

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



22 December 2023

Our Ref Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9
January 2024
Contact. Committee Services
Direct Dial. (01462) 474655
Email. committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk

To: Members of the Committee: Councillors Adam Compton (Chair), Val Bryant (Vice-Chair), 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, GERNON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF**

On

TUESDAY, 9TH JANUARY, 2024 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 - 7 NOVEMBER AND 5 DECEMBER 2023 | To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 7 November 2023 and 5 December 2023 | (Pages 5 - 22) |
| 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 COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND SCRUTINY MANAGER 23 - 24)

To consider the outcome of Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolutions.

10. Q2 UPDATE ON PROGRESS AGAINST THE COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN (Pages
An update on the Projects, PI's and Risks linked to delivery of the Council 25 - 62)
Plan.

11. LOCAL PLAN REVIEW (Pages
REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – REGULATORY 63 - 156)

Overview & Scrutiny is requested to note the report and make recommendations to Cabinet.

12. 2024 - 2028 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (Pages
The council's proposed approach to Marketing and Communications for the 157 -
five year period from 2024 - 2028. 170)

13. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS (MARCH - JUNE 2023) (Pages
The key findings from the Community Survey (March - June 2023), our first 171 -
digital residents' survey and how they compare to the Local Government 204)
Association June 2023 Resident Satisfaction phone survey results.

14. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (Pages
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND SCRUTINY MANAGER 205 -
222)

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

ANDALLNORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON TUESDAY, 7TH NOVEMBER, 2023 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

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

In Attendance:

Ian Couper (Service Director - Resources), Steve Crowley (Service Director - Enterprise), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Chloe Hipwood (Service Manager), Chris Jeffery (Customer Service Manager), Sarah Kingsley (Service Director - Place), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager) and Nafees Parker

Also Present:

For the duration of the meeting, there were no members of the public present.

Councillors Ian Albert, Elizabeth Dennis, Tom Tyson, Amy Allen and Keith Hoskins were also in attendance.

236 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 01 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mick Debenham.

Having given due notice Councillor Sean Nolan substituted for Councillor Mick Debenham.

237 MINUTES - 12 SEPTEMBER 2023

Audio Recording – 2 minutes 38 seconds

In response to a question from Councillor Ralph Muncer, the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager advised that:

- The questions Councillor Muncer had submitted after the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were recorded in a supplementary document on ModGov.
- Following this meeting there would now be a public reference to this supplementary document as reflected in these minutes.

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 12 September 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

238 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 5 minutes 0 seconds

There was no other business notified.

239 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 5 minutes 5 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 for the purposes of clarification clause 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution does not apply to this meeting.
- (4) The Chair advised that he had agreed to a change to the order of the agenda and Agenda Item 9 would take place after Agenda Item 15.

240 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 6 minutes 9 seconds

There was no public participation at this meeting.

241 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

Audio recording – 6 minutes 23 seconds

No urgent or general exception items were received.

242 CALLED-IN ITEMS

Audio recording – 6 minutes 29 seconds

There have been no called-in items.

243 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Audio recording – 6 minutes 33 seconds

No questions had been submitted by Members.

244 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Audio recording – 2 hours 8 minutes 14 seconds

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

- The Draft Sustainability SPD had been presented to Cabinet Panel on the Environment on 27 September 2023 and it would also be presented at the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 December 2023.

- The CPC Action Plan was marked as complete and would be removed from the resolutions.
- An online training video for Ideagen would be distributed to Councillors once it was completed. An intranet guide for Members had been circulated in the meantime.
- Q1 Update on the Council Delivery Plan 2023-24 had been referred and the recommendation was considered, and approved, by Cabinet at the meeting on 19 September 2023.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed and Councillor Nigel Mason seconded and, following a vote, it was:

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

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

245 3C'S HALF YEAR UPDATE 2023/2024

Audio recording – 6 minutes 41 seconds

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis presented the Information Note entitled '3Cs Half Year Update 2023/2024' and advised that:

- Things were moving in a positive direction when you compare the number of complaints received this year as opposed to the number received last year over the same period.
- There had been a slight increase in the number of complaints to our contractor Urbaser, but this was because customer services were putting them directly through to the contractors to resolve where possible.
- Overall picture is positive when looking at total percentage of complaints received versus the number of customers that the Council serve.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Dominic Griffiths

In response to the questions, Councillor Dennis advised that she would contact the relevant Service Directorate and report back to Members on lessons learned from the complaints.

In response to the questions, the Customer Services Manager advised that:

- There had not been any progress at that time, however the Council had recently procured a new digital platform which amongst other things would replace the current Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. As part of that project, the Council was looking at how best to capture customer experience, including some sentiment analysis.
- He would provide a breakdown of why May had seen the highest number of complaints.

The Chair advised that it would be very useful if in future years analysis of complaints could be provided with a monthly breakdown.

246 CALL TO ACCOUNT ON THE HARKNESS COURT REFURBISHMENT

Audio recording – 12 minutes 18 seconds

The Chair introduced the Call to Account item and welcomed Steve Crowley, Service Director – Enterprise and Nafees Parker, Building Surveyor, who were in attendance to provide their account.

Before proceedings commenced, the following Members confirmed they had received dispensation from the Service Director – Legal & Community:

- Councillor Sean Nolan
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Ian Moody
- Councillor Val Bryant

The Service Director – Enterprise presented their report entitled 'Call to account on the Harkness Court Refurbishment' and Appendices, and advised that:

- The aim was to revert Harkness Court back into residential use, as four flats, from its current use as offices.
- The start date for refurbishment was delayed from 2018 to August 2020, the building work had been completed, however, there were a number of additional items that needed to be undertaken to enable it to be rented out. This work was scheduled to complete by the start of February 2024.
- The lack of a formal project or project manager in place, plus changes in personnel at Stevenage Borough Council and North Herts Council combined with the impact of Covid, had caused delays in starting this project.
- Another delay was complying was that the furthest point a fire engine can park from the furthest point of a building could be no more than 45 meters, this was part of the previously mentioned work that needed to be undertaken.
- On completion Harkness Court would be leased out to rent by Broadwater Hundred Property Management Ltd, a trading company wholly owned by the Council which would provide a revenue income of £16,000 per annum.

The following which Members asked questions:

- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Ian Moody
- Councillor Sean Nolan
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

The following questions were asked by Members:

- Have you gone through the list of all the other commercial projects to see if they do fall within the scope which will ensure they get on to a project plan and this doesn't happen again?
- Is the figure of £16,000 revenue income listed in 4.2 of the report for the Council correct?
- Could you outline the primary objectives for the project? Were any other alternative objectives considered?
- Who were key stakeholder of the project and did this change throughout the duration of the project?
- Was the role of the project manager identified and were other stakeholders aware of this?
- Was this project in Councillor Levett's portfolio at the beginning of the project?
- Were there any delays in signing off the contract at the start?
- Were any risks identified at the start of the project?

- Were there any significant changes to milestones at the beginning of the project, and were there in fact any milestones?
- Had there been any staff resource issues throughout the project and did this have any impact on the timescales?
- Were any of the current projects identified that there wasn't a contract for?
- In the last eighteen months was there any project management software used throughout the project?
- How many regular reviews in last year have there been for the project?
- How were building control involved in the contract agreements and management?
- Where did the responsibility for liaising with building control throughout the project rest?
- Was any money borrowed because payments were late?
- What was the original timescale of the project for awarding to completion?
- Have there been any methodologies identified for developing project management skills that are not present so far?
- Have there been any proactive ideas for reviewing information we have about land ownerships where there were complexities?
- Was it fair to say that the Council underestimated the scale for the original project?
- Why was there not a project manager allocated to a project of this size?
- When were officers made aware of significant concerns around project management?
- What mechanisms were enabled to ensure cross authority communication?
- Was the correct level of expertise now available going forward to enable the full set of specifications?
- Was there a recognised way specifications were developed in the early stages of a project?
- When was it identified that the contract was missing?
- Were we now signing electronic copies of contracts?
- What is the difference between a deal of agreement and a contract?

In response to questions, the Service Director – Enterprise advised that:

- This project was seen as a simple conversion and only once work had started issues were identified which had caused significant delays.
- There was still the option to sell the four flats instead of renting if preferred.
- Further work did still need to be completed to get this refurbishment completed.
- Harkness Court was part of a much bigger £3 million capital allocation rather than a standalone project.
- This project was in Councillor David Levett's portfolio at the beginning of the project.
- Stevenage Borough Council had responsibility for liaising with building control, working closely with North Herts Council.
- There was no formal framework in place to ensure the correct monitoring of projects and that the right documents were in place.
- No project management software was used at that time, there was only monitoring of outstanding items.
- An audit found the original contract was missing.
- All building control issues were now resolved apart from the 45 meter rule.
- No risk log or issue log were found.
- No extra funds had been borrowed by the Council for this project.
- Informal project board meetings were now held regularly to review progress of the project.
- There was now a full-time procurement officer employed by the Council.
- This was a learning curve for the Council and going forward, any project of this size would have the correct project management in place to ensure knowledge and expertise throughout the project.

In response to questions, the Building Surveyor advised:

- That the relationship with architects and staff at Stevenage Borough Council worked well.
- Even with a project manager in place, it was unlikely that the 45 meter rule would have been identified.
- Any project with a cost of over £50,000 must have a formal contract.
- The signing of a contract was handled by the legal department.
- A paper contract was signed at the time, but this can't be found.
- A deal of agreement was a more simple and cheaper document than a contract.
- Hard copies of contracts were still being used.

The Chair advised that he would be submitting a report back to either Cabinet or Council to talk about the lessons learnt as part of this process. He would be looking at ways in which Overview and Scrutiny could use the lessons learnt from an internal audit for the best for the Council in the long term.

N.B. Subsequent to the meeting, for the purpose of clarification, the contract referred to in the above minute for the building works was held and had not been misplaced.

247 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Audio Recording: 1 hour 11 minutes

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

N.B. Following the conclusion of this item there was a short break in proceedings until 20:44.

248 PART 2 MINUTES - 20 JUNE 2023

N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recordings were available.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed, and Councillor Clare Billing seconded, and following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the part 2 Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20 June 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

249 WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING CONTRACT SERVICE DESIGN - PART 2

N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recordings were available.

The Executive Member for Recycling and Waste Management presented the report entitled 'Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Design – Part 2'.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) Any changes to the service design identified in Appendix 2 of the report regarding waste and recycling service are referred back to Cabinet for approval.
- (2) Any changes to the service design identified in Appendix 2 of the report regarding street cleansing service are referred back to Cabinet for approval.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) The competitive dialogue procurement process allowed the Council to explore service design options which may present benefits to the Council. The process so far has identified that significant cost increases are likely from the waste, recycling and street cleansing services in the next contract.
- (2) Officers have considered the initial offers from bidders and discussed opportunities for specification changes with them, which were aligned with the Council's aims for high performance, but that will reduce the costs to the Council with minimal impacts on perceived performance.
- (3) To ensure decisions were taken by elected representatives and not delegated to Officers.

250 WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING CONTRACT SERVICE DESIGN - PART 1

Audio recording – 1hours 52 minutes 05 seconds

The Executive Member for Recycling and Waste Management, presented the report entitled 'Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Service Design – Part 1' and advised that:

- This was a high-profile service which impacts on residents every week and on the Council being able to meet its carbon reduction and sustainability objectives.
- There was a competitive procurement process in progress as the proposed service design presented affordability issues for Council.
- Delegated authority was being sought to proceed with points 8.2 of this report as the procurement timeline was tight.

The Chair advised that the reason part of this item was in Part 2 was due to financial implications for the Council and that there was a vote on two new Recommendations.

The following members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Adam Compton

In response to questions, the Service Manager - Waste stated that:

- External legal advice was being sought to ensure the contract complied with proposed statutory guidance on frequency of residual waste collections.
- Some of the design changes were mutually exclusive.
- There were lots of performance measures available, but sustainability was different to carbon reduction in relation to climate and performance rates.
- The specification would be able to manage all anticipated changes in legislation.
- Further legal advice was being sought to ensure the ability to make changes to the contract if needed.

Councillor David Levett reported that this was the largest contract and the biggest expenditure that the Council has and the way it is delivered had an impact on every household in North Herts and should be decided by elected representatives. He proposed that the referral be amended and any changes should be referred to Cabinet for approval.

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Ralph Muncer.

The Service Director – Resources advised that recommendations are listed as paragraph 8.2 in Part 1 and as Appendix 2 in Part 2.

Having been proposed, as amended, by Councillor David Levett and seconded by Councillor Ralph Muncer, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) Any changes to the service design identified in paragraph 8.2 of the report regarding waste and recycling service are referred back to Cabinet for approval.
- (2) Any changes to the service design identified in paragraph 8.2 of the report regarding street cleansing service are referred back to Cabinet for approval.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) The competitive dialogue procurement process allowed the Council to explore service design options which may present benefits to the Council. The process so far has identified that significant cost increases are likely from the waste, recycling and street cleansing services in the next contract.
- (2) Officers have considered the initial offers from bidders and discussed opportunities for specification changes with them, which were aligned with the Council's aims for high performance, but that would reduce the costs to the Council with minimal impacts on perceived performance.
- (3) To ensure decisions were taken by elected representatives and not delegated to Officers.

251 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Audio recording – 2 hours 10 minutes 32 seconds

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

- Members should use the link in 8.3 of the report to find up to date information on the Forward Plan and dates for Cabinet consideration.
- Members needed to advise of any topics to be included for discussion at the Crime and Disorders Matters on 29 January 2024.
- An extraordinary meeting would be held on 5 December to review the Leisure Management Contract.
- The update to the Common Housing Allocation Scheme would be heard at the meeting on 9 January 2024.

In response to a question from Councillor Ralph Muncer, the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager advised that he would ensure an invite was sent out to the Hertfordshire Constabulary to attend a meeting next year.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed, and Councillor Ian Moody seconded, and following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee prioritised topics for inclusion in the work programme attached as Appendix A and, where appropriate, determined 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 at Appendix B, suggested items be considered at its meetings in the coming civic year.

(3) That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan as attached at Appendix C was considered.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

(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.

(2) The need to observe Constitutional requirements and monitor the Forward Plan for appropriate items to scrutinise remains a key aspect of work programming.

The meeting closed at 9.48 pm

Chair

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH
ON TUESDAY, 5TH DECEMBER, 2023 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

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

In Attendance:

Deborah Coates (Principal Strategic Planning Officer), Ian Couper (Service Director - Resources), Chloe Hipwood (Service Manager), Sarah Kingsley (Service Director - Place), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Omar Ezzet (Strategic Planning Officer), Louise Randall (Leisure Manager), Nigel Smith (Strategic Planning Manager), Henry Thomas (Planning Officer - Graduate) and Sjanel Wickenden (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer).

Also Present:

There were no members of the public present.

252 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clare Billing, Dominic Griffiths and Ian Moody.

253 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 18 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 for the purposes of clarification clause 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution does not apply to this meeting.
- (4) The Chair asked the Committee for proposed topics for the Crime and Disorder Matters meeting on 29 January 2024.

254 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 3 minutes 55 seconds

There was no Public Participation.

255 DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY SPD

Audio Recording 4 minutes 6 seconds

The Executive Member for Planning and Transport presented the report 'Draft Sustainability SPD and highlighted that:

- If approved the draft would go out for public consultation in early January 2024 and the Hertfordshire Development Quality Charter would be endorsed.
- The Cabinet Panel for Environment had contributed to the improvements of the Sustainability SPD.
- The Local Plan was produced when the climate change aspirations of the Council were different. This draft would improve the climate and ecological stance of the Council especially as the built environment contributed to 25% of the CO² emissions.
- This draft seeks to promote higher building fabric standards to reduce the need for retrofitting in the future. It also encourages climate-responsive design using passive design strategies, such as orientation, shading, ventilation, insulation and landscaping, to reduce the reliance on mechanical systems and enhance the adaptability of buildings to changing weather patterns.
- The sustainability topics covered by the draft were highlighted in appendix A.
- The purpose of this draft was to provide a robust guidance for developers and to drive up the sustainability of our built environment and feedback from developers suggested they were supportive of this approach.
- There would be three levels of standards. bronze, silver and gold. The bronze level was the basic legal requirement. Applications meeting the silver and gold levels would be more favourably considered by the Planning department.
- The draft would go through a public consultation and then recommendations would be made to Cabinet next year.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor David Levett

In response to questions the Executive Member for Planning and Transport stated:

- The three different standard levels would raise aspirations and ambitions and they had clear criteria.
- There were three different SPDs and they related to different topics, this one covered the build, construction, embodied carbon, biodiversity and green infrastructure and was wider than the design code.
- The draft Biodiversity SPD was expected in March 2024 and the draft Design Code SPD in late 2024, the timetable for these SPDs was shared at the Cabinet meeting in November.
- There was some uncertainty around the future of SPDs following central government changes, however, in the meantime it was felt important to continue to update the Local Plan and strengthen policies.

In response to a question the Strategic Planning Manager stated that there was potential to revise the three standards and the options for implementation were highlighted at 8.7 of the report. It was also the intention that these standards would not be too onerous for small applications.

In response to a question the Strategic Planning Officer stated that the draft incorporated the best practices currently available from other Councils for renewable energy and biodiversity standards.

Councillor David Levett proposed and Councillor Adam Compton seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the draft Sustainability SPD, attached as Appendix A to this report, be endorsed and approved for a six-week public consultation from 4 January 2024 to 16 February 2024.
- (2) That the Hertfordshire Development Quality Charter attached as Appendix C is endorsed and that developers of strategic and significant sites in the District (as defined by the Local Plan) are encouraged to voluntarily sign and commit to its pledges.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) To allow the draft Sustainability SPD to be progressed to public consultation so that it may be developed and eventually adopted to support the adopted Local Plan.
- (2) To support a common standard for design quality and sustainability across Hertfordshire.

256 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

257 WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING CONTRACT SERVICE DESIGN - PART 2

N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recordings were available.

RESOLVED: That the Committee returned to Part 1 to consider the report and to make a final determination on the recommendations as the recommendations for Part 1 and Part 2 were identical.

258 WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING CONTRACT SERVICE DESIGN - PART 1

Audio Recording 55 minutes 36 seconds.

The Executive Member for Recycling and Waste Management presented the report entitled 'Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Service Design' and highlighted that:

- This contract represents the largest service contract spend for the Council each year and would have a huge impact on residents.
- The contract would have a significant impact on the finances of the Council and would influence the ability of the Council to achieve their carbon reduction and sustainability aims.
- Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) bear the cost of residual waste disposal.
- Officers had worked with Members and East Herts District Council (EHDC) to meet the contract sustainability objectives, prior to taking this contract out to tender.

- There would be a change of affordability for the Council, but this report contained recommendations to limit the increase in the anticipated contract costs.
- The proposed changes gave residents more capacity to recycle and were the most financially sustainable solutions for the Council.
- There was a tight procurement timeline and any delays may result in greater cost implications.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason

In response to questions the Shared Service Manager, Waste Management stated:

- The additional capital bin cost related to the change to the 3,3,3 bin collection model and not for the 2 weekly collection schedule, should this be required to take place.
- The pricing of the additional, new bins was competitive due the volume that would be ordered, however the Council did not have any storage available to have vast surplus stocks of bins.
- Replacing an individual bin would cost more per unit than the large scale procurement of the extra bins. Previously when bin replacements were included as a general provision in the waste contract, compared with paying on a unit basis, it cost more than it does now.
- The feedback from the public consultation showed that residents wanted to improve recycling and their ability to recycle as highlighted in 8.33 of the report.
- North Herts residents recycled about 57% of their rubbish, but the aim was to reach St Albans and Three Rivers who were the top recycling performers in the Country.
- There was a soft plastics recycling trial occurring in Knebworth, to learn about how residents would use the service. This would be district wide in 2025 and soft plastics would be collected in the containers bin.
- Any mismatch of coloured bins may confuse the collection staff, and the majority of unused brown bins had been collected or would need significant cleaning to be viable to be used for other collection purposes, which was unlikely to have any significant cost savings.
- The previous change of bin colour from grey to purple had been supported by a high level of communication.
- There would be full colour alignment throughout East and North Herts District Councils.
- Occupiers of terrace houses would have an opt in choice due to their volume and storage needs, they would have the opportunity to change this, should their situations change, work was ongoing with the client team to finalise this matter.
- A total figure for the savings achieved by the proposals in this report would not be available until after the contract was awarded.
- Social Value is weighted at 10% in the contract, and is based on themes, outcomes and measures and included consideration towards recruitment of apprenticeships, former armed service personnel, non-working mothers and the unemployed, as well as a range of other social value elements.
- There were various mechanisms in place for any disruptions of service, with a clear criteria for the minimum service level. These would be best endeavours and are currently being consulted.
- If there was a strike the Council would not get involved in negotiations however if a disruption was due to a natural disaster, then this would impact of the minimum level of service delivered.

In response to questions the Service Director – Resources stated:

- The Council received £17.85M of funding in 2010/11, the funding for 2022/23 was £17.29M however this would be the equivalent of £11.83M at 2010/11 prices.
- Council costs had increased with inflation, and they had been additional cost rises in fuel, and staff costs. This meant that there was a 33% reduction of funding in real terms since 2010/11.
- Employees would be paid directly by the contractor and all salaries would need to comply with legislation.
- The contract would have an inflation model for salary, fuel costs and other costs throughout the contract lifespan.
- There was no requirement in the contract to pay the real living wage, that would be the choice of the contractor.

In response to questions the Executive Member for Recycling and Waste Management stated:

- The new contract was about changes not cuts.
- One bin would need to be put out each week and overall bin capacity should increase.
- The blue box was being replaced by a wheeled bin for most houses under the 3,3,3 proposal.
- There would be an improved service to residents with less confusion over bin days.

Councillor David Levett stated that this report contained recommendations for Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had previously reviewed this matter and stated that the final decision should be made by Cabinet and he believed this should still be the case.

Councillor David Levett stated that many of the recommendations contained reductions of service.

Councillor Levett noted that constitutionally this Committee could not revisit the recommendation it made to Cabinet 7 November 2023 and therefore proposed an amendment to the recommendation on the report. The amendment was seconded by Councillor Adam Compton and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report to Cabinet and requested that Cabinet takes into account the comments and questions made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Part 1 and Part 2 when making their final decision.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: To ensure Cabinet reviews and considers the comments and questions made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when considering the final recommendations of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning Contract Service Design.

259 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

260 LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT AWARD - PART 2

N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recordings were available.

Details of decisions taken on this item are restricted due to the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

261 LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT AWARD - PART 1

Audio Recording 2 hours and 9 seconds

The Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Green Spaces presented the report entitled 'Leisure Management Contract Award Part 1' and highlighted that:

- The current Leisure Management contract would expire at the end of March 2024.
- A multistage procurement process had taken place, initially with five bidders, with two bidders submitting final bids.
- Both bids were fully explored and scored satisfactorily, however there was a clear bid winner who would provide the best price, quality and social value.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Matt Barnes

In response to questions the Service Director – Place stated:

- That a press release was expected around the 2 January 2024 informing the public of the new contractor.
- Direct debits would transfer over to the new provider and memberships would continue, with more details released post contract.
- The service quality was assessed and evaluated against weighted method statements, detailed at 8.10 of the report. These highlighted that sustainability was at the core of their businesses.
- There was a very specific method statement concerning Letchworth outdoor pool and ideas to promote this site.
- There were KPIs in the contract relating to Customer Service levels which would be monitored, the successful bidder would provide a performance monitoring report.
- As part of the bid submission the applicants provided case studies showing examples of service quality and innovation on other contracts.
- No mystery shoppers were used but a specialist consultant was utilised throughout the procurement process.
- The capital for the Royston fitness extension had been allocated and had an expected start date of April 2024 with completion in October 2025

In response to a question the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Green Spaces stated that mystery shoppers would only be able to give a snapshot of a bidder, therefore an in-depth assessment was sought from a consultant.

In response to a question the Service Director – Resources stated that there was a provision in the contract regarding the risk of fuel prices increasing with the burden on the Council, but any risk on the volume of fuel consumed fell to the contractor.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed and Councillor Ralph Muncer seconded, and following a vote, it was:

Tuesday, 5th December, 2023

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet agree to award the Leisure and Active Communities Contract to the successful bidder highlighted in the Part 2 report. Subject to Standstill period.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: Our leisure management contracts expire on 31 March 2024. The recommendation ensures the procurement can be undertaken and completed within the project timescales, enabling the successful ongoing provision of leisure services in North Herts.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm

Chair

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RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

| REFERENCE | RESOLUTION | RESPONSE/OUTCOME | STATUS |
|--|--|---|-------------|
| | LOCAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION | | |
| MARCH 21 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. | The Draft Sustainability SPD item was considered at the meeting of O&S on 5 December 2023 and referred onto Cabinet for approval. The Draft Sustainability SPD item was approved at Cabinet on 12 December 2023. | In progress |
| | IDEAGEN (FORMELY PENTANA) TRAINING | | |
| SEPT 23 Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 12th September 2023 | Following discussion on the Council Delivery Plan Report, the Vice-Chair requested training on the risk monitoring software, Ideagen (formerly Pentana). | Following discussion with the Chair, a refresher video will be made by Risk/IT on how to use the Ideagen software, which Councillors will have access to when made. A guide has been circulated to Members on how to access and use Ideagen. | In progress |

PREVIOUS REFERRALS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

| REFERENCE | RESOLUTION | RESPONSE/OUTCOME | |
|---|--|---|----------|
| NOV 23 Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 7th November, 2023, 7.30 pm North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk) | One referral was made to Cabinet from the Committee on 7 November 2023: 1. Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Service Design – Part 1 and Part 2 | Referral was considered at Cabinet on 14 November 2023. Following the amended recommendation by O&S, the Leader of the Council accepted these changes and deferred the items to be considered and approved by Cabinet at the next meeting. Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 14th November, 2023, 7.30 pm North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk) | Complete |
| DEC 23 Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 5th December, 2023, 7.30 pm North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk) | Three referrals were made to Cabinet from the Committee on 5 December 2023: 1. Draft Sustainability SPD 2. Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract Service Design – Part 1 and Part 2 3. Leisure Management Contract Award – Part 1 and Part 2 | Referrals were considered at Cabinet on 12 December 2023. The recommendations were approved as detailed in the reports. Executive Members were asked to provide an update from Overview & Scrutiny Committee on their items in the absence of the Chair, so that comments made were considered by Cabinet. Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 12th December, 2023, 7.30 pm North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk) | Complete |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 9 JANUARY 2024

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-24 (QUARTER 2 UPDATE)

REPORT OF: REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: FIANANCE AND IT - IAN ALBERT

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 2, 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

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 identifies any project(s) for which they would like to receive a more detailed update.

