

1 September 2023

Our Ref Overview and Scrutiny Committee/12
September 2023
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillors Adam Compton (Chair), Val Bryant (Vice-Chair), Adam Compton, Val Bryant, Matt Barnes, Clare Billing, Mick Debenham, Dominic Griffiths, David Levett, Nigel Mason, Ian Moody, Ralph Muncer and Daniel Wright-Mason

Substitutes: Councillors Daniel Allen, David Barnard, Raj Bhakar, Sam Collins, James Denselow, Lisa Nash, Sean Nolan and Mandi Tandi

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

to be held in the

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3JF**

On

TUESDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2023 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**

Item		Page
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 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.	
2.	MINUTES - 20 JUNE 2023 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 20 June 2023.	(Pages 5 - 16)
3.	NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS 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.	
4.	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the 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.	
5.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.	
6.	URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS 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.	
7.	CALLED-IN ITEMS To consider any matters referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to a call-in of decision. At the time of printing the agenda, no items of business had been called-in.	

8. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

To receive and respond to any questions from Members either set out in the agenda or tabled at the meeting.

9. RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Pages
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER 17 - 18)

To consider the outcome of Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolutions.

10. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2023 (Pages
REPORT OF THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM LEADER 19 - 60)

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

11. Q1 2023-2024 UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN (Pages
REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES 61 - 98)

A report to show progress against projects, risks and performance indicators supporting delivery of the Council Plan.

12. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (Pages
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER 99 - 116)

To consider the issues that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee plans to review at future meetings and the activities of its sub-groups.

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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, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON TUESDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2023 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Adam Compton (Chair) Val Bryant (Vice-Chair), Matt Barnes, Clare Billing, Mick Debenham, Dominic Griffiths, David Levett, Nigel Mason, Ralph Muncer and Daniel Wright-Mason*

In Attendance:

Sjanel Wickenden (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Ian Couper (Service Director - Resources), Steve Crowley (Service Director - Enterprise), Sarah Kingsley (Service Director - Place), Jeanette Thompson (Service Director - Legal and Community), Rachel Cooper (Controls, Risk and Performance Manager), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Christine Crofts (Communications Manager), Chloe Hipwood (Service Manager) and Chris Jeffery (Customer Service Manager)

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting there was 1 member of the public, and Councillor Claire Strong present.

206 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 20 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ian Moody.

Having given due notice Councillor Lisa Nash would fill in for the Liberal Democrat vacancy for this meeting.

207 MINUTES - 9 MARCH 2023

Audio Recording – 2 minutes 47 seconds

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Val Bryant seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 9 March 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

208 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 45 minutes

There was no other business notified.

209 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 53 seconds

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (3) The Chair advised that section 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution applied to this meeting.

210 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 4 minutes 39 seconds

There was no public participation at this meeting.

211 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 45 seconds

The Chair advised that he had been informed of one item under the Urgent Proceedings regarding the Local Authority Housing Fund Round Two.

212 CALLED-IN ITEMS

Audio recording – 5 minutes 11 seconds

No items had been called in.

213 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Audio recording – 5 minutes 17 seconds

No questions from Members have been submitted.

214 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Audio recording – 5 minutes 22 seconds

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

- The Task and Finish Group on Community Engagement was still ongoing, Group Leaders would be emailed asking for nominations.
- The Draft Sustainability SPD was still in progress
- The Peer report had been removed as requested at the previous meeting and the new Peer Review was being presented for consideration at this meeting.
- Further details on the Tourism strategy and Town Centre Recovery strategy would be provided in the Q4 Update on the Council Delivery Plan.

The Chair advised any Members wanting to take part in the Task and Finish group to contact their Group Leader.

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Val Bryant 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.

215 ANNUAL REPORT OF OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY 2022/2023

Audio recording – 7 minutes 57 seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the report entitled 'Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny 2022/23' and drew attention to the following that:

- This was presented at the last meeting with the decision taken to make some changes to the O&S procedures and agendas and for the Committee to review the report prior to going to full Council.
- The report is compiled from information at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2022/23 and highlighted the following statistics, attendance at meetings, how many referrals were made and how many people viewed the YouTube channel.
- The report was waiting for a foreword from the former Chair, Councillor David Levett, with the intention of being presented to Council on 13 July.

In response to a question from Councillor Matt Barnes, the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager stated the number of items adopted and their details could be found on Mod Gov and would be provided at a later date.

Councillor David Levett proposed, and Councillor Ralph Muncer seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and commented on the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2022/2023 as attached at Appendix A prior to consideration by Council.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the 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 2022/2023 Civic Year prior to consideration by Council.

216 3C'S FULL YEAR UPDATE 22-23

Audio recording 11 minutes 46 seconds

The Information Note entitled '3Cs Full Year Update 22-23' was presented by the Customer Service Manager who highlighted that:

- The Information Note provided an update on the full year 2022-23 regarding the comments compliments and complaints, which included contractors.
- Appendix A showed the dashboard of 3Cs and Appendix B highlighted this information by service area and type.
- Compliments and complaints received by the Council had decreased since last year.
- Comments remained the same as last year.
- 77% of complaint were resolved within the 10-day timescale, slightly under the target of 80%, 6 out of the 12 months were above the 80% target.
- Planning Control had the most complaints, but the number had decreased by 48% on last year.

- Percentage of interactions/collections/visitors resulting in a complaint remained at less than 1 %.
- 172 compliments were received directly to the Council.
- LGO received 13 complaints across a range of service areas, five were upheld, however two of these had already been remedied by the Council.

The following Member asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Clair Billing
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Adam Compton

In response the Customer Service Manager stated that:

- Upheld LGO complaints and previous years LGO upheld information would be provided at a later date.
- Urbaser collected their own information every quarter, and that information is then incorporated into our database.
- The majority of customers telephoned Urbaser and they compiled a spreadsheet of issues for the Council.
- The Customer Service Manager shared this information with other Councils and a comparison could be provided at a later date.
- Urbaser had 105 complaints in the full year, 14 of which occurred in May 2022 and the reasons varied.
- Numbers of complaints directed towards Settle would be provided.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the 3C's full year update 2022-23

217 NORTH HERTS PLACE NARRATIVE

Audio recording – 20 minutes 3 seconds.

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis presented the report entitled 'North Herts Place Narrative' including that:

- It is often remarked that there is no such place as North Herts, but from engagement with residents, businesses and those who work in the district it was clear there were things that tied people together.
- The Narrative compiled the different views and interpretations of the district and place so there was one message to promote to industries, as well as promoting North Herts as a place to move, live and engage to drive the local economy.
- The Narrative focussed on the people, culture and businesses that makes North Herts a unique place, consisting of a logo, a strapline and passage of copy.
- It was based on research completed by a partner Council and had been completed at no cost to North Herts Council with funding and support provided by the Local Government Association.
- The Narrative put people at the centre and was aligned to the priorities of the Council, including the People First priority.
- Bold colours were used for the logo and strapline and these deliberately avoided traditional political colours or those of the Council branding, to ensure that it was about the place North Herts, not North Herts Council.
- It showcased what made North Herts a unique place, including our local artists, writers, businesses, residents and greenspaces, and would be key in recovery of town centres and the local economy.

- It would assist in drawing people into the area, retaining the existing economy, growing local skills, and investing in people.
- The project would be the responsibility of the Communication team to embed the Narrative and initially this would have minimal costs, though more ambitious strategies may be considered alongside partners.
- The Narrative was about evolution not revolution and selling North Herts as a place that exists which is vibrant and unique.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Dominic Griffiths

In response to questions, Councillor Elizabeth Dennis clarified that:

- The Narrative could be used when considering other policies and strategies of the Council, such as the climate strategy or town centre recovery, to make North Herts a better place.
- The Herts Growth Board has a workstream looking into town centre regeneration, including understanding and creating place narratives. The progress has been slow and a number of districts and boroughs, including North Herts, have therefore undertaken their own work.
- The comments from Leaders and Chief Executive were based on perception of place, which still had a role in contributing to the Narrative, but Members needed to be mindful of this.

In response to questions the Communications Manager clarified that:

- Royston BID were unavailable when the research was completed but they now have a new manager in place, who would be consulted on the work before rollout. However local Councillors had been involved, as well as representatives from creative and arts groups in Royston.
- Therfield Heath had been directly referenced in the copy produced as part of the Narrative.
- The launch was expected in September 2023 with organic growth expected from key partners following this date.

During the debate, Councillor Muncer noted his support for the work produced, but questioned whether it was overly negative in the copy at Appendix D, specifically the penultimate paragraph. Following comments from other Members, it was agreed that it was important to recognise the challenges and issues that the district faced and therefore should be retained.

Councillor Nigel Mason proposed, and Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet approves the North Herts Place Narrative.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) Despite being a district since 1974, North Hertfordshire has no clear identity and needs a point of differentiation within the county. This will help North Herts stand out as the place to invest, live, visit and work in Hertfordshire.

- (2) Currently, the Council and its partners are all telling different stories about North Herts which leads to fragmented communications. A joined up and coherent approach in the future will have greater impact, generate greater engagement and raise the profile of North Herts the place.

218 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE REPORT & ACTION PLAN

Audio recording – 46 minutes and 1 second

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis presented the report entitled 'Corporate Peer Challenge Report and Action Plan' and highlighted:

- The LGA 2020 Peer Review looked at North Herts Council and provided an action plan that was agreed by Cabinet in March 2020. A follow up review took place in 2022, with a focus on Overview and Scrutiny and Finance, Audit and Risk Committees and how these could be improved.
- A number of recommendations were produced from this review, which are detailed in the Action Plan, and Members were asked to consider these actions and whether they were appropriate.
- Any timescales that are not set would be agreed by the Managing Director, Leader and Deputy Leader consulting the relevant Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Matt Barnes

In response to a question from Councillor Ralph Muncer, the Service Director - Legal and Community advised that the Scrutiny Officer role was discussed with Group Leaders, and although a full time role would be ideal, the 17 hour role reflected the funding available. This could be reviewed following the recruitment process and when an Officer was in place.

In response to a question from Councillor Matt Barnes, Councillor David Levett, as former Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, confirmed that the Action Plan was a fair reflection of what was required, especially a dedicated Scrutiny Officer, however he noted that this had been difficult due to resources, recruitment and staff turnover.

The Chair made the following comments:

- Overview and Scrutiny Members had not previously been reviewing the Forward Plan and therefore it was often left for Officers to decide what items to include on agendas.
- Debate at meetings had previously been limited.
- A pre-agenda meeting had been set up with Officers and the Chair and Vice Chair to discuss topics before publication of agenda.
- The Scrutiny Officer role would assist with ensuring agendas were shorter and more focussed.

Councillor David Levett noted that the discussion on this item had been one of the most in-depth at the Committee and this was thanks to the new Members on the Committee who had contributed.

The following Members took part in debate:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Val Bryant

- Councillor Clare Billing

Points raised during the debate included:

- The Action Plan proposed was fair and followed the best practices of the LGA peer report.
- Without the Scrutiny Officer role in place, it was difficult to set timescales for the actions.
- Taking relevant actions from the plan should be a priority, and operational before May 2024.
- Requested that a progress report be provided at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Val Bryant seconded, and following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the content of the CPC report was noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the draft Action Plan at Appendix A be considered, and proposed action be recommended to Cabinet for approval (as per Appendix A*)
- (2) That, in the absence of timescales, that it be recommended to Cabinet, that these be set by the Leader, Deputy Leader and Managing Director (in consultation with relevant Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs).

REASONS FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that the Council responds to the matters identified within the CPC report, ensuring that the benefits of the CPC process are realised.

219 Q4 UPDATE ON PROGRESS AGAINST THE COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 22-23

Audio recording 1 hour 2 minutes 50 seconds

The Controls Risk and Performance Manager presented the report entitled 'Q4 update on the Council Action Plan 2022-23' and highlighted that:

- The report detailed project risks and performance indicators, as well as a high-level overview of progress made on projects in the Council Delivery Plan.
- Members can request more details of specific projects to be reported to the Committee and are able to log into view projects on Pentana.
- Projects moving to the 2023-24 Action Plan are highlighted in grey in Appendix A, with new milestones and dates.
- Paragraph 8.5 of the report highlighted the four projects have been completed in this period.
- Paragraph 8.6 of the report detailed the projects that will no longer be included in the report.
- The Boundary Review report has now been received the project will be marked as complete and removed from future monitoring reports.
- The further details requested on the Town Centre Recovery and the Tourism Strategy requested at the last meeting can be found in Appendix B at 8.9 of the report.
- The proposed milestones changes are required to be signed off by Cabinet and are highlighted in yellow.
- The Town Centre Recovery plan had moved from a risk factor of 3 to 2 following a review of the risks.
- The risk performers indicators for Q4 show 6 Green, 1 Amber and 2 Red as highlighted in blue in the report.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

In response to questions the Controls Risk and Performance Manager stated that:

- The projects identified for inclusions on the Council Plan are set out by the Leadership team and Cabinet and monitored by O&S.
- Where the milestones have slipped, sometime this is due to resourcing, and an overarching resourcing risk has now been added to projects which is shown in Appendix A.
- An update on the EV Charging project and delivery dates can be provided outside of this meeting.
- There were no quality bids for the Royston Solar Thermal procurement, a feasibility report has been requested so it can be reviewed, and a decision made as to whether to continue with the existing project or roll into a new project on the 2023-24 Council Delivery Plan.
- HR and the Leadership team are looking into the resourcing issues and a more detailed report on resourcing risk could be highlighted at the next O&S meeting.

In response to questions the Service Director – Enterprise stated that a budget had been set regarding the Churchgate project and a consultant had been appointed, with a review scheduled by the July Project Board.

The Chair stated that he would look to prioritise projects for consideration on the agenda from the Council Delivery Plan for future meetings.

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Val Bryant seconded, and following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee determined projects that they wanted to receive more details on as part of the next monitoring report, including the resourcing issues the Council was facing.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That Cabinet notes the progress against Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (Appendix A) including new milestones, deleted milestones, and changes to milestone dates and risks.
- (2) That Cabinet notes the deletion of projects outlined in 8.6, to be replaced by new projects in 2023-24.
- (3) That Cabinet notes the completion in Q4 of the Museum and HTH recovery, Customer Portal, Full review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, and Green Space Management Strategy Projects.
- (4) That Cabinet notes the reduction in the Town Centre Recovery risk score from a 3 to a risk score of 2.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Overview and Scrutiny, and Cabinet, with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks, or opportunities

220 WASTE SHARED SERVICE: CLIENT TEAM AND CORPORATE SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Audio recording 1 hour 17 minutes 39 seconds

Councillor Amy Allen presented the report entitled 'Waste Shared Service: Client Team and Corporate Support Arrangements' highlighting:

- That this report related to the support and governance for the new waste, recycling and street cleansing contract.
- This new contract would allow residents to get a consistent service across East and North Herts.
- Each Council would lead their own Customer Services team.
- North Herts would lead on expenditure management on behalf of both Councils, although each Council will remain in charge of their own income management.
- The new service would come into effect in 2025.
- As previously agreed at Cabinet, the Customer Services team will be managed by the in-house corporate team at each Council.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett

In response to questions Councillor Allen stated that:

- The contract would go live in May 2025.
- Bin collections were moved to 6.30am and this was normal across other authorities to account for hotter weather.
- Bigger bins will need to be replaced at the expense of the resident or Urbaser, depending on cause.
- Food caddies and blue paper boxes were free to replace and could be requested online by residents and therefore are not referenced in this document.

In response to question the Shared Waste Service Manager stated that:

- East Herts had considered, commented on, and agreed the recommendations at their Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the waste agreement.
- The transition to a new payment system with online integration was a big project, and consideration had been given to Plan B scenarios but believed there is enough time to get the resources in place for a seamless transition.
- There would not be a joint waste committee, but the partnership would continue, with the only minor change being that the Executive Member for Finance would be invited to relevant meetings.
- The legal implications were included on the Cabinet version of the report and confirmed how the governance arrangements would work alongside the Council Constitution.
- Within the Street Cleansing Policy, rural areas referred to did not mean the villages, but rather rural roads where road closures may be required or where it could be incorporated into already existing schedules.
- The 3-14 days stated did not mean that it would take 14 days for action, and it was normal for action to be taken before the 14-days.

Councillor Nigel Mason proposed, and Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the draft timeline for transition for customer service provision outlined at 8.7 in the report was noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That each Council leads on their own customer service provision with one set of processes for customer interactions being developed and agreed with a focus on resolution at the first point of contact.
- (2) That Cabinet agrees, the proposed updates and changes to financial management and governance arrangements and subsequent necessary changes to the Inter Authority Agreement outlined in Section 8.
- (3) That Cabinet agrees to the updated waste service policy statements contained in Appendix 2 to come into force from May 2025.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the shared waste service.

221 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Audio recording – 1 hour 33 minutes and 27 seconds

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Val Bryant seconded and, following a vote, it was

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following report will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

222 AN UPDATE OF THE ENTERPRISE DIRECTORATE'S WORK PROGRAMME

N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recording is available.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

REASON FOR DECISION: The report is following the request of the Committee for an update on the progress of the Enterprise Directorate work programme and is for information only.

223 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Audio recording – 1 hour 49 minutes and 50 seconds

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

- The supplementary document showed the 2023 -2024 Work Programme, the report cycle had been discussed with the Chair, Vice Chair, and Officers.
- Any member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could request an agenda item for consideration.
- Crime and Disorder matters would be discussed at the January meeting and Members were requested to suggest discussion topics so that relevant presenters could be found.
- The standard Enterprise Update would be removed and focused on specific projects that would be added to the Work Programme.
- The LGA Peer Report action plan could be added to the Work Programme item to review and monitor the progression.

The Chair stated that future agendas would be reduced so that the Committee could scrutinise more efficiently and invited the Members to suggest future items.

The following Member took part in the discussion:

- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Matt Barnes

Points of discussion were:

- Issues of staff safety and abusive telephone calls.
- The implementation of the new Leisure Contract.
- Draft Sustainability SPD report.

In response, Councillor Compton as Chair stated that:

- Safeguarding was on the September agenda, and a request would be made to include staff safety.
- The implementation of the new Leisure Contract would be added.

In response to the discussion, the Committee Member and Scrutiny Manager stated that the Draft Sustainability was already on the work plan as part of the Local Plan.

Councillor Adam Compton as Chair proposed, and Councillor Val Bryant seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee prioritises proposed topics for inclusion in the work programme 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, as attached as Appendix B, suggests a list of items to be considered at its meetings in the coming civic year.

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.

