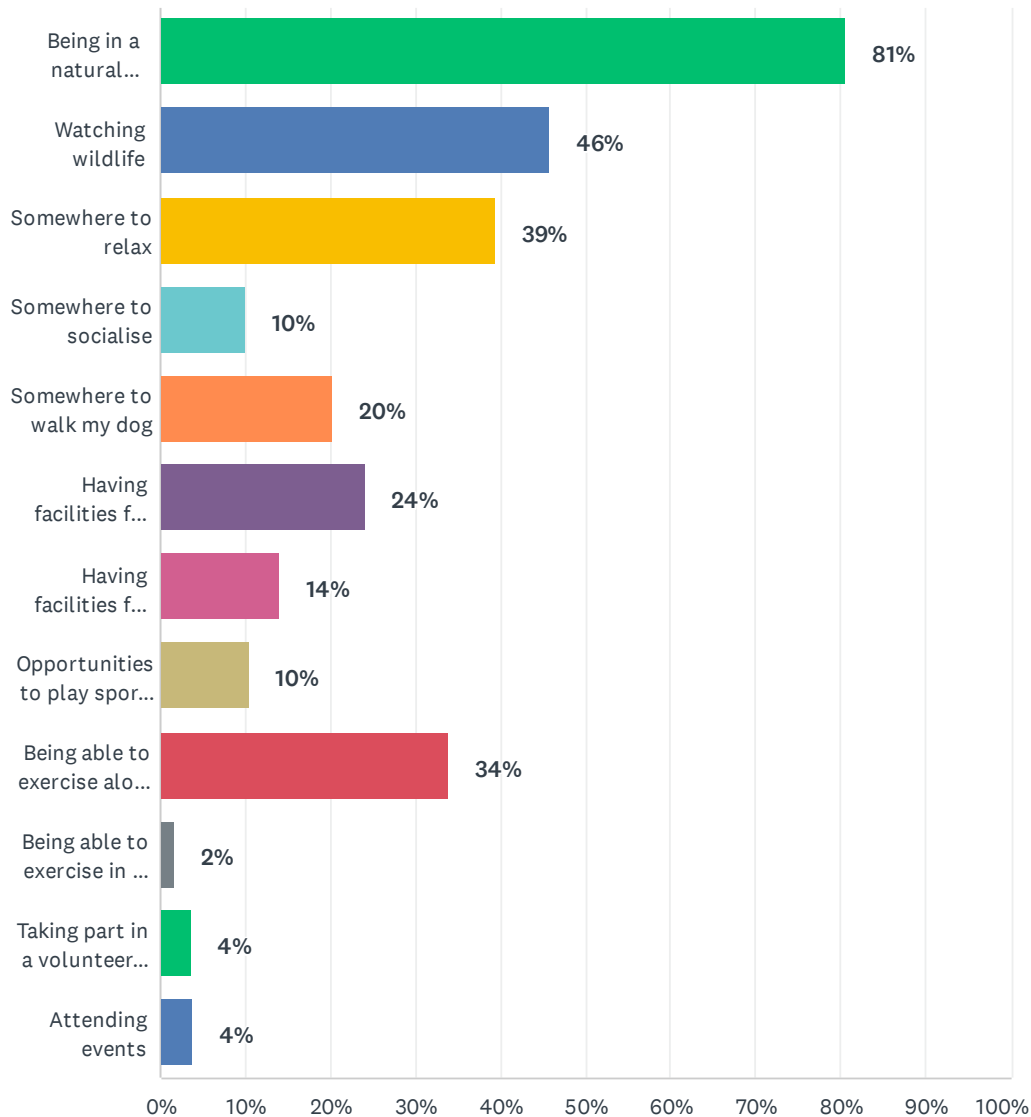
Answered: 1,082 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Baldock	13%	144
Hitchin	30%	330
Letchworth	24%	258
Royston	8%	85
Knebworth	5%	49
Village/rural area of North Herts	17%	187
Outside North Herts	3%	29
TOTAL		1,082