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 2 update was provided to Performance and Risk Management Group (PRMG) in November. 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 Q2 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 9 October 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 2 update, it generally reflects the latest position at the time that the report was written (mid-November).
- 8.2 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. Following feedback from Cabinet in September, this method of reporting completion will be kept under review.
- 8.3 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. The original due date for each project has now been included on the report, in addition to the current due date.

- 8.4 13 projects have proposed changes to milestone dates in Q2.10 of these projects have now moved to amber status as a result. Details for each project are included in Appendix A.
- Charnwood House – small change of 1 month proposed to allow for last minute queries, however, it is not expected that this will impact on the project overall.
 - Churchgate – Issues with Digital hub training, In-Person Hub on hold.
 - Empty Homes Strategy – Resourcing Issues.
 - Local Authority Housing Fund – Waiting for external party.
 - Local Plan delivery and review – delayed to accommodate further input from the Council's Cabinet panel on the Environment and Overview and Scrutiny / awaiting mandatory guidance from Central Government.
 - New ways of delivering Housing on Council Land –delay in Consultant availability.
 - Resident/ EV charging in our Car Parks – External party delay in dealing with grant application.
 - Solar PV on leisure centres – awaiting outcome of grant application.
 - Work with partners to prevent and relieve homelessness – dependent on HCC timescales.
 - Cycling Network – dependent on HCC timescales.
 - Finalise pay on exit parking review – Resourcing Issues / change in procurement approach.
 - Leisure Contract Procurement – Project timescales improved to allow for a longer mobilisation period.
 - Royston Leisure Centre solar thermal – awaiting outcome of grant application.

Proposed changes to plan milestone dates are highlighted in yellow, and the addition of new milestones (9) are highlighted in green, for ease of reference.

- 8.5 1 Project was completed in Q2 – Create and Communicate a Place Narrative for North Herts. This will be removed from future monitoring reports.
- 8.6 New Risks / Changes to Risks – There were no new Corporate Risks this quarter. All current risk scores remain unchanged this quarter, apart from the Local Authority Housing Fund. Despite the project being flagged as amber, the risk score has been reduced from 2 to 1 to reflect the fact that there are only a small number of units to be delivered, and delivery of both funding rounds is going ahead.
- 8.7 At the 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 RPMG meeting in August. This was linked to the resourcing risk, 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. Officers have developed a tool for assessing the prioritisation of projects, which is attached at Appendix B. The model assesses projects against a number of criteria, including Council Plan alignment, affordability and availability of resources. Each criteria has a weighting and an overall score is generated. The score against all the criteria is used to assess whether the project should continue. There is then a score against a sub-set of the criteria to determine if the project should be part of the Council Delivery Plan. This tool has been discussed with Executive Members and agreed that each project will be scored

against the tool (by the relevant Executive Member and Service Director). The results will then be moderated, before being used to form the projects that are included in the Q3 version of this report. Having a shorter list of projects helps ensure that the Council (Officers and Members) are more focused on key priorities.

- 8.8 Following feedback from Cabinet in September, we are developing the Council Delivery Plan so that only relevant milestones are included. This will include all current year milestones (which would include all that are incomplete) and those prior year milestones that help provide context to the overall project. As this is implemented it will help to reduce the length of the report. For all projects, all the milestones are retained on Ideagen, (the Council's Risk and Performance system that all Councillors can access), and those that are no longer relevant will be manually removed from the report.
- 8.9 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. Any such request would be incorporated into the next monitoring report. No requests were made at the last Committee meeting.
- 8.10 Members are able to view the detail of all projects, risks and performance indicators by accessing the Council's Performance and Risk software, Pentana (Ideagen). Details of the guest login can be found on the intranet at the link below, along with a procedure note on how to navigate the system. At the request of Members, we are currently looking at producing a video guide on how to navigate the system, and this will be made available as soon as possible.
[Ideagen Risk Management | Intranet \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](http://north-herts.gov.uk)

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 Q2 monitoring report.
Appendix B – Project Scoring Template

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

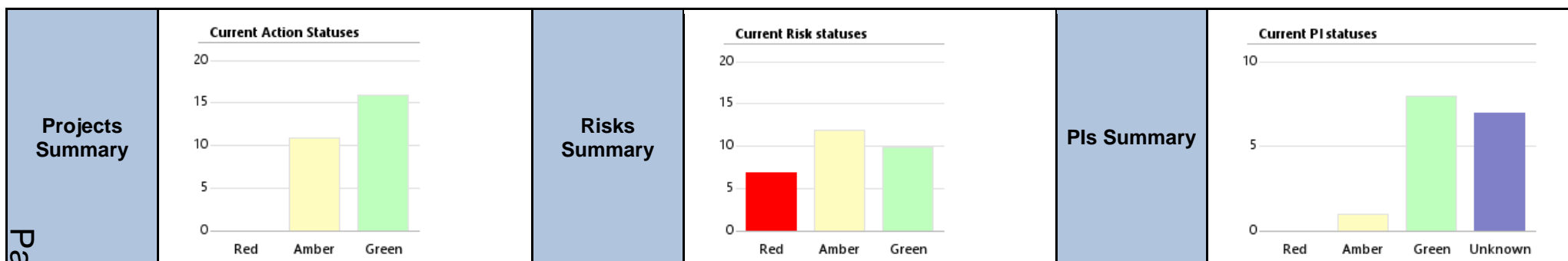
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Council Delivery Plan – Status Key

| 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. | | | | | | | | | |
| <div><div></div><div>33%</div></div> | 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><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. | | | | | | | | | |
























































Status Summaries

Generated on: 09 November 2023



Page 22



| Summary | Project Status | Change? | Risk | Risk Score |
|--|----------------|---------|------|------------------|
| Charnwood House | | | | 5 |
| Churchgate | | | | 8 |
| Empty Homes Strategy | | | | 2 |
| Enterprise Strategy | | | | 2 |
| Local Authority Housing Fund | | | | Down from 2 to 1 |
| Local Plan Delivery and Review | | | | 5 |
| Museum Storage | | | | 5 |
| New Ways of Delivering Housing on Council Land | | | | 5 |
| Resident/Public EV Charging in our Car Parks | | | | 5 |
| Solar PV on Leisure Centres | | | | 5 |

| Summary | Project Status | Change? | Risk | Risk Score |
|---|---|---|---|------------|
| Work with relevant partners to prevent and relieve homelessness whenever possible |  |  |  | 8 |
| Royston Leisure Centre Solar Thermal |  |  |  | 5 |
| Cycling Network |  |  |  | 2 |
| Finalise Pay on Exit Parking Review |  |  |  | 1 |
| Financial Sustainability/Balancing our Budget |  |  |  | 9 |
| Health Inequalities |  |  |  | 3 |
| Leisure Contract Procurement |  |  |  | 5 |
| Master Planning |  |  |  | 5 |
| Oughtonhead Common Weir |  |  |  | 2 |
| Playground Renovation Programme |  |  |  | 1 |
| Pursue commercial leasing opportunity for Royston Town Hall Annexe |  |  |  | 5 |
| Shared Prosperity Fund |  |  |  | 5 |
| Town Centre Recovery |  |  |  | 2 |
| Town Centre Strategies |  |  |  | 5 |
| Waste and Street Cleansing Contract Procurement |  |  |  | 9 |
| Waste Depots |  |  |  | 9 |
| Create and Communicate a Place Narrative for North Herts |  |  |  | 1 |
| Resourcing Risk | n/a |  |  | 9 |
| Cyber Risks | n/a |  |  | 8 |


2023/24 Council Delivery Plan


Generated on: 04 December 2023





| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|----------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|--------|
|  | Charnwood House | Due Date | 30-Apr-2024 | Progress | <div><div>60%</div></div> | Original Date | 30-Apr-2023 | | | |
| Project Summary | Leasing the property as a Community Hub. | | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 06-Nov-2023 Formal marketing exercise for leasing Charnwood House commenced and is now drawing to a close. We expect bids from interested parties to be received in November 2023. This should allow time to evaluate options and report to Cabinet in line with the recorded milestone due dates (by April 2024), despite the complexities presented by the condition of the building and title issues. Risk level still assessed as medium, although this could decrease depending on the bids received 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 | Completed. | | | | | | |
| 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 | Due date to change to 30 November 2023. Formal marketing exercise ending soon and bids from interested parties expected to be received in November 2023. | | | | | | |
| Following marketing exercise, evaluate options. | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | | | | | | | |
| Present report to Cabinet on the preferred options. | | 30-Apr-2024 | No | | | | | | | |
| When Cabinet report presented, finalise arrangements i.e., negotiate Heads of Terms with selected tenant, seek further Cabinet decision, complete lease. | | 30-Apr-2024 | No | Actual dates still to be confirmed, although actions likely to be completed in 2024/25. If required, new individual milestones will be introduced 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. | |  | 5 | 5 | 3 | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3. Viability of Listed Building consent conditions. | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Demand for community hub. | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Delays due to Asset of Community Value (ACV) listing. | | | | | | | | | |


|  | Churchgate | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>88%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 |
|--|---|-------------|-------------|---|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Project Summary | Actions in 2023/24 to progress the long-term regeneration of the shopping centre and surrounding areas. | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 06-Dec-2023 Overview of the project so far has been recently shared in the Winter 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. So far, they have completed the following steps: review of ownership, planning policy and market overview. They have also started their stakeholder engagement phase, whereby they are meeting with key stakeholders to identify issues, challenges and to gain an understanding of expectations. Their findings so far, and details of their next steps, were presented at an all Councillor event on 9 November 2023. The creation and set-up of an in-person hub is still planned, however, this is on hold until the Estates and Legal teams resolve the ongoing issue with the preferred unit and previous tenant. Once this is resolved, plans will be in place to open the hub as soon as possible. The digital hub has been created, tested by a focus group and is now live. The official launch will be w/c 11 December 2023 via NHC social media channels. Further milestones will be added as the project progresses and the consultants are appointed to conduct the next phases of the project timeline. Risk level still assessed as high, although the likelihood score remains medium to reflect that the project is still 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 | Completed | | | |
| 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 | Completed | | | |
| Project Board approve specification for consultant appointment. | | 31-May-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| Sharing results, by releasing top level information to the community via Comms. | | 31-Jul-2023 | Yes | Completed | | | |
| Procure and appoint consultant to develop viable regeneration project, and contract signed. | | 31-Aug-2023 | Yes | Completed | | | |
| Digital hub goes live. | | 30-Sep-2023 | Yes | Digital hub went live on 4 December 2023. Official launch will be w/c 11 December 2023 via NHC social media channels. | | | |
| Open in-person project hub. | | 30-Sep-2023 | No | The permanent in-person hub is on hold until further notice and we are not able to propose a revised due date at this time. We are still unable to access the premises due to a legal dispute with the previous tenant. We are now discussing the best ways to engage with stakeholders with our consultant, including the need for and timing of pop-up hubs in the early stages of the project. We now expect the permanent in-person hub to be established later into the project when we have completed further work to develop specific options. In the meantime, from December 2023, ongoing communication will be via the digital hub. | | | |






| 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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|--|---|--|---|----------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|--------|
|  | Empty Homes Strategy | | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>25%</div></div> | Original Date | 01-Sep-2022 | | | |
| Project Summary | Develop and start to implement a strategy to reduce numbers of empty homes. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 06-Nov-2023 Empty Homes Strategy being updated to consider latest housing requirements and now plan to present it to Cabinet in January 2024. The delay is due to resourcing issues, with the Environmental Health Manager having to prioritise undertaking numerous day-to-day officer/manager tasks to cover absences/vacancies. Meeting these competing demands remains challenging. Now anticipate advertising and appointing to the new Housing Improvement Officer role by March 2024. Once Strategy is adopted, Council Delivery Plan details to be reviewed and updated to reflect key implementation stages and risks to the successful achievement of stated objectives. Subsequent 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 | Completed | | | | | | |
| Present to Cabinet for adoption of the Strategy. | | | 19-Sep-2023 | No | Due date to change to 16 January 2024. Strategy delayed. Report now due to go to Cabinet in January 2024. | | | | | | |
| Commence implementation of Strategy post adoption, including advertising and appointing officer to post. | | | 20-Sep-2023 | No | Due date to change to 17 January 2024 to reflect the revised timetable for Strategy adoption. Milestone for Ideagen purposes, with the date simply reflecting that implementation of the Strategy will commence following its adoption by Cabinet. | | | | | | |
| Attempt to recruit to new Housing Improvement Officer role, created to help deliver approved Strategy. | | | 31-Dec-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Plan to advertise to the post following adoption of the Strategy. Anticipate being ready to appoint to post by end of March 2024. | | | | | | |
| 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. | | |  | 4 | 2 | 1 | | | | | |


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|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| - 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. | | | | | | | | | |
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|---|---|---|----------------|---------------|---|------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|--------|
|  | Enterprise Strategy | Due Date | 19-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div>0%</div> | Original Date | 16-Jan-2024 | | | |
| Project Summary | Development and approval of an Enterprise Strategy, incorporating Commercial, Economic Development and Tourism. | | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 08-Dec-2023 Due to the Enterprise Team having to prioritise other actions, we now expect to take the Enterprise Strategy to Cabinet for adoption in March 2024. We are also being assisted by the Local Enterprise Partnership and they have limited availability prior to the Christmas break. The scope is prepared and will be signed-off at the Executive Member briefing on 14 December 2023. The first draft of the Strategy will be presented to Leadership Team in February 2024, and following feedback from Leadership Team and relevant Executive Members, this will be updated, and the final draft will go back to Leadership Team in early March 2024. 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 | Scope prepared and due to be signed-off at the Executive Member briefing on 14 December 2023. | | | | | |
| First draft prepared for comment – Leadership Team/Exec Members. | | | 31-Oct-2023 | No | Now seeking sign-off of the first draft at the Leadership Team meeting scheduled for 26 February 2024. | | | | | |
| Present Strategy to Leadership Team/PLB. | | | 30-Nov-2023 | No | Draft Strategy to be reviewed/amended in line with feedback from Leadership Team and Executive Members. Final draft to be prepared and presented to Leadership Team on 11 March 2024. | | | | | |
| Present Strategy to Cabinet for adoption. | | | 16-Jan-2024 | No | Now plan to present final draft of Strategy to Cabinet for adoption on 19 March 2024. | | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | |


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|---|---|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------|
|  | Local Authority Housing Fund | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div>42%</div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2024 |
| Project Summary | Delivery of additional housing through Registered Providers. | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 30-Oct-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 and occupation of all three units is expected by end November 2023. Following Cabinet on 27 June 2023, we submitted our validation form for round two of the scheme - two providers are interested, and this should deliver a further eight units. Risk level reduced from 2 to 1, as there are only a small number of units due to be delivered and delivery of both funding rounds is going ahead. | | | | | | |


| Milestone | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | |
|--|---|------------|----------------|---------------|---|---|---|----------------------------|-------|--------|
| Report to Cabinet on Round Two allocation. | | | 27-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | |
| Submission of Round Two validation form to Government. | | | 05-Jul-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | |
| Agree Memorandum of Understanding with Registered Provider(s) to deliver housing via Round Two allocated funding. | | | 31-Aug-2023 | No | Due date to change to 30 November 2023. Will be completed once MOU agreed with DLUHC. | | | | | |
| Agree Memorandum of Understanding with settle relating to Round One allocated funding. | | | 31-Aug-2023 | No | Due date to change to 15 November 2023. Draft MOU sent to settle and we are awaiting a response. | | | | | |
| Assess Expressions of Interest from Registered Providers relating to Round Two allocation and select preferred partner(s). | | | 31-Aug-2023 | Yes | Five providers were initially interested. However, only two remain - settle and Home Group. | | | | | |
| 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 | 1 | 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 | |


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|---|--|----------|-------------|----------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | Local Plan Delivery and Review | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div>0%</div> | Original 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 | 03-Nov-2023 Officer recommendations on the initial review of the Local Plan remain on course to be published by the end of the year in line with the requirements of the Local Plan. Progress on the Sustainability SPD has been slightly delayed allowing for additional input from the Council's Cabinet Panel on the Environment and Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The timetable for the Biodiversity and Design Code SPDs have been amended in response to Government announcements and staffing capacity (see Master Planning commentary for a summary of the latter). | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | |


| Approval of draft Sustainability SPD for consultation. | | | | 30-Sep-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 December 2023. To now be reported to Cabinet in December 2023 to allow for additional input from the Council's Cabinet Panel on the Environment and Overview & Scrutiny Committee. | | | | |
|---|--|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|---|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Approval of draft Biodiversity SPD for consultation. | | | | 31-Dec-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. The Government has delayed the introduction of mandatory Biodiversity requirements until January 2024. Detailed guidance accompanying this is required before a decision can be taken on the scope of any Biodiversity SPD which this Council might produce. | | | | |
| Publication of initial recommendations in relation to the review of the Local Plan as required by Policy IMR2. | | | | 31-Dec-2023 | No | To be reported to Cabinet in January 2024. | | | | |
| Adoption of Sustainability SPD. | | | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Approval of draft Sustainability SPD for consultation now due December 2023. | | | | |
| Approval of draft Design Guide SPD for consultation. | | | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | Due date to change to 30 September 2024. Strategic Planning Matters report to Cabinet (November 2023) identifies this is likely to occur in Summer 2024. Revision agreed in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy. | | | | |
| Adoption of Biodiversity SPD. | | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Due date to change to 30 September 2024. As above. | | | | |
| Risks | | Risk Level | Original Score | Current Score | Target Score | Performance Indicators | Status | Trend | Value | Target |
| <p>Risks:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Poor scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to local character and context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Failure to retain/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 | | | | | |


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|---|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
|  | Museum Storage | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>57%</div></div> | Original 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 | 06-Nov-2023 Executive members have considered the potential options for the project, but identifying the right way forward needs to be considered as part of the wider discussions around ongoing and future budgetary pressures. In the meantime, officers have been asked to look at alternative options and timelines. September 2023 Cabinet report deferred, and a revised date has not yet been confirmed. In the meantime, we continue to manage the risks associated with the current storage facilities to the best of our ability within current available resources. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | |

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|---|---|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|--|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Appoint contractor to conduct an initial feasibility report on the project. | | | | 28-Feb-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| Receive initial feasibility report. | | | | 18-Apr-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| Receive report on options for including a commercial storage facility as part of the re-development. | | | | 19-May-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| Review findings of feasibility/commercial reports, including assessing finance options with Accounts. | | | | 30-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| Consider the best way to deal with currently stored items should the project progress. | | | | 19-Sep-2023 | No | Aligns with Cabinet report milestone date. September 2023 Cabinet report deferred. Timing of report not yet confirmed and so we are unable to propose a revised due date. Existing site not cleared and the need to do this will depend on the Cabinet decision. 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 | On hold. September 2023 Cabinet report deferred. Timing of report not yet confirmed and so we are unable to propose a revised due date. | | | | |
| Develop further milestones to reflect Cabinet decision e.g., appoint Project Manager/Quantity Surveyor, finalise Business Case and detailed specifications. | | | | 30-Sep-2023 | No | This will follow the Cabinet decision. As the September 2023 Cabinet report was deferred and the timing of report not yet confirmed, we are unable to propose a revised due date. | | | | |
| Page 40 | 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 | | | | | |


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|---|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
|  | New Ways of Delivering Housing on Council Land | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>66%</div></div> | Original Date | 01-Dec-2022 |
| 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 | 06-Nov-2023 Following receipt of the initial external Chartered Surveyor market research report, we have now requested further work to clarify the report findings and to focus on the detail of specific options. Due to the consultant being heavily committed to other projects on our behalf, we now expect the focussed work to be completed and a further report on preferred options to be delivered by 23 December 2023. 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, as there remains uncertainty regarding our ability to move forward with specific sites and the appetite for pursuing the identified options. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | |
| Determine a way forward/partnership agreement with current provider. | | 31-Mar-2022 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| Start to consider other options for delivery. | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |




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|---|---|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Final market research report received from Chartered Surveyor. | | | 31-Jul-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| Review report findings/recommendations. | | | 31-Aug-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| Dependent on market research findings, develop milestones/timings to report and make a formal decision on the preferred way forward. | | | 30-Sep-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Although still to be confirmed, based on anticipated timeframe for further advice (December 2023), now expect to have developed plans for moving things forward by the end of March 2024. | | | | |
| New Milestone - Further work to clarify report findings and to focus on the detail of specific options, leading to a report/further advice on the preferred options. | | | 23-Dec-2023 | No | Anticipated timeline for further advice is December 2023 due to the consultant being heavily committed to other projects on our behalf. | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | |


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|--|--|-----------------|-----------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| <div>  </div> <div> <div>Page 41</div> <div>Project Summary</div> <div>Latest Update</div> </div> | Resident/Public EV Charging in our Car Parks | Due Date | 31-Oct-2024 | Progress | <div><div>50%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 |
| | Submit grant application to Office for Zero Emission Vehicles for funding. Finalise contract/leases with private sector partner and commence installation of EV charging points. | | | | | | |
| | 25-Oct-2023 The Council received an offer Letter on 4 September 2023 from OZEV for the full grant application of £135k. This equates to 60% of estimated project costs. Other 40% to be covered by our private sector partner. Given the time taken by DfT to respond to the grant application, the project has been delayed. Now finalising the contract documentation with our partner (which was subject to the grant award) and working with them to agree a revised implementation programme. Expect contract to be in place and relevant leases to be completed by the end of January 2024, prior to works commencing on site. Although precise timeframes still to be confirmed, all units expected to be installed in the eight car parks by 31 October 2024 in accordance with the OZEV grant requirements. Without agreed contract, lease arrangements and implementation programme, there is uncertainty regarding delivering the project on time and meeting grant requirements, and so risk level still assessed as medium. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | |
| Establish detailed costings for grant application. | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| Submit grant application to OZEV for 60% (originally 75%) of cost, with private partner providing the remaining 40% (originally 25%). | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| Decision on grant application received. | | 31-Aug-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| 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 future proofing. | | 31-Aug-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| Complete relevant leases with contractor for the length of the contract. | | 30-Sep-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 January 2024. Still to be confirmed, as dependent on contract documentation and revised implementation programme being agreed with our partner, although we currently expect this milestone to be completed by the end of January 2024. | | | |




| Contractor to commence works and NHC to start promoting project. | | | 01-Oct-2023 | No | Due date to change to 29 February 2024. Still to be confirmed, as dependent on the revised implementation programme being prepared with our partner, although we currently expect works to commence in February 2024. All units to be implemented by October 2024, in accordance with the OZEV grant requirements. | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|--|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| New Milestone - Contract finalised with private sector partner. | | | 31-Dec-2023 | No | | | | | |
| Installation of all new EV charging points completed. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Due date to change to 31 October 2024. Revised implementation programme yet to be agreed with our partner, but we have to complete installation by October 2024, in accordance with the OZEV grant requirements. | | | | |
| Risks | Risk Level | Original Score | Current Score | Target Score | Performance Indicators | Status | Trend | Value | Target |
| 1. Not successful in obtaining grant funding (no longer a risk). 2. Unable to identify/procure a private sector partner (no longer a risk). 3. Unable to agree contract conditions/relevant lease arrangements with contractor. 4. Unable to deliver project in accordance with OZEV requirements. |  | 5 | 5 | 1 | | | | | |

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|  | Solar PV on Leisure Centres | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>16%</div></div> | Original 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 | 09-Oct-2023 Project currently on hold. It will now be included and considered as part of a wider Corporate Decarbonisation Project. As part of this wider project, we are applying for a grant via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to fund a decarbonisation review of our main buildings. We expect to hear the outcome of our application in January 2024. Therefore, no further action will be taken to progress the installation of Solar PV technology at the three main leisure facilities until we know whether our application has been successful, and if it goes ahead, we have considered the findings of the decarbonisation review. If we are unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding, we will then have to decide whether to proceed with the originally planned project. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | |
| 1. Feasibility study. | | 31-May-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| On hold - 2. Appoint specialist to complete design specification and manage procurement of contractor and subsequent installation. | | 29-Sep-2023 | No | Due date to be removed. Milestone to be updated following grant application outcome to reflect if decarbonisation review of our main buildings will be undertaken or an independent decision on project viability will be required. | | | |
| New Milestone - Decision received on our Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant application. | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | | | | |
| On hold - 3. Design specification completed. | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Due date to be removed. Milestone to be updated following grant application outcome to reflect if decarbonisation review of our main buildings will be undertaken or an independent decision on project viability will be required. | | | |



| On hold - 4. Procurement of contractor to undertake installation works. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Due date to be removed. Milestone to be updated following grant application outcome to reflect if decarbonisation review of our main buildings will be undertaken or an independent decision on project viability will be required. | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|---|---|---|---|--------|
| On hold - 5. Complete installation of Solar PV. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Due date to be removed. Milestone to be updated following grant application outcome to reflect if decarbonisation review of our main buildings will be undertaken or an independent decision on project viability will be required. | | | | |
| 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 | |