The meeting closed at 9:25

Chair

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RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

REFERENCE	RESOLUTION	RESPONSE/OUTCOME	STATUS
	TASK AND FINISH GROUP ON COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT		
JUNE 20 MIN 9 (3) Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 16th June 2020	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.	A draft scoping document has been put together and was presented to Members at the September meeting and approved. Following approval from the Committee for the core principles of the review, Group Leaders have been consulted to appoint members to the Task & Finish Group and arrange suitable dates for the Group to meet.	In progress
	LOCAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION		
MARCH 21 MIN 93 (4) Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 9th March 2021	Recommended to Cabinet: 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

	CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN		
JUNE 23 MIN 46 Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 20th June 2023	The Chair asked for a progress report on the Action Tracker at the next meeting of the Committee, to ensure that required actions were monitored by the Committee.	An Action Tracker with the recommendations from the CPC report would be included as an appendix to every Work Programme report.	In progress

PREVIOUS REFERRALS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REFERENCE	RESOLUTION	RESPONSE/OUTCOME	
JUNE 23 Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 20th June 2023	Four referrals were made to Cabinet from the Committee on 20 June 2023: 1. Corporate Peer Challenge Report and Action Plan 2. North Herts Place Narrative 3. Waste Shared service: Client Team Corporate Support Arrangements 4. Q4 Council Delivery Plan Update	Referrals were considered, and all report recommendations were approved by Cabinet on 27 June 2023: Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 27th June, 2023, 7.30 pm North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk) .	Complete

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
12th SEPTEMBER 2023**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: ANNUAL REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN AND ADULTS (2022-23)

REPORT OF: SAFEGUARDING TEAM LEADER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee be recommended to:

- 2.1 Receive and comment on the annual report of progress made against the Council's fulfilment of the statutory duty to maintain an effective safeguarding function regarding children, adults, modern slavery and domestic abuse.
- 2.2 Note the recent Shared Internal Audit Service (SIAS) audit (Appendix A) and its Action Plan tracker (Appendix B).
- 2.3 Agree that sufficient and robust processes are in place at the Council for application and review of safeguarding processes, and that an annual review and presentation to this committee should continue.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. None considered appropriate given the Committees remit.

- 5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**
- 5.1 The Executive and Deputy Member for Community & Partnerships have been consulted and have endorsed the content of the report. The Leadership Team have also been consulted and support the contents of the report.
- 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 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on all statutory agencies working with children and young people to 'safeguard and promote their welfare' and includes responsibility to monitor sufficient arrangements in services they contract out to others.
- 7.2 The Care Act 2014 places a duty on Districts Councils and other local organisations to cooperate fully with their local Safeguarding Adults Board by referring concerns and providing information when requested to assist with investigations.
- 7.3 The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to participate in Domestic Homicide Reviews whilst the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires local authorities to provide safe accommodation, homelessness assistance and additional support services for victims.
- 7.4 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires local authorities to refer child and adult victims to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).
- 7.5 District Council representation is maintained at the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, Hertfordshire District and Borough Councils Safeguarding Group, Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership and Hertfordshire Multi Agency Prevent Board.
- 7.6 Our primary statutory function remains that of referring concerns to the relevant agency for necessary action. When making a formal referral, the Council should receive notification as to whether the referral has met the threshold for further enquiry or not. An officer who has significant dealings with the victim could be asked to contribute to further proceedings and/or provide further information. Concerns that do not meet the threshold for a statutory investigation will be passed back to the organisation. Officers have a duty to offer information and support including contact details for organisations who can provide further advice and guidance. Concerns that do not meet the threshold for statutory investigation are logged on a central database enabling officers to see if the ongoing reporting of additional concerns should trigger a future referral.
- 7.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an annual report detailing safeguarding activity undertaken by the Council over the previous year and significant actions that will be undertaken in the coming year. Following the Safeguarding Audit report recommendations (Appendix) they shall also receive an update note bi-annually for information, that enables the Committee to note and track any recommendations and actions taken.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The Council's safeguarding referral rates:

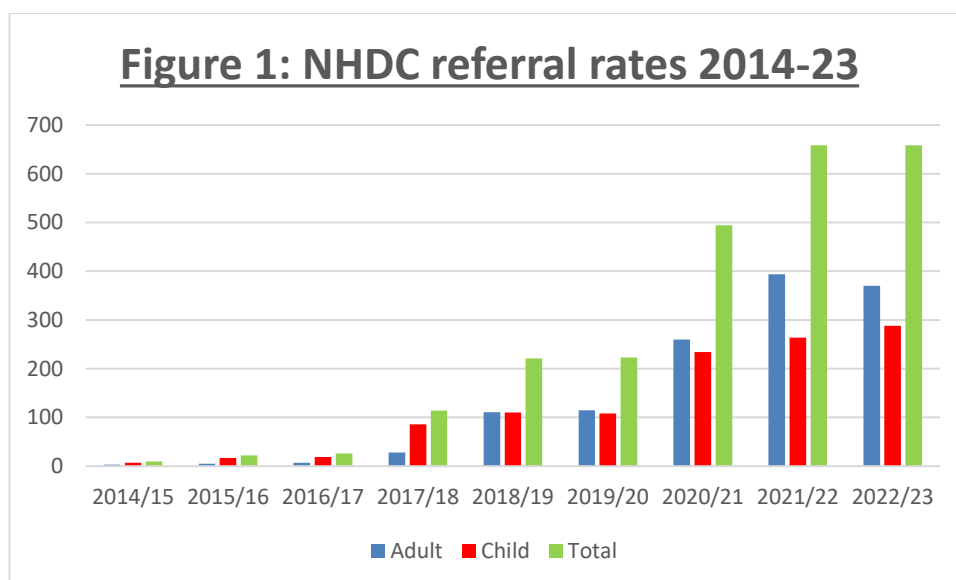
<u>Reason for referral</u>	<u>No. of referrals</u> <u>20/21</u>	<u>No. of referrals</u> <u>21/22</u>	<u>No. of referrals</u> <u>22/23</u>
CHILD			
Child at risk of significant harm	30	38	51
Child present & parent deemed intentionally homeless	4	2	9
Child in household where domestic abuse is present*	198	223	220
Modern Slavery (children)	0	0	0
Concerns about a child below threshold for a referral (other help offered)	2	1	8
Total no. of cases involving children	234	264	288
ADULT			
Adult with care & support needs at risk of significant harm	23	29	108
Adult with unmet mental health need (mental health crisis)	33	50	74
Modern Slavery (adult)	0	8	0
Domestic abuse (adult)** * & ** - adult domestic abuse victims will sometimes have more than one child present in the household, hence numbers of child victims are higher than adult.	173	251	93
Concerns about an adult below threshold for a referral (other help offered) / or consent declined	31	56	95
Total no. of cases involving adults	260	394	370
TOTAL CHILD & ADULT CASES	494 (+97% from 19/20)	658 (+33% from 20/21)	658 (- 0.0% from 21/22)

Table 1: Safeguarding referral rates 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23

8.1.1 As shown in figure 1 (below) the Council has continued to record and report more concerns year on year since 2014 when centralised records began. However, until 2020, referral rates into external statutory agencies have remained relatively static, tending to fluctuate up and down between quarters with no substantial changes from one year to the next. Our rising referral rates have not been reflective of an increase in abuse in our local communities, but due to positive developments at the Council such as the introduction of a central database of referrals, mandatory corporate safeguarding training and numerous awareness raising campaigns. These have resulted in both an increased awareness and confidence amongst staff as well as improved corporate oversight about the safeguarding actions undertaken across the organisation resulting in a steady increase in our recorded referral rates.

- 8.1.2 The significant increase in referral rates between 2020/21 and 2021/22 was consistent with national trends which saw a surge in requests for domestic abuse support services and lower referrals for safeguarding concerns due to reduced face to face contact between officers and the public, and a smaller increase in referrals for mental health support. In 2022/23, referral rates have continued to rise across all categories, we have seen a significant increase in referrals for adults with care & support needs at risk of significant harm, and adults with unmet mental health needs (mental health crisis).
- 8.1.3 Referrals for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis have continued to increase. We have seen an increase in several referrals due to the current cost-of-living crisis. Many statutory and third sector organisations providing mental health support report that demand currently far exceeds resources. Long waits for treatment can be distressing for the individual but also more time consuming for officers looking to provide alternative sources of support. Hertfordshire County Council have put together a Food Aid Providers list which has been shared with individuals in need of this facility.
- 8.1.4 SADA have commenced a project in North Herts. The project is enabling SADA to work in those areas in North Hertfordshire where we know there is under reporting of domestic abuse and high levels of deprivation ¹

¹ [New data from Refuge warns that cost of living crisis is forcing survivors of domestic abuse to stay with abusive partners. - Refuge](#)



8.2 Actions completed April 2022 to March 2023:

- 8.2.1 Introductory, basic and advanced child and adult safeguarding training has been delivered to all officers (new or refresher) and introductory e-learning is now mandatory as a minimum level of training for all staff. All new starters should attend the relevant level of training (note audit report for e-learning for all staff now within the first few working days). Officers refresh training every 3 years and approximately 200 bookings for training are facilitated every year.
- 8.2.2 Representation has been maintained at the Hertfordshire District and Borough Council Safeguarding Group which brings together all ten districts and the Adults Board and Children's Partnership.

- 8.2.3 Ongoing contribution to Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Panels involving North Hertfordshire residents. There have been three historic DHRs re-reviewed following Home Officer consideration, one from 2018 finalised review referred during 2023 and one from 2022, currently under consideration.
- 8.2.4 Continued delivery of the corporate safeguarding learning and development programme to ensure all new starters receive a first day information sheet and undertake a learning needs analysis, corporate induction safeguarding briefing and the relevant level of training.
- 8.2.5 Continued maintenance of the corporate safeguarding database, including responses to Section 17 and 47 enquiries for children and Section 42 information sharing requests for adults as well as subject access and freedom of information requests.
- 8.2.6 Officers and members were offered additional training on a variety of safeguarding issues including domestic abuse, modern slavery and supporting individuals experiencing a mental health crisis / suicide attempt.
- 8.2.7 A variety of local and national campaigns were promoted to the local community and to staff through monthly Insight articles including domestic abuse, making good quality referrals, professional curiosity and promoting training opportunities.
- 8.2.8 To continue to support the North Herts Community Safety Partnership's 'Protecting Vulnerable People' strategic priority which incorporates domestic abuse and violence. As a priority this encourages all partners to lead and support where appropriate campaigns through social media, exhibition stands and events to highlight issues relating to this. The Council will continue to promote all national and local support domestic abuse services available.
- 8.2.9 There was a restructure of the Safeguarding team during the latter part of 2022, with the Safeguarding Team Leader and Safeguarding Admin Assistant appointed into role in December 2022. The Safeguarding Team was also formally included within Policy & Community Services from February 2023. This was to provide further resilience to deal with the increasing level of referrals and actions required.
- 8.2.10 SIAS (Shared Internal Audit Service) Safeguarding Audit commenced in March 2023. This was undertaken by Hertfordshire in Partnership. The Audit completed on the 25th May 2023, and draft audit report issued 8th June 2023. Concluded that overall reasonable assurance was given, two medium and four low priority findings identified and recommendations as a result of the work undertaken. A copy of the Audit was provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Chair and Vice chair when the final version was issued in July 2023. The final report is also Appended at A, and this and the Action Plan tracker at B contain the recommendations. The Committee will note, as indicated above, that in addition to the annual report, an Information note is also provided to the Committee to provide regular updates.
- 8.3 Work April 2023 to March 2024:**
- 8.3.1 The Team will continue to promote local and national campaigns, which have included the National Stalking Awareness Week April 23, World Elder Abuse Day, Labour Exploitation Week Sept 23, and the Anti-Slavery Day October 2023.

- 8.3.2 The work will include the continuation of all ongoing day to day safeguarding functions: training for new staff and refresher training for existing staff; maintenance of database and information sharing requests; representation on relevant networks and partnership groups; coordination of Corporate Safeguarding Group with twice yearly meetings; data retention compliance.
- 8.3.3 To ensure effective compliance regarding the Authority's duties in relation to modern slavery and human trafficking and Domestic Homicide Reviews. The Committee should note that the Government has recently been finalising a consultation of the guidance on the process and the outcome will be provided in due course.
- 8.3.4 Bespoke training will be offered to officers on mental health and hoarding behaviours.
- 8.3.5 The Team will continue to utilise the Government Modern Slavery Statement Registry to easily assess information in relation to suppliers' compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- 8.3.6 There will also be a continuation with the work in partnership with SADA to manage domestic abuse referrals and to support staff managing these cases.
- 8.3.7 Ensure staff and designated safeguarding officers are equipped to support complex requests for help from individuals experiencing a mental health crisis, in terms of technical skills and knowledge but also aftercare for staff supporting individuals who are self-harming or threatening suicide.
- 8.3.8 Review Corporate Safeguarding Groups Terms of reference and delivery of meeting, to ensure that participation is maximised and meaningful.
- 8.3.9 The Team will review the audit actions that arose out of the recent Safeguarding Audit and try to address these. Of specific relevance to this Committee, are the recommendations numbered 2 "Councillor/ Member Safeguarding Training". Member training uptake has been low – at best 45%. SIAS have recommended that all Members complete the E-learning module and that is particular importance to the Membership of this Committee (as the overseeing body).

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Section 6 of the Council's Constitution at paragraph 6.2.7(y) (p 59) states that the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee includes to "Consider reports relating to the authority's safeguarding responsibilities".
- 9.2 The relevant legislation includes the Children Act 2004, the key points of which are:-
- Section 11 places a statutory duty on key people and bodies – including district councils to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
 - Section 10 outlines the duty to promote inter-agency cooperation between named agencies (including district councils).
- 9.3 Legislation to reform multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children formed part of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, which sets out new safeguarding duties. Local

Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB's) have been abolished and new requirements have been placed on top tier local authorities, the police and health to make arrangements for safeguarding children in their local area. In Hertfordshire, the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP) has been established, led by the local authority, police and health with partnership engagement from other organisations including the District and Borough Councils.

- 9.4 The Care Act 2014 came into effect on 1st April 2015 and places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide services to meet the needs of adults who require care and support. A duty to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board in every local authority area was introduced and a duty has been placed on District Councils alongside other local organisations to cooperate fully with the board.
- 9.5 The key responsibility for safeguarding in Hertfordshire lies with the County Council and it is important to remember that it is not the responsibility of any District Council member, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider to determine whether abuse is being experienced, or has taken place, or indeed the nature of any abuse.
- 9.6 The role of the member, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider is to inform and report concerns, not to investigate or judge. A District Council is not responsible for investigating any safeguarding incidents or allegations, involving children, young people or adults at risk, but provides the local 'eyes and ears' to enable a route to report any concerns.
- 9.7 Statutory guidance that was issued under 9 (3) of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to participate in Domestic Homicide Reviews. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 also places a duty on local authorities in relation to safe accommodation, homelessness assistance and additional support services for victims of domestic abuse.
- 9.8 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 places specific duties on local authorities under sections 43 and 52 of the Act, to refer child victims or consenting adult victims through to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), or to make a duty to notify referral (DtN) to the Home Office for a Single Competent Authority (SCA) assessment. Modern Slavery will be treated as falling under the over-arching area of safeguarding and reported through to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as part of the annual report accordingly.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Currently, the corporate training budget provides revenue funding for all levels of safeguarding training. It should be noted that when there are increased training needs for both staff and members in response to the national agenda e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation, Prevent, domestic abuse, this will place additional pressure on learning and development budgets. In addition, the Council continues to source training opportunities that are provided free of charge by partners where possible.
- 10.2 There are no capital implications.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Council's safeguarding policies and procedures outline the various steps taken to reduce the risk to employees, councillors and children and adults at risk of abuse and

harm accessing our services, including procedures for safe recruitment, learning and development for employees and reporting procedures for employees with concerns.

- 11.2 These policies and procedures are now established throughout the organisation, with processes in place to monitor, review and report ongoing implementation as a business-as-usual activity.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 12.2 Due to their age, development and dependency on adults including in the delivery of services, children are vulnerable and therefore often more open to abuse. They have a legal right to be protected and for organisations to take appropriate action to prevent and report suspected abusive behaviour. The Equality Act supports the Children Act 2004 to provide this protection to vulnerable children.

- 12.3 Equally, adults who are more vulnerable, either through decreased mental capacity/age related dementia, learning difficulties, or their personal domestic situation i.e. changing from one residential care home to another, have a legal right to be protected and for organisations to take appropriate action to prevent and report suspected abusive behaviour.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” 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 As indicated in the main body of this report, the corporate human resourcing required to fulfil the Authorities statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding agenda is increasing and it is likely that this will continue.

- 15.2 In regard to the Human Resources service role in safeguarding it is, in the main, responsible for the corporate management, process and administration of the Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Disclosure Barring Service Employment Checks Policy. The Human Resource Service also assist with learning and development training required for safeguarding.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix A – SIAS Audit June 2023

- 16.2 Appendix B - SIAS Audit Management Action tracker

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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- 17.6 HR Help
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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 None.

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Final Internal Audit Report

North Herts Council – Safeguarding 2022/23

June 2023

Issued to:	Helen Rae - Community Health and Wellbeing Team Leader Lisa Mcdonnell - Safeguarding Team Leader Lisa Mcdonald - Safeguarding Admin Assistant Reuben Ayavoo – Policy and Communities Manager Jeanette Thompson - Service Director (Legal and Community)
Copied to	Anthony Roche – Managing Director Tim Everitt – Performance and Risk Officer Ian Couper – Service Director (Resources) FAR Committee Members
Report Status:	Final
Reference:	N097/22/001
Overall Assurance:	Reasonable
Recommendations:	Two Medium, Four Low

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

- 1.1 Internal Audit provides North Herts Council (the Council) with an independent and objective opinion on the organisation's governance arrangements, encompassing internal control and risk management, by completing an annual risk-based internal audit plan. This internal audit forms part of the approved 2022/23 Internal Audit Plan.
- 1.2 Safeguarding is a collective responsibility to ensure adults, young people and children are free from harm or abuse. Legislative reforms (Care Act 2014 and Children and Social Work Act 2017) placed duties on top tier local authorities and health services to implement a Safeguarding Adults Board. Requirements were also placed on top tier local authorities, the Police and health services to plan for safeguarding children under their jurisdiction. The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) were established as a result, it being led by Hertfordshire County Council, the Police and health services. The Council also works in partnership with the HSAB and HSCP.
- 1.3 The Council works with several service users and has a responsibility for making safeguarding referrals to the appropriate agency where it establishes potential safeguarding concerns. In 2021/22, the Council made 661 safeguarding referrals. This is following a trend of rising referral rates, with the previous two years seeing 252 referrals made (2019/20) and 496 referrals made (2020/21).
- 1.4 The purpose of this internal audit was to provide assurance that training arrangements are in place to enable safeguarding awareness, mechanisms in place to take forward actions or recommendations from partnership arrangements, and that there is sufficient oversight in place from senior management and Members. The internal audit also included a sample review of referrals/incidents, including the arrangements in place regarding the logging of safeguarding referrals on the central database, and whether these were supported by appropriate evidence.
- 1.5 The internal audit did not cover whistleblowing arrangements, Prevent, domestic abuse, modern slavery, 'county lines' and gangs, cuckooing, radicalisation, or safeguarding allegations made against Council employees, contractors, or partners. In addition, safer recruitment was not in scope and has been included in the 2023/24 internal audit plan. Please see section 2 below for confirmation of the areas which were in scope for this internal audit.