## Q4 What do you value most in our parks and open space? Please pick the top 3 things you value most:

Answered: 1,044 Skipped: 38

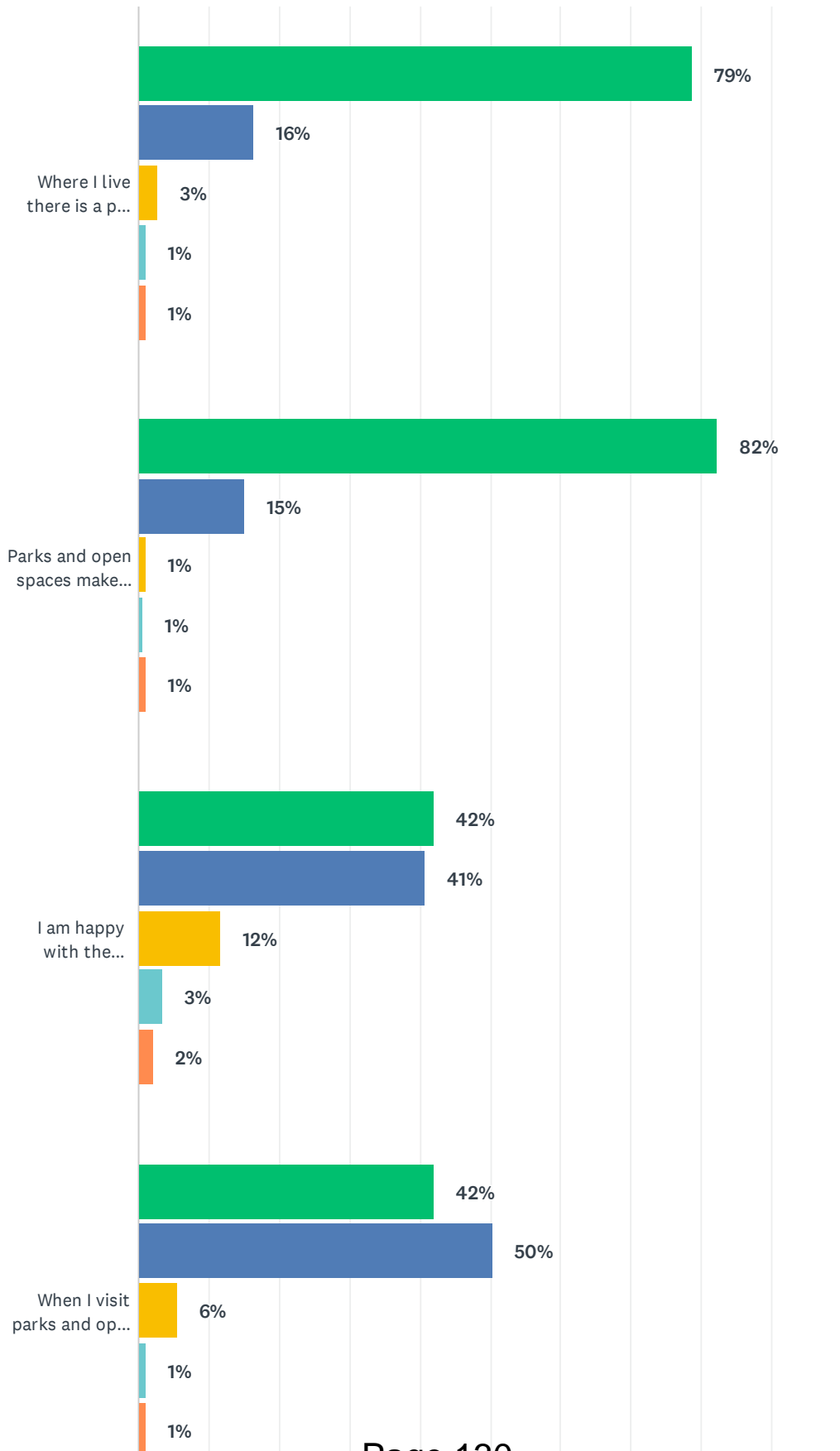




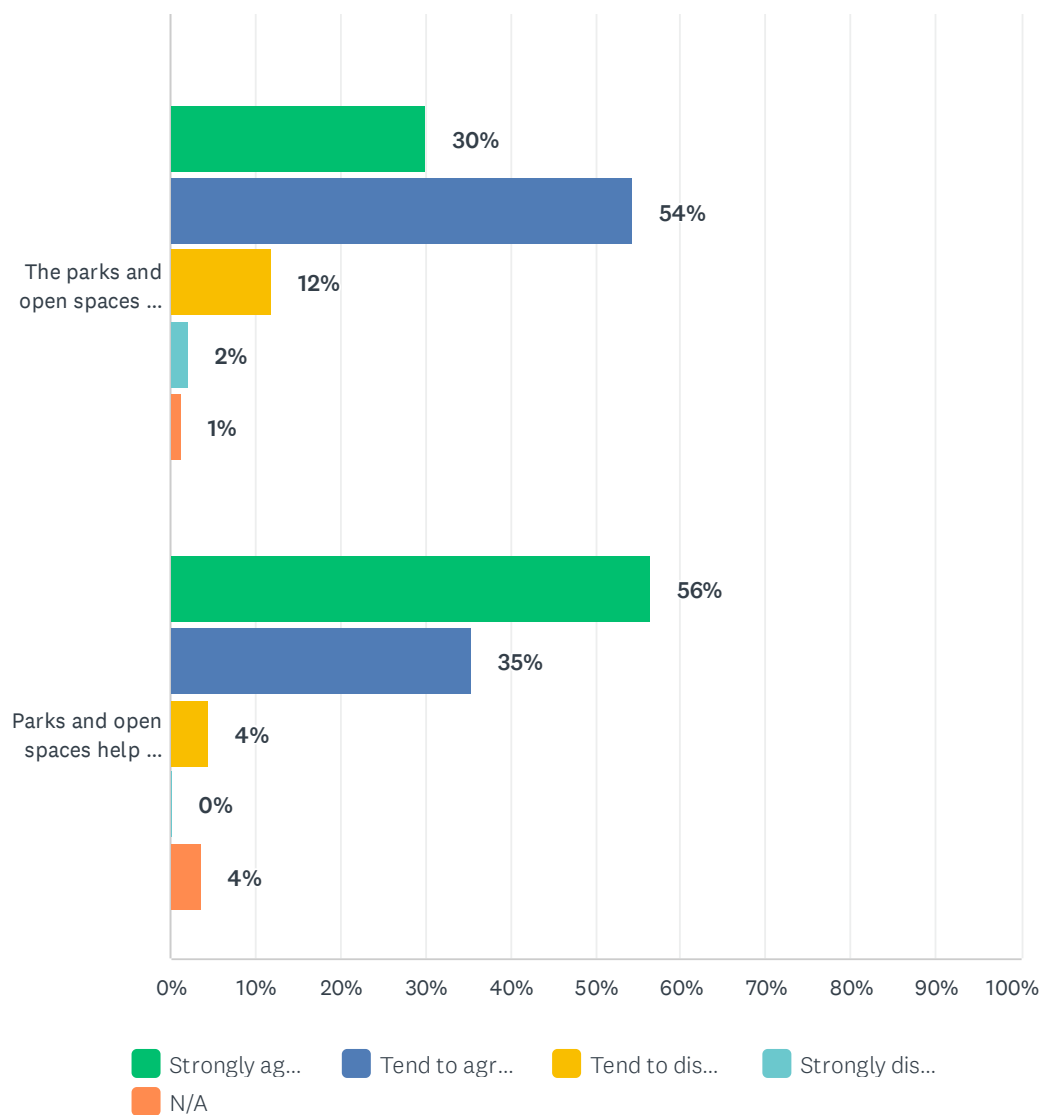
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Being in a natural environment	81%	841
Watching wildlife	46%	478
Somewhere to relax	39%	412
Somewhere to socialise	10%	105
Somewhere to walk my dog	20%	212
Having facilities for toddlers and young children e.g. play equipment	24%	252
Having facilities for young people e.g. skatepark, play equipment for older children	14%	147
Opportunities to play sport e.g. tennis courts, football pitches	10%	108
Being able to exercise alone e.g. running, walking, cycling	34%	353
Being able to exercise in a group e.g. structured class	2%	17
Taking part in a volunteer activity	4%	38
Attending events	4%	41
Total Respondents: 1,044		