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|---|--|------------|----------------|---------------|---|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------|-------|--------|
|  | Work with relevant partners to prevent and relieve homelessness whenever possible | | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>16%</div></div> | Original 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 | 30-Oct-2023 Timeframes for completing the development of a Single Homeless Pathway Plan and temporary accommodation forecasting model have both been extended to the end of November 2023. The overall risk level associated with increased levels of homelessness continues to be assessed as high and the initiatives included in this action aim to help us manage the related risks. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | Due date to change to 30 November 2023. This project identifies the key actions required to stabilise and supplement the accommodation and support services for single homeless people. | | | | | | |
| Develop temporary accommodation forecasting model. | | | 30-Sep-2023 | No | Due date to change to 30 November 2023. 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, Helping Herts Homeless and One YMCA. | | | | | | |
| 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 unmanageable 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 |  |  | 102 | N/A Data Only |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|-----|------------------|


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|--|--|----------------|---------------|--|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------|--------|
|  | Cycling Network | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>66%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 | | |
| Project Summary | Working with HCC as they develop a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy. Work in partnership with HCC to develop plans/projects for progressing cycling opportunities within North Herts. | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 25-Oct-2023 HCC adopted the LCWIP for North Hertfordshire on 18 September 2023, setting out a 10-year strategic approach to cycling and walking improvements, and providing necessary policy guidance for progressing cycling opportunities within North Herts. We also expect HCC to adopt the complementary Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy in early 2024. Cycle parking standards and facilities will be incorporated into the Sustainability SPD, which is currently being prepared. It is no longer the intention to develop a separate Cycling Strategy for North Herts, as it is more effective for officer effort to be directed at seeking funding to assist with the design and delivery of schemes outlined in the LCWIP. In view of available resources, priority will be focussed on urban areas, and this approach aligns with the LCWIP. We will continue to work effectively in partnership with HCC to help identify, fund and deliver the best schemes for North Herts, although it is HCC who will lead and deliver specific projects. In view of this, following adoption of the Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy, it is unlikely that further milestones will be taken forward in future Council Delivery Plans, as overall responsibility for delivering improvements rests with HCC. | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | Completed. | | | | | |
| Report to NHC Cabinet for comment and recommendations on the LCWIP. | | 27-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | |
| Adoption of LCWIP by HCC Highways Transport Panel/Cabinet. | | 31-Oct-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | |
| Further milestones dependent on adoption of LCWIP and Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy. | | 30-Nov-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Further milestones relating to plans for progressing cycling opportunities within North Herts to be considered at this time, although HCC is responsible for delivering specific projects, working in partnership with NHC. | | | | | |
| New Milestone - HCC adopt Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy. | | 29-Feb-2024 | No | | | | | | |
| 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 (no longer a risk). 3. Limits to what can be achieved in the short-term. |  | 3 | 2 | 1 | | | | | |


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|  | Finalise Pay on Exit Parking Review | | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>50%</div></div> | Original Date | 30-Sep-2022 | | | | |
| Project Summary | Procure suppliers and start replacing all existing parking machines in early 2024. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 25-Oct-2023 Progress being made and Cabinet agreed revised parking tariffs in September 2023. However, general resourcing issues and a revised procurement approach means that milestone due dates need to be revised. We will now appoint a contractor to replace existing parking machines via a framework mini competition. This exercise is due to commence November 2023 and complete January 2024. We now expect procurement of a contractor to replace tariff boards to be completed in February 2024 and TROs to be updated in March 2024. Works to replace existing parking machines will commence later than originally planned in March 2024, although we still expect all works to be completed by 31 March 2025 in line with allocated Capital funding. Risk level still assessed as low, although at this early stage there is uncertainty relating to the procurement of contractors, public reaction to changes/associated disruption, and the impact on future parking income. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | | | |
| Consultants appointed to produce Feasibility Study to be reported to Exec Member & Deputy. | | | 31-Jul-2022 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | | |
| Report to PLB to get a steer on proceeding to a pay on exit trial. | | | 01-Nov-2022 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | | |
| The Cabinet report determines further milestones. | | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | | |
| Report presented to Cabinet to agree revised tariffs. | | | 30-Sep-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | | |
| Procure supplier by framework mini competition to replace existing parking machines. | | | 30-Nov-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 January 2024. General resourcing issues and a revised procurement approach means that milestone due date needs to be revised. Exercise to commence November 2023 and complete January 2024. | | | | | | | |
| Procure supplier to replace tariff boards. | | | 30-Nov-2023 | No | Due date to change to 29 February 2024. Linked to delay noted in the above milestone. | | | | | | | |
| Update TROs. | | | 31-Dec-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Updated TROs will need to be in place prior to works commencing. | | | | | | | |
| Contractor to commence works (works to be undertaken during 2023/24 and 2024/25). | | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Although there have been project delays due to resourcing and procurement issues, we still expect all works to be completed by 31 March 2025 in line with allocated Capital funding. | | | | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | | |


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|---|--|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
|  | Financial Sustainability/Balancing our Budget | Due Date | 30-Sep-2024 | Progress | <div><div>33%</div></div> | Original Date | 28-Feb-2023 |
| Project Summary | To deliver a medium term balanced budget for the Council that reflects Council priorities. | | | | | | |


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|--|---|--|---|-----------------------|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Latest Update | 10-Nov-2023 Medium Term Financial Strategy going to Cabinet on 14 November 2023. Communications on how the Council sets its budget will be delayed to align better with the setting of the 2024/25 budget at the end of February. Precise timing still to be determined with Communications team to ensure that engagement happens at the right time. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 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. | | | | | |
| Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council. | | | | 23-Nov-2023 | Yes | Council adopted the Medium Term Financial Strategy on 23 November 2023. | | | | | |
| Communications on how the Council sets its budget. | | | | 30-Nov-2023 | No | To be determined with Communications team when timing makes sense to ensure that engagement happens at the right time. Will be delayed to align better with the setting of the budget for 2024/25 at the end of February. | | | | | |
| Budget for 2024/25 approved by Council. | | | | 29-Feb-2024 | No | | | | | | |
| Respond to expected consultation on funding reform. | | | | 30-Sep-2024 | No | Not now expected to have consultation until summer 2024. | | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | |

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|---|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
|  | Health Inequalities | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>50%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 |
| Project Summary | Deliver projects to address health inequalities using approved funding for 2023/24. Following confirmation of HCC funding arrangements for 2024/25, agree delivery plans for 2024/25 projects (delivery plans to be agreed by end of January 2024). | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 10-Oct-2023 HCC confirmed continued funding for 2024/25. Mid-point evaluations of each current intervention completed, demonstrating the effectiveness of each project, and remaining funding for 2023/24 released to partners. A further review of 2023/24 projects will inform the annual delivery plan for 2024/25 projects, with proposals due to be submitted to HCC by end of January 2024. HCC also confirmed continued funding for the North Herts Healthy Hub. In view of continued funding, risk level associated with the delivery of projects and support services in 2023/24 and 2024/25 is low, although there remains uncertainty regarding funding levels and provision in later years. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | |
| Secure Tranche 1 funding (Health and Wellbeing led projects). | | | 31-May-2022 | Yes | Completed. | | |



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|---|--|--|--|---|----------------|---|--------------|------------------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Develop an action plan for Tranche 1 (based on Public Health Strategy, Health Inequalities Framework and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment). | | | | 31-Dec-2022 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Deliver Tranche 1 projects (as planned for 2022/23). | | | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Royston Men's Club - June 2023 course. | | | | 30-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Royston Men's Club - September 2023 course. | | | | 30-Sep-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| New Milestone - Royston Men's Club - November 2023 course. | | | | 30-Nov-2023 | Yes | Course has been delivered. Awaiting details of participant numbers. | | | | | | |
| New Milestone - Review 2023/24 projects and submit proposed annual delivery plan for 2024/25 projects to HCC. | | | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | Outcome of this will determine delivery for 2024/25. | | | | | | |
| New Milestone - Royston Men's Club – January 2024 course. | | | | 31-Jan-2024 | 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. | | | | | | |
| Page 41 | 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 | | | | | |

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|---|--|----------|-------------|----------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | Leisure Contract Procurement | Due Date | 01-Apr-2024 | Progress | <div><div>46%</div></div> | Original 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 | 18-Oct-2023 Procurement progressing well. Project plan revised to enable a longer mobilisation period. Now plan to present report to Cabinet on 12 December 2023 and award contract in early January 2024. Risk level still assessed as medium, although lack of responses to tender and value of bids now represent a lower risk, and revisions to the project plan have helped mitigate the risks associated with mobilising the new contract in time for the 1 April 2024 start date. | | | | | | |



| Milestone | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|----------------|---------------|--|------------------------|--|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Develop pre-procurement strategy. | | | 20-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Issue contract notice. | | | 24-Apr-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Market Interest Day. | | | 03-May-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Selected candidates invited to submit Initial Tender. | | | 12-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Develop Active North Herts Strategy and present to Cabinet for adoption. | | | 27-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Closing date for Initial Tender submissions. | | | 17-Aug-2023 | Yes | Completed | | | | | | |
| Deadline for revised tender submissions (if required). | | | 17-Nov-2023 | Yes | Deadline changed to 8 November 2023. | | | | | | |
| Evaluation of tenders. | | | 31-Dec-2023 | Yes | Evaluation completed on the revised target date of 17 November 2023. | | | | | | |
| Present report to Cabinet. | | | 11-Jan-2024 | No | Due date to change to 12 December 2023, which is the new Extraordinary Cabinet meeting date. Report will be presented to O&S on 5 December 2023 prior to going to Cabinet. | | | | | | |
| Notification of outcome to bidders. | | | 15-Jan-2024 | No | Due date to change to 20 December 2023. | | | | | | |
| Finalise Contract Award. | | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | Due date to change to 2 January 2024. | | | | | | |
| Amended Milestone - Mobilisation period - 2 January 2024 to 31 March 2024. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Now plan for the mobilisation period to commence on 2 January 2024 rather than 1 February 2024. | | | | | | |
| 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. - 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. | |  | 5 | 5 | 3 | | | | | | |


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|  | Master Planning | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>44%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 | | | |
| 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 | 03-Nov-2023 Progress remains ongoing on these strategic site projects. The Planning Control Committee reconsidered the Highover Farm application in October 2023 and resolved to grant planning permission subject to completion of a legal agreement. Further masterplans are expected to progress through public consultation in late 2023 and early 2024. The Council's lead professional officer for these workstreams has recently resigned. This post has been advertised and recruitment is ongoing. A further professional post has now been filled on a fixed-term basis through a Government-backed placement scheme (Public Practice). Interim consultant support has been secured, however there has been a reduction in the Council's capacity and ability to respond effectively which will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Most sites are expected to reach at least the draft masterplan stage during 2023/24. However, it is now anticipated that formal approvals are likely to extend into 2024/25. Although the 'Council-side' matters outlined above are an influence, this is equally due to the complexity of the projects and/or factors on the developer side. The initial 'grace period' during which the Council was exempted from certain Government measures following adoption of its Local Plan is now expired. A revised National Planning Policy Framework is anticipated to be published by the Government shortly which, among other matters, is anticipated to reintroduce and extend the 'grace period' to potentially cover up to five years from Local Plan adoption. In the meantime, relevant planning decisions and recommendations will have regard to national policies on land supply alongside the Local Plan. | | | | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | | |
| Liaise with developers and identify the Council's expectations with regard master planning. | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| 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 | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Consideration of Highover Farm masterplan by Planning Committee (18/01154/OP, Local Plan Policy SP17). | | 30-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | | | |
| Further consideration of Highover Farm masterplan by Planning Committee (18/01154/OP, Local Plan Policy SP17). | | 31-Dec-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | | | |
| 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. | |  | 5 | 5 | 3 | | | | | |


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|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 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. Reduction in pre-application income and delay to income from planning applications. 6. Failure to retain/recruit sufficiently experienced officers. 7. Risk of adverse appeal findings on other/non-Local Plan sites if delivery is delayed or stalled. | | | | | | | | | |
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|  | Oughtonhead Common Weir | Due Date | 30-Sep-2024 | Progress | <div><div>75%</div></div> | Original Date | 30-Sep-2024 | | | |
| Project Summary | Replace the collapsed weir. | | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 04-Oct-2023 Contractor appointed, with a contract start date of 18 September 2023. Contractor has commenced work on site to undertake required surveys and investigations. Subsequent detailed design work will commence in November 2023. The current plan is for design documentation and consent submissions to be completed by the end of January 2024, which will then allow us to tender for the required works. Risk level assessed as low, as although delays in completing the design work or procurement process could affect our ability to complete required works by the end of Summer 2024, any further deterioration of the partially collapsed weir is unlikely to result in a significant impact. | | | | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | | |
| Options appraisal completed. | | 31-Dec-2022 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Capital budget approved (£400K) to implement preferred option. | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Commence contract with CMS to manage delivery of the project. | | 01-Apr-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| CMS to confirm delivery plan for the development of detailed specification and completion of works phases. | | 31-May-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Return of tenders for the development of the detailed design and specification for the preferred option. | | 11-Sep-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| Evaluation of tenders for the development of the detailed design and specification for the preferred option, and appointment of supplier. | | 30-Sep-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| New Milestone - Design documentation and consent submissions completed. | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | | | | | | | |
| Amended Milestone - Introduce further milestones following completion of the design stage relating to the subsequent procurement process and delivery of the preferred option. | | 29-Feb-2024 | No | Anticipate tendering for works in early 2024, with works hopefully commencing 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. | |  | 4 | 2 | 1 | | | | | |


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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing situation deteriorates quickly prior to any works being undertaken. - Issues with contractor resources delay design stage, procurement process or completion of works on site. Leading to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. | | | | | | | | | |
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|  | Playground Renovation Programme | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>33%</div></div> | Original 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 | 05-Oct-2023 Groundwork progressing the two projects. Should be going out to tender for both shortly. Still anticipate completing the projects by the due dates specified. Risk level continues to be assessed as low, with potential risks being supply issues relating to equipment and materials. | | | | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | |
| 2023/24 work programme received from Groundwork. | | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | |
| 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. On track. | | | | | |
| Complete renovation of the playground at Bancroft Recreation Ground. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Timeline from the March 2023 programme - April 2023 to March 2024. On track. | | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | |


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|---|---|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
|  | Pursue commercial leasing opportunity for Royston Town Hall Annexe | Due Date | 30-Jun-2024 | Progress | <div><div>40%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-May-2023 |
| 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 | 06-Nov-2023 Due to prioritising other projects, there has been no progress since the previous update. It is unlikely that this project will move forward until we have successfully recruited further surveyors. We are still waiting for HCC to engage with us regarding the acquisition of rights over their land from the public highway, and without acquiring these vehicular access rights the project is unlikely to progress in any meaningful way. Currently, it is difficult to comment on the timings of recorded milestones, although it is likely that the current target dates will not be achieved. Risks to the | | | | | | |


| | project remain resourcing issues, reliance on HCC regarding obtaining access rights, and the interested party withdrawing their interest. There remains a possibility that the current project will not be delivered. | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|------------------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Milestone | | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | |
| Exploring options following unsolicited solid interest in site. | | | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | |
| Ascertain, acquire, and address rights and restrictions on the site. | | | | 31-May-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | |
| Commencement of negotiations with HCC regarding the acquisition of vehicular access rights over their land from the public highway. | | | | 15-Dec-2023 | No | | | | | | |
| Completion of negotiations with HCC regarding the acquisition of vehicular access rights over their land and arrangements formalised. | | | | 30-Jun-2024 | No | | | | | | |
| Maintain ongoing dialogue with interested party whilst seeking to acquire access rights from HCC. | | | | 30-Jun-2024 | No | | | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | |


|  | Royston Leisure Centre Solar Thermal | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>50%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|---|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Project Summary | Installation of Solar Thermal technology at Royston Leisure Centre. | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 09-Oct-2023 Project currently on hold. It will now be included and considered as part of a wider Corporate Decarbonisation Project. As part of this wider project, we are applying for a grant via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to fund a decarbonisation review of our main buildings. We expect to hear the outcome of our application in January 2024. Therefore, no further action will be taken to progress the installation of Solar Thermal technology at Royston Leisure Centre until we know whether our application has been successful, and if it goes ahead, we have considered the findings of the decarbonisation review. If we are unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding, we will then have to decide whether to proceed with the originally planned project. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | |
| Design specification. | | 31-May-2022 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| 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 | Completed. | | | |



| Change to Due Date - If project proceeds, further milestones to be developed and incorporated into the Council Delivery Plan. | | | 31-Dec-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Further action is dependent on grant application outcome and decision to proceed with project. | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|---|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Change to Due Date - Review report findings and decision on project viability. | | | 31-Dec-2023 | No | Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Timings uncertain, as dependent on whether a decarbonisation review of our main buildings is undertaken or an independent decision on project viability is required. | | | | |
| New Milestone - Decision received on our Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant application. | | | 31-Jan-2024 | No | | | | | |
| 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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|--|---|-------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | Shared Prosperity Fund | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>66%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 |
| Project Summary | Deliver projects to support the aims of the Shared Prosperity Fund, as agreed with Government. | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 10-Nov-2023 Update on the progress of Town Centre Programmes and related SPF funding is provided in the Town Centre Recovery update. The timings for installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Hitchin and Letchworth are still to be confirmed, although we still expect works to be completed this financial year. | | | | | | |
| 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 | Completed. | | | |
| Deliver projects: Recruit sports development officer. Deliver outdoor fitness classes and first set of new outdoor exercise equipment. | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| Deliver projects: Town Centre regeneration plans and initial activities. | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| 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 | Completed. | | | |
| Recruit fitness project manager, and commence fitness classes based on GP referrals. | | 31-Aug-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| 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. Groundworks (who are leading the project) going out to tender in November 2023. Once the contract has been awarded, we will receive a timeframe for installation. Still expect to complete works this financial year. | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|---|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Letchworth. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Due date to be confirmed. Groundworks (who are leading the project) going out to tender in November 2023. Once the contract has been awarded, we will receive a timeframe for installation. Still 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. 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. |  | 5 | 5 | 3 | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | Town Centre Recovery | Due Date | 31-Mar-2024 | Progress | <div><div>83%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Mar-2023 |
| 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 | 07-Nov-2023 The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) is open until March 2025. All the towns, except Baldock, have developed projects and have been funded in Year 1 (2022/23) and Year 2 (2023/24). They are now working on items for 2024/25, as well as items for the remaining 2023/24 funding. Baldock have no fundable entity yet. Save the High Streets and the HCC Growth Board have commenced activities in Baldock to assess the feasibility of a Trade Association of Town Centre Businesses in Baldock and held the first two traders' meetings. The group has a number of short term and medium term ideas, relating to Christmas and increasing the popularity of the market, which may require some SPF funding when they are formally established. NHC is assisting Letchworth, Baldock and Royston to develop Town Centre Programmes. These are owned by the town stakeholders and benefit them by organising their ideas into a coherent programme. NHC input is via support and consultation. Hitchin did not require help and we understand they already have a programme/plans in place via the Hitchin Initiative/BID. The Town Centre Programme development has started in Letchworth, where People and Places (using SPF funding) have been helping develop the BID relaunch programme to coincide with other Heritage Foundation initiatives including the rebranding and marketing strategies. We expect the Letchworth programme to be in place by March 2024. By this time, People and Places will have moved on to the Baldock and Royston programmes, and these should be completed by October 2024. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | |
| Completion of Welcome Back Fund town centre recovery plans for the four towns. | | 31-Mar-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| 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 | Completed. | | | |
| Allocate 2022/23 Shared Prosperity Fund (Town Centre Tranche) funding to enable improvements to town centres and high streets. | | 29-Jun-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | |
| 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 | Completed. | | | |


| Liaise with HCC and other key stakeholders with regard the experimental traffic orders for Hitchin and Royston town centres. | | | 31-Jul-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
|--|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|--|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Detailed town centre programmes produced by each of the four towns. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | NHC is assisting Letchworth, Baldock and Royston to develop Town Centre Programmes via People and Places. Expect the Letchworth programme to be in place by March 2024, and the Baldock and Royston programmes by October 2024. Understand Hitchin already have a programme in place via the Hitchin Initiative/BID. | | | | |
| 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 | | | | | |


| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|----------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------|-------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
|  | Town Centre Strategies | | Due Date | 30-Jun-2024 | Progress | <div><div>40%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Jan-2023 | | | | |
| Project Summary | Progress development of overarching Town Centre Strategy and individual Town Centre Strategic Masterplans. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Page 5 Latest Update | 25-Oct-2023 Project Officer and temporary consultant now in place and preparing the evidence base for the overarching Town Centre Strategy. Going out to tender soon for additional technical expertise relating to the evidence base. The time taken to complete this procurement exercise may mean that current milestone dates are not achieved, although this will not be confirmed until we have appointed the consultant and agreed the work programme. Work with stakeholders to progress options for the Letchworth Town Centre Strategic Masterplan remains ongoing. We still intend to present a scoping report to Cabinet in June 2024 to provide an overview of the draft Strategy and project/governance arrangements for individual Town Centre Strategic Masterplans, prior to going out to formal consultation on proposals. Risk level still assessed as medium, as without approved Strategy/Strategic 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 | Completed. | | | | | | |
| | Appoint consultant to prepare evidence base for overarching Town Centre Strategy. | | | 31-Oct-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | | | |
| | Undertake work to complete evidence base and prepare draft Strategy. | | | 31-Mar-2024 | No | Time taken to complete procurement exercise for additional technical expertise (currently ongoing) could result in the milestone date not being achieved. | | | | | | |
| Present details of draft Strategy to Cabinet, along with a scoping report to agree overall project and governance arrangements for progressing individual Town Centre strategic masterplans. | | | 30-Jun-2024 | No | | | | | | | | |
| Progress work on Letchworth Town Centre strategic masterplan, confirming/commencing detailed work following presentation of the Cabinet report. | | | 30-Jun-2024 | No | 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 | | | | | | |

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|--|---|---|----------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|--------|
|  | Waste and Street Cleansing Contract Procurement | Due Date | 01-Aug-2024 | Progress | <div><div>28%</div></div> | Original Date | 01-Apr-2024 | | | |
| Project Summary | Procurement of the Waste and Street Cleansing contract. | | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 23-Nov-2023 The project is not on target to meet the original milestones. These have therefore been adjusted. The delays are as a consequence of early dialogue and detailed solution stage indicating affordability concerns. Cabinet and Executive are required to make decisions on changes to the specification in December 2023. Even with all officer recommendations taken forward, it is possible that final tender solutions may present budget pressures. | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | Yes | | | | | | | |
| Invitation to submit final tenders and receipt of ISFT responses. | | 18-Jan-2024 | No | Revised due date is now 1 March 2024. | | | | | | |
| Evaluation of final tenders and production of Evaluation Report. | | 29-Feb-2024 | No | Revised due date is now 1 May 2024. | | | | | | |
| Project Board sign off of Evaluation Report and award recommendation. | | 07-Mar-2024 | No | Revised due date is now 1 July 2024. | | | | | | |
| Executive and Cabinet approval. | | 19-Mar-2024 | No | Revised due date is now 19 July 2024. | | | | | | |
| Contract award. | | 01-Apr-2024 | No | Revised due date is now 1 August 2024. | | | | | | |
| 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 currently in consultation). - Costs are over budget. - Delays to mobilisation lead to insufficient preparation and planning time, leading to mobilisation challenges and inability to secure new fleet for Day 1. | |  | 9 | 9 | 6 | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|----------------|---------------|---|------------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------------|-------------|--------|
|  | Waste Depots | | Due Date | 01-May-2025 | | Progress | <div><div></div></div> 0% | | Original Date | 01-May-2025 | |
| Project Summary | Securing fit for purpose depot solutions for the future of waste and street cleansing services. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Latest Update | 23-Nov-2023 Work is underway to assign the lease of the existing depot. This will provide some security over an available site for the next waste contract. The site will require upgrades to ensure it is fit for purpose and can deliver, in particular the needs of the contractor in relation to charging infrastructure for electric fleet. An extension to the Buntingford lease is being negotiated by EHC. It is proposed to make this available for the life of the new waste collection contract. Recent meetings with HCC have concluded that it is necessary to look at the options regarding depot provision on a long-term basis. Construction costs have significantly increased since the original proposals for a new depot were considered, however this does not lessen the need for fit for purpose facilities in the long-term to service our residents. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | | | | |
| New Milestone - Assignment of Letchworth depot lease. | | | 01-Jan-2024 | No | | | | | | | |
| New Milestone - Review of new depot project costs. | | | 01-Mar-2024 | No | Consultant to be procured. | | | | | | |
| New Milestone - Procurement of EV charging infrastructure. | | | 01-Nov-2024 | No | No staff capacity currently available to progress this. | | | | | | |
| 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. - Staff capacity not available to deliver related projects. | |  | 9 | 9 | 5 | | | | | | |

























| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----------|-------------|----------|----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | Create and Communicate a Place Narrative for North Herts | Due Date | 30-Sep-2023 | Progress | <div><div>100%</div></div> | Original Date | 31-Aug-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 | 20-Oct-2023 Place Narrative now live. Internal launch completed September 2023. External launch and communications commenced 6 October 2023. Communication and promotion will be ongoing, to ensure that the Place Narrative becomes established over the coming months and years. Project complete for the purpose of the Council Delivery Plan, as Place Narrative for North Herts created and initial communications commenced. No project risks remain. | | | | | | |
| Milestone | | Due Date | Complete | Note | | | |

| Stage One: Develop our Core Place Narrative and rollout plans (February - April 2023). | | | 30-Apr-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
|--|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|------------------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| 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 | Completed. | | | | |
| Stage Three: Develop launch plans and related communications (July - September 2023). | | | 29-Sep-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| Stage Four: Go live (September 2023). | | | 30-Sep-2023 | Yes | Completed. | | | | |
| 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/need to be moved and our Core Place Narrative going live later than expected. |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | |

Risks and PIs Not Linked to Specific Projects

Generated on: 09 November 2023

| Risks | Risk Level | Original Score | Current Score | Target Score |
|---|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Resourcing 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 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 |
| Cyber Risks 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. |  | 8 | 8 | 8 |

| Performance Indicators | Status | Trend | Value | Target |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Percentage of NNDR collected in year |  |  | 67.05% | 60.5% |
| Percentage of council tax collected in year |  |  | 69.31% | 63% |
| Museum general admittance visitor numbers |  |  | 16,163 | 14,000 |
| Miles driven by NHC full electric vehicles |  |  | 51,757 | 27,500 |
| Hitchin Town Hall income |  |  | £147,203 | N/A Data Only |
| Value of sales at Bancroft Cafe Kiosk |  |  | £20,546 | N/A Data Only |
| Percentage of raised sales invoices due for payment that have been paid |  |  | 96.11% | 97% |
| % of payments received that were paid by electronic methods |  |  | 99.32% | 99.3% |
| Kg residual waste per household |  |  | 152kg | 178kg |
| Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting |  |  | 61.59% | 59% |
| Electricity and gas energy consumption (kWh) - 100% of reported energy consumption is from green energy sources |  |  | 838,839 | 923,074 |
| Percentage of Social Value committed on the Social Value Portal that has been delivered |  |  | No data currently available | N/A Data Only |

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Scoring criteria and weightings

| | |
|---|--------------|
| | |
| Impact of non-delivery (excluding political and financial impacts which are assessed separately) | Score |
| All alternatives lead to more work/ failure to deliver a statutory service in the short/ medium-term | 20 |
| Non-delivery (at the current time) will have significant impact (e.g. service delivery, reputational) in the medium-term (3-5 years) | 15 |
| Non-delivery (at the current time) will have some impact in the medium-term (3-5 years) | 10 |
| Delivery will have longer-term impacts, but project could be delayed and still avoid any negative impacts | 5 |
| Nice to have project, apart from not achieving project outcomes doesn't cause any other impacts | 0 |
| | |
| Council plan alignment (Priorities and Themes) - due to financial measure below, sustainability should be focused on environmental sustainability | |
| Strong alignment to delivery of multiple Council Priorities/ Themes | 10 |
| Strong alignment to delivery of at least 1 Council Priority/ Theme | 8 |
| Moderate alignment to 1 or more Council Priority/ Theme | 6 |
| Some alignment to 1 or more Council Priority/ Theme | 4 |
| Unclear how aligns to Council Priorities/ Themes | 0 |
| | |
| External/ political benefits | |
| High political/ resident support across multiple areas/ wards (non-neighbouring) | 10 |
| High political/ resident support across multiple neighbouring areas/ wards | 8 |
| Moderate political/ resident support across multiple areas/ wards | 6 |
| High political/ resident support in one or two areas/ wards | 4 |
| Low political/ resident support | 2 |
| | |
| Financial Sustainability (all analysis should include capital costs) | |
| Delivery of the project is likely to deliver significant savings (cost reductions/ income generation) | 20 |
| Delivery of the project is likely to deliver savings (cost reductions/ income generation) | 15 |
| Possible that the project will deliver savings | 10 |
| No impact on savings | 2 |
| Negative financial impact (increases ongoing costs) | 0 |
| | |
| Financial Resources for delivery | |
| Fully funded from specific grant which is certain/highly certain / funded from existing revenue budgets | 5 |
| High proportion funded from a specific grant which is highly certain/ Fully funded from specific funding which is likely to be received | 4 |
| Fully funded from existing capital budget / Good likelihood of being majority funded from an external source | 3 |
| Requires 3rd party funding which is uncertain / subject to competitive bid process | 2 |
| Funding is highly uncertain | 1 |
| | |
| Productivity benefits | |
| Delivery of the project is likely to significantly increase productivity | 5 |
| Delivery of the project is likely to increase productivity | 4 |
| Possible that the project will deliver increased productivity | 3 |
| No impact on savings or productivity | 1 |
| Negative impact on ongoing productivity | 0 |
| | |
| Resource to deliver | Score |
| In place and not directly affected by other projects, manageable alongside BAU work | 10 |
| In place with some impact from other projects BAU | 8 |
| Possible to get resource required, and funding to do so (e.g. direct grant, specific reserve) | 6 |
| Resource available if can fill posts, but posts are hard to fill | 4 |
| No resource available, or any resource is already delivering BAU/ other projects with no remaining capacity | 0 |
| | |
| Delivery capacity risk | Score |
| Unlikely to be other work impacting key delivery resource or sufficient cover/ resilience | 5 |
| Low chance of other work impacting key delivery resource and limited cover/ resilience | 4 |
| Moderate likelihood of other work impacting key delivery resource and limited resilience | 3 |
| Likely to be other work that impacts delivery and limited resilience | 2 |
| High likelihood of other work that impacts key delivery resource, with no/ minimal resilience | 1 |
| | |
| Support Services delivery | |
| No significant impact on support services, and been confirmed with support services managers | 5 |
| Some impact on support services. Whilst it is contained within work plans for support services, it will need to be prioritised against other demands | 4 |
| Impact on key support services is being managed through buying in the required support, and budget is in place to enable this | 3 |
| Significant impact on support services. Whilst it is contained within work plans for support services, it will need to be prioritised against other demands | 2 |
| Key support services do not have the capacity to deliver and no resources to get external support | 1 |

Outputs and thresholds (examples)

| Benchmark | Assesment of whether we should be doing it? | | | |
|------------------------|---|----|----|----|
| 40 or more (out of 90) | Score | 62 | 17 | 40 |
| 2 or fewer | Number of red | 0 | 6 | 1 |
| Concern if 5 or more | Number of amber | 4 | 3 | 6 |
| | | | | |
| | Should it be on the Council Delivery Plan? | | | |
| | Number of greens against first 4 criteria | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 or more | | | | 1 |

| Benchmark | Assesment of whether we should be doing it? | |
|------------------------|---|----|
| 40 or more (out of 90) | Score | 62 |
| 2 or fewer | Number of red | 0 |
| Concern if 5 or more | Number of amber | 4 |
| | | |
| | Should it be on the Council Delivery Plan? | |
| | Number of greens against first 4 criteria | 2 |
| 2 or more | | |

CABINET

16 JANUARY 2024

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: Local Plan Review

REPORT OF: Ian Fullstone, Service Director - Regulatory

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Ruth Brown, Executive Member for Planning and Transport

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The current North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP) was adopted in November 2022. Notwithstanding the statutory five-year period for carrying out a review of a local plan to determine whether an update is required, the NHLP contains Policy IMR2 which commits the Council to determine whether the Plan needs to be updated in part or in whole by the end of 2023.
- 1.2 A review of the policies of the NHLP has now been carried out which has concluded that there is a need for a full update of the Local Plan (Appendix A). This is supported by a completed Planning Advisory Service (PAS) toolkit assessment which reaches a similar conclusion (Appendix B). Cabinet is requested to note the review of the policies and agree to undertake the full update of the NHLP.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Cabinet note the results of the review of the policies of the NHLP set out in Appendix A and the PAS toolkit in Appendix B.
- 2.2. That Cabinet agree that a full review and update of the NHLP is undertaken.
- 2.3. That work commences during 2024/25 on updating the technical studies needed to provide a robust evidence base to inform an update of the Local Plan and early community engagement take place.
- 2.4. That a further report on the detailed scope of the update and the timetable for its preparation, submission and examination is prepared at the earliest opportunity once the implications of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are better understood and the statutory framework required to implement the reforms has been approved.

Note: This draft report has been prepared ahead of the anticipated publication of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This is due in December 2023. It is expected the new NPPF will set out further information and requirements on the matters set out in this report. Any implications will be included in the final report and / or a published supplementary and / or updated verbally.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To ensure that North Herts Council fulfils its commitments as set out in Policy IMR2 of the North Herts Local Plan which requires the Council to undertake a whole plan review by the end of 2023 to determine whether the plan needs to be updated either in whole or in part.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. Alternative options have been considered in relation to two key factors:

- The breadth of any review (including whether to undertake one at all); and
- The timetable for implementing the findings of any review.

No Update (1)

- 4.2. An option would be to not conduct or not give effect to this review at all, disregarding the requirements as set out in the Inspectors Report and Policy IMR2. The preparation of a Local Plan is a significant undertaking; the Local Plan 2011-2031 took 10 years to complete and incurred external costs of approximately £1.6m.
- 4.3. Historically, there has been a lack of intervention by the Secretary of State against Local Authorities who have delayed or been slow to progress Local Plans. For example, the Secretary of State, in November 2018, had ‘particular cause for concern’ over the progress of 15 Local Plans at Local Authorities across the country. However, of these 15 Local Authorities, only three received intervention programmes from the government’s Chief Planner and their team of experts. In addition, we can see more locally that where Local Plans have not been updated, despite commitments in the Local Plan Policy framework to do so, there have been little to no consequences.
- 4.4. However, this approach would carry with it a significant amount of risk and would damage the reputation of the Council. It would leave the Council without up-to-date policies in some essential areas, in particular housing delivery, and would likely result in applications needing to be judged against national policies for these areas. These have previously included a ‘presumption in favour of development’. This would lead to a loss of control over the quality of housing development, and potentially an increase in the number, length, and complexity of planning appeals. This option is not recommended.

No Update (2)

- 4.5. A further option would be to conduct the review but conclude the Local Plan 2011-2031 remains up-to-date and that no further work is required. This option is not recommended by officers for the reasons set out in this report and its appendices.

Partial Update

- 4.6. Another alternative option is to conclude that only some limited policies need updating and undertake a partial update of the Local Plan. This might focus, for example, on policies that addressed certain matters or priorities such as the Climate and Ecological Emergency declarations.
- 4.7. This approach would ensure that the updated policies would have weight in determining planning applications. However, the absence of up-to-date policy in other areas could mean that the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is invoked, which will mean that development should be approved unless the much more general policies in the NPPF would indicate otherwise.

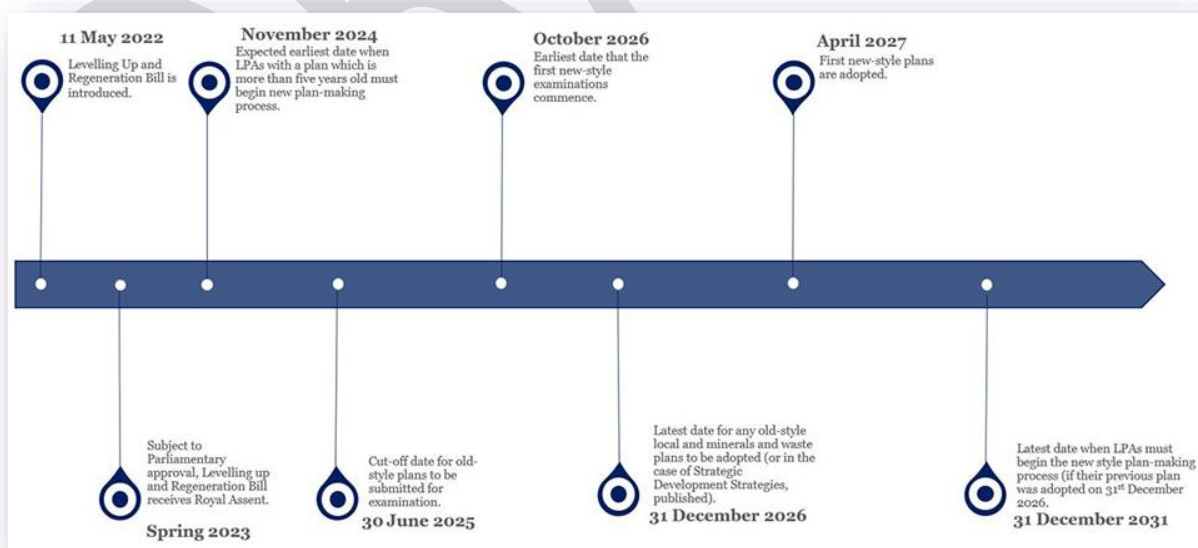
- 4.8. Officers' view is that it is not practical or reasonable to try and 'isolate' certain issues from the wider conclusions in this report, either in terms of this initial review or any subsequent update.

Update under Transitional Arrangements (1)

- 4.9. The transitional arrangements were consulted on in December 2022 and proposed that any current style plan update would need to be submitted for Examination by 25 June 2025 and then adopted by 31 December 2026. A plan prepared in this way would be tested against the current statutory framework and examination tests, including the Duty to Cooperate. This would be (broadly speaking) the same approach as for the current Local Plan. Plans not submitted by this date would need to be in a new format focussing on development amount, site allocations and design guidance with development management policies being prescribed nationally.
- 4.10. Progressing any review to this timetable is not recommended. There are insufficient resources allocated to the Strategic Planning team, either in terms of staff or budget, to achieve the preparation, submission and examination of a revised plan to this timeframe.
- 4.11. This approach would also likely be incompatible with the intended approaches of surrounding authorities such as East Hertfordshire, Luton and Stevenage to their own Local Plan reviews. It would leave North Herts 'out of sync' in terms of preparing joint evidence and / or under a legal obligation to resolve issues with surrounding authorities *ahead* of them setting out their own positions.

Update under Transitional Arrangements (2)

- 4.12. Under the new regime, plans would be required to be completed within 30 months of starting.
- 4.13. There is an intention, as set out in the Plan Making Reforms Implementation Consultation, that expert plan-making support will be provided to a first, small cohort of around ten 'front runner' authorities to prepare the new-style Local Plans.



- 4.14. Whilst there are opportunities to be a forerunner in the new Plan Making Reforms, potentially including Government assistance in funding and resourcing, it is officers'

professional judgement that we should not take part on this occasion due to the relative small-scale nature of the Strategic Planning Team, the need to complete projects associated with implementation of the current plan and the lack of financial investment in the expected levels of software that would be required to complete such a large piece of work in such short timescales.

- 4.15. Previous scenarios when Local Authorities have 'gone first', for example as part of the 2012 NPPF, there was a significant failure rate as the new system 'bedded in' largely due to the failure of Duty to Co-operate or to meet the examination tests. As such, there is no guarantee that going first will result in the successful adoption of a sound plan in the first instance.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. Executive Members and Deputies have been briefed on the relevant matters in this report.
- 5.2. In addition, the Strategic Planning Project Board were briefed and informally consulted in November 2023 on the relevant matters and recommendations set out in this report.
- 5.3. Furthermore, Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the reports in their meeting in January 2024.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 13 October 2023.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. Whilst paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework¹ (NPPF), details the need for local plans to be reviewed once every five years, North Herts Council are required, in accordance with Policy IMR2 of the NHLP, to undertake a review of its Local Plan by the end of 2023.

- 7.2. The National Planning Practice Guidance² (NPPG) provides further guidance stating '*The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that strategic policies should be prepared over a minimum 15-year period and a local planning authority should be planning for the full plan period. Policies age at different rates according to local circumstances and a plan does not become out-of-date automatically after 5 years. The review process is a method to ensure that a plan and the policies within remains effective. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework. It will be up to the decision-maker to decide the weight to give to the policies.*' (paragraph 64 Reference ID: 61-064-20190315).

'A local planning authority can review specific policies on an individual basis. Updates to the plan or certain policies within it must follow the plan-making procedure; including preparation, publication, and examination by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.' (paragraph 69 Reference ID: 61-069-20190723).

- 7.3. Correspondingly, the NPPG states '*If a local planning authority decides that they do not need to update their policies, they must publish the reasons for this decision within 5 years*

¹ [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

² [Plan-making - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

of the adoption date of the plan. A local planning authority will not necessarily need to revise their entire plan in whole and may publish a list of which policies they will update and which policies they consider do not need updating.' (paragraph 70 Reference ID: 61-070-20190315).

- 7.4. Notwithstanding the five-year timeframe referred to in the NPPF and NPPG, North Herts is required to assess whether its Local Plan needs updating by the end of 2023 accounting for the points set out above.
- 7.5. It is important to be clear at this stage that the review of the Local Plan is only to consider whether the Plan needs updating due to the circumstances in which the Plan was prepared are no longer relevant or have changed, including consideration of national policy and local change.
- 7.6. The review does not decide what planning policy approaches any update to the Local Plan should take; this will be for the Council's future consideration if it is decided that an update is needed.

Reforms to the planning system

Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act³

- 7.7. The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023 bringing in new laws *'to speed up the planning system, hold developers to account, cut bureaucracy and encourage more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes'*⁴.
- 7.8. The intention of the Act is to *'ensure new development is built more beautifully, produces more local infrastructure...is shaped by local people's democratic wishes, enhances the environment, and creates neighbourhoods where people want to live and work'*⁵.
- 7.9. Measures in the Act will change the planning system in a number of ways including:
 - Putting local people at the heart of development – making it easier to put Local Plans in place and requiring design codes that set out where homes will be built and how they will look. These plans will deliver more homes in a way that works for communities;
 - Boosting local services – requiring developers to deliver vital infrastructure. This will put an end to lifeless edge-of-town developments with no community assets and ensure developers deliver the schools, doctors surgeries and public services that communities need and expect;
 - Encouraging developers to get building – giving communities updates on the progress of development and giving councils the chance to consider slow build-out rates when approving planning.
- 7.10. Other key planning related sections of the Act, which do not have an agreed commencement date include:
 - The content of development plans and spatial strategies, to be included under the new system of plan-making;

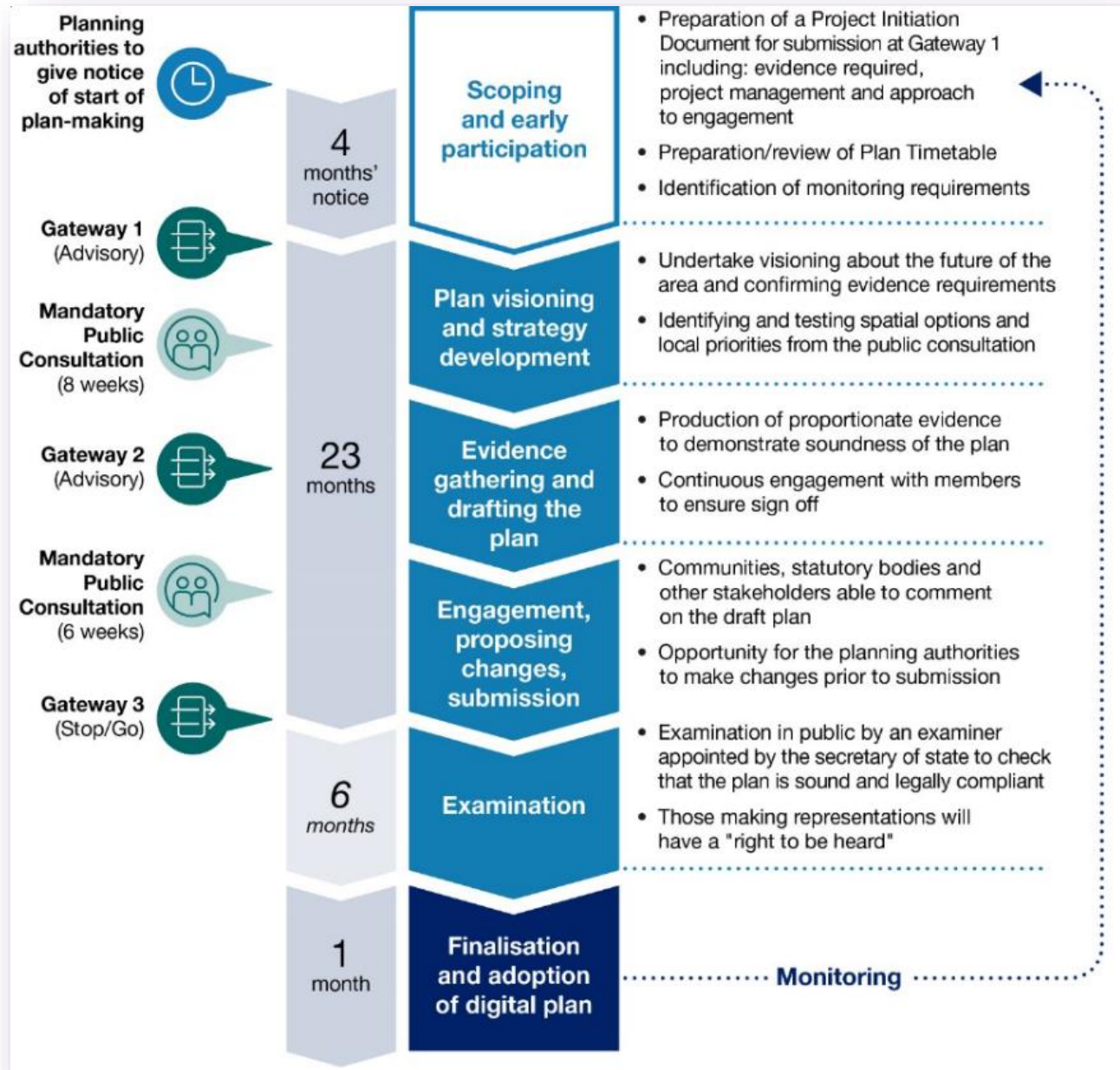
³ [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-consultation-on-implementation-of-plan-making-reforms)

⁴ [New laws to speed up planning, build homes and level up - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-speed-up-planning-build-homes-and-level-up)

⁵ [New laws to speed up planning, build homes and level up - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-speed-up-planning-build-homes-and-level-up)

- A streamlined 30-month plan-making system, including supplementary development plans and area-wide design codes forming part of the development plan, formal repealing of the duty to cooperate, and voluntary joint spatial strategies.

Figure 1 – The new 30-month plan timeframe



7.11. Within the plan-making reforms consultation⁶, that took place earlier this year, was a proposed approach to the roll out and transition from the current to the future plan-making

⁶ [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-consultation-on-implementation-of-plan-making-reforms)

system (contingent upon Royal Assent of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and Parliamentary approval of the relevant regulations):

- The last date to submit a local plan for examination under the current system is 30 June 2025 and be adopted by 31 December 2026 (paragraph 235)
- A phased roll out for the new plan-making system
 - Small cohort of around ten 'front runner' authorities could start plan-making from autumn 2024 (paragraph 244)
 - From 30 June 2025 the remaining authorities would be (paragraph 245)
 - Ranked chronologically by the date that they have most recently adopted a plan containing strategic policies;
 - Grouped together sequentially into groups of up to 25 authorities;
 - Each group allocated a 6-month plan-making commencement window (a 'wave'), within which plan making should start.

NB. North Herts may well find itself grouped with other authorities based on housing market areas, county boundaries or rural/urban complexities. In which case, we may well find ourselves grouped with East Herts and Stevenage, both of whom are in the process of undertaking reviews of their Local Plans also.

- Alternatively, allow authorities to begin plan-making earlier than these dates with the wave acting as a final 'back stop'. Although risks have been identified such as losing the benefit of putting authorities into waves if a high number decide to start the process in the same period and overwhelming the professional capacity in this sector
- 7.12. The consultation goes on to assess the matter around up-to-date plans and considers that *'where a plan has been found sound subject to an early update requirement, and the Inspector has given a deadline to submit an updated plan within the first 30 months of the new system going live, this deadline will be extended to 30 months after the new system goes live. This will ensure that local planning authorities are protected from the risk of speculative development while preparing their new plan'*.
- 7.13. Whilst North Herts has been required to review its Local Plan to determine whether the plan needs to be updated either in whole or in part, by the end of 2023, we have not been given a deadline by which an updated plan should be submitted. However, we are not in the position of the Local Plan becoming more than 5 years old during the first 30 months of the new system, where, in such instances, the Plan will continue to be considered 'up-to-date' for decision-making purposes for 30 months after the new system starts.
- 7.14. The reforms to the planning system are wide ranging and there remains a lot of detail that has not been confirmed. There will need to be a comprehensive set of secondary legislation to implement the reforms, as well as changes to national policy and guidance. These changes are therefore likely to have a significant bearing on the process, scope, and approach of any update to the NHLP.

Policy Context

- 7.15. The North Hertfordshire Local Plan (NHLP) was adopted by Council on 8th November 2022. Since that point, the Local Plan has formed part of the statutory Development Plan for the District which is the 'starting point' for considering the determination of planning applications within North Hertfordshire.

7.16. The examination of the NHLP was an exceptionally long process and, as part of that process, the Inspector recommended a modification to the Local Plan which involved the inclusion of Policy IMR2 which required North Herts to undertake an early review.

7.17. Policy IMR2 of the Local Plan states that:

Policy IMR2: Local plan early review

The Council will undertake a whole plan review of the Local Plan 2011-2031 by the end of 2023 at the latest. This will determine whether this Plan needs to be updated either in whole or in part. All policies will be reviewed but with particular regard paid to the following matters that were specifically identified during the preparation and examination of this plan:

- Housing requirements for the District and wider housing market areas;
- Housing delivery having regard to the progress and implementation of the Strategic Housing Sites and Local Housing Allocations identified in this plan and the rates of development being achieved measured against the stepped approach and housing trajectory set out in this plan;
- The safeguarded land to the West of Stevenage;
- The outcomes of the process(es) to comprehensively explore new settlement options in the District;
- Gypsy and Traveller provision
- The identification of needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses;
- Options for long-term secondary education provision in the Stevenage area; and
- Broad alignment with the statutory five-year time limit for reviews of the East Hertfordshire and Stevenage local plans (required by November 2023 and May 2024 respectively) to allow co-ordinated consideration of the above matters.

The review will have regard to up-to-date information and be conducted in line with Government policy and statutory requirements. Subject to the outcomes of that review, a new plan or policies will be prepared to a new time horizon of at least 2041.

The review will also serve to build upon existing strong, working relationships with adjoining and nearby authorities and may result in the preparation of a joint plan or policies based upon wider functional geographies.

7.18. There is a statutory requirement that policies in Local Plans should be assessed at least once every five years and that reviews should be completed no longer than five years from the adoption date of the Plan, taking account of changing circumstances affecting the area (local change), or any relevant changes in national policy.