Overall Audit Opinion

- 1.6 Based on the work performed during this audit we can provide overall **reasonable assurance** that there are effective controls in place for the areas covered by this review.
- 1.7 From the review undertaken, the following key statutory requirements and elements of good practice were confirmed to be in place:

- a) The process for assessing safeguarding training requirements was discussed with key officers and management assurance received that sufficient mechanisms were in place. A safeguarding training tracker was also found to be in place.
 - b) The Named Safeguarding Officer (NSO) was an appropriate senior officer (Service Director – Legal & Community) and Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) had been clearly identified, with contact details available through the Council's Intranet.
 - c) The Council are partners of the HSAB and HSCP and have completed the most recently issued safeguarding self-assessments (2020/21 and 2019/20 respectively). The Council is also part of the District Safeguarding Group (DSG), and we understand pertinent information from the HSAB and HSCP meetings feed into the DSG. All three DSG meetings held in 2022 were attended by a NHC representative and we also received management assurance that the Safeguarding Team Leader attended the DSG meeting on 23/03/2023.
 - d) Action plans were produced from the 2020/21 HSAB self-assessment and presentation process, whilst an action plan was also produced from the 2019 HSCP self-assessment. We have reviewed the actions plans from the self-assessments and confirmed the January 2023 update of the HSAB action plan shows all entries had a green RAG rating. We received management assurance the actions from the HSCP action plan were incorporated immediately into the day to day working by the Safeguarding Support Officer. Therefore, based on the above we have received assurance there are no outstanding actions from the most recent HSAB and HSCP self-assessments.
 - e) At the time of testing, the Council had publicly accessible web pages outlining how safeguarding concerns for adults and children can be reported.
 - f) Through the availability of intranet guidance, DSO support (if required by referring officers), as well as oversight from the safeguarding team (Safeguarding Team Leader and Safeguarding Admin Assistant), we have been assured there are clear processes in place at the Council for officers to make safeguarding referrals. We received this assurance through a combination of documentation reviewed and management assurance.
 - g) Safeguarding updates are provided to a wider group of officers at the Council using the online monthly staff briefing magazine 'Insight'. We have seen examples providing information on training available, high level safeguarding referral statistics and updates on making referrals.
 - h) For a sample of safeguarding referrals and a safeguarding incident reviewed, these were found to be logged on a centrally maintained database by the safeguarding team and supported by backing documentation.
- 1.8 From the testing completed, the following findings were also identified, which have affected our assurance opinion in the risk areas identified in section 2 below:

- a) We have raised three recommendations (two medium and one low) relating to safeguarding training completion and tracking processes in place. Please see recommendations 1, 2 and 5 in Appendix A.
- b) At the time of testing, the last time the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) had convened was in November 2021. Although we were assured the CSG meetings would be restarting in 2023/24, we have raised a low priority recommendation to ensure this continues to operate. We also understand that the CSG is an important mechanism to feedback actions and points of good practice from the HSAB and HSCP, however a key officer outlined that the bi-annual meetings do not currently align with the DSG meetings. We have raised a recommendation for the CSG meetings to be held within a suitable timeframe after DSG meetings have taken place.
- c) Although action plans were produced for the most recently completed HSAB and HSCP issued self-assessments (2020/21 and 2019/20 respectively), review of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports did not show these action plans being reported to Members. It is our understanding that this committee is the main mechanism by which Member oversight of safeguarding is achieved. A finding and recommendation have been raised to ensure the Committee receives the resulting action plans from all HSAB and HSCP self-assessment activities. We acknowledge this usually takes place for HSAB self-assessments but had not occurred on this occasion.
- d) From our review of the Councils safeguarding intranet pages and supporting documents, we found some minor revisions could be made to provide some missing information on the referral process for CRHTT to Luton, amendments to contact details on the DSO page and clarifying the support available to officers on some safeguarding pages. These are discussed further to recommendation six below.

1.9 Please note the commentary in the report covers the period during which the audit was undertaken (between March to May 2023).

1.10 For definitions of our assurance levels, please see Appendix B.

Summary of Recommendations

1.11 We have raised two medium and four low priority recommendations to further strengthen the control environment.

1.12 Please see Management Action Plan at Appendix A for further detail.

Annual Governance Statement

1.13 This report provides reasonable levels of assurance to support the Annual Governance Statement.

2. ASSURANCE BY RISK AREA

2.1 Our specific objectives in undertaking this work, as per the Terms of Reference, were to provide the Council with assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls, processes, and records in place to mitigate risks in the following areas:

Risk Area	No	Limited	Reasonable	Substantial
<p>Safeguarding Training – The Council has assessed the safeguarding training level required for each officer position at the Council and for Members, including the frequency of refresher training. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that new starters complete the required safeguarding training in a timely manner. Training trackers are in place to clearly monitor when safeguarding training has been completed, when training is due for renewal with reminders being issued in a timely manner to ensure training is renewed before expiring. Escalated alerts are issued for overdue safeguarding training to ensure these are completed. Mechanisms are in place to ensure safeguarding training being delivered is sufficient and relevant.</p>				
<p>Key Safeguarding Roles - The Council has identified its Named Safeguarding Officer (NSO) and has Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) in place. The council has suitable arrangements in place to ensure staff are aware of who the NSO and DSOs are and how these officers can be contacted.</p>				
<p>Partnership and Oversight Arrangements - The Council is a partner of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP). Mechanisms are in place to ensure the Council actively takes forward actions and outcomes from the partnership meetings. Partnership issued self-assessments audits have been completed by the Council with rectifying actions being identified and taken forward for implementation in a timely manner. Where follow up visits have been conducted by the HSAB or HSCP, recommendations made have been implemented in a timely manner. Appropriate tracking tools are in place to monitor the status of actions and</p>				

recommendations, with these being reported to senior management and members on a scheduled basis.				
Referrals – The Council has clearly advertised to the public how referrals for safeguarding adults and children are to be completed on its website. A clear process is in place for officers at the Council to make safeguarding referrals. A central database is maintained of safeguarding incidents and referrals made with these being adequately supported by backing documentation/evidence.				
Overall				

2.2 See definitions for the above assurance levels at Appendix B.

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
1.	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>We reviewed the safeguarding training completed for a sample of officers by reviewing the Councils safeguarding training tracker. The sample included a mix of officers requiring different levels of training. This included basic and advanced safeguarding training as well as E-Learning. The latter was limited to a sample of new starters from the 2022/23 financial year, due to the safeguarding team recently incorporating monitoring of this training completion into the training tracker. From the 13 officers we sampled, the following findings were noted:</p> <p><u>Incomplete Training:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three officers were assessed as requiring basic adult and child safeguarding training courses however, they had not completed one or both courses since starting employment at the Council. The start dates of the officers were 30/06/19, 29/03/21 and 23/08/21. It is acknowledged that actions have been taken by the current safeguarding team to try and schedule courses for these officers. Three of the five outstanding courses were yet to be scheduled at the time of testing. • A casual Careline Operator who started employment on 22/08/22 has not completed 	Medium	<p>We recommend:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where officers have outstanding or overdue safeguarding training, the safeguarding team continues to work with these officers to schedule the outstanding training as a matter of priority. 2. For the Casual Careline Operator mentioned, they must undertake the same level of safeguarding training which has been assessed as required by other Careline Operators (this was the basic adult and child safeguarding training at the time of testing). 	<p>1. Responsible Officer: The member of staff/ their line manager/ follow up by the Safeguarding Team. Corporate issue.</p> <p>If they have failed to attend an organised Basic or Advanced level training course, then should (if reasonably practical) undertake the Introductory E-learning within a week.</p> <p>2. Responsible Officer: The Careline staff, their line Manager and the Service Director: Customers.</p> <p>To ensure undertaken Introductory e-learning within the week and then to attend the next basic course arranged. Otherwise, will be</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start by end of June 2023, once staff and their line managers aware. 2. 31 December 2023 for ECP Training

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 37	<p>the basic adult and child safeguarding courses. It is our understanding that Careline Operators would as a minimum be required to undertake both these basic safeguarding courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An officer's basic child safeguarding training expired in June 2022 and at the time of testing (April 2023) had yet to be renewed. We acknowledge actions had been taken by the current safeguarding team to attempt to book a training course for renewal. <p><u>Timeliness of Training Completion</u></p> <p>We understand the Council aims to schedule basic and advanced safeguarding courses within three months of an officers start date. We noted for some of the officers we sample tested, that they attended training courses after three months. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An officer attending basic safeguarding courses 14 and 15 months after their employment start date. An officer attending basic safeguarding courses 6 and 11 months after their employment start date. Two officers scheduled to attend an advanced safeguarding course 5 months after their employment start date. It is acknowledged 		<p>3. The Council reviews whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current aim of scheduling basic or advanced safeguarding training for completion within three months is timely or whether this needs to be shortened. E-Learning training is sufficient in the interim time where officers are waiting to receive basic or advanced safeguarding training. <p>4. Backing evidence must be adequately</p>	<p>reviewing with ECP if there are alternative ways to provide Basic and Advanced training.</p> <p>Casual Careline Operator has undertaken E-Learning.</p> <p>3. Reviewed and considered to be sufficient, as the courses are run every month and should be undertaken within the probation period of up to 6 months. No further action required.</p> <p>All new staff will undertake e-learning within the week, and those who just have to undertake this level of training, every 3 years.</p> <p>4. The Safeguarding team already do this, so N/A.</p>	<p>3. N/A</p> <p>4. N/A</p>

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 38	<p>these officers are the members of the newly formed safeguarding team.</p> <p>We were unable to obtain confirmation of the reasons for some of the delays mentioned above (first two bullet points), due to these pre-dating the current safeguarding team and therefore inhibiting the audit trails available.</p> <p>We were assured that where safeguarding courses cannot be provided in a timely manner, the safeguarding e-Learning module is instead issued to officers for completion. For three of the four officers, the training tracker shows they have completed the E-Learning training. For the remaining officer the date of completion was not logged on the training tracker. We understand that the safeguarding team feel the E-learning is sufficient to cover officers until they attend basic or advanced safeguarding courses. However, as the E-Learning is an introductory module, this may not be sufficient for officers who have roles/responsibilities requiring basic or advanced safeguarding courses.</p> <p><u>Evidence of Training Completion:</u></p> <p>During testing, we requested to see backing evidence to confirm officers had attended/completed the basic or advanced safeguarding training courses held in person.</p>		<p>retained to demonstrate officers have attended/completed safeguarding training courses.</p> <p>5. Officers assessed as requiring only E-Learning safeguarding training, must renew this training on a scheduled basis (e.g., every two years).</p>	<p>5. Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team/ Learning and Development Team.</p> <p>Agreed, albeit every 3 years.</p>	<p>5. Start implementation from July 2023.</p>

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 39	<p>For three officers, backing evidence could not be located to demonstrate attendance at either one or both basic safeguarding courses and for one officer no evidence could be located to demonstrate attendance to an advanced child safeguarding course.</p> <p><u>E-Learning Training</u></p> <p>From discussions with key officers, it is understood that the E-Learning safeguarding course is not required to be renewed. This means that officers who are assessed as only requiring the E-Learning safeguarding training, do not need to undertake any safeguarding training renewal. As all officers have a responsibility for safeguarding, a recommendation has been raised requiring these officers to renew their safeguarding training on a scheduled basis.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>Officers do not undertake an adequate level of safeguarding training for their job role. This could lead to officers not identifying potential safeguarding concerns or not taking appropriate action. This could result in harm to the persons affected and damage to the Councils reputation.</p>				

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2.	<p>Councillor/Member Safeguarding Training</p> <p>From discussions with key officers, we found that Councillor uptake of safeguarding training was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 of 48 Members have not had any safeguarding training. • 6 and 10 Members attended the safeguarding children and adult awareness session respectively. Awareness sessions were last held in 2021. • 17 of 48 Members had completed the E-Learning training. E-Learning training is currently not required to be renewed. <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>Members have a responsibility for safeguarding, as their role could include contact with members of the public, whilst they may also be required to have oversight of safeguarding arrangements operating at the Council. Without sufficient training, potential safeguarding incidents may not be identified, or appropriate action may not be taken on identification of potential concerns. This could result in harm to the persons in potential danger and damage to the Councils reputation.</p> <p>As part of their oversight role, Members may not have sufficient awareness of safeguarding</p>	Medium	<p>We recommend, as a minimum, all Members complete the safeguarding E-Learning module. This is to be renewed on a scheduled basis (e.g., every two years).</p> <p>We further recommend, that adult and child safeguarding awareness sessions are run on a scheduled basis for Members (e.g., every two years) or when there is a significant change in membership. We are aware the Council intends to run sessions in 2023/24 following the May 2023 elections.</p>	<p>Responsible Officer: Committee, Member & Scrutiny Officer/ Safeguarding Team (and Service Director: Legal & Community).</p> <p>Responsibility is also with the Members. Dependent on self-audit (i.e., if they have undertaken before / similar or equivalent within the last year), every 4 years.</p> <p>We shall undertake an audit of those elected to check they have undertaken e-learning and seek to ensure outstanding e-learning is taken by them within 6 months. Failing this, this will be completed post all out elections from June 2024.</p> <p>E-learning is sufficient, so not accepted, as a proportionate level for</p>	<p>31 December 2023 for current Members.</p> <p>31 December 2024 for newly elected Members in May 2024.</p> <p>N/A</p>

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
	arrangements to provide challenge and ensure these are operating effectively.		Members with responsibility for oversight of the Councils safeguarding arrangements (e.g., members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), should attend the awareness sessions.	District Councillors. See above, not accepted without Members agreement. This will be reviewed with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee when the Annual Safeguarding report is presented at the September 2023 meeting. At present, E-learning should be completed.	
Page 3. 41	<p>Corporate Safeguarding Group Meetings</p> <p>From discussions with key officers, we understand that the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) meetings are an important mechanism to feedback and discuss actions with officers holding key safeguarding roles at the Council (including DSOs). This includes guidance and points of practice identified from the HSAB, HSCP and DSG meetings.</p> <p>However, at the time of testing the last CSG meeting was held in November 2021. In addition, a key officer has outlined that the CSG meetings have not previously been aligned to the DSG meetings to ensure feedback is provided and discussed in a timely manner after DSG meetings</p>	Low	We recommend CSG meetings are held at least on a bi-annual basis within the Council, with meetings scheduled to take place within a timely manner after DSG meetings (within a month of DSG meetings taking place).	<p>Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team Leader.</p> <p>Accept the bi-annual, but not linked to the DSG as these can be cancelled easily/ do not always align and monthly updates are provided to all CSG members in any event by email.</p> <p>June 2023 CSG meeting has taken place.</p>	October 2023 and continuous going forward.

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 42	<p>have taken place.</p> <p>Whilst we acknowledge the Council are restarting the CSG meetings in 2023/24, we have raised this recommendation to ensure these meetings continue to be held and are scheduled within a suitable timeframe after DSG meetings.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>Actions, guidance, and points of good practice are not sufficiently disseminated and discussed with officers holding key safeguarding roles at the Council. This could lead to slow or ineffective implementation of such actions.</p>				
	<p>4. Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Section 6 of the Councils Constitution ('Scrutiny') includes the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Under 6.2.7 (y) it states a term of the Committee is to 'Consider reports relating to the authority's safeguarding responsibilities'. From review of the annual safeguarding reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, we found that the action plans from the most recently issued HSAB and HSCP self-assessments (2020/21 and 2019 respectively) have not been reported to the committee.</p> <p>We acknowledge the actions from the HSCP self-</p>	Low	<p>We recommend all resulting action plans from HSAB and HSCP issued assessments are reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at least twice a year.</p> <p>Actions/ recommendations</p>	<p>Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team Leader/ Service Director: Legal & Community</p> <p>We include these in the annual report, which ensures any relevant debate as against the figures.</p> <p>The Annual report and an information note will be</p>	<p>To be taken forward for future HSAB/HSCP assessments.</p>

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 43	<p>assessment were immediately incorporated into day-to-day working (as assured by a key officer), however the action plan should have been reported to the committee. In addition, we acknowledge the HSAB action plans are usually reported to the committee, however on this occasion this did not take place.</p> <p>It is also our understanding that progress against action plans are reported once a year to the committee as part of the annual safeguarding report. This means that Members could potentially be waiting 12 months for further updates on the action plans. This does not enable Members to have effective oversight of the action positions.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>Members are not provided with adequate information on actions/recommendations raised from HSAB and HSCP assessment processes, including the current position of implementation of these actions/recommendations. This could prevent Members from being able to provide adequate oversight and challenge to ensure actions/recommendation are being take forward appropriately and in a timely manner. This could lead to inadequate safeguarding processes.</p>		<p>should continue to be reported to the Committee until fully completed. Only once actions have been reported as completed to the committee (with the committee being happy the actions have been adequately completed), these should be ceased to be reported at future meetings.</p>	<p>provided to the Overview & Scrutiny committee to update them on the relevant HSAB/HSCP actions/recommendations. The LGA Peer Committee Support report has two recommendations regarding member training. The first recommendation is for whole council training for the 2023 and 2024 induction of new members. The second recommendation is to review the quality of the provision and delivery of training.</p>	





No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
5.	<p>Safeguarding Training Tracking and Database</p> <p>Following a review of the safeguarding training tracking arrangements, we identified opportunities where these could be strengthened to track a complete picture of the training received by officers at the Council. These are discussed in further detail below:</p> <p><u>Safeguarding and protecting children and adults in our local communities handout:</u></p> <p>We received management assurance the safeguarding handout is issued to new starters when joining the Council. The handout includes a self-certification form at the end asking the new starter to confirm they have received and read the handout. However, from discussions with key officers, we understand this self-certification form is inconsistently completed and returned by new starters. Also, as discussed further below, the safeguarding team do not currently track the completion of the safeguarding handout for all new starters at the Council. Therefore, the completion and return of the self-certifications will enable this mechanism of safeguarding training to be tracked for new starters.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding E-Learning Training</u></p> <p>It is understood the safeguarding team have</p>	Low	<p>We recommend:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the safeguarding handout self-certification process is robustly implemented, with the signed off form being returned to the safeguarding team by all new starters. The date of sign off should then be recorded in the safeguarding training tracker. 2. A monthly report of completed E-Learning safeguarding training is produced by the HR learning and development team and provided to the safeguarding team, to enable the training tracker to be populated with this information. 	<p>Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team Leader</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed. 2. This is already in place so no further action. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implemented and continuous going forward 2. 31 July 2023