## Q5 Please rate your agreement with the following statements around parks and open spaces:

Answered: 1,028 Skipped: 54



## Greenspace Strategy 2022-27 consultation



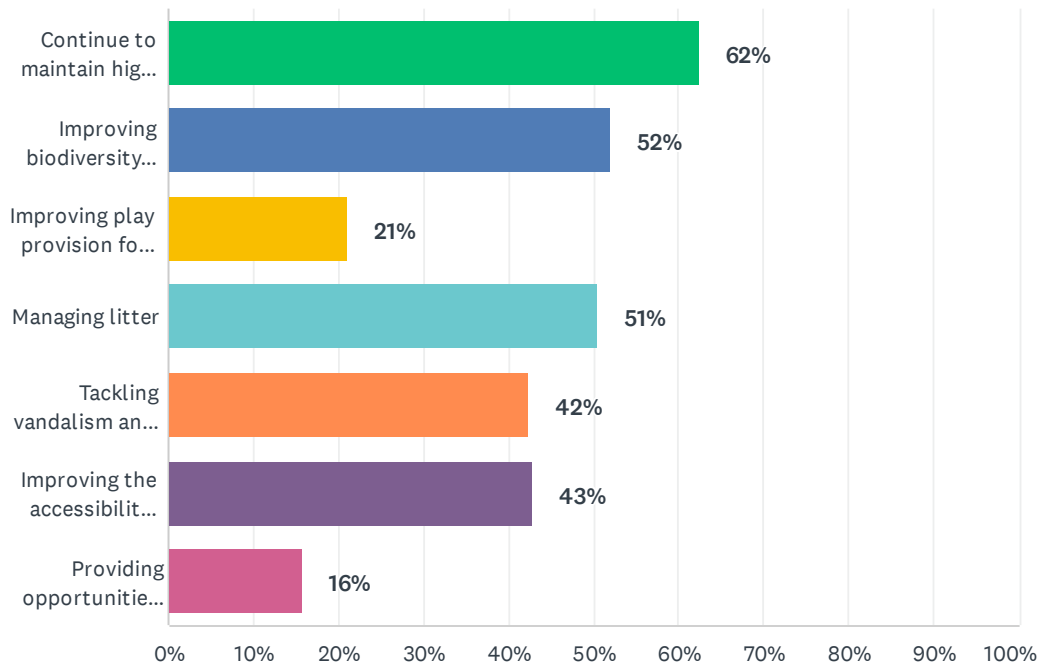
	STRONGLY AGREE	TEND TO AGREE	TEND TO DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	N/A	TOTAL
Where I live there is a park or open space within easy walking distance from my home	79% 808	16% 169	3% 28	1% 12	1% 11	1,028
Parks and open spaces make this a nice place to live	82% 845	15% 156	1% 10	1% 6	1% 11	1,028
I am happy with the facilities that are available in my nearest park or open space	42% 431	41% 418	12% 121	3% 35	2% 23	1,028
When I visit parks and open spaces, I feel safe	42% 432	50% 517	6% 58	1% 10	1% 11	1,028
The parks and open spaces are clean and well maintained	30% 310	54% 559	12% 122	2% 23	1% 14	1,028
Parks and open spaces help me to stay fit and healthy	56% 580	35% 364	4% 45	0% 2	4% 37	1,028

**Q6 If you disagreed with any of the above statements in Q5 please tell us why:**

Answered: 239   Skipped: 843

## Q7 What do you think should be the council's main priorities for how we manage our greenspace over the next five years? Please pick your top three priorities:

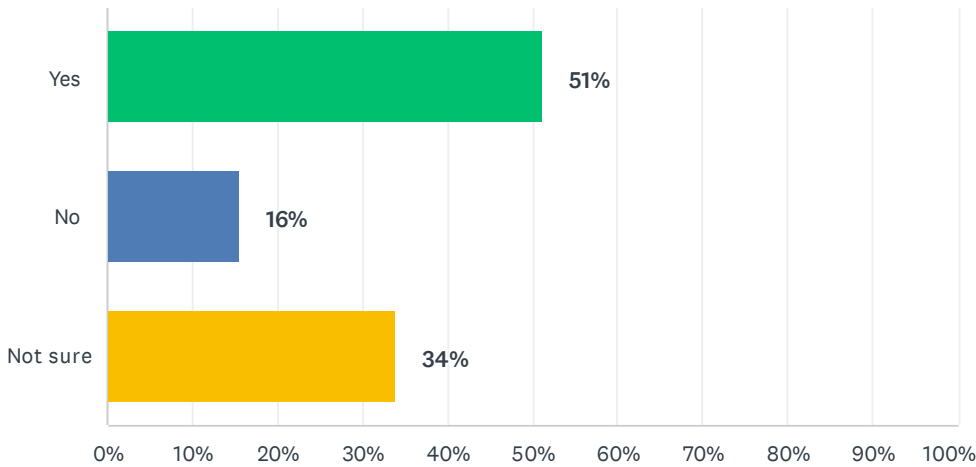
Answered: 1,018 Skipped: 64



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Continue to maintain high standards of maintenance	62%	635
Improving biodiversity through allowing more areas to go wild	52%	529
Improving play provision for children	21%	214
Managing litter	51%	515
Tackling vandalism and anti-social behaviour	42%	432
Improving the accessibility of our greenspace e.g. through footpath renovations	43%	436
Providing opportunities for people to volunteer in our parks and open spaces	16%	160
Total Respondents: 1,018		

Q8 Are there other priorities the council should consider for managing our greenspace over the next five years? Please specify below:

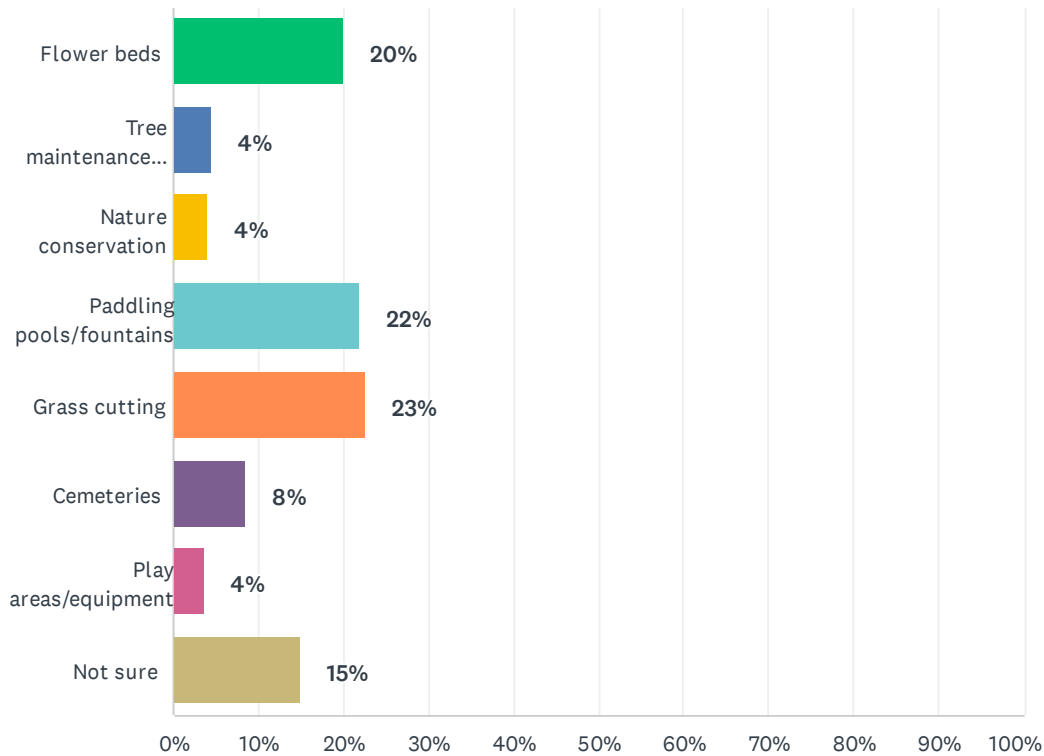
Answered: 964 Skipped: 118



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	51%	493
No	16%	151
Not sure	34%	326
Total Respondents: 964		

## Q9 If North Herts Council has to make financial savings in just one of the areas below, which should it be?

Answered: 1,007 Skipped: 75



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Flower beds	20%	201
Tree maintenance (planting)	4%	45
Nature conservation	4%	41
Paddling pools/fountains	22%	221
Grass cutting	23%	228
Cemeteries	8%	85
Play areas/equipment	4%	36
Not sure	15%	150
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,007</b>

**Q10 Please use this space to tell us if there's anything we can improve on and/or any further comments about the future management of greenspace in North Herts.**

Answered: 471   Skipped: 611