7.19. However, North Hertfordshire Council was directed by the Inspector to include a policy to undertake an early review of the Local Plan by the end of 2023 at the latest. Such a review should determine whether there is a need to update the Local Plan in full or in part. A review of the policies in the NHLP is therefore required by the Local Plan to begin to be

undertaken by 31st December 2023. Work began on reviewing the policies in summer 2023 and the outcome of the review of those policies is set out in Appendix A.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Updating the Local Plan would ensure that:

- The District benefits from having an up-to-date Development Plan against which all planning decisions are made;
- The policies in the Plan are updated to capture the best current practice available, the latest evidence base and would also offer the opportunity to support key corporate objectives;
- Stakeholder engagement is at the heart of Plan-making and any update would involve and integrate feedback from key stakeholders across the District, alongside statutory public consultation involving our communities;
- An updated evidence base provides better decision-making and ensures planning is directly supporting the need of the community. Opportunities to update evidence will also assist other departments; responsibilities and workstreams where there is shared evidence, in particular Economic Development and Housing;
- The Council can defend its planning decision robustly, reducing the likelihood of costly planning inquiries and appeals;
- A fit for purpose spatial strategy in the Local Plan will limit the amount of speculative planning applications received and ensure that any development is Plan-led; allowing for infrastructure to be planned proactively through direct liaison with infrastructure providers throughout the process and can reduce piecemeal development in unsustainable locations.

Review of the North Herts Local Plan

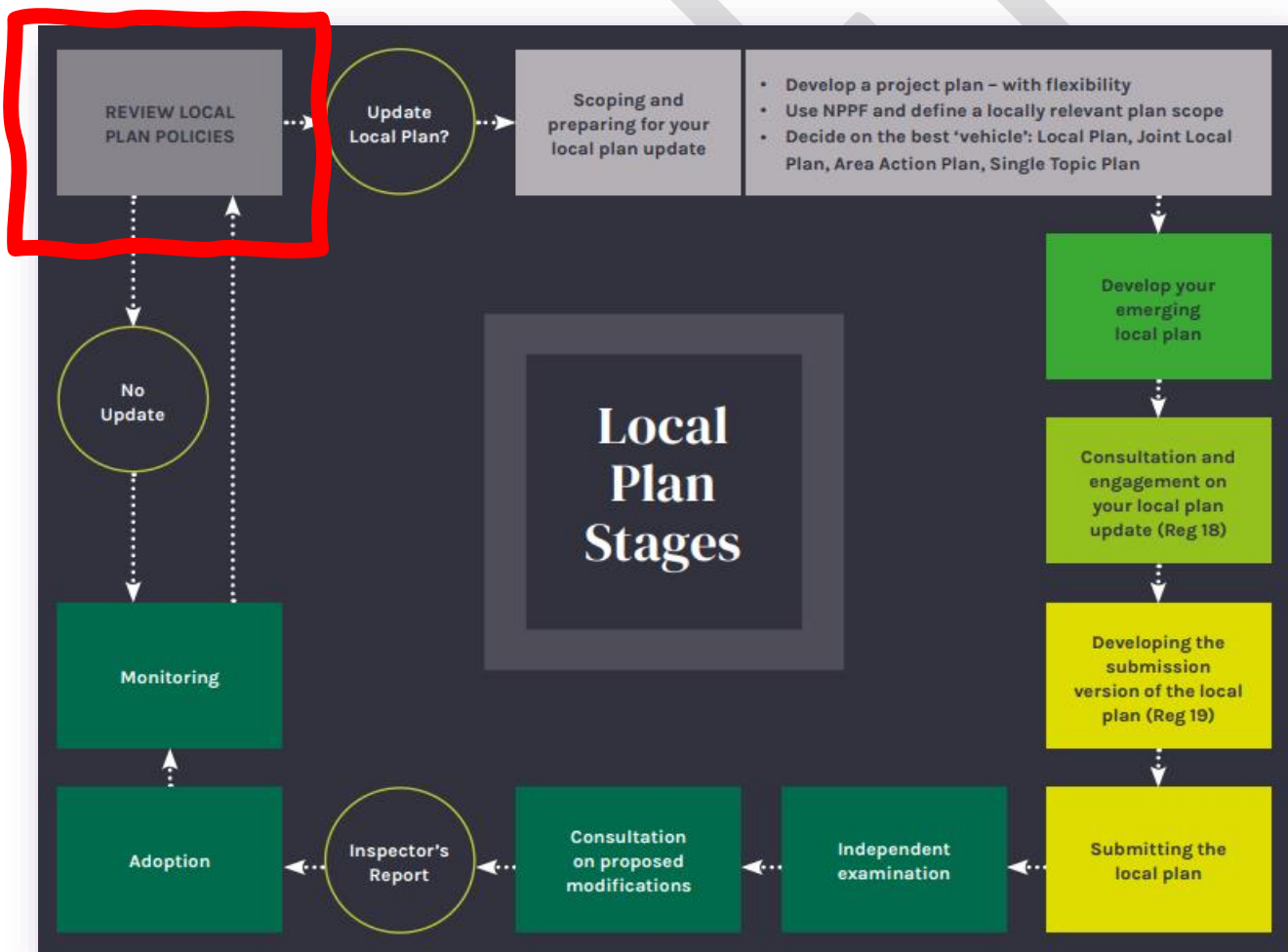
8.1 A technical review of the policies in the NHLP has been completed by Officers (Appendix A) based on the current NPPF and NPPG. Paragraph 64 of the NPPG⁷ states that ‘the authority can consider information such as (but not exclusively):

- *conformity with national planning policy;*
- *changes to local circumstances; such as a change in Local Housing Need;*
- *their Housing Delivery Test performance;*
- *whether the authority can demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable sites for housing;*
- *whether issues have arisen that may impact on the deliverability of key site allocations;*
- *their appeals performance;*
- *success of policies against indicators in the Development Plan as set out in their Authority Monitoring Report;*
- *the impact of changes to higher tier plans;*
- *plan-making activity by other authorities, such as whether they have identified that they are unable to meet all their housing need;*
- *significant economic changes that may impact on viability.; and*
- *whether any new social, environmental, or economic priorities may have arisen.*

⁷ [Plan-making - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework/national-planning-policy-framework)

- 8.2 Paragraph 68 of the NPPG⁸ of goes on to state that ‘a local planning authority may need to gather new evidence to inform their review. Proportionate, relevant and up-to-date evidence should be used to justify a decision not to update policies. We expect authorities to have due regard to the Duty to Cooperate when to undertaking a review to assess if they need updating’.
- 8.3 Much of the evidence for the NHLP dates to 2016, when it was submitted for examination. Whilst some elements of evidence may still be fit for purpose, such as landscape character appraisals, other evidence will need to be updated, for example social and economic elements,
- 8.4 The review of the NHLP has been carried out using:
- An assessment of the policies in the Local Plan with regard to the current NPPF and NPPG and consideration of any changes in local circumstances (Appendix A)
 - The Local Plan Route Mapper Toolkit⁹ produced by PAS (Appendix B)

Figure 2 – PAS Local Plan review process



⁸ Plan-making - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁹ PAS Local Plan Route Mapper v2.0.pdf

- 8.5 The assessment of the policies in the Local Plan (Appendix A) indicates officers' view that many of the policies require some form of updating. It should be noted that this assessment reflects a point in time and the process will need to be repeated once the content of the new NPPF and proposed National Development Management Policies (NDMP) become apparent.
- 8.6 Appendix A does not identify any new policy areas that may need to be included or developed as part of the Local Plan update. Nor does it identify policies that will be updated or added in line with the priorities identified by North Herts or corporate objectives. It is also expected that the majority of supporting text will also need redrafting. However, these steps would follow on from an initial decision that an update should take place.
- 8.7 Appendix B is the completed PAS Local Plan Route Mapper Toolkit. It indicates officers' view that the NHLP requires updating for a number of reasons including:
- That, at the time of writing, there is a little over seven years remaining in the Plan period (to March 2031) versus the NPPF / NPPG advice that Plans should look at least fifteen years into the future;
 - The potential requirement to identify new sites for development to ensure that the Council can demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.
 - The ongoing requirement to address affordable housing targets .
 - The need to maximise opportunities for jobs growth and to take account of changing economic circumstances.
 - Changes in the environmental context including the Council's declaration of climate emergency and the requirement for biodiversity net gain.
 - A number of the development management policies will also need clarification and updating to reflect changes in national policy/local changes, including the requirement to draw up design codes and guidance.
- 8.8 Section B of the Toolkit notes a number of factors that should be considered to determine whether the Local Plan should be updated. In considering these factors we conclude that a full update of the spatial strategy and spatial policies (and potentially non-strategic policies) need updating.
- 8.9 However, it should be noted that it is difficult to answer these questions until the implications of the planning reforms, outlined above, become clearer.

Evidence Base

- 8.10 As details of the new plan-making system emerges, it is recommended that the Council proactively commences work on updating the Local Plan evidence base so that the Council is in a strong position to commence formal stages at the earliest opportunity, once determined by the plan-making reforms as detailed above.
- 8.11 Updating the existing evidence base will also provide the Council with an opportunity to address issues that have greater prominence since the preparation of the NHLP. Including
- Climate change
 - Design
 - Sustainability
 - Biodiversity
 - Affordable Housing

- Use Classes

8.12 As work commences on an update of the Local Plan, the Strategic Planning Project Board will informally work with officers on the scope and breadth of issues to be addressed in the Local Plan. This will inform any future reports to Cabinet.

Conclusion

8.13 It is recommended that Cabinet note the results of the review. Appendix A sets out which policies have been judged as needing to be updated as a result of the local plan review.

8.14 There will be opportunities to bring other policies within the scope of the update over time if emerging evidence suggests that this will be necessary.

8.15 In addition to the individual policies, the overall spatial strategy is likely to require an update to account for changing development levels.

8.16 Furthermore, the level of infrastructure required to meet changing development levels will need a new infrastructure delivery plan, which will be integral to the plan and will set out how the broad range of infrastructure will be delivered.

8.17 The option proposed is that the Council proceeds with a full update of the NHLP based on the results of the local plan review (Appendix A).

8.18 The Local Plan update, through setting out the way North Hertfordshire will develop beyond the current plan end date of 2031, will contribute to the following priorities in the Council Plan 2022/27:

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

8.19 It is recommended that the final scope of the update and its associated timetable should be determined once the implications of the proposed changes to the NPPF and statutory framework has been approved.

8.20 Whilst the scope of the NHLP update is yet to be determined, what is clear at this stage is that under the new system a strong evidence base will still be expected to inform and support local plans, and that evidence will remain an important part of plan-making and monitoring.

8.21 Therefore, the Strategic Planning Team should focus on starting to update the evidence base and other preparatory work needed to support an update to the NHLP, particularly in light of the Governments intended 30-month plan-making timetable.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. The current legal framework for the preparation of Local Plans is set out in the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA) and associated regulations (as amended).

- 9.2. Under regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)¹⁰, local planning authorities must review their Local Plans within five years of the adoption date.
- 9.3. The enactment of relevant sections of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act and associated secondary legislation, will likely, through amendments to the PCPA and associated regulations, set the statutory framework for the preparation of the new Plan. However, this is yet to be confirmed.
- 9.4. The adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 forms part of the statutory Development Plan for the District. Section 38(6) of the PCPA states that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 9.5. Any decision to review the Local Plan does not affect its Development Plan status, or automatically render it 'out of date' for decision-making purposes. The current Local Plan remains the starting point for consideration of planning applications in North Hertfordshire until such time as any replacement Plan is prepared, examined and adopted.
- 9.6. Emerging policies in any new Plan may become a material consideration as they progress through the system.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The production of Local Plans can be a significant cost to Councils. The overall cost of producing the NHLP was approximately £1.6m. Key costs associated with the Local Plan review that are borne by the Council include (but are not necessarily limited to):
- Staffing;
 - Expert support to the Council (e.g. technical specialist consultants, evidence base studies, legal advice);
 - IT programmes and packages;
 - Process costs, including stakeholder and community engagement; and
 - The Planning Inspectorate (i.e. the examining Inspector).
- 10.2. Staffing matters are covered under the Human Resource Implications section below.
- 10.3. It is anticipated that the cost of any review would not be as high due to, inter alia, having a relatively recent plan to build upon as opposed to effectively 'starting from scratch'. The Council has previously approved two growth bids in the budgets for 2021/22 and 2022/23, each for £60k per year over a five-year period (i.e. £600k in total). A third tranche of resource has been included as a Revenue Investment Proposal in the upcoming budget for 2024/25. If approved, this third tranche of resource requested will provide a total working budget of £780k.
- 10.4. These bids also seek to factor in any additional costs for uncertainty around forthcoming legislative and policy changes. Unspent funds will be requested to be carried forward to mitigate the need for significant growth bids in future years as any review of the Plan progresses towards key stages such as pre-examination consultation and examination.
- 10.5. Costs will be controlled by undertaking as much of the technical and engagement work as possible in house, where appropriate in terms of capacity and expertise, and ensuring that evidence prepared for the examination enables it to be carried out in the most efficient manner.

¹⁰ [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2746/contents/make)

- 10.6. The Council does need to update and adopt more appropriate digital technology to enable work relating to the evidence base and community engagement throughout the Local Plan update process. This will be undertaken in line with the Council's evolving Digital Strategy.
- 10.7. Officers will also explore options to set charges for and / or recover costs from (potential) beneficiaries from the Plan review. This could include charges, Planning Performance Agreements or similar for landowners wishing to submit sites for potential development in order to (partially) cover costs associated with site assessment and the ratification of supporting technical evidence, such as ecology or landscape studies.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2. Local Plan Delivery and Review is identified as a Corporate Risk. This risk was last updated in November 2023. This identified a Risk Score of 5 and the following 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 retain/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; and
 - Government intervention if inadequate progress is made upon Local Plan Review.
- 11.3 These risks are minimised by having an up to date development plan which fulfils the requirements of legislation.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be carried out for the NHLP update in accordance with The Equality Act 2010.

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 direct Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report; this is a procedural decision.
- 14.2 Subject to the (potential) changes in the regulatory framework outlined above, it is expected that any replacement Local Plan will need to be accompanied by comprehensive environmental assessments which consider the social, economic and environmental implications of proposed policies and allocations. These will be set out in any relevant future reports.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 Reviewing the NHLP will require a fully staffed Strategic Planning Team to enable the Council to comply with the Governments proposed reduced 30-month timetable towards adoption. There have been challenges to recruiting staff and these will likely continue, therefore the use of agency staff and consultants will most likely be required going forward.
- 15.2 In recent years, both permanent and fixed-term posts have been added to the Planning Service in anticipation of the work associated with implementing the current NHLP followed by the review. Further bids for an additional fixed-term planning officer and technical / administrative support are included as Revenue Investment Proposals in the budget for 2024/25.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix A – Review of Local Plan Policies
Appendix B – PAS Local Plan Route Mapper Toolkit

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 17.1 Ian Fullstone, Service Director – Regulatory
Ian.Fullstone@North-Herts.gov.uk ext 4480
- Nigel Smith, Strategic Planning Manager
Nigel.Smith@North-Herts.gov.uk ext 4847
- Debbie Coates, Principal Strategic Planner
Deborah.Coates@North-Herts.gov.uk ext 4353
- Reuben Ayavoo, Policy and Communities Manager
Reuben.Ayavoo@North-Herts.gov.uk ext 4212
- Rebecca Webb, HR Services Manager
Rebecca.Webb@North-Herts.gov.uk ext 4481
- Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources
Ian.Couper@North-Herts.gov.uk ext 4243
- Kerrie Munro, Locum Planning Lawyer
Kerrie.Munro@North-Herts.gov.uk

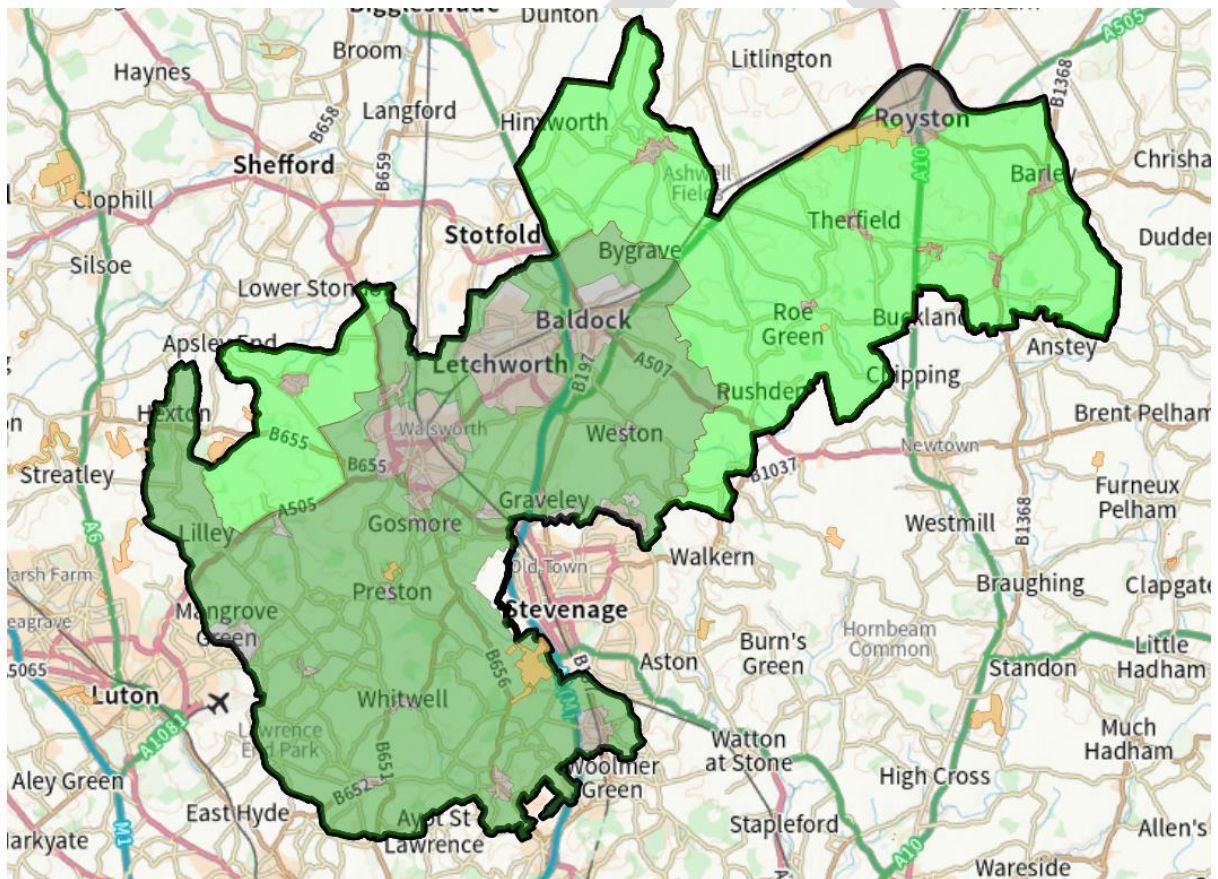
8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 North Herts Local Plan

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Review of the North Herts Local Plan

2011 - 2031



December 2023

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Local planning authorities are required to undertake a review of their local plans within five years of adoption. This requirement is set out in legislation¹. The review is to establish whether the plan needs updating. If the plan does require updating, those updates need to be undertaken through the relevant local plan process set out in legislation.

1.2 The North Herts Local Plan (NHLP) was adopted on 8th November 2022. The Inspector concluded in his Report² that the NHLP was only found sound on the basis of the inclusion of a Policy to undertake an early review of the Plan.

1.3 Policy IMR2 of the Local Plan states that The Council will undertake a whole plan review of the Local Plan 2011-2031 by the end of 2023 at the latest and sets out a range of issues identified through the examination that led to the early review requirement. This will determine whether this Plan needs to be updated either in whole or in part. It is clear a two-stage process is envisaged:

- 1) A review of existing policies to determine whether they require updating;
- 2) Subject to (1), a subsequent updating of the Plan either in whole or in part.

1.4 This means that step 1 must be completed by the end of the year. It does not mean that an updated plan needs to have been progressed or adopted by that time.

1.5 The purpose of this document is therefore to assess whether an update of the NHLP is required. An update could involve an update of the entire plan, or a partial update of one or more policies. This document therefore considers each individual policy in terms of the need for an update, as well as the vision, objectives and overall strategy.



¹ Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

² [North Herts Inspectors Report - Final.pdf \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

Policy IMR2: Local plan early review

The Council will undertake a whole plan review of the Local Plan 2011-2031 by the end of 2023 at the latest. This will determine whether this Plan needs to be updated either in whole or in part. All policies will be reviewed but with particular regard paid to the following matters that were specifically identified during the preparation and examination of this plan:

- Housing requirements for the District and wider housing market areas;
- Housing delivery having regard to the progress and implementation of the Strategic Housing Sites and Local Housing Allocations identified in this plan and the rates of development being achieved measured against the stepped approach and housing trajectory set out in this plan;
- The safeguarded land to the West of Stevenage;
- The outcomes of the process(es) to comprehensively explore new settlement options in the District;
- Gypsy and Traveller provision
- The identification of needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses;
- Options for long-term secondary education provision in the Stevenage area; and
- Broad alignment with the statutory five-year time limit for reviews of the East Hertfordshire and Stevenage local plans (required by November 2023 and May 2024 respectively) to allow co-ordinated consideration of the above matters.

The review will have regard to up-to-date information and be conducted in line with Government policy and statutory requirements. Subject to the outcomes of that review, a new plan or policies will be prepared to a new time horizon of at least 2041.

The review will also serve to build upon existing strong, working relationships with adjoining and nearby authorities and may result in the preparation of a joint plan or policies based upon wider functional geographies.

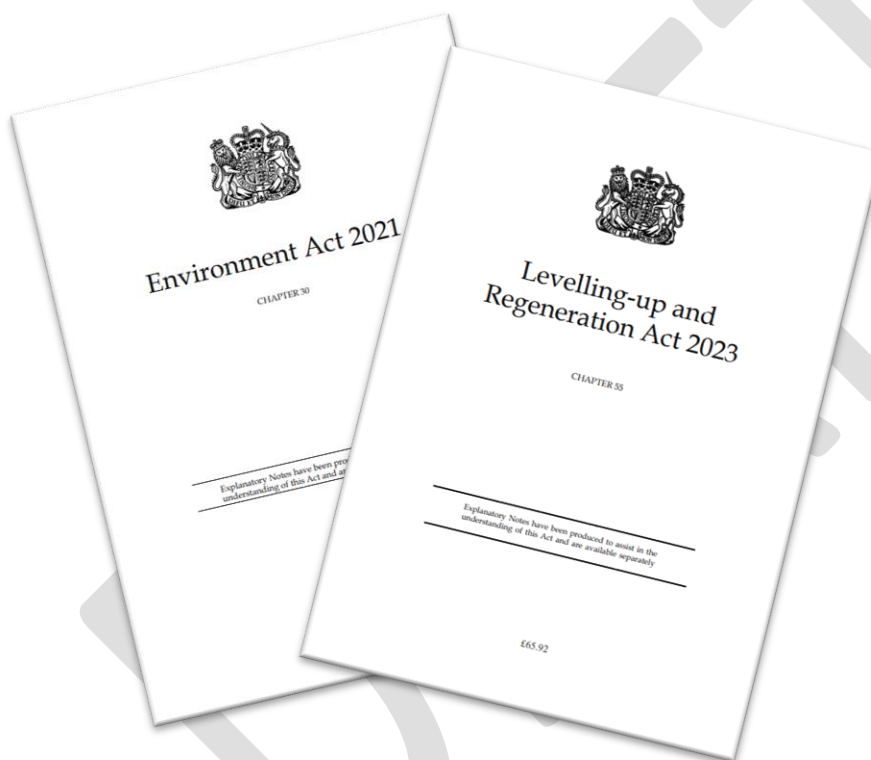
- 1.6 There are a number of reasons that an update of all or part of the plan may be necessary, and these will be considered in overall terms and in relation to each individual policy. These can be summarised as follows:
- **Legislative changes:** Changes to the law may result in the need to amend policies. For instance, the Environment Act introduces statutory requirements in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain and Nature Recovery Strategies. The Levelling Up & Regeneration Act will result in changes to the scope of policies contained in Local Plans.
 - **National policy changes:** The NHLP 2022 was examined against the 2012 version of the National Planning Policy Framework. Since that time, there have been four further versions of the NPPF, with the most recent being that published on 5 September 2023. Planning Practice Guidance has also changed in that time, most particularly in relation to the approach to housing need. A new iteration of the NPPF is expected in December 2023 introducing new approaches to various elements of planning including:
 - The test of 'soundness' for local plans to be softened;
 - Duty to co-operate to be replaced with an as-yet-unformulated 'alignment policy';
 - Authorities with an up-to-date local plan will no longer need to continually show a deliverable five-year housing land supply.
 - **Local policy changes:** Other policy changes include the publication of new local policies such as the Council's Climate Change Strategy updated in 2022, and progress made on local plans in adjoining areas, including issues of unmet needs.
- 1.7 Any conclusion that the Plan requires updating (in whole or in part) for plan-making purposes does not mean the existing NHLP stops being used or is 'out of date' for decision-making purposes. The planning system is plan-led and the existing NHLP would continue to form a key part of the statutory Development Plan for determining planning applications while any replacement plan or policies are developed.

2 REVIEW OF OVERALL STRATEGY

- 2.1 The overall strategy of the document, including the Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives set the overall framework for the plan, and it may be that updates to this overall strategy are required.

Legislative changes

- 2.2 There have been legislative changes, including the Environment Act 2021³ and the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023⁴ that call the overall strategy of the plan into question.