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 45	<p>recently begun tracking the completion of the E-Learning safeguarding module by new starters (tracking began at the time of this audit). We understand the safeguarding team are currently confirming completion of the course by asking the officers directly to confirm the date they completed the online module. As we understand reports can be run from the learning system showing the module status of completion, there is an opportunity to instead use this mechanism to confirm training completion, which will support the reliability of information and efficiency of the process.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Training Tracker</u></p> <p>There is an opportunity to record of the following information on the safeguarding training tracker for a complete view of the safeguarding training completed by officers and renewal deadlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training tracker does not record the expiration date (date it must be renewed) for basic or advanced safeguarding training courses. • There is no consistent recording of the safeguarding handout training being completed by new starters. No dedicated section to record this completion date. • No recording of when the corporate induction safeguarding briefing was given to new starters. 		<p>3. The training tracker is reviewed to incorporate the information which is not currently tracked (as per the finding).</p>	<p>3. Reviewed and start date is in place.</p>	<p>3. 31 July 2023</p>

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We found the dates of basic or advanced safeguarding training courses were usually recorded as the month and year of completion. For an accurate audit trail, the full date when the course was attended should be logged (day, month, year). <p>Following on from recommendation two above regarding Councillor safeguarding training, tracking of training expiration dates (e.g., E-Learning) should also be incorporated into the Member safeguarding training tracker.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>The safeguarding training tracker does not record pertinent information to demonstrate when safeguarding training was delivered or when renewal is required. This could limit the effectiveness of the tracker to support in ensuring all aspects safeguarding training has been completed or renewed in a timely manner.</p>				
6.	<p>Safeguarding Intranet Pages</p> <p>Following a review of the Councils safeguarding intranet pages, the following was noted and identified as an opportunity to clarify the information available to officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the Adults Needing Mental Health Support page, the CRHTT referral form for Luton is 	Low	<p>We recommend:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Adults Needing Mental Health Support or supporting 	<p>Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contacted Luton and not accepted as this is Luton's information and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
Page 47	<p>provided. However, the form and supporting information on the page do not outline where the referral form needs to be submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking through the DSO intranet page, we found the email address for the current Safeguarding Team Leader has not been included and the formatting of the safeguarding team email address needs to be corrected. For the two intranet pages listed below, we found no link to the DSO intranet page was provided should officers require any support. <p><u>Associated Opportunity</u></p> <p>Opportunity to clarify some of the safeguarding intranet pages, which could provide additional clarity to officers on how referrals should be made or the support available to officers should they require guidance with regards to safeguarding. This could in turn lead to more effective safeguarding at the Council.</p>		<p>information includes guidance on how the CRHTT referral form for Luton should be submitted.</p> <p>2. The DSO intranet page is reviewed and amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the email address of the current Safeguarding Team Leader. Correct the safeguarding team email address which has been provided. <p>3. For the 'County Lines, Drugs, Gangs and Cuckooing' and 'Safeguarding Information Sharing' intranet pages, outline the contract details for DSOs (link to the DSO intranet page) and or the central safeguarding team, should officers require support.</p>	<p>they do not accept third party referrals any longer</p> <p>Council Intranet pages have been updated to remove information on Luton referrals as no longer relevant.</p> <p>2. This is a very small team and not appropriate to provide the individual email address for 2 part time officers. The corporate generic email will be provided as it currently is.</p> <p>3. Links have been reviewed and working with support in place.</p>	<p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. Implemented</p>

Assurance Level	Definition
Substantial	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exist, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Reasonable	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Limited	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
No	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Priority Level		Definition
Corporate	Critical	 Audit findings which, in the present state, represent a serious risk to the organisation, i.e. reputation, financial resources and / or compliance with regulations. Management action to implement the appropriate controls is required immediately.
Service	High	 Audit findings indicate a serious weakness or breakdown in control environment, which, if untreated by management intervention, is highly likely to put achievement of core service objectives at risk. Remedial action is required urgently.
	Medium	 Audit findings which, if not treated by appropriate management action, are likely to put achievement of some of the core service objectives at risk. Remedial action is required in a timely manner.
	Low	 Audit findings indicate opportunities to implement good or best practice, which, if adopted, will enhance the control environment. The appropriate solution should be implemented as soon as is practically possible.

No.	Finding / Associated Risk	Priority	Recommendation	Management Response	Target Date
1.	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>We reviewed the safeguarding training completed for a sample of officers by reviewing the Councils safeguarding training tracker. The sample included a mix of officers requiring different levels of training. This included basic and advanced safeguarding training as well as E-Learning. The latter was limited to a sample of new starters from the 2022/23 financial year, due to the safeguarding team recently incorporating monitoring of this training completion into the training tracker. From the 13 officers we sampled, the following findings were noted:</p> <p><u>Incomplete Training:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three officers were assessed as requiring basic adult and child safeguarding training courses however, they had not completed one or both courses since starting employment at the Council. The start dates of the officers were 30/06/19, 29/03/21 and 23/08/21. It is acknowledged that actions have been taken by the current safeguarding team to try and schedule courses for these officers. Three of the five outstanding courses were yet to be scheduled at the time of testing. • A casual Careline Operator who started employment on 22/08/22 has not completed 	Medium	<p>We recommend:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where officers have outstanding or overdue safeguarding training, the safeguarding team continues to work with these officers to schedule the outstanding training as a matter of priority. 2. For the Casual Careline Operator mentioned, they must undertake the same level of safeguarding training which has been assessed as required by other Careline Operators (this was the basic adult and child safeguarding training at the time of testing). 3. The Council reviews 	<p>Responsible Officer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The member of staff/ their line manager/ follow up by the Safeguarding Team. If they have failed to attend an organised Basic or Advanced level training course, then should (if reasonably practical) undertake the Introductory E-learning within a week. 2. The Careline staff, their line Manager and the Service Director: Customers to ensure undertaken. Introductory e-learning within the week and then to attend the next basic course arranged. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start by end June 23, once staff and their line managers aware. 2. 31 December 2023 for ECP Training 3. N/A.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 50</p>	<p>the basic adult and child safeguarding courses. It is our understanding that Careline Operators would as a minimum be required to undertake both these basic safeguarding courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An officer’s basic child safeguarding training expired in June 2022 and at the time of testing (April 2023) had yet to be renewed. We acknowledge actions had been taken by the current safeguarding team to book a training course for renewal. <p><u>Timeliness of Training Completion</u></p> <p>We understand the Council aims to schedule basic and advanced safeguarding courses within three months of an officers start date. We noted for some of the officers we sample tested, that they attended training courses after three months. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An officer attending basic safeguarding courses 14 and 15 months after their employment start date. An officer attending basic safeguarding courses 6 and 11 months after their employment start date. Two officers scheduled to attend an advanced safeguarding course 5 months after their employment start date. It is acknowledged these officers are the members of the newly formed safeguarding team. 		<p>whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current aim of scheduling basic or advanced safeguarding training for completion within three months is timely or whether this needs to be shortened. E-Learning training is sufficient in the interim time where officers are waiting to receive basic or advanced safeguarding training. <p>4. Backing evidence must be adequately retained to demonstrate officers have attended/completed safeguarding training courses.</p> <p>5. Officers assessed as requiring only E-Learning safeguarding training, must renew this training on a scheduled basis (e.g., every two years).</p>	<p>3. Reviewed and considered to be sufficient, as the courses are run every month and should be undertaken within the probation period of up to 6 months. No further action required.</p> <p>All new staff will undertake e-learning within the week, and those who just have to undertake this level of training, every 3 years.</p> <p>4. The Safeguarding team already do this, so N/A.</p> <p>5. Agreed, albeit every 3 years.</p>	<p>4. N/A.</p> <p>5. Start implementation from July 2023.</p>
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	<p>We were unable to obtain confirmation of the reasons for some of the delays mentioned above (first two bullet points), due to these pre-dating the current safeguarding team and therefore inhibiting the audit trails available.</p> <p>We were assured that where safeguarding courses cannot be provided in a timely manner, the safeguarding e-Learning module is instead issued to officers for completion. For three of the four officers, the training tracker shows they have completed the E-Learning training. For the remaining officer the date of completion was not logged on the training tracker. We understand that the safeguarding team feel the E-learning is sufficient to cover officers until they attend basic or advanced safeguarding courses. However, as the E-Learning is an introductory module, this may not be sufficient for officers who have roles/responsibilities requiring basic or advanced safeguarding courses.</p> <p><u>Evidence of Training Completion:</u> During testing, we requested to see backing evidence to confirm officers had attended/completed the basic or advanced safeguarding training courses held in person.</p> <p>For three officers, backing evidence could not be located to demonstrate attendance at either one or both basic safeguarding courses and for one officer no evidence could be located to demonstrate attendance to an advanced child safeguarding course.</p>				
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Page 52	<p><u>E-Learning Training</u></p> <p>From discussions with key officers, it is understood that the E-Learning safeguarding course is not required to be renewed. This means that officers who are assessed as only requiring the E-Learning safeguarding training, do not need to undertake any safeguarding training renewal. As all officers have a responsibility for safeguarding, a recommendation has been raised requiring these officers to renew their safeguarding training on a scheduled basis.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>Officers do not undertake an adequate level of safeguarding training for their job role. This could lead to officers not identifying potential safeguarding concerns or not taking appropriate action. This could result in harm to the persons affected and damage to the Councils reputation.</p>				
2.	<p>Councillor/Member Safeguarding Training</p> <p>From discussions with key officers, we found that Councillor uptake of safeguarding training was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 of 48 Members have not had any safeguarding training. • 6 and 10 Members attended the safeguarding children and adult awareness session 	Medium	<p>We recommend, as a minimum, all Members complete the safeguarding E-Learning module. This is to be renewed on a scheduled basis (e.g., every two years).</p>	<p>Responsible Officer: Committee, Member & Scrutiny Officer/ Safeguarding Team (and Service Director: Legal & Community).</p> <p>Responsibility is for Members. Dependent on</p>	

Page 53	<p>respectively. Awareness sessions were last held in 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 of 48 Members had completed the E-Learning training. E-Learning training is currently not required to be renewed. <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>Members have a responsibility for safeguarding, as their role could include contact with members of the public, whilst they may also be required to have oversight of safeguarding arrangements operating at the Council. Without sufficient training, potential safeguarding incidents may not be identified, or appropriate action may not be taken on identification of potential concerns. This could result in harm to the persons in potential danger and damage to the Councils reputation.</p> <p>As part of their oversight role, Members may not have sufficient awareness of safeguarding arrangements to provide challenge and ensure these are operating effectively.</p>		<p>We further recommend, that adult and child safeguarding awareness sessions are run on a scheduled basis for Members (e.g., every two years) or when there is a significant change in membership. We are aware the Council intends to run sessions in 2023/24 following the May 2023 elections.</p> <p>Members with responsibility for oversight of the Councils safeguarding arrangements (e.g., members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), should attend the awareness sessions.</p>	<p>Self audit (i.e. if they have undertaken before/ similar or equivalent within the last year), every 4 years.</p> <p>We shall undertake an audit of those elected to check they have undertaken e-learning and seek to ensure outstanding e-learning is taken by them within 6 months. Failing this, this will be completed post all out elections from June 2024.</p> <p>E-learning is sufficient, so not accepted, as a proportionate level for District Councillors.</p> <p>See above, not accepted without Members agreement. This will be reviewed with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee when the Annual Safeguarding report is presented at the September 2023 meeting.</p>	<p>31 December 2023 for current Members.</p> <p>31 December 2024 for newly elected Members in May 2024.</p> <p>N/A</p>
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				At present, E-learning should be completed.	
3.	<p>Corporate Safeguarding Group Meetings</p> <p>From discussions with key officers, we understand that the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) meetings are an important mechanism to feedback and discuss actions with officers holding key safeguarding roles at the Council (including DSOs). This includes guidance and points of practice identified from the HSAB, HSCP and DSG meetings.</p> <p>However, at the time of testing the last CSG meeting was held in November 2021. In addition, a key officer has outlined that the CSG meetings have not previously been aligned to the DSG meetings to ensure feedback is provided and discussed in a timely manner after DSG meetings have taken place.</p> <p>Whilst we acknowledge the Council are restarting the CSG meetings in 2023/24, we have raised this recommendation to ensure these meetings continue to be held and are scheduled within a suitable timeframe after DSG meetings.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>Actions, guidance, and points of good practice are not sufficiently disseminated and discussed with officers holding key safeguarding roles at the Council. This could lead to slow or ineffective</p>	Low	We recommend CSG meetings are held at least on a bi-annual basis within the Council, with meetings scheduled to take place within a timely manner after DSG meetings (within a month of DSG meetings taking place).	<p>Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team Leader.</p> <p>Accept the bi-annual, but not linked to the DSG as these can be cancelled easily/ do not always align and monthly updates are provided to all CSG members in any event by email.</p> <p>June 2023 CSG meeting has taken place.</p>	October 2023 and continuous going forward.

	implementation of such actions.				
Page 55	<p>4. Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Section 6 of the Councils Constitution ('Scrutiny') includes the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Under 6.2.7 (y) it states a term of the Committee is to 'Consider reports relating to the authority's safeguarding responsibilities'. From review of the annual safeguarding reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, we found that the action plans from the most recently issued HSAB and HSCP self-assessments (2020/21 and 2019 respectively) have not been reported to the committee.</p> <p>We acknowledge the actions from the HSCP self-assessment were immediately incorporated into day-to-day working (as assured by a key officer), however the action plan should have been reported to the committee. In addition, we acknowledge the HSAB action plans are usually reported to the committee, however on this occasion this did not take place.</p> <p>It is also our understanding that progress against action plans are reported once a year to the committee as part of the annual safeguarding report. This means that Members could potentially be waiting 12 months for further updates on the action plans. This does not enable Members to have effective oversight of the action positions.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p>	Low	<p>We recommend all resulting action plans from HSAB and HSCP issued assessments are reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at least twice a year.</p> <p>Actions/ recommendations should continue to be reported to the Committee until fully completed. Only once actions have been reported as completed to the committee (with the committee being happy the actions have been adequately completed), these should be ceased to be reported at future meetings.</p>	<p>Responsible Officer:</p> <p>Safeguarding Team Leader/ Service Director: Legal & Community</p> <p>We include these in the annual report, which ensures any relevant debate as against the figures.</p> <p>The Annual report and an information note will be provided to the Overview & Scrutiny committee to update them on the relevant HSAB/HSCP actions/recommendations</p> <p>The LGA Peer Committee Support report has two recommendations regarding member training. The first recommendation is for whole council training for the 2023 and 2024 induction of new members. The second recommendation is to review the quality of the</p>	<p>To be taken forward for future HSAB/HSCP assessments</p>

	Members are not provided with adequate information on actions/recommendations raised from HSAB and HSCP assessment processes, including the current position of implementation of these actions/recommendations. This could prevent Members from being able to provide adequate oversight and challenge to ensure actions/recommendation are being take forward appropriately and in a timely manner. This could lead to inadequate safeguarding processes.			provision and delivery of training	
Page 56	<p>5. Safeguarding Training Tracking and Database</p> <p>Following a review of the safeguarding training tracking arrangements, we identified opportunities where these could be strengthened to track a complete picture of the training received by officers at the Council. These are discussed in further detail below:</p> <p><u>Safeguarding and protecting children and adults in our local communities handout:</u></p> <p>We received management assurance the safeguarding handout is issued to new starters when joining the Council. The handout includes a self-certification form at the end asking the new starter to confirm they have received and read the handout. However, from discussions with key officers, we understand this self-certification form is inconsistently completed and returned by new starters. Also, as discussed further below, the safeguarding team do not currently track the</p>	Low	<p>We recommend:</p> <p>1. the safeguarding handout self-certification process is robustly implemented, with the signed off form being returned to the safeguarding team by all new starters. The date of sign off should then be recorded in the safeguarding training tracker.</p> <p>2. A monthly report of completed E-Learning safeguarding training is produced by the HR learning and development team and</p>	<p>Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team Leader</p> <p>1. Agreed.</p> <p>2. This is already in place so no further action.</p>	<p>1. Implemented and continuous going forward..</p> <p>2. 31 July 2023.</p>

<p>Page 57</p>	<p>completion of the safeguarding handout for all new starters at the Council. Therefore, the completion and return of the self-certifications will enable this mechanism of safeguarding training to be tracked for new starters.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding E-Learning Training</u></p> <p>It is understood the safeguarding team have recently begun tracking the completion of the E-Learning safeguarding module by new starters (tracking began at the time of this audit). We understand the safeguarding team are currently confirming completion of the course by asking the officers directly to confirm the date they completed the online module. As we understand reports can be run from the learning system showing the module status of completion, there is an opportunity to instead use this mechanism to confirm training completion, which will support the reliability of information and efficiency of the process.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Training Tracker</u></p> <p>There is an opportunity to record of the following information on the safeguarding training tracker for a complete view of the safeguarding training completed by officers and renewal deadlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training tracker does not record the expiration date (date it must be renewed) for basic or advanced safeguarding training courses. 		<p>provided to the safeguarding team, to enable the training tracker to be populated with this information.</p> <p>3. The training tracker is reviewed to incorporate the information which is not currently tracked (as per the finding).</p>	<p>3. Reviewed and start date is in place.</p>	<p>3. 31 July 2023.</p>
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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 58</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no consistent recording of the safeguarding handout training being completed by new starters. No dedicated section to record this completion date. • No recording of when the corporate induction safeguarding briefing was given to new starters. • We found the dates of basic or advanced safeguarding training courses were usually recorded as the month and year of completion. For an accurate audit trail, the full date when the course was attended should be logged (day, month, year). <p>Following on from recommendation two above regarding Councillor safeguarding training, tracking of training expiration dates (e.g., E-Learning) should also be incorporated into the Member safeguarding training tracker.</p> <p><u>Associated Risk</u></p> <p>The safeguarding training tracker does not record pertinent information to demonstrate when safeguarding training was delivered or when renewal is required. This could limit the effectiveness of the tracker to support in ensuring all aspects safeguarding training has been completed or renewed in a timely manner.</p>				
<p>6.</p>	<p>Safeguarding Intranet Pages</p> <p>Following a review of the Councils safeguarding intranet pages, the following was noted and</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>We recommend:</p>	<p>Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team</p>	

<p>Page 59</p>	<p>identified as an opportunity to clarify the information available to officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the Adults Needing Mental Health Support page, the CRHTT referral form for Luton is provided. However, the form and supporting information on the page do not outline where the referral form needs to be submitted. Looking through the DSO intranet page, we found the email address for the current Safeguarding Team Leader has not been included and the formatting of the safeguarding team email address needs to be corrected. For the two intranet pages listed below, we found no link to the DSO intranet page was provided should officers require any support. <p><u>Associated Opportunity</u></p> <p>Opportunity to clarify some of the safeguarding intranet pages, which could provide additional clarity to officers on how referrals should be made or the support available to officers should they require guidance with regards to safeguarding. This could in turn lead to more effective safeguarding at the Council.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Adults Needing Mental Health Support or supporting information includes guidance on how the CRHTT referral form for Luton should be submitted. The DSO intranet page is reviewed and amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the email address of the current Safeguarding Team Leader. Correct the safeguarding team email address which has been provided. For the ‘County Lines, Drugs, Gangs and Cuckooing’ and ‘Safeguarding Information Sharing’ intranet pages, outline the contract details for DSOs (link to the DSO intranet page) and or the central safeguarding team, should officers require support. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contacted Luton and not accepted as this is Luton’s information and they do not accept third party referrals any longer Council Intranet pages have been updated to remove information on Luton referrals as no longer relevant. This is a very small team and not appropriate to provide the individual email address for 2 part time officers. The corporate generic email will be provided as it currently is. Links have been reviewed and working with support in place. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented. N/A. Implemented.
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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 SEPTEMBER 2023**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-24 (QUARTER 1 UPDATE)