- 2.3 The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act makes transformations to the planning system, including the proposed production of a set of National Development Management Policies, the repeal and replacement of Duty to Cooperate with a more flexible alignment test, and the introduction of a new Infrastructure Levy that would principally replace the

current system of developer contributions (Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Planning Obligations), and a proposed further update to the NPPF. However, many of these transformations require secondary legislation to come forward before they can be enacted.

National policy changes

- 2.4 The foremost national policy implication is that the NHLP only had a nine-year period, upon adoption in November 2022, of a 20-year Plan which is in conflict with

³ [Environment Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

⁴ [Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

the requirement for a minimum 15-year period from adoption (para 22, NPPF 2021). Little more than a year on from adoption, and the NHLP only has seven years left of its plan period against the 15-year requirement.

2.5 There have been a number of other changes, notably around design, including:

- The National Design Guide⁵ – which sets out ten characteristics for a well-designed place; and
- The National Model Design Code⁶ – which provides guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design.



2.6 The Environment Act, 2021 introduced a mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain which will apply from January 2024. Whilst the Climate Change Act, 2008⁷ was amended in 2019 to commit the UK to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

2.7 In more general terms, society has experienced fundamental changes since the Plan was written – Covid-19 pandemic, climate change crisis, a greater awareness of mental health, all issues that have changed, and need to change, our relationship with the built and natural environment in which we live.

⁵ [National design guide.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92342/national-design-guide.pdf)

⁶ [National Model Design Code: Part 1 - The Coding Process \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92342/national-model-design-code-part-1-the-coding-process.pdf)

⁷ [Climate Change Act 2008 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/section/1)

Local policy changes

- 2.8 A new version of the North Herts Council Plan⁸ covering the period 2022-27 has been published. Its vision is to “put people first and deliver sustainable services, to enable a brighter future together”. There are four themes to achieving this vision, three of which are relevant here.



Our environment

2.9 In terms of healthy environment, the plan highlights the work being undertaken to work towards a carbon neutral North Herts by 2040, ten years ahead of the current statutory target for the country as a whole. It highlights the need for adaptation to climate change in line with our Climate Change Strategy and declared Climate Change Emergency and the unique richness of the environment in which we live identifying the vital chalk streams and grasslands, ancient

hedgerow and woodlands and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that influences the District.

Our local economy

- 2.10 The theme relating to our local economy notes the importance of our towns and villages and our commitment to support them to grow and thrive. This includes better understanding of the issues facing our rural economies as well as the more industrial employment areas. The plan identifies the need to reinvest into the local economy for the benefit of local communities.

Our places

- 2.11 In relation to our places, the plan highlights matters including the importance of access to good quality affordable housing and our continued support for Neighbourhood Plans. It also highlights the importance of addressing the need to ensure these places are well designed and connected across and beyond the District by means of sustainable transport and a network of green infrastructure

⁸ [Council Plan 2022-2027.pdf \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/council-plan-2022-2027.pdf)

corridors which will support carbon capture, biodiversity, flood and surface water management as well as the health and wellbeing of residents.

- 2.12 The North Herts Climate Change Strategy⁹, published in 2022, identifies a number of actions across a number of partners to address the climate emergency including working with the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) across all the Local Authorities in Hertfordshire.

- 2.13 The HCCSP identifies a number of different priorities all of which are central matters to the Local Plan process and will continue to be throughout the update.

- 2.14 The Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan, 2018 – 2031¹⁰, sets out how transport can deliver a positive future vision for Hertfordshire by having a major input into wider policies such as economic growth, meeting housing needs, improving public health and reducing environmental damage whilst also providing for safe and efficient travel.



Conclusion

- 2.15 Bearing in mind the changes outlined above, updates to the vision and objectives of the Local Plan are required. In addition, the spatial strategy requires an update, particularly to accommodate any changes to the level of development needed in North Herts, including to an extended end date of at least 2041¹¹.

⁹ [NHDC-811 NHDC Climate change Strategy 2022-27 V3.pdf \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁰ [LTP4 Transport Plan 2018 \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

¹¹ The most appropriate plan period will be established as any new Local Plan is progressed.

3 REVIEW OF POLICIES

- 3.1 This section takes each policy in the Local Plan in turn and considers whether there are any reasons that it should be updated. It considers legislative changes, national policy changes, local policy changes and any other changes in circumstances. This allows the scope of the Local Plan update to be identified.
- 3.2 It should be noted that the below assessment identifies the need for an update to be considered. It does not necessarily represent a firm commitment that a policy will be amended, if further work reveals that such an amendment is not necessary. Nor does it exclude policies being brought within the scope of the update further into the process where circumstances change or where the update process reveals a further need for amendments.
- 3.3 A number of policies refer to the current Plan period to 2031 and associated targets, quantities of development etc. It is necessary to review these as part of an overall consideration of whether to extend the time horizon of the Local Plan in line with national guidance. To avoid repetition, this is not necessarily identified in the table below in each instance.
- 3.4 Similarly, all detailed policies will need to be reviewed against National Development Management Policies once these are published to avoid repetition while all unimplemented site allocations will need review to ensure they remain necessary, deliverable or developable.
- 3.5 Policies that require reviewing are highlighted in green, those that do not require reviewing are highlighted in red. Those policies that are highlighted amber do not readily require reviewing but may need to be revisited based on the outcome of the review of other policies highlighted in green.

| |
|--|
| Requires review |
| May require reviewing based on <ul style="list-style-type: none">the outcome of another policy's review;for site allocations, progression of the site through the development management process; ordoesn't require reviewing as a standalone policy but in combination with others, we should/could review for completeness |

Does not require review / site allocation has been implemented and can be deleted

- 3.6 In addition, if spatial policies are updated and the spatial boundary of the policy alters, there will be a requirement to update the policies map as a consequence of these changes.

DRAFT

| Policy | | Review required? |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Vision | | Yes |
| Strategic Objectives | | Yes |
| SP1 | Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire | No |
| SP2 | Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution | Yes |
| SP3 | Employment | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| SP4 | Town Centres, Local Centres and Community Shops | Yes |
| SP5 | Countryside and Green Belt | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| SP6 | Sustainable transport | Yes |
| SP7 | Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| SP8 | Housing | Yes |
| SP9 | Design and Sustainability | Yes |
| SP10 | Healthy Communities | Yes |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|---|---|
| SP11 | Natural resources and sustainability | Yes |
| SP12 | Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| SP13 | Historic environment | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| SP14 | Site BA1 – North of Baldock | Yes |
| SP15 | Site LG1 – North of Letchworth Garden City | Yes |
| SP16 | Site NS1 – North of Stevenage | Yes |
| SP17 | Site HT1 – Highover Farm, Hitchin | Yes |
| SP18 | Site GA2 – Land off Mendip Way, Great Ashby | Yes |
| SP19 | Sites EL1, EL2 & EL3 – East of Luton | Yes |
| ETC1 | Appropriate uses in Employment Areas | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| ETC2 | Employment development outside Employment Areas and Employment Allocations BA10 and RY9 | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|---|---|
| ETC3 | New retail, leisure and other main town centre development | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| ETC4 | Primary Shopping Frontages | Yes |
| ETC5 | Secondary Shopping Frontages | Yes |
| ETC6 | Local Centres | Yes |
| ETC7 | Local community shops and services in towns and villages | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| ETC8 | Tourism | No |
| CGB1 | Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| CGB2a | Exception sites for affordable housing in the Green Belt | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| CGB2b | Community facilities, services and affordable housing in the rural area beyond the Green Belt | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| CGB3 | Rural workers dwellings | No |
| CGB4 | Existing building in the Rural Area beyond Green Belt | No |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|--|---|
| CGB5 | Urban open land | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| T1 | Assessment of transport matters | Yes |
| T2 | Parking | Yes |
| HS1 | Local housing allocations | Yes |
| HS2 | Affordable housing | Yes |
| HS3 | Housing mix | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HS4 | Supported, sheltered and older persons housing | Yes |
| HS5 | Accessible and adaptable housing | Yes |
| HS6 | Relatives and dependent accommodation | No |
| HS7 | Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople | Yes |
| D1 | Sustainable design | Yes |
| D2 | House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|--|---|
| D3 | Protecting living conditions | No |
| D4 | Air quality | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HC1 | Community facilities | No |
| NE1 | Strategic green infrastructure | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| NE2 | Landscape | Yes |
| NE3 | Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| NE4 | Biodiversity and geological sites | Yes |
| NE5 | Protecting open space | Yes |
| NE6 | New and improved open space | No |
| NE7 | Reducing flood risk | Yes |
| NE8 | Sustainable drainage systems | Yes |
| NE9 | Water quality and environment | Yes |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|--|---|
| NE10 | Water conservation and wastewater infrastructure | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| NE11 | Contaminated Land | No |
| NE12 | Renewable and low carbon energy development | Yes |
| HE1 | Designated heritage assets | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HE2 | Heritage at risk | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HE3 | Non-designated heritage assets | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HE4 | Archaeology | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| BA2 | Land south west of Clothall Road | Yes |
| BA3 | Land south of Clothall Common | Yes |
| BA4 | Land east of Clothall Common | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|--|---|
| BA5 | Land of Yeomanry Drive | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| BA6 | Land at Icknield Way | Allocation implemented - delete |
| BA7 | Land rear of Clare Crescent | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| BA10 | Royston Road | Yes |
| BA11 | Deans Yard, South Road | Yes |
| BK2 | Land off Windmill Close | Allocation implemented – delete |
| BK3 | Land between Cambridge Road and Royston Road | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| CD1 | Land south of Cowards Lane | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| CD2 | Codicote Garden Centre, High Street | Allocation implemented – delete |
| CD3 | Land north of The Close | Yes |
| CD5 | Land south of Heath Lane | Allocation implemented – delete |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|--|---|
| CD6 | Land at Woodside Place, Danesbury Park Road | Yes |
| GR1 | Land at Milksey Lane | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| GA1 | Land at Roundwood | Yes |
| HT2 | Land north of Pound Farm | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HT3 | Land south of Oughtonhead Lane | Yes |
| HT5 | Land at junction of Grays Lane and Lucus Lane | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HT6 | Land at junction of Grays Lane and Crows Furlong | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| HT8 | Industrial Area, Cooks Way | Yes |
| HT10 | Former B&Q site | Yes |
| HT11 | Churchgate and its surrounding area | Yes |
| HT12 | Paynes Park | Yes |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|---|---|
| IC1 | Land at Duncots Close | Yes |
| IC2 | Burford Grange, Bedford Road | Allocation implemented – delete |
| IC3 | Land at Bedford Road | Yes |
| KM3 | Land north of High Street | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| KW1 | Land west of The Heath, Breachwood Green | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| KB1 | Land at Deards End | Yes |
| KB2 | Land off Gipsy Lane | Yes |
| KB4 | Land east of Knebworth | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| LG3 | Land east of Kristiansand Way and Talbot Way | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| LG4 | Land north of former Norton School, Norton Road | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| LG5 | Land at Birds Hill | Yes |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|----------------------------------|---|
| LG6 | Land off Radburn Way | Yes |
| LG8 | Pixmore Centre, Pixmore Avenue | Yes |
| LG9 | Former Lannock School | Allocation implemented – delete |
| LG10 | Former playing field, Croft Lane | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| LG13 | Glebe Road industrial estate | Yes |
| LG15 | Garages, Ickniel Way | Yes |
| LG16 | Foundation House | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| LG18 | Former Depot, Ickniel Way | Yes |
| LG19 | The Wynd, Openshaw Way | Yes |
| LG20 | Gernon Road | Allocation implemented – delete |
| LG21 | Arena Parade | Yes |
| PR1 | Land off Templars Lane | Allocation implemented – delete |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|-------------------------------------|---|
| RD1 | Land at Blacksmiths Lane | Yes |
| RY4 | Land north of Lindsay Close | Yes |
| RY7 | Anglian Business Park, Orchard Road | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| RY9 | Land north of York Way | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| RY10 | Land south of Newmarket Road | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| RY11 | Land at Barkway Road | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| RY12 | Town Hall site, Melbourn Street | Yes |
| SI1 | Land south of Waterdell Lane | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| SI2 | Land south of Stevenage Road | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| TH1 | Land at Police Row | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |

| Policy | | Review required? |
|--------|--------------------------------|---|
| WE1 | Land off Hitchin Road | Yes |
| WY1 | Land south of Little Wymondley | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews |
| IMR1 | Five Year Housing Land Supply | Yes |
| IMR2 | Local Plan Early Review | No |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Vision | Sets out the aspirations for North Herts over the Plan period | Update to reflect the priorities of the Council and to cover an appropriate time period. | Yes | Local change |
| Strategic Objectives | Provides the link between the Vision and the Strategic Policies | Update to reflect the amendments to the Vision. | Yes | Local change |
| SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire | Model policy which supports the delivery of growth | Accords with national guidance. | No | |
| SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution | Sets out the approach to development in the context of towns and villages and where, predominantly, housing development will be directed | Needs updating to account for delivery on strategic sites, updated commitments, completions and windfalls and to extend time horizon of the Plan beyond 2031 with appropriate targets and requirements. | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| SP3: Employment | Sets out the approach to development in the context of towns and villages and where employment development will be directed | Needs updating to account for delivery on sites, and to extend time horizon of the Plan beyond 2031 with appropriate targets and requirements. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| SP4: Town Centres, Local Centres and Community Shops | Sets out the provision for appropriate range of retail and services across the District | <p>Town Centre Strategies are being undertaken which are likely to result in updated approaches to retail uses; current retail forecasts pre-date Covid-19.</p> <p>The outcome of these strategies should be reflected in any updated policy and should account for any changes in the settlement hierarchy as set out in Policy SP2.</p> | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| SP5: Countryside and Green Belt | Sets out how unrestrained development will be controlled in areas of Green Belt within the District | The policy generally accords with national policy and has been mostly effective but may require a consequential review based on the outcome of the review of a number of other policies. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| <div> <div>P6: Sustainable Transport</div> <div>Page 108</div> </div> | Sets out how accessibility across the District will be promoted through sustainable transport modes | <p>HCC is updating the Local Transport Plan, Active Travel Strategy and a new <i>Place and Movement Planning and Design Guide</i> (to replace <i>Roads in Hertfordshire</i>)</p> <p>Policy should be strengthened to reflect the national and local priority afforded to active travel, as set out in the Active Travel England Framework document, <i>Gear Change</i>, LTP4, and the North Herts LCWIP</p> <p>Local Plan policy needs to say more about designing in permeability and safety by design to make active travel convenient and attractive</p> | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions | Sets out infrastructure required to support development | Policy already refers to the appropriate mechanisms for collecting contributions but in light of the other updates required in the Local Plan, it would be opportune to ensure that this policy has regard to relevant national guidance or requirements in relation to planning obligations and any Infrastructure Levy proposed in secondary legislation resulting from the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| SP8: Housing | Sets out minimum housing supply to meet projected need over the Plan period | Needs updating to account for delivery on strategic sites, updated commitments, completions and windfalls and to extend time horizon of the Plan beyond 2031 with appropriate targets and requirements. This includes consideration of the outcomes of Local Plan reviews in surrounding areas. Status of safeguarded land West of Stevenage to be reviewed. | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| SP9: Design and Sustainability | Sets out the expectations for the sustainability of developments, in particular meeting high Masterplanning standards for residential developments | National policy on climate change has evolved over time while North Herts have declared a Climate Emergency. Examination decisions on local authorities setting their own sustainability standards have, to date, been inconsistent. However, this issue should be comprehensively explored. | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |
| SP10: Healthy Communities | Sets out requirements for developments to contribute towards inclusive communities | Policy generally accords with national guidance. However long-term secondary education requirements around Stevenage are specifically identified in Policy IMR2 as an issue for the review to consider. | Yes | |
| SP11: Natural resources and sustainability | Sets out how the challenges of climate change and flooding will be met | National policy in this area has evolved over time and this needs to be reflected in an update to this policy and to take account of the North Herts Climate Emergency declaration | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| SP12: Green infrastructure, landscape, and biodiversity | Sets out how development will ensure that the natural environment is protected and enhanced | <p>The Environment Act 2021 introduces significant new provisions which affect the relationship between biodiversity and development.</p> <p>The general principles and aspirations of the policy are sound, but the policy may require a consequential review following any other updates to associated policies as set out below.</p> | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| SP13: Historic environment | Sets out requirement for the protection and enhancement of historic features | <p>Policy generally accords with national guidance.</p> <p>However, keep under review in line with revisions to local and / or national Development Management Policies</p> | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| SP14: Site BA1 – North of Baldock | Strategic site allocation policy | <p>Masterplanning in progress</p> <p>The policy should be retained until the final phase of the site has been implemented but reviewed to reflect any more up-to-date information on site capacity, delivery, constraints, infrastructure requirements etc.</p> | Yes | Local change |
| SP15: Site LG1 – North of Letchworth Garden City | Strategic site allocation policy | <p>Masterplanning in progress</p> <p>The policy should be retained until the final phase of the site has been implemented but reviewed to reflect any more up-to-date information on site capacity, delivery, constraints, infrastructure requirements etc.</p> | Yes | Local change |
| SP16: Site NS1 – North of Stevenage | Strategic site allocation policy | <p>Masterplanning in progress</p> <p>The policy should be retained until the final phase of the site has been implemented but reviewed to reflect any more up-to-date information on site capacity, delivery, constraints, infrastructure requirements etc.</p> | Yes | Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| SP17: Site HT1 – Highover Farm, Hitchin | Strategic site allocation policy | Resolution to grant outline permission (18/01154/OP) The policy should be retained until the final phase of the site has been implemented | Yes | Local change |
| SP18: Site GA2 – Land off Mendip Way, Great Ashby | Strategic site allocation policy | Masterplanning in progress The policy should be retained until the final phase of the site has been implemented but reviewed to reflect any more up-to-date information on site capacity, delivery, constraints, infrastructure requirements etc. | Yes | Local change |
| SP19: Sites EL1, EL2 & EL3 – East of Luton | Strategic site allocation policy | Applications under consideration The policy should be retained until the final phase of the site has been implemented. Site is predominantly to meet unmet needs from Luton's Local Plan which is due to be reviewed. | Yes | Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| ETC1: Appropriate uses in Employment Areas | Sets out a criteria-based approach to proposals for maintaining employment land and controlling loss of employment land in other locations | The policy may require consequential updates to the boundary of the employment areas only. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| ETC2: Employment development outside Employment Areas and Employment Allocations BA10 and RY9 | Sets out the main locations for major office and industrial or warehouse development outside of the designated areas | The policy may require updates that are consequential to SP2 and any changes in the hierarchy of settlements. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| ETC3: New retail, leisure, and other main town centre development | Supports town centre uses as defined in the NPPF with the town centre boundaries and requires proposals to be assessed in line with the sequential approach | <p>Policy generally accords with national guidance.</p> <p>Town Centre Strategies are being undertaken which are likely to result in updated approaches to retail uses.</p> <p>Whilst the Policy is unlikely to need updating, it should be re-assessed following updates (if appropriate) to other policies in the Economy and Town Centres chapter to ensure consistency</p> | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| ETC4: Primary Shopping Frontages | Identifies Town Centre boundaries and Primary Shopping Frontages in Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and Royston | Town Centre Strategies are being undertaken which may result in updated approaches to primary shopping frontages to account for post-Covid 19 requirements. The outcome of these strategies should be reflected in any updated policy | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| ETC5: Secondary Shopping Frontages | Identifies Secondary Shopping Frontages in Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and Royston | Town Centre Strategies are being undertaken which may result in updated approaches to secondary shopping frontages to account for post-Covid 19 requirements. The outcome of these strategies should be reflected in any updated policy | Yes | National Policy change and local change |
| ETC6: Local Centres | Sets out the uses that will be accepted in identified local centres | Policy should be reviewed in light of the recommendations made for post-Covid 19 requirements that come out of the Town Centre Strategies to ensure that the Council takes a consistent approach across Town Centres and Local Centres in the District and accounting for local need within the local area | Yes | National Policy change |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| ETC7: Local community shops and services in towns and villages | Sets out the uses that will be accepted in identified local community shops in towns and villages | Policy generally accords with national guidance. Any update should only occur as a consequence of any updates to SP2 or CB2b and to ensure consistency. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| ETC8: Tourism | Supports provision of further leisure, culture and tourism uses in North Herts | Policy generally accords with national guidance | No | |
| CGB1: Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt | Sets out the types of development that will be permitted in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt | Policy generally accords with national guidance. Any update should only occur as a consequence of updates to SP2 to ensure consistency. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| CGB2a: Exception sites for affordable housing in the Green Belt | Sets out areas that would be suitable for affordable housing in the Green Belt | <p>Policy generally accords with national guidance.</p> <p>Any update should only occur as a consequence of updates to SP2 and HS2 to ensure consistency.</p> | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| CGB2b: Community facilities, services, and affordable housing in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt | Sets out areas that would be suitable for community facilities, services and affordable housing in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt | <p>Policy generally accords with national guidance.</p> <p>Any update should only occur as a consequence of updates to SP2 and HS2 to ensure consistency.</p> | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| CGB3: Rural workers' dwellings | Sets out the criteria for which Rural workers dwelling are assessed against | The policy generally accords with national policy | No | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| CGB4: Existing buildings in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt | Sets out the criteria for which the re-use, replacement or extension of existing building are assessed against | The policy generally accords with national policy | No | |
| GB5: Urban Open Land | Sets out the criteria for which the use of urban open land is assessed against | The policy generally accords with national policy. However, this may need to be updated in light of the review of other policies relating to housing need, open space requirements and Biodiversity Net Gain. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <div>Page 120</div> 1: Assessment of transport matters | Sets out requirements for developments to contribute to meeting the objectives of the sustainable transport measures | To reflect national and local changes in affording priority to active travel and public transport over private cars, the policy requires updating to require a vision-and-validate or decide-and-provide approach, where a target mode share is agreed first, and then supportive interventions, on- and off-site, are agreed subsequently. This is a departure from the traditional predict-and-provide approach, which assumes a new development will have the same modal shares as similar existing sites and focuses on providing sufficient highway and junction capacity to accommodate the forecast peak flows of motor traffic | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|------------|--|
| | <p>Ensures that car and cycle parking appropriate to the level of accessibility of the site is provided as part of new developments.</p> | <p>The policy needs to be updated to reference Document S of the Building Regulations, which requires one EV chargepoint to be installed per parking space or per dwelling (as a minimum) and set some design and accessibility standards for EV chargepoints.</p> <p>The NPPF now talks about the importance of providing adequate overnight lorry parking facilities, which is something not currently addressed in the Local Plan</p> <p>LTP4 and LTN1/20 prioritise safety and convenience of active travel over private cars. This requires car parking provision to be arranged so as to make driving no more convenient than walking or cycling.</p> <p>Cycle parking standards need to be revised upwards to one per occupier (since people generally do not share cycles, unlike cars)</p> <p>Policy needs to include explicit provision for car clubs, which can help deliver on various local and national policy objectives (see DfT toolkit)</p> | <p>Yes</p> | <p>Nation Policy change and Local change</p> |
|--|--|---|------------|--|

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| HS1: Local Housing Allocations | This policy aims to set out the amount of housing that would be provided in North Herts over the plan period | Will need updating to account for delivery on strategic sites, updated commitments, completions and windfalls. Policies map will need updating to reflect any new/removed allocations. | Yes | National Policy change |
| HS2: Affordable housing | This policy aims to ensure that housing development makes an appropriate contribution to the delivery of affordable housing, either through delivery on site for larger developments, or through a financial contribution for smaller developments | Policy will need to reflect the latest affordable housing definition in the most up to date evidence and NPPF 2023 | Yes | National Policy change |
| HS3: Housing mix | Sets out the type and mix of housing required appropriate to local character, taking account of the latest evidence. | Policy generally signposts readers to other relevant policies but also provides a link to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which sets out the appropriate type and mix of housing. Consequential update may be necessary from other associated policies. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| HS4: Supported, sheltered and older persons housing | Sets out proposals for specialist residential accommodation for vulnerable people, including older people and people with disabilities. | Additional guidance in the PPG was published on Housing for Older and Disabled People. This includes setting out categories of the different types of specialist housing for older people and also identifying the need to provide housing for older people as critical | Yes | National Policy change |
| HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing | Ensures the delivery of accessible and adaptable homes to meet the changing needs of occupant | <p>The PPG and NPPF allows plan-making authorities to set out the proportion of new housing that will be delivered to technical housing standards – Policy HS5 currently does this.</p> <p>However, the proportion will need to be reassessed in light of any up-to-date evidence and viability considerations. As such the Policy will likely need to be updated</p> | Yes | Local change |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| HS6: Relatives' and dependents' accommodation | Sets out expectations for proposals for house extensions or for other householder development, including ancillary accommodation such as granny annexes | Policy generally accords with national guidance | No | |
| HS7: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople | Aims to identify levels of need for sites for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation, as well as set out criteria for consideration of proposals for new development for this use | Updates required to Gypsy, Traveller and Showperson Accommodation Assessment work to reflect updated need | Yes | Local change |
| D1: Sustainable design | Sets out requirements for all development proposals to be of high standard of design and layout to reflect and promote local distinctiveness | Policy needs to be updated to better incorporate sustainability measures and ensure that it captures all key principles for good urban design. Policy should also incorporate the Design Code requirements set out in the LURA and any other secondary legislation. | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| D2: House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings | Sets out the criteria against which proposals for extensions and alterations to dwellings, residential outbuildings, and work within residential curtilages, will be considered. | Policy generally accords with national guidance. However, this policy may be replaced by Design Code/NDMP's and may need updating or removing accordingly. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| D3: Protecting living conditions | Sets out how existing living conditions should not be harmed by development proposals | Policy generally accords with national guidance | No | |
| D4: Air quality | Ensures new development includes measures to minimise the impact on air quality | Policy needs to be strengthened to reflect latest national and local position on improving air quality | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| HC1: Community facilities | Requires the provision of adequate and appropriately located community facilities in conjunction with new development | Policy generally accords with national guidance | No | |
| IE1: Strategic green infrastructure | To ensure the delivery, protection and enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure across the district | Policy generally accords with national guidance. Policy could be strengthened to reflect the lessons learnt from the delivery of strategic sites, such as stewardship arrangements. Opportunity to update to include reference to most up to date local strategies | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| NE2: Landscape | Sets out how developments will respect the existing landscapes within the area | Change in national policy in that the NPPF that protection and enhancement of valued landscapes should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. These elements may require mapping on the Policies Map also. | Yes | National Policy change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| NE3: The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) | This policy identifies a major landscape feature, the character of which should be maintained | <p>Change in national policy in that the NPPF that protection and enhancement of valued landscapes should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan.</p> <p>Work is underway on a potential extension to the Chilterns AONB, and it is currently expected that an Order to amend the boundary will be made by October 2024. At this stage, it is not known whether any land within North Herts or on the boundary would be affected. However, this element of change is not within the control of NHC.</p> | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites | Aims to ensure that biodiversity in North Herts is protected and enhanced wherever possible | The Environment Act 2021 introduces significant new provisions which affect the relationship between biodiversity and development including BNG and its strategic significance. | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| NE5: Protecting open space | Sets out defined areas as either Local Green Space or Public Open Space, which will be protected from development | The general principles of the policy are sound, but the policy relies on general protections rather than allocating land which is at odds with more up to date legislation and sustainable aspirations. | Yes | Local change |
| NE6: New and improved open space | Sets out expectations for the amount, type, and quality of new open space to be provided as part of a development | Policy generally accords with national guidance | No | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| NE7: Reducing flood risk | Sets out expectations in terms of flood risk, by following the relevant national policy tests and ensuring that the capacity of the flood plain to store floodwater is not reduced, the flow of floodwater is not impeded and the risks to life and property are not increased | Paragraph 160 of the NPPF 2021 has been amended to clarify the sequential test should take into account “all sources of flood risk”, and new Annex 3 now sets out the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification which was previously included in national planning guidance. The flood risk and coastal change section of the Planning Practice Guidance was updated in 2022 to strengthen guidance on the how to apply the sequential test, surface water flood risks and sustainable drainage | Yes | National Policy change |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| NE8: Sustainable drainage systems | Ensures new development utilises effective sustainable drainage | The flood risk and coastal change section of the Planning Practice Guidance was updated in 2022 to strengthen guidance on surface water flood risk, the role and multi-functional use of sustainable drainage (SuDS) and to encourage the use of local policies to steer the type of SuDs preferred in different locations. | Yes | National Policy change and Local change |
| NE9: Water quality and environment | Requires proposals to preserve and enhance water quality | Policy generally accords with national guidance. However, the importance of Chalk Stream corridors etc and their presence in the District could and should be enhanced. In addition, further guidance is set out in our Draft Sustainability SPD and should be incorporated into Local Plan | Yes | Local change |





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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| NE10: Water conservation and wastewater infrastructure | Sets out the aims to deal with water conservation and wastewater infrastructure | Policy generally accords with national guidance. Further guidance is set out in our Draft Sustainability SPD and should be incorporated into Local Plan | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| NE11: Contaminated land | Sets out requirements for new development to demonstrate that unacceptable risks from contamination and land instability can be addressed | Policy generally accords with national guidance | No | |
| NE12: Renewable and low carbon energy development | Identifies criteria to inform the appropriate location of sources of renewable energy generation. | Policy generally accords with national guidance however requires much more emphasis. Further guidance is set out in our Draft Sustainability SPD and should be incorporated into Local Plan | Yes | Local change |






| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| HE1: Designated heritage assets | Sets out how development proposals should preserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment | Policy generally accords with national guidance. Could be expanded to make clear that great weight should be given to less than substantial harm | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| HE2: Heritage at risk | Sets out the requirements for development that affects designated heritage assets that are identified as 'at risk' | Policy generally accords with national guidance. Could be expanded to make clear that great weight should be given to less than substantial harm | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| HE3: Non-designated heritage assets | Sets out the requirements for development that affects non-designated heritage assets | Policy generally accords with national guidance. Could be expanded to refer to a future local list, which would be appended to the District Plan | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |
| HE4: Archaeology | Sets the requirement to submit a desk-based assessment and a field evaluation where sites have the potential include heritage assets with archaeological interest. | Policy generally accords with national guidance. NDMPs and/or updates to guidance may deal with these aspects and the policy may need amending or removing. | Review decision to be confirmed based on outcome of associated policy reviews | |





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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| BA2 – Land south west of Clothall Road | Local housing site allocation policy | Masterplanning in progress with no application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| BA3 - Land south of Clothall Common | Local housing site allocation policy | Masterplanning in progress with no application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented. | Yes |  |
| BA4 - Land east of Clothall Common | Local housing site allocation policy | Application under consideration (21/01882/FP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| BA5 - Land of Yeomanry Drive | Local housing site allocation policy | Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (20/02046/OP) The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | |  |




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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| BA6 - Land at Icknield Way | Local housing site allocation policy | Site complete – Policy will be deleted | No |  |
| BA7 - Land rear of Clare Crescent | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission (20/02507/FP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| BA10 - Royston Road | Employment site allocation policy | In masterplanning with no application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| BA11 - Deans Yard, South Road | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| BK2 - Land off Windmill Close | Local housing site allocation policy | Site complete – Policy will be deleted | No |  |





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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| BK3 - Land between Cambridge Road and Royston Road | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission (18/01502/OP). The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| CD1 - Land south of Cowards Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from outline planning permission (17/01464/1) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| CD2 - Codicote Garden Centre, High Street | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced (19/01448/FP) Policy will be deleted | No |  |
| CD3 - Land north of The Close | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | Yes |  |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| CD5 - Land south of Heath Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced (18/02722/FP) Policy will be deleted | No |  |
| CD6 - Land at Woodside Place, Panesbury Park Road | Gypsy and traveller site allocation | The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes | |
| GR1 - Land at Milksey Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (17/04017/FP) The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | |  |
| GA1 - Land at Roundwood | Local housing site allocation policy | Masterplanning in progress. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |




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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| HT2 - Land north of Pound Farm | Local housing site allocation policy | <p>Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (21/00434/HYA)</p> <p>The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented</p> | |  |
| HT3 - Land south of Doughtonhead Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| HT5 - Land at junction of Grays Lane and Lucas Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | <p>Application under consideration (22/00516/FP)</p> <p>The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented</p> | |  |
| HT6 - Land at junction of Grays Lane and Crows Furlong | Local housing site allocation policy | <p>Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (22/03092/FP)</p> <p>The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented</p> | |  |






| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| HT8 - Industrial Area, Cooks Way | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| HT10 - Former B&Q site | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| HT11 - Churchgate and its surrounding area | Town Centre Uses site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| HT12 - Paynes Park | Town Centre Uses site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| IC1 - Land at Duncots Close | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| IC2 - Burford Grange, Bedford Road | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced (19/01106/FP) Policy will be deleted | No |  |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| IC3 - Land at Bedford Road | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| KM3 - Land north of High Street | Local housing site allocation policy | Application under consideration (21/00541/OP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| KW1 - Land west of The Heath, Breachwood Green | Local housing site allocation policy | Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (22/01942/OP) The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | |  |
| KB1 - Land at Deards End | Local housing site allocation policy | Masterplanning in progress with no application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |







| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| KB2 - Land off Gipsy Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | Masterplanning in progress with no application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| KB4 - Land east of Knebworth | Local housing site allocation policy | Application under consideration (23/01552/OP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| LG3 - Land east of Kristiansand Way and Talbot Way | Local housing site allocation policy | Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (21/00504/OP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |





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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| LG4 - Land north of former Norton School, Norton Road | Local housing site allocation policy | Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (18/02913/OP) The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | |  |
| LG5 - Land at Birds Hill | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| LG6 - Land off Radburn Way | Local housing site allocation policy | Site partially implemented. Part of the site has permission, and the boundary is now incorrect | Yes |  |
| LG8 - Pixmore Centre, Pixmore Avenue | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| LG9 - Former Lannock School | Local housing site allocation policy | Site complete – Policy will be deleted | No |  |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| LG10 - Former playing field, Croft Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (22/01464/OP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| LG13 - Glebe Road Industrial estate | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| LG15 - Garages, Icknield Way | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| LG16 - Foundation House | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission (20/01714/FP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| LG18 - Former Depot, Icknield Way | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| LG19 - The Wynd, Openshaw Way | Town Centre Uses site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| LG20 - Gernon Road | Town Centre Uses site allocation policy | Site complete – Policy will be deleted | No |  |
| LG21 - Arena Parade | Town Centre Uses site allocation policy | The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| PR1 - Land off Templars Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced (21/02076/FP) | No |  |
| RD1 - Land at Blacksmiths Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| RY4 - Land north of Lindsay Close | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | Yes |  |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| RY7 - Anglian Business Park, Orchard Road | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission (19/01172/HYA) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| RY9 - Land north of York Way | Employment site allocation policy | Site benefits from various permissions some of which have been implemented | |  |
| RY10 - Land south of Newmarket Road | Local housing site allocation policy | The site benefits from planning permission (20/01138/RM) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| RY11 - Land at Barkway Road | Local housing site allocation policy | Development complete on part of the site Remainder of the site benefits from planning permission (21/02957/FP) The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented. | |  |

| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| RY12 - Town Hall site, Melbourn Street | Retail site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| SI1 - Land south of Waterdell Lane | Local housing site allocation policy | Site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement (20/02412/FP) The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | |  |
| SI2 - Land south of Stevenage Road | Local housing site allocation policy | Application under consideration (19/01669/FP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| TH1 - Land at Police Row | Local housing site allocation policy | Application under consideration (23/01885/FP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |

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| Local Plan Policy | Purpose | Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc) | Does the policy need reviewing? (yes/no) | Reason (National Policy change/Local change) |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| WE1 - Land off Hitchin Road | Local housing site allocation policy | No application. The policy should be retained until the whole site has been implemented | Yes |  |
| WY1 - Land south of Little Wymondley | Local housing site allocation policy | Application under consideration (22/00956/OP) The policy should be retained until the site has been implemented | |  |
| IMR1 - Five Year Housing Land Supply | Sets out the housing delivery targets over the Plan period to meet projected need to 2031 | Will need updating to account for delivery of strategic sites and updated commitment, completions and windfall. Will need updating to reflect the standard method | Yes | National Policy change and local change |
| IMR2 - Local Plan Early Review | Sets out the requirement to undertake an early review by the end of 2023 to determine whether the Plan needs updating either in part or in full | This work has been undertaken and is being presented to Cabinet at the end of 2023 | No | Policy sets framework for the review. |

4 Other matters for update

- 4.1.1 This section considers whether there are other aspects of the Local Plan in addition to the overall spatial strategy and the individual policies that need to be incorporated within any update. This consideration has emerged from the same process as already described for the individual policies.

Policy gaps

- 4.1.2 In examining the headings used for the assessment of the individual policies a number of areas have been identified where there is a potential gap in Local Plan policy that would need to be addressed.
- 4.1.3 One such area is digital infrastructure. It has already been identified that there is a need to update policy to ensure that digital infrastructure is appropriately prioritised within the general infrastructure list. The latest version of the NPPF (paragraph 114) also specifically highlights the importance of policies addressing digital infrastructure, which was not present in the 2012 version against which the existing plan was examined:

“Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).”

- 4.1.4 Another possible matter for further policy coverage is walking. There is an existing policy T1 which deals with the assessment of transport matters, but this is directed at road transportation. NHC have since adopted a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), and this needs to be incorporated into the Local Plan.

Infrastructure delivery plan

- 4.1.5 The Local Plan is supported by a background document which sets out the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including a summary Infrastructure Delivery Schedule, which identifies the key infrastructure requirements to support the level of growth identified and how they will be secured. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan should be part of any update of the Local Plan.

Monitoring framework

- 4.1.6 The Monitoring Framework in section 14 of the Local Plan will require an update, particularly where it refers to specific targets for levels of development that are expected to be superseded. Updates of relevant monitoring indicators and targets

would be included within the wider update of those respective policies, and the Monitoring Framework would simply be updated as a consequence of those changes rather than consideration in its own right.

DRAFT

5 Conclusions and next steps

- 5.1.1 In conclusion, a need has been identified to update the vast majority of the policies in the Local Plan. Therefore, a full update of the Local Plan is required, to cover those policies identified. In addition to updating the policies identified above, there is potentially a need to address identified policy gaps in terms of digital infrastructure and walking provision, amongst other policy areas, either as new policies or by amending existing policies.
- 5.1.2 Furthermore, the overall spatial strategy will also need to be updated in particular to amend references to possible developments in neighbouring authorities to reflect the latest position in those authorities' plans.
- 5.1.3 Finally, the potential changes in needs for development, in particular for housing development, will place demands on the need for infrastructure. There will need to be a significant enhancement to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to ensure that the level of development proposed is supported by the essential infrastructure, delivered at the right time.

PAS LOCAL PLAN ROUTE MAPPER TOOLKIT PART 1: LOCAL PLAN REVIEW ASSESSMENT

| | Matters to consider | Agree / Disagree | Extent to which the local plan meets this requirement |
|-----|--|------------------|--|
| A | PLAN REVIEW FACTORS | | |
| A1. | The plan policies still reflect current national planning policy requirements. | Disagree | <p>The adopted plan was prepared and examined against the 2012 version of the NPPF; submission in 2017 pre-dated publication of current NPPF, PPG updates and NDG / NMDC (albeit some principles are reflected). Although the broad direction of national policy remains similar, we need to demonstrate that policies have been considered against the latest version of the NPPF.</p> <p>Under the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act, the Government is expected to publish nationally-set Development Management policies which should then not be repeated in Local Plans.</p> |
| A2. | There has not been a <u>significant</u> change in local housing need numbers from that specified in your plan (accepting there will be some degree of flux). | Disagree | <p>The current plan contains a locally derived and objectively assessed need as opposed to Local Housing Need.</p> <p>There is some similarity in the figures particularly in latter years of the plan.</p> <p>Plan and associated housing targets currently have ~7.5 years left to run compared to NPPF advice of 10-15 year headroom.</p> |
| A3. | You have a 5-year supply of housing land | Disagree | <p>The Plan was considered 'recently adopted' until 31 October 2023. The protection of having a 5yhls has now ended and we are now unable to demonstrate a sufficient supply beyond this date.</p> <p>The anticipated revised NPPF may remove the requirement for a 5YHLS, however, to date the revision has not been published.</p> |
| A4. | You are meeting housing delivery targets | Agree | Yes, the Council is meeting its HDT targets. The revised HDT shows 124% delivery rate. |

| | Matters to consider | Agree / Disagree | Extent to which the local plan meets this requirement |
|-----|---|--------------------|---|
| A5. | Your plan policies are on track to deliver other plan objectives including any (i) affordable housing targets including requirements for First Homes; and (ii) commercial floorspace/jobs targets over the remaining plan period. | Agree/ Disagree | <p>(i) Affordable housing targets including requirements for First Homes</p> <p>Whilst we are on track to meet affordable housing requirements through development, viability is increasingly becoming an issue and may impact upon our ability to continue to deliver at the anticipated rate. The SHMA supporting the Local Plan was completed in 2016/17 and there have been changes in affordability and the wider economy. The Plan does not contain requirements for First Homes.</p> <p>(ii) Commercial floorspace/jobs targets over the remaining plan period</p> <p>Commercial and retail requirements pre-date Covid-19 and are now unrealistic / unrepresentative.</p> |
| A6. | There have been no significant changes in economic conditions which could challenge the delivery of the Plan, including the policy requirements within it. | Disagree | <p>There have been some significant changes in economic conditions that will need to be considered.</p> <p>The Plan targets and evidence pre-date the Covid-19 pandemic. The commercial and retail strategies, in particular, are out of date on this basis.</p> <p>In addition, there have been the recent changes to the use classes order that allows for commercial premises (business and retail) to change to housing without the need for planning permission.</p> |
| A7. | There have been no significant changes affecting viability of planned development. | Disagree | <p>North Herts is still, generally speaking, a high-value and buoyant market. However, even since adoption of the Local Plan, economic circumstances have changed – we need to understand how those changes may have impacted on allocations and policy flexibility in the Local Plan.</p> |

| | Matters to consider | Agree / Disagree | Extent to which the local plan meets this requirement |
|------|--|------------------|---|
| A8. | Key site allocations are delivering, or on course to deliver, in accordance the local plan policies meaning that the delivery of the spatial strategy is not at risk. | Disagree | <p>There have been delays in the delivery of key sites. Last housing delivery information was submitted to the Examination in August 2020 and was predicated on a relatively speedy resolution. The Plan was adopted more than two years later (November 2022). Given that all key, strategic allocations required release from the Green Belt this has had an impact.</p> <p>Site allocations in the Local Plan are undergoing more detailed analysis for master(planning) is impacting upon dwelling and delivery estimates, identified constraints and infrastructure requirements in some cases.</p> |
| A9. | There have been no significant changes to the local environmental or heritage context which have implications for the local plan approach or policies. | Agree / Disagree | <p>No significant impacts. We have had minor Conservation Area revisions and adjustments to SSSI impact areas but not likely to substantively impact upon outcomes.</p> <p>However, SEA indicators are based on those first identified in 2005, there would be an opportunity to review and revise and possibly make these more relevant to reflect the differences that have happened environmentally and economically.</p> <p>The Environment Act has introduced new requirements in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies which should be reflected in an appropriate set of objectives, policies and allocations</p> |
| A10. | No new sites have become available since the finalisation of the adopted local plan which require the spatial strategy to be re-evaluated. | Agree | Some windfall sites have come forward but not in sufficient quantity to substantively undermine or reevaluate the strategy |
| A11. | Key planned infrastructure projects critical to plan delivery are on track and have not stalled / failed and there are no new major infrastructure programmes with implications for the growth / spatial strategy set out in the plan. | Agree/ Disagree | Government has halted the roll-out of SMART motorway expansions. A1(M) J6-8 was identified and relied upon in the examination of the Plan though HCC as highway authority have been conducting transport modelling on the assumption this scheme will not happen for some time. |

| | Matters to consider | Agree / Disagree | Extent to which the local plan meets this requirement |
|------|--|------------------|---|
| A12. | All policies in the plan are achievable and effective including for the purpose of decision-making. | Disagree | <p>There have not been any major 'overturns' of policy approach at appeal.</p> <p>However, there are some issues that are arising which are not covered by policies in the Local Plan or which now 'lag behind' current thinking or legislation i.e. Climate change emergency, Biodiversity Net Gain etc. An update would benefit the effectiveness of these policies.</p> |
| A13. | There are no recent or forthcoming changes to another authority's development plan or planning context which would have a material impact on your plan / planning context for the area covered by your local plan. | Disagree | <p>Key neighbours' Plans are due for review in a similar timescale including Luton, Central Bedfordshire and Stevenage.</p> <p>These are presently at an early stage of consideration and have not identified significant issues yet but Stevenage and Luton in particular are known to be constrained authorities and required the assistance of North Hertfordshire to meet development needs in the last round of plan-making.</p> |
| A14. | There are no local political changes or a revised / new corporate strategy which would require a change to the approach set out in the current plan. | Disagree | <p>The Council has declared a Climate Change Emergency (2019) and an Ecological Emergency (2023). Our Council Plan and Climate Change Strategy were both update in 2022.</p> <p>More broadly the Covid-19 pandemic and recent policy changes have placed an increased emphasis on health & wellbeing, active travel, access to green space and the role of the planning system in facilitating these.</p> |

| | ASSESSING WHETHER OR NOT TO UPDATE YOUR PLAN POLICIES | YES/NO (please indicate below) | |
|------|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| A15. | You AGREE with <u>all</u> of the statements above | No | |
| A16. | You DISAGREE with one or more of the statements above and the issue can be addressed by an update of local plan policies | Yes | |
| A17. | <p><u>Decision:</u> Update plan policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the environmental context including the Council's declaration of climate emergency and the requirement for biodiversity net gain. • A number of the development management policies will also need clarification and updating to reflect changes in national policy/local changes, including the requirement to draw up design codes and guidance. • The need to maximise opportunities for jobs growth and to take account of changing economic circumstances. • The ongoing requirement to address affordable housing need. • The potential requirement to identify new sites for development to ensure that the Council can demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. | | |

| | B. POLICY UPDATE FACTORS | YES/NO (please indicate below) | Provide details explaining your answer in the context of your plan / local authority area |
|----|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| B1 | Your policies update is likely to lead to a material change in the housing requirement which in turn has implications for other plan requirements / the overall evidence base. | Yes | Linked as much to the need to extend time horizon of plan as to the numbers themselves. |
| B2 | The growth strategy and / or spatial distribution of growth set out in the current plan is not fit for purpose and your policies update is likely to involve a change to this. | Yes | Commercial policies pre-date Covid-19. |
| B3 | Your policies update is likely to affect more than a single strategic site or one or more strategic policies that will have consequential impacts on other policies of the plan. | Yes | Plan needs to be reconciled against, in particular, Climate Change emergency as well as other policy priorities and statutory obligations that have developed since current plan was written. |
| | | | You are likely to need to undertake a full update of your spatial strategy and strategic policies (and potentially non-strategic policies). Use your responses above to complete Section B4. |
| B4 | <p><u>Decision:</u> Full Update of Plan Policies</p> <p>A full update will also allow the Council to give greater emphasis to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to design quality.</p> <p>It is recommended that decisions on the final scope of the review and its associated timetable should be made when the implications of the proposed changes to the NPPF are better understood, and secondary legislation and guidance accompanying the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act has been approved.</p> | | |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 9 January 2024

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: 2024 – 2028 Marketing and Communications Strategy

REPORT OF: Service Director, Place

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Leader of the Council, Elizabeth Dennis

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To outline the Council's proposed approach to Marketing and Communications for the five-year period from 2024 – 2028.
- 2.2. To inform our residents on how we will communicate with them in the future.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Cabinet approves the 2024 - 2028 Marketing and Communications Strategy.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 With residents facing a cost-of-living crisis and council budgets being tightened further, it has never been more important for councils to communicate effectively with their audiences.
- 3.2 Effective communication is critical as it has the power to engage communities, challenge misconceptions, build trust and confidence in the council and through that, strengthen relationships with residents, stakeholders, and staff.
- 3.3 Although communications help to tell the story of North Herts Council (and improve resident perceptions of the council), marketing is needed to promote and raise awareness of our vision, priorities, and themes, to ensure that the right people, get the right message, at the right time through their preferred channel of choice.
- 3.4 It is therefore recommended, that the 2024 - 2028 strategy is a Marketing and Communications Strategy.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. A purely Communications-based strategy was initially considered, however, one of the key learnings since the adoption of the 2019 – 2023 Communications Strategy is that where Marketing has been used to promote our news, event or initiative, it has driven greater engagement.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. A draft of the 2024 – 2028 Marketing and Communications strategy was taken to the internal, informal Political Liaison Board of the Executive and the Leadership team on 5 December 2023 where it was recommended that Cabinet approves the 2024 - 2028 Marketing and Communications Strategy. The Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council have also been consulted on this strategy.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 13 October 2023.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The last Communications Strategy was approved in 2019, just before COVID-19. The pandemic meant that the Communications team had no choice but to switch their focuses from the newly approved strategy to predominantly communicating National COVID-19 messages from Spring 2020 to Spring 2022. As the restrictions of the pandemic lifted, the team were able to execute some of the key elements of the 2019 – 2023 Communications Strategy, namely:

- **Promotion of key projects/initiatives**, including the Churchgate redevelopment and the North Herts Place Narrative.
- **Developing our Filming offer**, welcoming several large productions and securing support from FAME Pro (a free film permit management service for UK councils) to widen our reach.
- **Delivering positive and engaging campaigns** – including Ease the Squeeze (our cost-of-living campaign) and the 2022 Outdoor pool extensions.
- **Digital First** – we've increased our social media followers, e: news readership and partnered with Zencity to enhance resident engagement.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The changing landscape

- 8.1.1 Communication is changing fast and as we move from a historic 'broadcaster' role that fixes problems, to a 'relationship-builder' that pre-empts problems and helps create solutions, we will need to embrace new technology and channels and the opportunities they provide us to reach our residents. This will not only be the responsibility of the Communications team but also the wider council, as ultimately, good communication is the responsibility of all officers and members.
- 8.1.2 This strategy builds on North Herts Council's current communication successes and includes learnings from other Local Authorities and the wider Marketing and Communications landscape. It sets out how we will communicate with our audiences and plan our marketing and communication activities for the next five years.

8.2 Purpose

- 8.2.1 The main purpose of the 2024 - 2028 Marketing and Communications strategy is to support the delivery of the North Herts Council's 2022 - 2027 Council Plan and bring our vision, strategic priorities, and themes to life.

8.3 Future strategic approach

- 8.3.1 People First - a key priority so let's ensure our communications constantly highlight that we do put people first by sharing visuals of people in the district and celebrate their successes.
- 8.3.2 Campaign-led – results show that campaigns drive engagement, so a campaign-led approach is recommended wherever possible.
- 8.3.3 Cross-channel – use the whole mix of channels to ensure that our key messages reach all audiences on the platform they prefer.
- 8.3.4 Digital First - maintain this element of our cross-channel approach and ensure we 1) exploit the opportunities digital channels provide us with and 2) make it easier for people to share their views at a time that suits them.