REPORT OF: REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: FINANCE AND IT

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents progress on delivering the Council Delivery Plan for 23-24 at the end of Quarter 1, which includes:

- Progress against the completion of Council projects and milestones
- Requests to change milestone dates.
- Commentary on progress made and any new issues, risks, or opportunities.
- The addition of new projects
- The setting of key Council projects

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Committee notes the progress against Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (Appendix A) including changes to milestones, performance indicators and risks, and makes any recommendations or comments to Cabinet.
- 2.2. That the Committee considers the presentation of the report for future meetings, especially in relation to milestones and project status, and makes any recommendations or comments to Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Cabinet with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks or opportunities.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. In developing the CDP, it was agreed that Cabinet would receive quarterly updates. The updates are also provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee so that they can provide additional oversight and support to Cabinet.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. Service Directors and Service Managers have provided updates on progress and will have made Executive Members (and Deputies) aware of progress made.
- 5.2. A draft of the Quarter 1 update was provided to Performance and Risk Management Group (PRMG) in August. The Group has a standing invite to the Executive Member for Finance and IT (has responsibility for performance monitoring), the Deputy Executive Member for Finance and IT, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) and the Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FAR). Other members of O&S and FAR are also encouraged to attend when they are able to. PRMG were asked to comment on the content and format of the CDP Q1 update.
- 5.3. The CDP is reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and they are asked to provide comments and 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 26 May 2023.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. The CDP brings together projects, risks and performance indicators together in one document. It was implemented in Spring 2022.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Appendix A provides an update on the progress made in delivering the Council Delivery Plan. Whilst it is labelled as a Quarter 1 update, it generally reflects the latest position at the time that the report was written (mid-August).
- 8.2 Proposed changes to plan milestone dates (23), the addition of new milestones (6) and new performance indicators (4) are highlighted in yellow.
- 8.3 The project completion percentage reflects the number of milestones that have been completed against the number of milestones that have been set. In general, the number of milestones that have been set will cover what is expected to be achieved in the current financial year (up to 31st March), but (for longer projects) will not be all the milestones up to ultimate completion.
- 8.4 The overall completion status of a project is measured against the current target completion date for current milestones. It does not reflect the ultimate completion date, and it is also updated as there are changes in milestone dates. For example, a project could have had an initial completion date of April 2023. Through changes to milestones that target completion date has now been agreed to be December 2023. The current status would therefore be a green arrow, even though the original target date had been missed. This was raised as something to be considered at PRMG, and it will be

considered how to incorporate the original target date to aid transparency, without having to go back through previous reports to see the agreed changes to milestone dates that have taken place.

- 8.5 At the last Overview and Scrutiny meeting in June, there was a discussion about whether there should be prioritisation within the Council Delivery Plan. This conversation was then continued at the PRMG meeting in August. This was linked to the resourcing risk (see below) and that there had been slippage in a number of milestone dates. Whilst there are reasons for changes in milestone dates and the project is still expected to be achieved, if any projects were a higher priority, then there should be an expectation that milestone dates should not move as much. Also, there are a large number of projects on the plan (with the potential for more to be added) so there should be a consideration of which ones are genuinely a priority, so that resources can be prioritised accordingly. Informal discussions with Cabinet members have started on this, and it is intended that this will be considered and presented alongside the Quarter 2 update (in December/January).
- 8.6 The Council Delivery Plan currently shows all the milestones for all the projects (unless a project has been completed/ removed). This was reasonable last year as it was the first year of the CDP. However, it now means that some projects now have a reasonably long list of completed milestones. Over time this will add to the length of the CDP report and eventually make it completely unwieldy. For current projects it is proposed that all milestones are retained on Pentana (the Council's Risk and Performance system that all Councillors can access), but that these are manually removed from the report after they have been presented as having been completed. This will help the readability of the overall CDP but does cause a minor issue with completion percentages. Currently it is easy to see the link between the completion percentages and the milestones. If there are 10 milestones and 6 have been completed, then it will show as 60% complete. If (for example) the 6 completed milestones are manually removed, then the report will show 4 incomplete milestones, but the completion percentage will still be 60%. This is why Cabinet (and Overview and Scrutiny) are asked to comment on this proposal.
- 8.7 At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting in June, it was requested that more detail was provided on the Resourcing risk. There has been a slight change to the risk in the CDP, but that has deliberately kept at a summary level. The following paragraphs provides a more detailed update.
- 8.8 The resourcing risk is made up of two parts. The first part is the number of projects in the Council Delivery Plan, and other work that sits outside the Council Delivery Plan. This makes up the demand on staff resources. The second part is the availability of staff to complete that workload, i.e., the supply.
- 8.9 The factors which affect the demand side are:
- New work/ projects (Member directed)- If Councillors are requesting new work to be completed then the resource implications of that need to be fully considered.
 - New work/ projects (Externally created). In general, this will be outside our control and require action to be taken. The main recent example is the

response and recovery work relating to the Baldock Industrial Estate fire (note: a project/ risk is being created in relation to this). This can also arise from things like changes in legislation and regulatory requirements (e.g., planning appeals).

- Removal of work/ projects, extending the target dates. This links to paragraph 8.5 above. At the moment this is being done on a reactionary basis. More formal work on prioritisation could help ensure that any reactionary changes are focused on the right work/ projects.

8.10 The factors that affect the supply side are:

- Staff retention- when staff leave it inevitably creates a gap in staff resource available to complete work.
- Staff recruitment- when a vacancy arises, it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill posts. This particularly applies to roles such as legal, planning, environmental health and estates.
- Note that the above should be considered in relation to the lead service area, and also any support services that are required to deliver the project.
- The Council has been putting in place measures to make the Council a more attractive place to work, as well as looking at ways of widening our job advertising to attract more applicants to roles.
- During the Covid pandemic response and recovery (as well as in response to the delivery of previous key projects), services have been delivered by staff not taking all their leave and being given flexibility to take it over a longer period. This has resulted in large leave balances, and these need to be brought back to normal levels. But this requires a reduction in current workload to allow that leave to be taken.
- The staffing carry-forward (£300k) from last year has helped to create some additional short-term capacity. However, this does not work in areas where recruitment to roles is not actually possible.
- Agency staff and consultants can be used to fill posts in areas where full-time recruitment is not possible, but this comes at a high cost.
- Agency staff and consultants could (in theory) be used to create additional capacity, but this is unaffordable.

8.11 The intention is that the CDP reports provide an overview, as providing all the details on projects and risks would lead to a report that was too long. Requests can be made (especially by O&S) to look at individual projects in more detail (as per paragraphs 8.9 and 8.10 above). Any such request would be incorporated into the next monitoring report.

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 5.7.3) .

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 There are no specific legal implications arising from the CDP as a whole. However, there may be individual legal implications for some of the projects outlined. Any commissioning of work on new and existing projects will follow the standard legal requirements and those required by the Council’s internal standing orders, contained within the Constitution.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Where projects are linked to efficiencies or investments then these are included in the budget proposals and monitored through the quarterly finance reports.

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.

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.

12.3 As projects progress, Equality Implications will be considered, and Equality Impact Assessments conducted where relevant.

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, but as referenced above there is a need to prioritise to make that achievable.

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.
- 15.2 As projects progress, Environmental Implications will be considered, and Environmental Impact Assessments conducted where relevant.

16. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Council Delivery Plan 23-24 Q1 monitoring report.
















17. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 17.1 Ian Couper, Service Director: Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk; ext. 4243
- 17.2 Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager, Rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk, ext. 4606
- 17.3 Tim Everitt, Performance and Risk Officer, tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk, ext. 4646
- 17.4 Jo Keshishian, HR Operations Manager, jo.keshishian@north-herts.gov.uk, ext. 4314
- 17.5 Isabel Alajooz, Legal Commercial Team Manager. Isabelle.alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk, ext. 4346
- 17.6 Reuben Ayavoo, Policy and Communities Manager. Reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk, ext. 4212

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Council Delivery Plan – Status Key

Status	Description									
Projects										
	The project (and all recorded milestones) has been completed.									
	All ongoing milestones have not reached their due dates (or do not have due dates).									
	There is at least one ongoing milestone that has not been completed by the due date, but the overall project due date has not passed. Proposals to change milestone due dates will be made, which may also lead to a proposed change to the overall project due date.									
	Overall project due date has passed and there is at least one milestone that has not been completed. Proposals to change project due date and milestone due dates will be made.									
<input data-bbox="168 614 257 630" type="text" value="33%"/>	The progress bar is based on the number of completed milestones compared with the total number of milestones e.g., two completed out of a total of six would be 33%. Therefore, 0% reflects that no milestones have been completed yet, rather than there has been no progress at all.									
Risks										
	Assessed as a low risk.									
	Assessed as a medium risk.									
	Assessed as a high risk.									
<table border="1" data-bbox="1568 718 1724 845"> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>7</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </table>		4	7	9	2	5	8	1	3	6
4	7	9								
2	5	8								
1	3	6								
PIs										
	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.									
	Pentana cannot calculate a status, as officers have not entered a target figure for the period on to the system.									
	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.									
	Pentana cannot calculate a direction of travel, as previous data is not available for comparison.									

2023/24 Council Delivery Plan

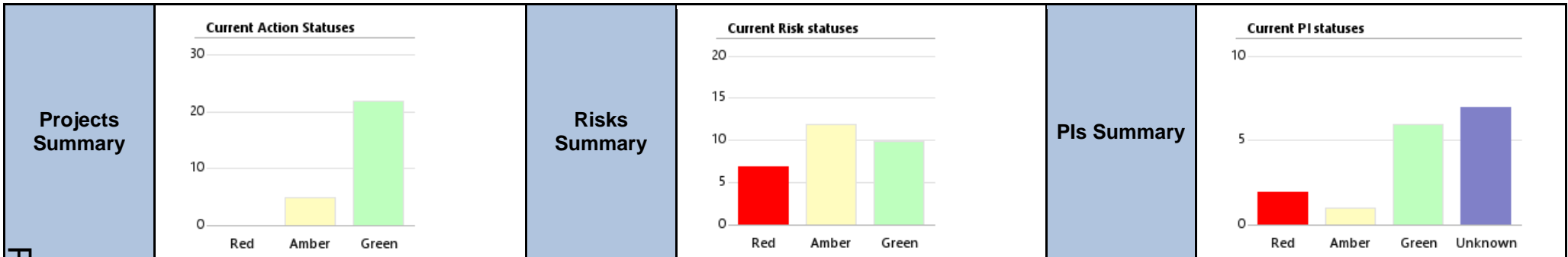
Generated on: 21 August 2023



Project	Status
Churchgate	
New Ways of Delivering Housing on Council Land	
Resident/Public EV Charging in our Car Parks	
Royston Leisure Centre Solar Thermal	
Town Centre Strategies	
Charnwood House	
Create and Communicate a Place Narrative for North Herts	
Cycling Network	
Empty Homes Strategy	
Finalise Pay on Exit Parking Review	
Financial Sustainability/Balancing our Budget	
Health Inequalities	
Leisure Contract Procurement	
Local Authority Housing Fund	
Master Planning	
Museum Storage	
Oughtonhead Common Weir	
Playground Renovation Programme	
Pursue commercial leasing opportunity for Royston Town Hall Annexe	
Shared Prosperity Fund	
Solar PV on Leisure Centres	
Town Centre Recovery	
Waste and Street Cleansing Contract Procurement	
Work with relevant partners to prevent and relieve homelessness whenever possible	
Enterprise Strategy	
Local Plan Delivery and Review	
Waste Depots	

Status Summaries

Generated on: 21 August 2023




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2023/24 Council Delivery Plan



Generated on: 21 August 2023







	Churchgate	Progress	66%	Due Date	31-Mar-2024
Project Summary	Identifying, consulting on, and delivering long-term regeneration of the shopping centre and surrounding areas.				
Latest Update	28-Jul-2023 Overview of Phase 1 public consultation findings shared via the Summer 2023 edition of Outlook. Further communication is planned and will continue throughout the project lifecycle. We have progressed the procurement and appointment of a consultant to develop a viable regeneration project and we are just waiting for the contract to be finalised. Work on an in-person hub to provide the local community with an opportunity to engage with us has commenced and we are currently waiting for Estates to confirm that we can go ahead at the preferred location. Work has also commenced on the provision of a digital hub, but the training requirements associated with this have caused a delay. We now anticipate both the in-person and digital hubs being up and running by the end of September 2023. Further milestones to be added once the consultant has been appointed, which will reflect the agreed work programme to drive the project forward. Risk level still assessed as high, although the likelihood score has been reduced to reflect that the project is expected to regenerate the area, although at this early stage we have yet to determine the best way to achieve this.				

Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Set up project board.	30-Sep-2022	Yes	Completed.						
Produce project plan, including communications plan.	31-Oct-2022	Yes	Project plan in place and in line with NHC's Project Management Framework.						
Report back to Council setting out short, medium and long-term approach with draft project plan.	31-Jan-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Conduct public consultation (Phase 1).	28-Feb-2023	Yes	Phase 1 survey closed 5 February 2023 and data analysed with Zensity.						
Project Board approve specification for consultant appointment.	31-May-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Procure and appoint consultant to develop viable regeneration project, and contract signed.	30-Jun-2023	No	Due date to change to 31 August 2023. Contract currently being finalised.						
Digital hub goes live.	31-Jul-2023	No	Due date to change to 30 September 2023. Work to provide this has commenced.						
Open in-person project hub.	31-Jul-2023	No	Due date to change to 30 September 2023. Awaiting confirmation from Estates that we can go ahead at the preferred location.						
Sharing results, by releasing top level information to the community via Comms.	31-Jul-2023	Yes	Overview of Phase 1 public consultation findings shared via the Summer 2023 edition of Outlook. Further communication will continue throughout the project lifecycle using the various channels defined in the Comms Plan.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. The regeneration will not meet expectations of stakeholders. 2. Regeneration of the Centre and surrounding area is not cost effective/not affordable. Including impacts of high inflation and likely recession.		9	8	6					



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	New Ways of Delivering Housing on Council Land	Progress	<input type="text" value="40%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024					
Project Summary	Alternative ways to deliver housing on surplus Council land (other than sale to a developer) to provide a greater financial return to the Council.									
Latest Update	19-Jul-2023 Estates is currently working with the external Chartered Surveyor to refine and verify the draft market research report and a draft report was received at the end of July 2023. The final report is delayed due to Estates having to attend to higher priorities. A review of the final report findings/recommendations is expected to take one month, at which time we will be able to report on the preferred options. Once there is clarity regarding the options available, further milestones will be added to the Council Delivery Plan monitoring report. Risk level still assessed as medium, although this will be re-assessed once we have considered the final report.									
Milestone		Due Date	Complete	Note						
	Determine a way forward/partnership agreement with current provider.	31-Mar-2022	Yes	Establishing a way forward with the current provider was unsuccessful.						
	Start to consider other options for delivery.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Following advice from Procurement, external Chartered Surveyor undertook a market research exercise with a cross-section of the development market regarding options for joint ventures. Draft report received.						
	Final market research report received from Chartered Surveyor.	31-May-2023	No	Due date to change from 31 May 2023 to 31 July 2023.						
	Review report findings/recommendations.	30-Jun-2023	No	Due date to change from 30 June 2023 to 31 August 2023.						
	Dependent on market research findings, develop milestones/timings to report and make a formal decision on the preferred way forward.	31-Jul-2023	No	Due date to change from 31 July 2023 to 30 September 2023.						
	Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
	1. Being able to develop a viable project. 2. Ensuring Contract Procurement Rules are adhered to. 3. Housing development subject to planning. 4. Working with the right supplier(s) for the Council. 5. Lack of demand and absorption rate for tenure and build type.		5	5	5					



	Resident/Public EV Charging in our Car Parks	Progress	<input type="text" value="28%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Submit grant application to Office for Zero Emission Vehicles for funding. Further actions dependent on funding awarded.								
Latest Update	24-Jul-2023 Following submission of our grant application, OZEV asked for further clarifications. Working with our partner, we then submitted a revised application to OZEV. We are still awaiting the outcome and have not been told the timescale for a decision. Currently, hope to receive a decision by the end of August 2023. Timescales for further milestones depend on when we find out if our application has been successful. No change to assessed risk level, as we are still in a position similar to the previous update.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Establish detailed costings for grant application.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Detailed costings finalised and application submitted to OZEV by 31 March 2023.						
Submit grant application to OZEV for 60% (originally 75%) of cost, with private partner providing the remaining 40% (originally 25%).	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Submitted to OZEV by 31 March 2023.						
Decision on grant application received.	30-Jun-2023	No	Due date to change to 31 August 2023. We are awaiting a decision on our revised grant application. Hope to hear from OZEV by end of August 2023. Delivery of future project milestones dependent on grant funding being awarded.						
Identify private sector partner to assist with grant application and to provide 40% (originally 25%) of funding not met by grant as well as being responsible for ongoing maintenance and insurance proofing.	30-Jun-2023	No	Due date to change to 31 August 2023. Private sector partner identified and revised grant application submitted. Contract with partner subject to receiving grant and will be completed once we have a decision from OZEV.						
Complete relevant leases with contractor for the length of the contract.	31-Jul-2023	No	Due date to change to 30 September 2023. Still to be confirmed, as dependent on the OZEV decision date.						
Contractor to commence works and NHC to start promoting project.	01-Aug-2023	No	Due date to change to 1 October 2023. Still to be confirmed, as dependent on the OZEV decision date.						
Installation of all new EV charging points completed.	31-Mar-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Not successful in obtaining grant funding. 2. Unable to identify/procure a private sector partner. 3. Unable to agree relevant lease arrangements with contractor.		5	5	1					



	Royston Leisure Centre Solar Thermal	Progress	<input type="text" value="60%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Installation of Solar Thermal technology at Royston Leisure Centre.								
Latest Update	20-Jul-2023 Feasibility report received. Decision on whether to proceed with the installation of Solar Thermal technology at Royston Leisure Centre now expected to be made by December 2023. By this time, we will have progressed work on the Solar PV project (see Council Delivery Plan project 'Solar PV on Leisure Centres') and will have a better understanding of the viability of incorporating both technologies at the same site.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Design specification.	31-May-2022	Yes							
Complete procurement and appoint contractor.	16-Dec-2022	Yes	Second procurement exercise closed on 31 January 2023. This was unsuccessful.						
Feasibility report received from consultant.	31-May-2023	Yes	Report received in June 2023.						
Review report findings and decision on project viability.	30-Jun-2023	No	Due date to change from 30 June 2023 to 31 December 2023.						
If project proceeds, further milestones to be developed or incorporated into the 2023/24 Council Delivery Plan project "Solar PV on Leisure Centres".	31-Jul-2023	No	Due date to change from 31 July 2023 to 31 December 2023, as further action is dependent on a decision on project viability.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Solar Thermal not viable alongside installation of Solar PV. 2. Tender returns over budget. 3. Delays to procurement/project delivery.		5	5	5					

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	Town Centre Strategies	Progress	<input type="text" value="20%"/>	Due Date	30-Jun-2024				
Project Summary	Progress development of overarching Town Centre Strategy and individual Town Centre Strategic Masterplans.								
Latest Update	24-Jul-2023 Resource issues continue to hamper progress, as our recruitment exercises were unsuccessful. Now plan to recruit Project Officer using Public Practice. In view of delays, now anticipate appointing consultant to prepare evidence base for overarching Town Centre Strategy by the end of October 2023. In turn, due dates for subsequent milestones are now expected to be completed later than previously reported. Work with stakeholders to progress options for the Letchworth Town Centre strategic masterplan has commenced. Risk level still assessed as medium, as without approved strategy/masterplans, speculative development could undermine the function of our town centres.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Consultants appointed to prepare High Level Town Centre Recovery Action Plans for each town centre.	30-Apr-2022	Yes	Consultants appointed and draft plans have now been received.						
Appoint consultant to prepare evidence base for overarching Town Centre Strategy.	31-Jul-2023	No	Due date to change to 31 October 2023.						
Undertake work to complete evidence base and prepare draft Strategy.	31-Jan-2024	No	Due date to change to 31 March 2024.						
Cabinet report presenting draft Strategy and scoping report to agree overall project and governance arrangements for progressing individual Town Centre strategic masterplans.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to 30 June 2024.						
Progress work on Letchworth Town Centre strategic masterplan, confirming/commencing detailed work following presentation of the Cabinet report.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to 30 June 2024. Aligns with Cabinet report milestone.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Lack of available resource to produce and deliver identified strategies. 2. Lack of strategic direction leads to speculative development that undermines function of town centres.		5	5	1					



	Charnwood House	Progress	<input type="text" value="60%"/>	Due Date	30-Apr-2024				
Project Summary	Leasing the property as a Community Hub.								
Latest Update	19-Jul-2023 Aitchison Raffety was formally instructed on 1 July 2023 to market Charnwood House for leasing out. Estates furnished Aitchison Raffety with draft marketing particulars and draft lease heads of terms. Marketing went live at the end of July 2023. Aitchison Raffety recommend a minimum marketing period of three months so anticipate marketing will complete 31 October 2023. Results of marketing will be reviewed in November 2023. Marketing may be extended dependent on the review. Depending on the range and number of responses, evaluation of the options is expected to take a further four months. A report on the preferred options is now expected to be presented to Cabinet by end of April 2024, prior to finalising arrangements i.e., negotiate Heads of Terms with selected tenant, seek further Cabinet decision, complete lease. Risk level still assessed as medium, although this could decrease, depending on the results of the marketing exercise and the tenant selected.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Market site (informally) for leasing as community hub, on non-committal basis.	29-Jul-2022	Yes	Meeting with interested parties held on 29 July 2022 to galvanise interest.						
Asbestos removed and air testing completed.	12-Oct-2022	Yes	Completed.						
Updated survey and costings for refurbishment works received.	08-Dec-2022	Yes	Completed.						
Options report received.	11-Jan-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Appraise options report and the remedial works/costings highlighted in the updated survey.	23-Feb-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Council decision on project budget.	23-Feb-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Undertake formal marketing exercise.	31-Oct-2023	No	Expected to go live by the end of July 2023 and it will last at least three months.						
Following marketing exercise, evaluate options.	29-Feb-2024	No	Due date to change from 29 February 2024 to 31 March 2024.						
Present report to Cabinet on the preferred options.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change from 31 March 2024 to 30 April 2024.						
When Cabinet report presented, finalise arrangements i.e., negotiate Heads of Terms with selected tenant, seek further Cabinet decision, complete lease.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change from 31 March 2024 to 30 April 2024, although actual dates still to be confirmed. Actions likely to be completed in 2024/25 and will be split into individual milestones at the appropriate time.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
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	5	3					



	Create and Communicate a Place Narrative for North Herts	Progress	<input type="text" value="50%"/>	Due Date	30-Sep-2023				
Project Summary	To create and communicate a clear and consistent story of our district, which will be incorporated in future Council communications and used to attract funding and visitors to our district through inclusion in our 2023 Enterprise Strategy.								
Latest Update	02-Aug-2023 Cabinet agreed to a September 2023 launch for our North Herts Place Narrative communications. Development of launch plans and related communications is progressing.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Stage One: Develop our Core Place Narrative and rollout plans (February - April 2023).	30-Apr-2023	Yes	This stage involved meetings with district partners and was completed by the end of April 2023.						
Stage Two: Take Core Place Narrative and rollout plans to Leadership, PLB, O&S and Cabinet meetings for feedback/approval (April - June 2023).	27-Jun-2023	Yes	Leadership Team – 24 April 2023 (Completed) PLB – 16 May 2023 (Completed) O&S – 20 June 2023 (Completed) Cabinet – 27 June 2023 (Completed)						
Stage Three: Develop launch plans and related communications (July - August 2023).	31-Aug-2023	No	In progress - Officers agreed a September 2023 launch for our North Herts Place Narrative comms with Cabinet.						
Stage Four: Go live (August 2023).	30-Sep-2023	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risk: Other unplanned urgent communication workload/projects take priority. Leading to: - Target project stage dates being missed/needing to be moved and our Core Place Narrative going live later than expected.		1	1	1					



	Cycling Network	Progress	<input type="text" value="60%"/>	Due Date	30-Nov-2023				
Project Summary	Working with HCC as they develop a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Use to inform a North Herts cycle strategy.								
Latest Update	24-Jul-2023 Report presented to Cabinet on 27 June 2023. Still anticipate adoption of LCWIP by HCC by end of October 2023. Its adoption will guide and accelerate future investment in transport infrastructure that enables and encourages people to make more trips by active travel, including cycling. Adoption of NHC Sustainability SPD (expected January 2024) will cover active travel and enable the progression of identified cycle schemes, which are likely to be high-cost projects. Following adoption of LCWIP, further milestones will be developed to reflect the activities NHC plan to undertake to enhance the district's cycling network.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Working with HCC on the production of a draft Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - for formal consultation.	26-Sep-2022	Yes	Completed.						
HCC/NHC finalise review of consultation findings.	09-Jun-2023	Yes							
Report to NHC Cabinet for comment and recommendations on the LCWIP.	27-Jun-2023	Yes							
Adoption of LCWIP by HCC Highways Transport Panel/Cabinet.	31-Oct-2023	No							
Further milestones dependent on adoption of LCWIP.	30-Nov-2023	No	Further milestones relating to the development of a NHC Cycle Strategy to be considered/commenced at this time.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Resourcing for NHC and HCC. 2. Timing and adoption of LCWIP by HCC Transport Panel/Cabinet. 3. Limits to what can be achieved in the short-term.		3	2	1					



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	Empty Homes Strategy	Progress	<input type="text" value="25%"/>	Due Date	31-Dec-2023				
Project Summary	Develop and start to implement a strategy to reduce numbers of empty homes.								
Latest Update	06-Jul-2023 Empty Homes Strategy to be updated to consider latest housing requirements and currently plan to submit it to Cabinet in September 2023. Role requirements and criteria for the new Housing Improvement Officer role approved by Full Council on 23 February 2023 to be developed with the intention of advertising and filling the post by December 2023. Current focus of the CDP remains on the development and approval of a strategic approach to bringing empty properties back into use. Once Strategy is adopted, this will be reviewed and updated to reflect key implementation stages and risks to the successful achievement of stated objectives. Risks relating to Strategy adoption continue to be assessed as low, although the implementation risk level will be dependent on the chosen strategic approach.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Development of Strategy and staff resources.	23-Feb-2023	Yes	Draft Strategy produced, but this still needs to be approved. Staff resource to enable delivery of the final Strategy approved by Full Council on 23 February 2023 (as part of a new Housing Improvement Officer role).						
Adoption of Strategy by Cabinet.	19-Sep-2023	No							
Commence implementation of adopted Strategy, including securing the budget required to deliver the preferred approach.	20-Sep-2023	No	Milestone for Pentana purposes, with the date simply reflecting that implementation of the Strategy will commence following its adoption by Cabinet.						
New Milestone - Recruit to new Housing Improvement Officer role, created to help deliver approved Strategy.	31-Dec-2023	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
<u>Development of Strategy</u> Risks: - Staff shortages/competing priorities limit progress with developing Strategy. - Potential political/reputational risk associated with not having an agreed strategic approach in place. - Resource implications/limitations relating to the different options available. <u>Implementation of Adopted Strategy</u> Risks (dependent on the agreed approach): - Securing the resources required to deliver the Strategy and achieve objectives. - Limited number of empty homes that we can actually take forward under the Strategy. - Cost to Council of maintaining empty properties that we acquire. - Political/reputational risk associated with a perceived lack of progress and/or cost/benefit analysis of our approach.		4	2	1					







	Finalise Pay on Exit Parking Review	Progress	<input type="text" value="37%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Procure suppliers and start replacing all existing parking machines in early 2024.								
Latest Update	24-Jul-2023 Project to replace all existing parking machines progressing and we will now be appointing contractors via Direct Award. Still anticipate trials/works commencing in January 2024, with all works to be completed by 31 March 2025 using allocated Capital budget. Prior to commencement, we will seek Cabinet approval of revised tariffs and post-payment options, complete procurement of suppliers, and update TROs. Risk level still assessed as low, although there is uncertainty about public reaction to the changes and any associated disruption.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Consultants appointed to produce Feasibility Study to be reported to Exec Member & Deputy.	31-Jul-2022	Yes							
Report to PLB to get a steer on proceeding to a pay on exit trial.	01-Nov-2022	Yes	PLB agreed that officers should proceed with the necessary work in progressing a trial in two of the Council's car parks and report back within this financial year.						
The Cabinet report determines further milestones.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Report to Cabinet not required. Following PLB decision in February 2023 to progress revised project and agreement to bring forward related Capital budget to 2023/24, project to replace all existing parking machines is now underway.						
Report presented to Cabinet to agree revised tariffs and post-payment options.	30-Sep-2023	No							
Procure supplier by Direct Award to replace existing parking machines.	30-Nov-2023	No							
Procure supplier to replace tariff boards.	30-Nov-2023	No							
Update TROs.	31-Dec-2023	No							
Contractor to commence works (works to be undertaken during 2023/24 and 2024/25).	31-Jan-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Budget implications of selected scheme. 2. Inability to procure suppliers within approved budget. 3. Negative public reaction to changes and disruption during works. 4. Loss of income during associated works.		1	1	1					



	Financial Sustainability/Balancing our Budget	Progress	<input type="text" value="33%"/>	Due Date	29-Feb-2024				
Project Summary	To deliver a medium term balanced budget for the Council that reflects Council priorities.								
Latest Update	04-May-2023 2023/24 Budget approved by Council in February.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Medium Term Financial Strategy (aligned to Council Plan) approved by Council.	22-Sep-2022	Yes	Completed.						
Budget for 2023/24 approved by Council.	23-Feb-2023	Yes	Completed.						
New Milestone - Communications on how the Council sets its budget.	30-Nov-2023	No							
Respond to expected consultation on funding reform.	30-Sep-2023	No	Due date to change to 30 September 2024. Not now expected to have consultation until summer 2024.						
Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council.	23-Nov-2023	No							
Budget for 2024/25 approved by Council.	29-Feb-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Funding reductions as a result of new funding formula. 2. Sales, fees, and charges income continues at a lower level due to changes in behaviour from Covid-19 and impact of 'cost of living'. 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	9	5					

	Health Inequalities	Progress	<input type="text" value="57%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Deliver projects to address health inequalities using approved funding for 2023/24. Assess options for 2024/25 and beyond when HCC confirm future funding arrangements.								
Latest Update	07-Jul-2023 The three projects funded by HCC, and referenced in the milestones, are ongoing. Funding is in place to the end of March 2024. We anticipate HCC confirming future funding arrangements in November 2023. North Herts Healthy Hub continues to provide support services to residents. Future HCC funding for this service is also expected to be confirmed in November 2023. Whilst the risk level associated with delivering projects/services throughout 2023/24 is low, there is less certainty relating to the provision of support to residents in future years due to the potential for funding levels to reduce and sufficient NHC budget not being available.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Secure Tranche 1 funding (Health and Wellbeing led projects).	31-May-2022	Yes	Completed.						
Develop an action plan for Tranche 1 (based on Public Health Strategy, Health Inequalities Framework and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment).	31-Dec-2022	Yes	Health inequalities identified and agreed. Developed associated intervention plan. HCC approved plan on 14 December 2022.						
Deliver Tranche 1 projects (as planned for 2022/23).	31-Mar-2023	Yes	The three projects included in the intervention plan all commenced by 31 March 2023, meeting funding requirements. Delivery to continue throughout 2023/24.						
Royston Men's Club - June 2023 course.	30-Jun-2023	Yes							
Royston Men's Club - September 2023 course.	30-Sep-2023	No							
Letchworth Horticultural Therapy.	31-Mar-2024	No	Budget of £5K to deliver individual placements of 12/24 weeks during 2023/24.						
Royston Emotional Wellbeing project.	31-Mar-2024	No	Two groups meeting every week throughout 2023/24.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks - Inability to achieve funding for future years. - Delays in achieving funding. - Restrictive funding terms. - Staff shortages/competing priorities. Leading to: - Cessation of current projects/services. - Delays in achieving outcomes. - Limited scope of projects. - Limited progress with pursuing funding opportunities/delivering projects.		7	3	3					



	Leisure Contract Procurement	Progress	<input type="text" value="46%"/>	Due Date	01-Apr-2024				
Project Summary	Procurement of leisure management contracts. Current contracts end on 31 March 2024. Includes development of strategies and procurement processes.								
Latest Update	21-Aug-2023 Procurement progressing in line with project plan. Closing date for initial tender submissions from bidders was 17 August 2023. We will now commence the evaluation stage. Risk level still assessed as medium, as currently, there remains uncertainty regarding the value of bids and our ability to mobilise the new contract by April 2024.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Develop pre-procurement strategy.	20-Mar-2023	Yes							
Issue contract notice.	24-Apr-2023	Yes							
Market Interest Day.	03-May-2023	Yes							
Selected candidates invited to submit Initial Tender.	12-Jun-2023	Yes							
Develop Active North Herts Strategy and present to Cabinet for adoption.	27-Jun-2023	Yes	Strategy adopted by Cabinet on 27 June 2023.						
Closing date for Initial Tender submissions.	17-Aug-2023	Yes							
Deadline for revised tender submissions (if required).	17-Nov-2023	No							
Evaluation of tenders.	31-Dec-2023	No							
Present report to Council (due date to be confirmed).	11-Jan-2024	No							
Notification of outcome to bidders.	15-Jan-2024	No							
Finalise Contract Award.	31-Jan-2024	No							
Mobilisation period - 1 February 2024 to 31 March 2024.	31-Mar-2024	No							
Start of new contract.	01-Apr-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - In-house staff capacity to deliver procurement on time.		5	5	3					



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited flexibility in project plan leaves little room for manoeuvre if key milestone dates are not met. - Poor quality specification will impact contract delivery. - Lack of responses to tender. - Low value bids from respondents. - Awarding contract to new supplier could lead to mobilisation/operational issues at handover. 									
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	Local Authority Housing Fund	Progress	<input type="text" value="28%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Delivery of additional housing through Registered Providers.								
Latest Update	02-Aug-2023 The proposal for settle to deliver one larger home (bridging element) and two smaller homes (main element) via the first round of LAHF was accepted by the DLUHC. Following Cabinet on 27 June 2023, we submitted our validation form for round two of the scheme and are currently waiting for DLUHC to confirm our allocation. Risk level assessed as low.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Report to Cabinet on Round Two allocation.	27-Jun-2023	Yes							
Submission of Round Two validation form to Government.	05-Jul-2023	Yes							
Agree Memorandum of Understanding with Registered Provider(s) to deliver housing via Round Two allocated funding.	31-Aug-2023	No	Will be completed once allocation confirmed by DLUHC.						
Agree Memorandum of Understanding with settle relating to Round One allocated funding.	31-Aug-2023	No							
Assess Expressions of Interest from Registered Providers relating to Round Two allocation and select preferred partner(s).	31-Aug-2023	No	Will be completed once allocation confirmed by DLUHC.						
Delivery of housing by settle via Round One allocated funding.	31-Dec-2023	No							
Delivery of housing by Registered Provider(s) via Round Two allocated funding.	31-Mar-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Reputational risk of not being able to use funding made available by Government, as it is not enough to make delivery viable. - Terms of the funding are not flexible enough to allow the partial delivery against our allocation. - Uncertainty relating to grant conditions leads to an inability to recover all expected costs. - Low risk associated with signing expression of interest or subsequent Memorandum of Understanding, as the grant allows withdrawal at any time.		8	2	1	Local Authority Housing Fund - Number of main element (smaller) homes delivered via Round One allocation			To be reported at year-end	2
					Local Authority Housing Fund - Number of bridging element (larger) homes delivered via Round One allocation			To be reported at year-end	1



	Master Planning	Progress	<input type="text" value="33%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Secure funding for Master Plans. Develop Master Plans and seek adoption. Focus is on 6 Strategic sites (approximately 8,500 homes in total) that account for the majority of homes, although there are 12 other sites (approximately 2,500 additional homes) presently captured by masterplan policy requirements.								
Latest Update	11-Jul-2023 Progress remains ongoing on these strategic site projects. The prospective developer for the NS1 site undertook public consultation on the draft masterplan for their site in July 2023. Design Review Panels are to be held for the emerging proposals for the Baldock sites and East of Luton in July 2023. A decision on the outline planning application for Highover Farm, Hitchin was deferred at the request of the Planning Control Committee to allow further work to be undertaken on transport matters, and a further milestone has been added to reflect this. A new milestone has been added reflecting a revised and updated timetable for the preparation of the East of Luton masterplan.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Liaise with developers and identify the Council's expectations with regard master planning.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Masterplan briefs have been issued for five of the six sites. For the sixth site (Highover Farm), a masterplan has been prepared as part of an existing outline planning application lodged with the Council which has been informed by Council officer feedback.						
Secure funding for master planning through the development of Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) to seek to cover NHC and HCC costs as far as is practicable.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	PPAs have been agreed for five of the six sites that are preparing masterplans. For the sixth site (Highover Farm), a masterplan has been prepared as part of an existing outline application lodged with the Council.						
Consideration of Highover Farm masterplan by Planning Committee (18/01154/OP, Local Plan Policy SP17).	30-Jun-2023	Yes	Application presented to Planning Control Committee on 6 July 2023. Decision deferred for further work to be undertaken on transport assessment and mitigation.						
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for GA2 North-east of Great Ashby (Local Plan Policy SP18).	31-Dec-2023	No							
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for NS1 North of Stevenage (Local Plan Policy SP16).	31-Dec-2023	No							
New milestone - Further consideration of Highover Farm masterplan by Planning Committee (18/01154/OP, Local Plan Policy SP17).	31-Dec-2023	No	Application to be re-presented at a date to be determined following completion of additional work on transport assessment and mitigation.						
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for Baldock sites (Local Plan Policies SP14, BA2, BA3 & BA10).	31-Mar-2024	No							
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for LG1 North of Letchworth (Local Plan Policy SP15).	31-Mar-2024	No							
New milestone - Approval of Strategic Masterplan for EL123 East of Luton (Local Plan Policy SP19).	31-Mar-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Risk of poor scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to local character and context. 2. Risk that strategic sites do not maximise contribution to corporate objectives and priorities of climate change, environment, economy and place. 3. Risk of delay to delivery of strategic sites if masterplan process is delayed or stalled or provides insufficient information to guide subsequent planning applications. 4. Failure to secure funding to resource the process.		5	5	3					



5. Reduction in pre-application income and delay to income from planning applications.									
6. Failure to recruit sufficiently experienced officers.									
7. Risk of adverse appeal findings on other/non-Local Plan sites if delivery is delayed or stalled.									

	Museum Storage	Progress	<input type="text" value="57%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Assess feasibility of constructing a new fit-for-purpose museum storage facility and including a commercial storage facility as part of the project. Decide the preferred way forward and if required, proceed to the next project phase.								
Latest Update	21-Jul-2023 Report on options for including a commercial storage facility as part of any re-development received. Reviewed findings of both the museum storage feasibility report and commercial report to assess options and viability. Now anticipate presenting a report to Cabinet on 19 September 2023 seeking a decision on the preferred way forward and possible changes to current Capital budget allocation. The existing Bury Mead site has not been cleared. We are considering the best way to deal with currently stored items should we proceed with the preferred option, so that there are no unnecessary delays following the Cabinet decision. Until the Cabinet decision, there remains uncertainty regarding if/how the project proceeds, and the risk of damage to items stored at the current facility remains, so the risk level is still assessed as medium.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Appoint contractor to conduct an initial feasibility report on the project.	28-Feb-2023	Yes							
Receive initial feasibility report.	18-Apr-2023	Yes							
Receive report on options for including a commercial storage facility as part of the re-development.	19-May-2023	Yes							
Review findings of feasibility/commercial reports, including assessing finance options with Accounts.	30-Jun-2023	Yes							
Consider the best way to deal with currently stored items should the project progress.	19-Sep-2023	No	Existing site not cleared. The need to do this will depend on the Cabinet decision. Therefore, due date aligns with the Cabinet date, as this will need to have been considered by then to avoid unnecessary delays should we proceed with the preferred option.						
Report presented to Leadership Team, PLB and Cabinet seeking a decision on the preferred way forward.	19-Sep-2023	No	Now anticipate presenting a report to Cabinet on 19 September 2023.						
Develop further milestones to reflect Cabinet decision e.g., appoint Project Manager/Quantity Surveyor, finalise Business Case and detailed specifications.	30-Sep-2023	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Funding the project. 2. Unforeseen issues with the development. 3. Lower utilisation of the commercial storage opportunity than expected. 4. Until the project is completed, risk of damage to items stored at the current facility (mainly reputational, but potentially financial).		5	5	3					

	Oughtonhead Common Weir	Progress	<input type="text" value="57%"/>	Due Date	30-Sep-2024				
Project Summary	Replace the collapsed weir.								
Latest Update	26-Jul-2023 We did not receive any responses to the closed tender process relating to detailed design work. We have now moved to an open tender process. The deadline for responses is early September 2023 and we anticipate appointing the preferred supplier by the end of September 2023, although this is dependent on a successful tender process. It is uncertain if works will be completed by September 2024, although this will become clearer once we have received the tender responses. Prior to the replacement of the partially collapsed weir, any further deterioration is unlikely to result in a significant impact. Risk level still assessed as low.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Options appraisal completed.	31-Dec-2022	Yes							
Capital budget approved (£400K) to implement preferred option.	31-Mar-2023	Yes							
Commence contract with CMS to manage delivery of the project.	01-Apr-2023	Yes							
CMS to confirm delivery plan for the development of detailed specification and completion of works phases.	31-May-2023	Yes							
Return of tenders for the development of the detailed design and specification for the preferred option.	11-Sep-2023	No	No responses to closed tender process. Now commenced an open tender process.						
Evaluation of tenders for the development of the detailed design and specification for the preferred option, and appointment of supplier.	30-Sep-2023	No							
Introduce further milestones following the outcome of the tender process for the development of the detailed design and specification for the preferred option.	31-Oct-2023	No	Initial expectation is to produce a tender with a detailed design and tender sometime in early 2024. Works will hopefully commence in late spring/early summer 2024 when water levels are low.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - External funding from HCC, EA and residents is not available. - Limited availability of consultants to undertake the detailed designs required for this project. - Existing situation deteriorates quickly prior to any works being undertaken. Leading to: - Full allocated Capital budget being used. - Planned timeline for delivery not being achieved. - Further urgent temporary solutions being required to manage an immediate changing situation.		4	2	1					



	Playground Renovation Programme	Progress	<input type="text" value="33%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024					
Project Summary	Progress playground renovation projects, as per the Greenspace Strategy. Two identified projects for 2023/24 (budget £180K).									
Latest Update	26-Jul-2023 Groundwork progressing the two projects, although both are still in the early stages. Still anticipate completing works in line with the milestone due dates. Risk level continues to be assessed as low.									
Milestone		Due Date	Complete	Note						
2023/24 work programme received from Groundwork.		31-Mar-2023	Yes							
Complete replacement of one piece of equipment and associated surfacing at Serby Avenue Recreation Ground.		31-Dec-2023	No	Timeline from the March 2023 programme - June to December 2023.						
Complete renovation of the playground at Bancroft Recreation Ground.		31-Mar-2024	No	Timeline from the March 2023 programme - April 2023 to March 2024.						
Risks		Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Budget insufficient to deliver project following appropriate public consultation. - Supply issues linked to materials/equipment. - Leading to: - Planned playground renovations being revised/delayed.			3	1	1					



	Pursue commercial leasing opportunity for Royston Town Hall Annexe	Progress	<input type="text" value="40%"/>	Due Date	30-Jun-2024				
Project Summary	In this year, to progress negotiations with HCC regarding the acquisition of vehicular access rights over their land and to maintain ongoing dialogue with interested party whilst seeking to acquire access rights.								
Latest Update	19-Jul-2023 Despite numerous attempts to engage with HCC regarding the acquisition of rights over their land from the public highway, they have so far not responded to our requests. Without acquiring these vehicular access rights, the project cannot move forward in any meaningful way. The current expectation is that it could take a further 12 months to commence negotiations and if successful, to formalise arrangements. NHC has attempted to maintain communication with the interested party during the first half of 2023, but the speed and regularity of replies have significantly waned compared to 2022, suggesting an increased risk that they may withdraw their interest if resolution of the rights issue is continually delayed. Risk level still assessed as medium, as progress is not completely in our control and there remains a possibility that the current project does not proceed.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Exploring options following unsolicited solid interest in site.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Initial discussions held with interested party regarding formalising use of NHC's land. This included the drafting of lease heads of terms. Not able to proceed in any meaningful way without acquiring vehicular access rights to our site.						
Ascertain, acquire, and address rights and restrictions on the site.	31-May-2023	Yes	No access rights to serve NHC's site are documented. So far, HCC have been unwilling to engage with us regarding acquiring rights. The proposal is to now monitor this via two new milestones. No restrictions on title apparent from investigation. Property included in the project is not Listed, although it is in a Conservation Area. This needs to be factored into the design of any scheme to repurpose the site but for now, there is no further action to take.						
Commencement of negotiations with HCC regarding the acquisition of vehicular access rights over their land from the public highway.	30-Sep-2023	No	Due date to change from 30 September 2023 to 15 December 2023.						
Completion of negotiations with HCC regarding the acquisition of vehicular access rights over their land and arrangements formalised.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change from 31 March 2024 to 30 June 2024.						
Maintain ongoing dialogue with interested party whilst seeking to acquire access rights from HCC.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change from 31 March 2024 to 30 June 2024.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Lack of engagement from HCC restricts our ability to acquire access rights. 2. Cost and time in acquiring rights or addressing restrictions are prohibitive. 3. Planning permission refused or subject to unviable conditions. 4. Desire to retain partial community use impinges on viability. 5. Build cost inflation impinges on viability.		5	5	3					





	Shared Prosperity Fund	Progress	<input type="text" value="66%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Deliver projects to support the aims of the Shared Prosperity Fund, as agreed with Government.								
Latest Update	21-Aug-2023 Allocated 2022/23 Shared Prosperity Fund (Town Centre Tranche) funding to enable improvements to town centres and high streets. Royston Outdoor Gym opened 17 August 2023. Outdoor fitness classes had already previously commenced, with more to be delivered following the opening of the Royston Outdoor Gym.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Submit Investment Plan.	28-Jul-2022	Yes	Completed.						
Work with Government on approval of Investment Plan.	31-Dec-2022	Yes	Completed.						
Deliver projects: Continue community wealth fund.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Partly completed in 2022/23. Some elements rolled forward to 2023/24 and milestone now replaced with new milestones for 2023/24.						
Deliver projects: Recruit sports development officer. Deliver outdoor fitness classes and first set of new outdoor exercise equipment.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Partly completed in 2022/23. Some elements rolled forward to 2023/24 and milestone now replaced with new milestones for 2023/24.						
Deliver projects: Town Centre regeneration plans and initial activities.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Partly completed in 2022/23. Some elements rolled forward to 2023/24 and milestone now replaced with new milestones for 2023/24.						
New Milestone - Allocate 2022/23 Shared Prosperity Fund (Town Centre Tranche) funding to enable improvements to town centres and high streets.	29-Jun-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Royston.	31-Aug-2023	Yes	Completion date was 12 August 2023 with an official opening date of 17 August 2023.						
Recruit fitness project manager, and commence fitness classes based on GP referrals.	31-Aug-2023	Yes	Recruited Active Communities Officer (started 1 June) and Active Communities Assistant (started 1 August) who sit contractor side. Rebranded exercise referral scheme launched. Outdoor fitness classes have commenced. The focus will then be on outdoor fitness classes at the Royston Outdoor Gym once this has been opened.						
Approve BIDs (and other town centre stakeholder groups) programmes for use of town centre improvement funding.	31-Mar-2024	No							
Installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Hitchin.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to be confirmed. Still in the planning stages. Groundworks (who are leading the project) due to send project plan for the works shortly. Expect to complete works this financial year.						
Installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Letchworth.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to be confirmed. Still in the planning stages. Groundworks (who are leading the project) due to send project plan for the works shortly. Expect to complete works this financial year.						
Provide 2023/24 allocation of funding for town centre improvements.	31-Mar-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Lack of general resources to deliver these projects as they are on top of core Council activities.		5	5	3					



2. Failure to spend the money by the end of the grant period.									
3. Lack of expertise in providing the required returns to Government on use of the grant.									
4. Long lead times for capital elements means that items are unavailable until beyond the end of the funding period.									



	Solar PV on Leisure Centres	Progress	<input type="text" value="20%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Appoint specialist to complete design specification, manage procurement of contractor and oversee subsequent installation of solar PV at the three main leisure facilities.								
Latest Update	26-Jul-2023 Installation of solar thermal technology at RLC will not be incorporated into this project. Feasibility study completed. Currently exploring options to appoint a specialist to complete the design specification, manage the procurement of the contractor and oversee completion of installation works. We anticipate appointing the specialist by the end of September 2023 and details of further milestones/due dates will be confirmed after the appointment. At this early stage, there remains uncertainty about progressing the project and how long it might take to complete, so the risk level is assessed as medium.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
1. Feasibility study.	31-May-2023	Yes	Completed.						
2. Appoint specialist to complete design specification and manage procurement of contractor and subsequent installation.	29-Sep-2023	No							
3. Design specification completed.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date will be confirmed following appointment of specialist.						
4. Procurement of contractor to undertake installation works.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date will be confirmed following appointment of specialist.						
5. Complete installation of Solar PV.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date will be confirmed following appointment of specialist.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Design specification identifies significant issues. - Tender returns over budget. - Delays to project plan.		5	5	3	Units of electricity generated by Solar PV on leisure centres			Data will commence once project completed	



	Town Centre Recovery	Progress	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">83%</div>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders in Hitchin and Royston town centres to be made permanent. Facilitate work with key stakeholders to develop and implement formal recovery/improvement programmes for each town utilising available Shared Prosperity Fund funding.								
Latest Update	31-Jul-2023 Based on the studies and evidence base of need developed under the Welcome Back Fund, 2022/23 Shared Prosperity Fund (Town Centre Tranche) funding has now been allocated, enabling the towns to deliver the initial recovery projects they said they would. We are also enabling towns to develop detailed programmes for projects over the next couple of years. Although further Shared Prosperity Fund funding will be available to help deliver proposed projects, towns should also be exploring options for other public/private funding sources. In addition, Save the High Streets (an organisation contracted by Herts Growth Board) is progressing a project to look at the feasibility and set up of a Trade Association of Town Centre Businesses in Baldock.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Completion of Welcome Back Fund town centre recovery plans for the four towns.	31-Mar-2023	Yes	Plans finalised and signed-off by the Executive Members for Enterprise and Planning and posted on website.						
Following on from Welcome Back Fund work, People & Places re-engaged to work with key stakeholders to facilitate development of detailed town centre programmes.	30-Apr-2023	Yes							
New Milestone - Allocate 2022/23 Shared Prosperity Fund (Town Centre Tranche) funding to enable improvements to town centres and high streets.	29-Jun-2023	Yes							
Development of permit scheme for experimental traffic orders in Hitchin Town Centre, sub-delegate to appropriate body, enforcement to be with NHC.	31-Jul-2023	Yes	Permanent with effect from 17 August 2023: The Hertfordshire (Hitchin Town Centre) (Restricted Parking Zone) Order 2023 The Hertfordshire (High Street, Market Place and Churchyard, Hitchin) (Pedestrian Zone) Order 2023						
Liaise with HCC and other key stakeholders with regard the experimental traffic orders for Hitchin and Royston town centres.	31-Jul-2023	Yes	Permanent with effect from 18 August 2023: The Hertfordshire (Royston Town Centre) (Restricted Parking Zone) Order 2023						
Detailed town centre programmes produced by each of the four towns and received by NHC.	31-Mar-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
- Limited budget available via the Shared Prosperity Fund. - Town Centre Programmes for each town not yet in place. - Reputational damage if improvements/initiatives are not progressed or delayed.		3	2	1					

	Waste and Street Cleansing Contract Procurement	Progress	<input type="text" value="14%"/>	Due Date	01-Apr-2024					
Project Summary	Procurement of the Waste and Street Cleansing contract.									
Latest Update	04-Aug-2023 Currently on target to meet the specified milestones. Three bidders taken forward through the first stage of dialogue. Evaluation of detailed solutions is underway. Key risks remain with staff capacity and Letchworth depot not yet being secured for 2025. Lease on Buntingford Depot has also not been secured past 2028. Government still hasn't released updates following the consultation on consistency of collections and therefore this risk also remains. Risk of contract going over budget is still high, due to historic issues such as Covid and Brexit previously adversely affecting contractors negatively.									
Milestone		Due Date	Complete	Note						
Evaluation of SQ and issue of decision letters to applicants.		31-May-2023	Yes	Invitations to participate sent.						
Invitation to submit detailed solutions, evaluation of submissions, and issue of letters to successful bidders.		05-Oct-2023	No	On target – evaluation of detailed solutions underway.						
Invitation to submit final tenders and receipt of ISFT responses.		18-Jan-2024	No							
Evaluation of final tenders and production of Evaluation Report.		29-Feb-2024	No							
PS09033	Project Board sign off of Evaluation Report and award recommendation.		07-Mar-2024	No						
	Executive and Cabinet approval.		19-Mar-2024	No						
	Contract award.		01-Apr-2024	No						
Risks		Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Unable to secure interested bidders (although this risk is unlikely to materialise). - Capacity of key staff. - Depots not fit for purpose/available. - Governments Resources & Waste Strategy differs from specification (outcomes of new Strategy not yet finalised). - Costs are over budget.			9	9	6					


	Work with relevant partners to prevent and relieve homelessness whenever possible	Progress	<input type="text" value="16%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	Work with relevant partners to prevent homelessness at the earliest stage and develop additional accommodation options that help to relieve homelessness whenever possible.								
Latest Update	02-Aug-2023 Beam private rented access/employment scheme launched in May 2023. Currently plan to complete the other recorded milestones in line with the due dates specified. The risk level associated with increased levels of homelessness continues to be assessed as high.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Launch Beam private rented access/employment scheme.	31-May-2023	Yes	On 31 January 2023, Cabinet approved the allocation of Homelessness Prevention Grant funding of £80k for the Beam service to deliver 40 lettings.						
Develop Single Homeless Pathway Plan.	31-Aug-2023	No	This project identifies the keys actions required to stabilise and supplement the accommodation and support services for single homeless people.						
Develop temporary accommodation forecasting model.	30-Sep-2023	No	Develop temporary accommodation forecasting model to help manage demand from homeless households in conjunction with Herts CC.						
Develop funding bid for DLUHC's Supported Housing Accommodation Programme (SHAP).	10-Nov-2023	No	DLUHC has invited the Council to bid under its SHAP. Options being developed with partners, including Herts CC, DLUHC, Homes England and accommodation/support providers.						
Develop and adopt new five-year Housing Strategy.	31-Mar-2024	No	Housing Strategy to include Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, as well as the Tenancy Strategy. Action also identified in April 2023 through Temporary Accommodation audit.						
Update Common Housing Allocation Scheme.	31-Mar-2024	No	The allocation scheme review will identify required amendments.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. An excessive demand from the public for housing services. 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 are required for some clients/families.		8	8	5	Number of households living in temporary accommodation			96	N/A Data Only


	Enterprise Strategy	Progress	<input type="text" value="0%"/>	Due Date	16-Jan-2024				
Project Summary	Development and approval of an Enterprise Strategy, incorporating Commercial, Economic Development and Tourism.								
Latest Update	27-Jul-2023 Due to the Enterprise Team having to prioritise other actions, we now expect to take the Enterprise Strategy to Cabinet for adoption in January 2024. A first draft of the Strategy will be produced in October 2023 and Overview & Scrutiny Committee have been advised of this. Officers continue to provide monthly updates to the Executive Member. This project continues to be assessed as low risk.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Detailed Strategy scope agreed by Exec Members.	30-Sep-2023	No							
First draft prepared for comment – Leadership Team/Exec Members.	31-Oct-2023	No							
Present Strategy to Leadership Team/PLB.	30-Nov-2023	No							
Present Strategy to Cabinet for adoption.	16-Jan-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Delay in procuring consultants, if required. - Shortage of resource and staff capacity within the Enterprise team. Leading to: - A delay in developing/approving the Strategy and associated resourcing.		2	2	1					

























	Local Plan Delivery and Review	Progress	<input type="text" value="0%"/>	Due Date	31-Mar-2024				
Project Summary	To undertake and complete various projects relating to the implementation of the Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted November 2022) and to progress work associated with the early review required by Policy IMR2 of the Plan.								
Latest Update	21-Aug-2023 New project includes milestones to monitor progress on subsidiary documents associated with the Local Plan and that are required to ensure successful implementation and co-ordination with Council priorities relating to the declared Climate Change Emergency and new statutory obligations relating to Biodiversity Net Gain. As the new Service Director - Housing and Environmental Health has started on an 18-month secondment, the Service Director – Regulatory will now be focussing on the strategic planning issues we face and successful implementation of the Local Plan.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Approval of draft Sustainability SPD for consultation.	30-Sep-2023	No							
Approval of draft Biodiversity SPD for consultation.	31-Dec-2023	No							
Publication of initial recommendations in relation to the review of the Local Plan as required by Policy IMR2.	31-Dec-2023	No							
Adoption of Sustainability SPD.	31-Jan-2024	No							
Approval of draft Design Guide SPD for consultation.	31-Jan-2024	No							
Adoption of Biodiversity SPD.	31-Mar-2024	No							
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Inadequate guidance leads to scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to, or contribute towards, corporate objectives and priorities of climate change, environment, economy and place. - Poor scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to local character and context. - Failure to recruit sufficiently experienced officers to implement required programme of work. - Failure to secure funding to resource the process. - Adverse appeal findings on other/non-Local Plan sites if progress on the Local Plan Review is delayed or stalled. - Government intervention if inadequate progress is made upon Local Plan Review.		5	5	3					

	Waste Depots	Progress	<input type="text" value="0%"/>	Due Date	01-May-2025				
Project Summary	Securing fit for purpose depot solutions for the future of waste and street cleansing services.								
Latest Update	Awaiting confirmation of project milestones.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Existing depot not fit for purpose. - Unable to secure existing depots in short/medium-term. - Funding not available for EV charging. - Fuel tank not fit for purpose/available for HVO. - Planning permission refused for Buntingford depot, shared space impacts leading to depot not being fit for purpose. - EA change permitting requirements making Buntingford not fit for purpose. - Capital works money not available. - Business case and planning permission not approved for new depot.		9	9	5					

Risks and PIs Not Linked to Specific Projects

Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
Vital additional actions require resources (e.g., staff and financial) to be redirected to enable them to be provided, which affects the delivery of other projects within the Council Delivery Plan. The cost-of-living crisis is leading to Government providing targeted support to individuals/households, some of which requires our support to administer. The fire in Baldock requires us to take a lead on recovery. The shortage of staff and other resources may affect our ability to respond, even if money is available. Significant difficulties in being able to recruit to roles in some key areas.		8	9	2

<p>Risk: Prolonged widespread disruption to/failure of IT infrastructure/systems. Possible causes: - Deliberate and unauthorised breaches of security e.g., ransomware, denial of service. - Unintentional/accidental breaches of security e.g., action of individual staff/Members. - Weakness/failure of essential IT infrastructure e.g., loss of internet access. - Evolving risk appetite/profile associated with IT systems, as we pursue increased use of hosted systems and associated risks to individual systems are transferred to suppliers. Leading to: - Inability to deliver services/projects. - Unbudgeted costs to enable recovery. - Reputational damage.</p>		8	8	8
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Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Percentage of NNDR collected in year			42.6%	34.5%
Percentage of council tax collected in year			42.54%	34.5%
Museum general admittance visitor numbers			6,422	6,500
Miles driven by NHC full electric vehicles			21,126	13,750
Machin Town Hall income			£64,591	N/A Data Only
Value of sales at Bancroft Cafe Kiosk			£12,345	N/A Data Only
Percentage of raised sales invoices due for payment that have been paid			92.74%	97%
% of payments received that were paid by electronic methods			99.24%	99.3%
Kg residual waste per household			79kg	89kg
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting			62%	59%
Electricity and gas energy consumption (kWh) - 100% of reported energy consumption is from green energy sources			432,590	525,420
Percentage of Social Value committed on the Social Value Portal that has been delivered			No data currently available	N/A Data Only

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 SEPTEMBER 2023**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
2023-24**

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: NOT APPLICABLE

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report highlights items scheduled in the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2023-24 civic year. It also includes items that have not yet been assigned to a specific meeting of the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Committee prioritises topics for inclusion in the work programme attached as Appendix A and, where appropriate, determines the high-level form and timing of scrutiny input.
- 2.2. That the Committee, having considered the most recent iteration of the Forward Plan, as attached at Appendix B, suggests a list of items to be considered at its meetings in the coming civic year.
- 2.3. That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan as attached at Appendix C be considered.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To allow the Committee to set a work programme which provides focused Member oversight, encourages open debate and seeks to achieve service improvement through effective policy development and meaningful policy and service change.
- 3.2. The need to observe Constitutional requirements and monitor the Forward Plan for appropriate items to scrutinise remains a key aspect of work programming.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. The Committee has varied its approach to overview and scrutiny activity over recent years. Currently it seeks to enter the process of policy development at an early stage and consequently may consider items associated with service action plans.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

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

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

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. The LGA Peer Committee Support was undertaken in 2022 and finalised in January 2023, which focused on the Overview and Scrutiny and Finance, Audit and Risk Committees. Recommendations for Overview & Scrutiny were made and are set out in the Action Plan at Appendix C.
- 7.2. In line with the recommendation of the Corporate Peer Challenge 2023 Executive Members were invited to present reports that fall under their remit and to make presentations on specific issues that the Committee wish to consider.
- 7.3. The Committee now considers a wide range of issues, where appropriate, commencing its reviews early in the policy development process. By doing this it seeks to ensure assumptions are challenged at an early stage, mistakes are avoided, and eventual outcomes provide optimal benefit to the community.
- 7.4. The Committee seeks to ensure that consideration of agenda items minimises the additional burdens on staff resources. Wherever possible, requests are made for the presentation of documents already in existence rather than the production of new documents specifically for the Committee.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Work Programme

- 8.1. The Committee's work programme for the year requires reviewing at each meeting and direction is sought from the Committee on items they wish adding. Appendix A contains the work programme for 2023-24.
- 8.2. When considering additional topics their risk assessment and prioritisation will ensure that the most appropriate items taking forward to the work programme.

Forward Plan

- 8.3. The Forward Plan for August at Appendix B. Members can view currently published forward plans here: [Browse plans - Cabinet, 2023 | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk)
- 8.4. Members are reminded that the Forward Plan acts as public notification of key executive decisions during the next four months and beyond that it is a working document subject to regular amendments.

Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan

- 8.5. The Committee agreed at the meeting held on 20 June 2023 that the actions regarding the Overview and Scrutiny Committee included in the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan be appended to all future reports in order to:
 - Act as an aide memoire when considering the work programme.
 - Consider any actions that need further work.
 - Assess the effectiveness of changes made.
- 8.6. The Committee is asked to consider the Action Plan and any update updates provided at Appendix C.

Task and Finish Group on Communication and Engagement

- 8.7. The Scrutiny Officer has contacted Group Leaders to ask for Panel Members and Chair nominations for the Task and Finish Group on Communication and Engagement.
- 8.8. The Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group were approved at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 September 2022: [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 6th September, 2022, 7.30 pm | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk).

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Under section 6.2.5 the Constitution, the Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme however it must ensure it retains sufficient capacity within the programme to meets its statutory obligations.
- 9.2. Section 6.2.7 (u) of the constitution allows the Committee “to appoint time limited task and finish topic groups to undertake detailed scrutiny work and report back to the overview and scrutiny committee to make recommendations to the Cabinet.”
- 9.3. In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme falls within the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. Depending on how they are applied in practice, the scope of the options presented in Sections 7 and 8 have the potential to be wide reaching. As detailed in Section 14: Human Resource Implications, the wider the reach, the more significant the impact on Officer time in terms of report writing, data analysis, and committee meeting attendance.

Given recent funding pressures and the consequent reduction in Officer numbers, significant requests for scrutiny work will limit officer time available to spend on activities such as identifying and delivering cost reductions, income generation and project management.

- 10.2. Although not significant, a committee attendance allowance of £25.17 per Officer per evening meeting is payable to officers in attendance. This is in addition to providing time off in lieu or overtime as an alternative.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

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

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

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

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1. Appendix A – Work Programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023-2024
- 16.2. Appendix B – Forward Plan – 18 August 2023

16.3. Appendix C – Corporate Peer Committee Support Action Plan in regard to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

17.1. Eleanor Hopcraft, Scrutiny Officer, ScrutinyOfficer@north-herts.gov.uk , ext 4514

17.2. James Lovegrove, Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager, James.Lovegrove@north-herts.gov.uk , ext 4204

17.3. Isabelle Alajooz, Legal Commercial Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Isabelle.Alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk , ext 4346

17.4. Tim Everitt, Performance and Risk Officer, Tim.Everitt@north-herts.gov.uk , ext 4646

17.4. Maggie Williams, Senior HR and Contracts Manager, Maggie.Williams@north-herts.gov.uk , ext. 4506

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1. Previous Reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Forward Plans.

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PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2023-24

DATE	REPORTS	Report Author	Portfolio Holder
12 September 2023	Resolutions Report Work Programme Q1 Update on the Council Delivery Plan 2023-24 Safeguarding Report	Eleanor Hopcraft Eleanor Hopcraft Rachel Cooper Lisa McDonnell	- - Ian Albert Alistair Willoughby
7 November 2023	Resolutions Report Work Programme Call to Account on Harkness Court	Eleanor Hopcraft Eleanor Hopcraft Steve Crowley	- - Keith Hoskins
9 January 2023	Resolutions Report Work Programme Leisure Management Contract	Eleanor Hopcraft Eleanor Hopcraft Louise Randall	- - Steve Jarvis
29 January 2023	Crime and Disorder Matters Resolutions Report Work Programme Q3 Update on the Council Delivery Plan 2023-24	Eleanor Hopcraft Eleanor Hopcraft Rachel Cooper	Alistair Willoughby - - Ian Albert
12 March 2024	Resolutions Report Work Programme Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023-2024 Council Delivery Plan	Eleanor Hopcraft Eleanor Hopcraft Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Rachel Cooper	- - - Ian Albert
	To be scheduled: Invitation to: settle Recovery Plan Lord Lister Call to Account Chair's Report Greenspaces Strategic Housing Policy Update Enterprise Service Area Updates		

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 18 August 2023

The Forward Plan contains brief details of Key Decisions that the Council is likely to take over the next four month period and beyond. You will also find details of contacts who can provide further information and hear your views. **Please note that the dates of some of the decisions may change from month to month, please check with Committee, Member and Scrutiny Services on (01462) 474655 before deciding to attend a meeting.**

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
Community Investment Fund Policy		Leader of the Council	14 Aug 2023		Jeanette Thompson, Service Director - Legal and Community jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Refugee resettlement and Home Office funding update		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Proposed Increase in Car Parking Tariffs 2023-24		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Statement of Community Involvement		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Clare Skeels, Senior Planning Officer clare.skeels@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
BID Reballot November 2023 - Letchworth		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Chloe Gray, Enterprise Manager chloe.gray@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
Burymead Museum Storage Solution		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Robert Orchard, Operations and Facilities Manager robert.orchard@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Leisure Management Contract Options		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Louise Randall, Leisure Manager louise.randall@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Q1 update on the Council Delivery Plan 2023-24		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
WITCHIN AND ROYSTON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BIDs) RENEWAL		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Andrew Figgis, Economic Development Officer andrew.figgis@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
FIRST QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
FIRST QUARTER INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) REVIEW 2023/24		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
DLUHC's Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme		Cabinet	19 Sep 2023		Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Financial System Procurement		Service Director: Resources	Before 30 Sep 2023		Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Permit Review		Cabinet	Not before 14th Nov 2023		Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Draft Sustainability SPD		Cabinet	14 Nov 2023		Deborah Coates, Principal Strategic Planning Officer deborah.coates@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Biodiversity Strategy 2023-2028		Cabinet	14 Nov 2023		Sarah Kingsley, Service Director - Place sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
Update to Common Housing Allocation Scheme		Cabinet	14 Nov 2023		Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

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

	Recommendation	Action	Led By	Timescale	Update
1	Define what you want your scrutiny panels to achieve.	<p>To be discussed with the scrutiny committee but approach based on the 4 principles of good scrutiny would make sense: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides critical friend challenge to policymakers and decision makers • Enables the voice and concerns to the public • Is carried out by independent-minded people who lead and own the scrutiny role • Drives improvement in public services 	Scrutiny Committee	Ongoing	
2	Put into place scrutiny training for the whole council (members and officers) and experiment with how training could be more effective for the 2024 new intake. Ensure all members understand the benefits and role of scrutiny.	<p>Will be incorporated within the Member training programme being developed.</p> <p>Group Leaders need to reinforce the importance of attending training with their groups.</p>	Democratic Services Member Champions Learning + Development	Before March 2024	Training provided on 18 May 2023 for Members, with recording of the session made available on GrowZone.
3	Consider how the provision of training can be improved to increase knowledge transfer and support members with ongoing training needs e.g., use of one-to-one coaching the provisional	Will be incorporated within the Member training programme being developed.	Democratic Services Member Champions Learning + Development	Before March 2024	

	feedback from live meetings, further training to fill any gaps in knowledge and skills.				
4	Urgently fund and recruit a dedicated scrutiny officer.	Budget has been identified for a part-time Scrutiny Officer subject to successful recruitment.	Democratic Services Manager/Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager	Complete	Scrutiny Officer started on 7 August 2023
5	Members to actively review the Forward Plan and invitation of cabinet members to attend O&S. This could be overcome with a dedicated scrutiny officer in place.	This is already on every agenda and is done every meeting it will be for members to take forward with the Scrutiny Officer.	Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Officer	Pending	Scrutiny Officer to discuss with Chair and Vice-Chair
6	Proper and effective reporting onwards to council and cabinet by O&S as required.	Chair and Scrutiny Officer will need to take this forward and consider the best way to report O&S discussion to cabinet and council. This can be done verbally. A report from a Task & Finish Group would be a written report.	Chair of Scrutiny Scrutiny Officer	Pending	Scrutiny Officer to discuss with Chair and Vice-Chair
7	Establish clear meeting protocols and associated processes for questioning cabinet members.	For Scrutiny Officer to work through with the Chair	Chair of Scrutiny Scrutiny Officer	Pending	Scrutiny Officer to discuss with Chair and Vice-Chair
8	Officers to always facilitate the bringing forward of future agenda items requested by O&S in a timely manner	This is accepted but felt to have been a one-off example. It would be for the Scrutiny Officer to ensure this happens.	Scrutiny Officer	Ongoing	

9	Training in scrutiny questioning skills (KLOE).	Has been and will continue to be incorporated within the Member training programme being developed.	Democratic Services Member Champions Learning + Development	Ongoing	
10	Specific O&S training for the opposition to encourage effective opposition role. There is specific scrutiny training for groups in opposition to assist with scrutiny work and assist them in being more effective throughout the council.	Will be incorporated within the Member training programme being developed.	Democratic Services Member Champions Learning + Development	Ongoing	Members of the opposition either attended the Scrutiny training session on 18 May 2023 or watched the recording on GROWzone. Other options of scrutiny training for the opposition will be explored.
11	Scrutiny needs to actively seek to implement the use of Task and Finish Groups.	This is for the Chair and Committee to consider with the support of the Scrutiny Officer.	Chair of Scrutiny Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Officer	Ongoing	Scrutiny Officer has asked for nominations from the group leaders for the Task and Finish Group on Communication and Engagement. Once nominations have been received dates for the Task and Finish Group will be organised.
12	It was observed by some members that the preparation for the special scrutiny meeting on the 'call to account' was beneficial and	For Scrutiny Officer to work through with the Chair.	Chair of Scrutiny Scrutiny Officer	Pending	

	lessons learnt on how this preparation helped scrutiny should be considered in taking forward scrutiny in the future.				
13	Establish proactive annual programme of work and agenda setting.	This is for the Chair and Committee to consider, with the support of Scrutiny Officer.	Chair of Scrutiny Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Officer	Ongoing	
14	Provide O&S training in Chairing Skills.	Will be incorporated within the Member training programme being developed.	Democratic Services Member Champions Learning + Development	Ongoing	Chairing Skills training provided on 12 June 2023
15	Training in scrutiny questioning skills (KLOE).	Duplicate. See entry 9 above.			To remove
16	Ensure the scrutiny committee actively follow up on all recommendations.	This is already on every agenda. For Scrutiny Officer to work with the Chair and Committee to ensure it is actively looked at.	Chair of Scrutiny Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Officer	Ongoing	Referrals will be included in the Committee's Resolutions report so the Committee can follow up on recommendations.
17	Consideration should be given by the cabinet and portfolio holders on how they can carry out their role in a way that supports scrutiny being able to act as effectively as possible.	This links to the vision for scrutiny in recommendation one this should be a two-way critical friend relationship to be included as part of training and potentially part of work planning. Cabinet to consider how to better engage with Scrutiny.	Cabinet Scrutiny Committee Chair of Scrutiny	Ongoing	
18	Ensure minutes reflect the decisions of the meeting – e.g., requests for agenda items to be	Committee Services and the Scrutiny Officer will make sure everything is accurately captured.	Scrutiny Officer	Ongoing	

	recorded in the minutes and added to the forward plan.				
19	Cabinet members should consistently and without exception be expected to attend O&S committee meetings where decisions from their area of responsibilities are being scrutinised.	Agreed. This is the current approach unless there is an emergency. Cabinet to consider as part of how to better engage with scrutiny.	Cabinet	Ongoing	Scrutiny Officer has advised the Executive of Committee dates for 2023-24 and will provide notice when required to attend meetings.
20	The scrutiny chair or their representative should attend all cabinet meetings to present scrutiny findings particularly to enable the thinking and debate around the recommendations to be clearly communicated with the cabinet to maximise the impact scrutiny can have on decisions.	Agreed.	Chair of Scrutiny	Ongoing	Scrutiny Officer has advised the Chair and Vice-Chair of Cabinet dates for 2023-24.
21	Where Cabinet do not accept an O&S recommendation, reasons should be given.	Agreed. Cabinet to consider as part of how to better engage with scrutiny	Cabinet	Ongoing	Reasons for a recommendation not being accepted by Cabinet will be included in the Committee's Resolutions report.

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