8.4 The 2024 - 2028 Marketing and Communications Strategy

- 8.4.1 Please refer to Appendix A for the detailed strategy document.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet TOR at 5.7.1 provides that the Cabinet will exercise the following function: "To prepare and agree to implement policies and strategies other than those reserved to Council."
- 9.2 The Local Government Act 1986 contained the statutory power for the Secretary of State to issue a Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity which all Local Authorities are required to have regard to. This was further strengthened by the insertion of a new section 4A of the 1986 Act by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 which grants the Secretary of State the power to direct specific authorities to comply with requirements of the Code.
- 9.3 The current Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity sets out guidance on the content, style, distribution, and cost of local authority publicity. Seven principles underpin the guidance which requires all local authority publicity to be lawful, cost effective, objective, even handed, appropriate, to have regard to equality and diversity and to be issued with care during periods of heightened sensitivity. The Council follows the Recommended Code of Practice for Local Authority Publicity.
- 9.4 It is important to note that the Local Government Act 1986 specifically prohibits Local Authorities publishing any material which appears to be intended to affect public support for any particular political party.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. The cost of the activities outlined in the marketing and communications strategy will be funded from the existing budget provision.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2 A lack of timely forewarning of potentially contentious issues by council teams may result in reputational risk to the council were the communications team placed in a position where they are unable to provide proactive, accurate and transparent marketing and communications. Processes have been put in place by the Communications team since the last strategy to lower the risk of this occurring in the future.
- 11.3 A lack of communications promoting our Corporate themes and priorities may result in reputational risk should residents not be fully aware of the variety of local services that their council tax is used to provide. This strategy clearly states that more will be done to communicate two of our four Corporate themes: Our Services and Our Economy; and that future campaigns/activity must be sense-checked against the council's three main priorities.

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 While females typically engage more than males, whatever the channel used, our channels are open to everyone, and all marketing and communication is widespread so there is a channel suitable for all to keep up to date with the Council's activities. Should future resources allow, consideration could be given to trialling targeting male residents specifically to see if that increases engagement levels.

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 the 2024 – 2028 Marketing and Communications strategy.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no direct Human Resource implications associated with the 2024 – 2028 Marketing and Communications strategy. Future plans outlined in the strategy for internal

communications will overlap with Human Resources focuses, so it is recommended both teams work together on this.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix A, North Herts Council 2024 – 2028 Marketing and Communications Strategy.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 17.1 Christine Crofts, Communications Manager, christine.crofts@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474544
- 17.2 Sarah Kingsley, Service Director: Place, sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474552.
- 17.3 Isabelle Alajooz, Acting Legal Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer: Legal Services, Isabelle.Alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474346
- 17.4 Ian Couper, Service Director: Resources, ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474243
- 17.5 Ellie Hollingsworth, Policy & Strategy Trainee Officer, ellie.hollingsworth@north-herts.gov.uk , 01462 474220
- 17.6 Reuben Ayavoo, Policy and Communities Manager, reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474212.
- 17.7 Rebecca Webb, HR Services Manager, rebecca.webb@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474481
- 17.8 Rizwan Sarwar, Procurement Officer, rizwan.sarwar@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474392

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North Herts Council Marketing and Communications Strategy, 2024 - 2028

1.0 Introduction

With residents facing a cost-of-living crisis and council budgets being tightened further, it has never been more important for councils to communicate effectively with their audiences. Effective communication is critical as it has the power to engage communities, challenge misconceptions, build trust and confidence in the council and through that, strengthen relationships with residents, stakeholders and staff. The Communications team is a vital function of North Herts Council as they support members, officers and partners convey the council's vision, strategic priorities and themes and ensure the council is communicating in one clear and consistent voice.

Although communications help to tell the story of North Herts Council (and improve resident perceptions of the council), marketing is needed to promote and raise awareness of our vision, priorities and themes, to ensure that the right people, get the right message, at the right time through their preferred channel of choice. This was evident in the 2022 Outdoor Pools marketing campaign which helped drive a 53% increase in season ticket sales at Letchworth Outdoor pool and helped drive a 54% increase in total usage figures across both outdoor pools (2022 Vs 2021). It is therefore recommended, that the 2024 - 2028 strategy is a Marketing and Communications Strategy.

Communication is changing fast and as we move from a historic 'broadcaster' role that fixes problems, to a 'relationship-builder' that pre-empts problems and helps create solutions, we will need to embrace new technology and channels and the opportunities they provide us to reach our residents. This will not only be the responsibility of the Communications team but also the wider council, as ultimately, good communication is the responsibility of all officers and members.

This strategy builds on North Herts Council's current communication successes and includes learnings from other Local Authorities and the wider Marketing and Communications landscape. It sets out how we will communicate with our audiences and plan our marketing and communication activities for the next four years.

The main purpose of the 2024 - 2028 Marketing and Communications strategy is to support the delivery of the North Herts Council's 2022 - 2027 Council Plan and bring our vision, strategic priorities, and themes to life.

2.0 Current situation – where are we now?

Our last Communications Strategy was approved in 2019, just before COVID-19. The pandemic meant that the Communications team had no choice but to switch their focuses from the newly approved strategy to predominantly communicating National COVID-19 messages from Spring 2020 to Spring 2022. As the National lockdown lifted, the team were able to execute some of the key elements of the 2019 – 2023 Communications Strategy, namely:

- **Promotion of key projects/initiatives** – including Climate initiatives, the Churchgate redevelopment, the North Herts Place Narrative and our Local Plan.
- **Developing our Filming offer** – we have welcomed productions from Dr Foster, My Policeman and Tell Me Everything and are now being supported by FAMEPro (a free film permits management service for UK councils) to widen our reach.

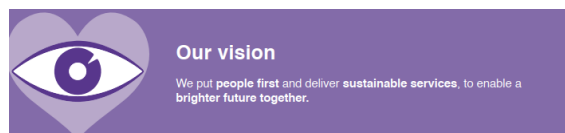
- **Delivering positive and engaging campaigns** – Ease the Squeeze, Outdoor pool extensions, driving footfall & ticket sales at HTH and NHM.
- **Digital First** – we've increased our social media followers, e: news readership and partnered with Zencity to enhance our resident engagement and develop our consultation offer.

| | |
|---|--|
| Strengths – what do we do well? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns – our 2023 Recruitment refresh saw a 14% increase in jobs page views (3 months post Vs prior). • Promoting two of our four Corporate themes: Our Places and our Environment. • Collaborative working – with teams from across the council and with Cabinet members. • Creativity – in terms of branding, campaign ideas, and look & feel. | Weaknesses – areas to improve. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of comms promoting two of our four Corporate themes: Our Services and Our Economy. • Strategic comms and sense-checking our campaigns/activity against our three priorities. • Lack of proactiveness pitching ideas/positive news stories to the media. • Internal promotion of key calendar dates to staff. |
| Opportunities - to enhance our Comms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of film/video – to create 'thumb-stopping' (i.e. attention-grabbing) content which talks directly to residents and humanises the council. • Briefing 'in the field'/on reception staff on our priorities and current campaigns so that they become our advocates. • Greater collaborative working with District Partners i.e., Place Narrative is a good example of this. • Exploring new ways to reach residents (e.g., WhatsApp Channels) as reliance on traditional media reduces. | Threats – detrimental to our Comms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An over-reliance on digital channels – the whole mix should be used wherever possible. • Budget – increased use of film/video requires the right equipment to do the best job possible. • Lack of forewarning of potentially contentious issues by council teams to enable proactive comms to be prepared, leaving us on the back foot. • Over-promotion of certain areas in the district rather than a 'whole district' approach. |

3.0 Aims and Objectives – what are our focuses?

3.1 Corporate

Vision:



Priorities:



Strategic themes:



3.2 Marketing and Communications

Aims:

- **INFORM** – to bring our services and support to life; help residents understand who we are and what we do; show value for money.
- **INSPIRE** – people to take part/join in by sharing real-life examples of district successes. Work in partnership for a brighter future together and create Civic pride.
- **INVOLVE** – residents in our decision-making by giving them as many opportunities as possible to have their say and show we have listened by sharing outcomes.
- **INTERACT** – get the conversation going. Have two-way conversations whether in-person (e.g., Ward Walks) or online (e.g., Engage hubs). Give a face to the Council and show we are approachable/do listen.

Principles:

- Clear and consistent
- Open and transparent
- Targeted, relevant and timely
- Collaborative
- Accessible
- Cross-channel
- Cost-effective
- In line with corporate style and identity guidelines

Strategic approach:

- **People First** - a key priority so let's ensure our comms constantly highlight that we do put people first by sharing photo/film of people in the district and celebrate their successes.
- **Campaign-led** – results show that campaigns drive engagement, so a campaign-led approach is recommended wherever possible.
- **Cross-channel** – use the whole mix of channels to ensure that our key messages reach all audiences on the platform they prefer.
- **Digital First** - maintain this element of our cross-channel approach and ensure we 1) exploit the opportunities digital channels provide us with and 2) make it easier for people to share their views at a time that suits them.

3.3 Measurables:

Deliver well-planned, engaging, and measurable campaigns which are aligned to our Corporate vision, priorities and themes and which:

- Improve resident satisfaction levels with the way we run things (43% Source: March to June Community survey results).
- Improve our 'involves, consults and engages with the community' score (21% Source: March to June 2023 Community survey results).
- Maintain a balanced/positive press score for our press, broadcast and digital media coverage (99% Source Q3 Media Monitoring report).
- Social media:
 - Increase our Facebook fans by 10% YOY.
 - Increase our LinkedIn followers by 5% YOY.
 - Increase our Instagram followers by 10% YOY.
 - Increase our X (formerly Twitter) followers by 1% YOY.
- Digital:
 - Increase our e: news subscribers by 5%.
 - Increase our e: news open rate by 2%.
 - Increase our website sessions by 5%
 - Increase our website page views by 5%

Internal:

- Increase our Insight page views by 2%.
- Maintain a minimum of a third of staff attending our staff briefings.
- Maintain a minimum of 50% attendance at SMG meetings.

4.0 Audiences – who are we talking to?



Audience type

| External – inform and engage. | Internal – inform & involve. |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Businesses/workers • Visitors • Media – local, regional, national and trade. • Community groups - including charities and voluntary organisations. • District Partners – including BIDs, Letchworth Heritage Foundation, Police, Fire & Rescue, Housing associations, County & District Councils. • Stakeholders – including Town and Parish Councils, MPs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council staff • Councillors • Contractors/Suppliers |

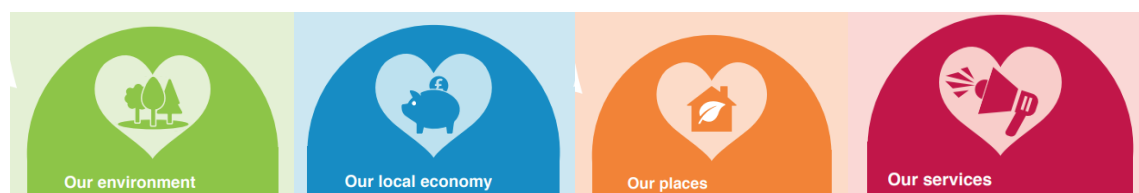
Audience detail

The North Hertfordshire population is 51% women and 49% men, with 35% of the population 35 – 59 years of age.

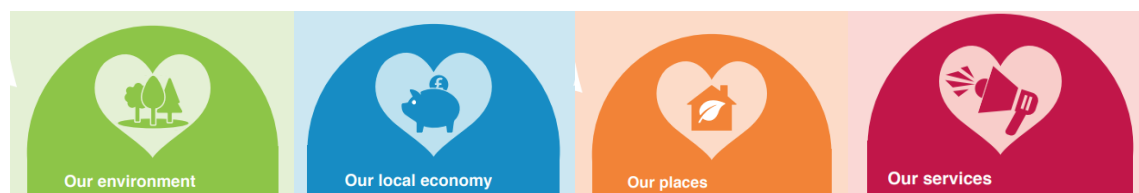
From the audience information we can access across our digital channels, we are currently talking to a majority female audience, aged 35 – 54 years of age.

5.0 Key messages - what are we promoting?

- Clear and consistent messaging will be used to promote our Corporate priorities (which will be included in an updated version of our Corporate Style Guide).
- And our Corporate themes:



- All campaigns will be sense-checked to ensure they align/convey the above before creation begins. Taking our new-launched Ward Walks as an example:



| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| √ | √ | √ | √ | WARD WALKS |
|---|---|---|---|-------------------|

- We will ensure that our Corporate Brand Identity is always reflected, with a friendly, supportive, expert and positive tone. Humour will be injected (where relevant) to humanise the council further.
- Visually, we will feature people wherever possible. Any graphics created will have the same look & feel as the Council Plan and use colourways from our corporate branding guidelines.
- We will continue to use key calendar dates to maximise our exposure within any national campaigns being run and discussed/debated in the public arena.

6.0 Channels - how we're promoting our key messages?

- Our campaigns will be multi-channel to ensure that our key messages reach all audiences on whichever platform they prefer.
- We will explore new digital channels to continue our Digital First approach and ensure our communications remain relevant.
- New news be launched at peak viewing times per channel to ensure the greatest possible engagement.
- We will use marketing to tease, launch, and repeat our campaign messaging to ensure cut-through.
- All of the above will ensure that the right people (our audiences), get the right message (re our services/priorities) at the right time (time of year, time of day) and place (channel of choice).

Current channels:

| External | Internal |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press - releases issued to Media (print, digital or radio) • Social Media (Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn). Monitor Threads too. • Website • E-newsletters • Outlook magazine • Zencity resident engagement Hubs (Climate Hive and Churchgate Conversations) • In-person • Physical i.e., our buildings, DCO reception, libraries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff (ambassadors) • Insight • SharePoint (intranet) • Staff briefings • Senior Manager meetings • Global emails |

New channels:

| External | Internal |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>WhatsApp Channels</u> – once LAs are able to access it.• LGA Case Studies – look for opportunities to be featured and seen as industry-leading.• Awards – are there awards worth applying for, where resource and relevancy allows?• Press - proactive pitching of ideas/positive news stories.• Website Search Engine Optimisation and Pay Per Click, social media targeting and sponsorship (all of which would require additional investment). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Viva Engage and Forms• TEAMS• Regular team up-skilling |

7.0 Planning and evaluation – measuring the impact of our Comms

We will continue to plan and evaluate our activity on a quarterly and annual basis using the Communications Activity Planner and Channel performance trackers, which were put in place in 2022.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 9 January 2024

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: Community Survey results (March – June 2023)

REPORT OF: Service Director, Place

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Leader of the Council, Elizabeth Dennis

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST and A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To advise Cabinet of the key findings from the Community Survey results (March – June 2023).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet comment on and note the key findings and observations from round one of the Community Survey and comment on the approach to future surveys (as detailed in section 8.5).

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that Cabinet is aware of the results of the Community Survey (our first digital residents' survey) and how they compare to the Local Government Association (LGA) June 23 Resident Satisfaction phone survey results.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. The Community Survey results report was taken to the internal, informal Political Liaison Board of the Executive and the Leadership team on 5 December 2023. The Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council have also been consulted on the report findings.

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 District Wide Surveys have been carried out every other year since 2008 and are a key tool to gauge residents' views and perceptions towards the council at a particular point in time.
- 7.2 A key focus of our 2022-27 Community Consultation Strategy is ensuring it delivers on our core priority of 'People first', by getting closer to our community and giving them opportunities to have their say on issues that are important to them. Incorporated within this, is a greater focus on digital forms of consultation, to reach a wider sample of our community and make it easier for people to share their views, at a time that suits them.
- 7.3 Taking the above into account, the decision was taken in September 2022 to move our district wide survey from a phone survey every two years, to a digital survey every six months, enabling us to hear 'of the moment' snapshot views from our residents on a more frequent basis.
- 7.4 Changing methodology from a phone survey to digital, means that previous results cannot be benchmarked and therefore the results from this first round will become our baseline for future comparisons.
- 7.5 Unlike interviewer-administered surveys (where the interviewer has time to build rapport, which research proves leads to more positive responses) moving to a digital (or self-administered mode for collecting feedback) gives no opportunity for explanation prior to residents giving their answer. Research has shown that this leads to significantly lower scores from residents. Source: Gallup; Oxford Academic; Nielsen.
- 7.6 It is important to note that the digital Community Survey is not designed to be an official consultation, but instead it captures a snapshot of resident feeling at a given point in time. The first of these surveys was carried out between March and June this year. It has fewer questions compared to a traditional phone survey (to ensure ease/speed for the user) and is weighted by fewer variables to previous phone-based surveys: area, age, gender, and ethnicity.
- 7.7 Respondent data was matched to the 2021 Census ethnicity, age and gender distribution of North Herts and rake-weighting applied to ensure no demographic group was over or underrepresented in the results.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Key findings

8.1 Highlights.

- 8.1.1 The digital survey saw a 183% increase in responses from 16-34-year-olds (113 people vs 40 people) and an increase of 88% of responses from 35-54 -year-olds (272 vs 145) compared to the 2022 phone survey.

8.1.2 Our residents continue to be satisfied with North Herts as place to live (74%). This is 1% higher than the Local Government Association (LGA) June 23 Resident Satisfaction Phone Survey average of 73%, and Hitchin residents' satisfaction levels were over 80%.

8.1.3 Two thirds, or 67% of residents would recommend North Herts as a place to live.

8.1.4 40% of those surveyed trust North Herts Council. This is 5% higher than trust levels in the UK Government (ONS 2022 'Trust in government' report).

8.2 Satisfaction with the way we run things and our services.

8.2.1 43% of those residents surveyed are satisfied with the way North Herts Council runs things. This is 17% lower than the LGA June 23 Resident Satisfaction Phone Survey results (60%). In addition, only a quarter of those surveyed feel we offer value for money (vs 42% in the LGA Survey).

8.2.2 A review of the open-ended responses for those residents who are dissatisfied with how we run things, and also have a low value for money perception, highlights that the biggest improvement that they would like to see is the maintenance of our roads, particularly potholes. Parking fees are the next biggest area of feedback, as some residents feel they are too high, and some feel they should be free at weekend/lunchtimes to attract footfall to town centres.

8.2.3 Resident satisfaction with waste collection (62%) and street cleaning (48%) services are considerably lower than the corresponding LGA survey results (79% and 64% respectively) and feature heavily in the 'how could the council improve the overall running of North Herts' responses. Comments include 'services need significant improvement', 'more bins/bigger bins' and 'increase street cleaning/sweeping'.

8.2.4 64% of those surveyed are satisfied with how we run North Herts parks and green spaces. This is significantly less than the LGA Survey results (80%), however it is positive to see that there are minimal 'park and green space' mentions in the open-ended 'improvement' feedback. What is mentioned is cutting grass more frequently at junctions.

8.2.5 Just under half of those residents surveyed are satisfied with our leisure facilities. Comments in the open-ended feedback include 'invest more money into leisure facilities', 'more leisure opportunities' and 'ensure they are tendered to a contractor that provides good service, clean facilities and a high level of maintenance'.

8.2.6 It is clear from the answers to the open-ended questions that residents are unclear which services/responsibilities sit with North Herts Council and which sit with Hertfordshire County Council, so an 'informing' communications piece is needed to clarify the situation moving forwards.

8.3 Informing and communicating with our residents.

8.3.1 Only 36% of residents surveyed (vs 55% in the LGA Survey) feel that we keep them informed about the services and benefits we provide. Current work on the draft 2024 - 2028 Marketing and Communications strategy has highlighted a need to communicate our services more.

8.3.2 33% of residents surveyed are aware of what their local councillor does in their local area.

8.3.3 84% felt we should listen/consult more and only 15% of respondents agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area. This is interesting, as the number of surveys/consultations shared over 2022/2023 has increased vs 2020/2021 and they have also been promoted across all our communication channels (in-person as well as digital) to ensure they reach residents through their channel of preference.

8.4 Areas of focus

8.4.1 The top three areas of improvement highlighted by responding residents are:

- **Improve our roads** (31%) – potholes (overwhelmingly) and pavement repairs/weeding & grass cutting.
- **Housing** (12%) – stop building new houses without the infrastructure to go with them; build more affordable housing and protect the greenbelt/rural areas.
- **Street cleaning** (11%) – increase the frequency; provide more bins; regular drain clearance and don't forget the villages/rural areas.

It is clear that the condition of our roads is of particular concern to residents and the open-ended feedback from residents on our roads will be shared with Hertfordshire County Council.

8.4.2 Royston residents' satisfaction levels with North Herts as a place to live (60%) and their propensity to recommend North Herts a place to live (57%) are considerably lower than both the district averages (74% & 67% respectively) and other areas. The open-ended question responses from those Royston residents who are dissatisfied, highlight the following key areas they'd like us to focus on:

- Increased frequency of street cleaning and maintenance.
- Fixing the roads, particularly potholes.
- Improving and increasing facilities, particularly with the new developments planned and with teenagers/young adults in mind.
- Reducing car park charges.

It is recommended that plans are put in place to involve, consult and engage with Royston residents with greater regularity in the future.

8.5 Future thoughts on resident surveys

8.5.1 As this is the first time North Herts Council have used a digital survey to gain feedback from our residents, there are areas of learning for us to take forwards.

8.5.2 A graphical explanation of which services/responsibilities sit with North Herts Council, and which sit with Hertfordshire County Council should be included in future rounds.

8.5.3 The 'services' question should only be answered by those who have stated they use them.

8.5.4 It is recommended that future results are not brought to Cabinet but published on our website and through other communications channels.

- 8.5.5 The discussion at Political Liaison Board considered the approach to how North Herts Council approach resident surveys in the future. This included reclarifying our objectives and whether, as the surveys are not official consultations, they could be managed in-house by the Communications team.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. If any actions are identified as a result of the findings of the Community Survey results (March to June 2023), the legal implications of those will be considered at the time.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The cost of the Community Survey has been funded from the current District Wide Survey budget.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2 Conducting the Community Survey is an important tool for gaining a snapshot of resident feeling at a given point in time. If the areas of focus identified in the survey are not seen to be acted upon, there is a risk that public satisfaction with the Council will reduce, leading to a negative impact on the Council's reputation.

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. The returned sample of those surveyed was matched to the 2021 Census ethnicity, age and gender distribution of North Herts and rake-weighting applied to ensure no demographic group was over or underrepresented in the results. This ensured that the results are broadly representative of the population of North Hertfordshire.

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 the findings of the Community Survey results (March to June 2023).

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no known Human Resource impacts or requirements that apply to the findings of the Community Survey results (March to June 2023).

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix A – Zencity Community Survey results report.

- 16.2 Appendix B – LGA results comparison.

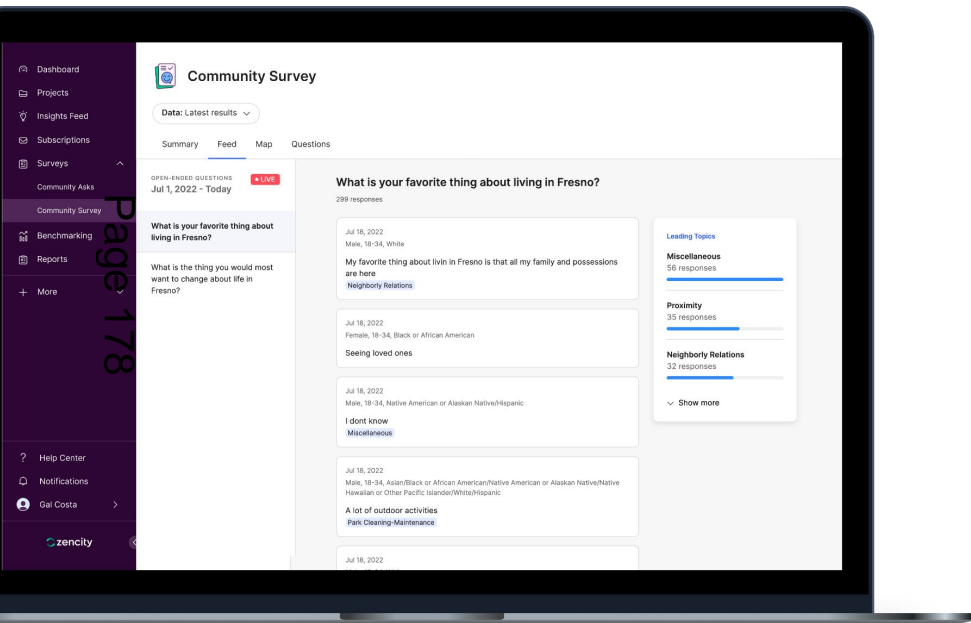
17. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 17.1 Christine Crofts, Communications Manager, christine.crofts@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474544.
- 17.2 Sarah Kingsley, Service Director: Place, sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474552.
- 17.3 Isabelle Alajooz, Acting Legal Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer: Legal Services, Isabelle.Alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474346.
- 17.4 Ian Couper, Service Director: Resources, ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474243.
- 17.5 Ellie Hollingsworth, Policy & Strategy Trainee Officer, ellie.hollingsworth@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474220.
- 17.6 Reuben Ayavoo, Policy and Communities Manager, reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474212.
- 17.7 Rebecca Webb, HR Services Manager, rebecca.webb@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474481
- 17.8 Rizwan Sarwar, Procurement Officer, rizwan.sarwar@north-herts.gov.uk, 01462 474392



North Herts Council Community Survey

March - June 2023



The Zencity Community Survey

A recurring survey, the Zencity Community Survey measures how satisfied residents are with their community and with local government-provided services and allows officials to compare these scores over time and against a cohort of similar communities.



Survey Methodology

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715 respondents were digitally recruited (e.g. over social media, mobile apps, local websites, and survey panels) between March - June, 2023. An additional 893 responses were collected through the council's distribution efforts, which were used to supplement the Zencity-recruited responses for free-text questions. Zencity built a representative sample by matching respondent data to the 2021 Census's ethnicity, age, and gender distributions in North Herts. Finally, rake-weighting was applied as a statistical safeguard to balance out any remaining discrepancies in distribution, so no demographic group is overrepresented or underrepresented in the final score.

For each question, percentages shown indicate the percent of respondents who responded positively (4 or 5). The bars indicate the proportion of respondents who were positive, neutral (3), or negative (1 or 2).

Sample Details

North Herts
March - June 2023

Powered by
 Zencity

4

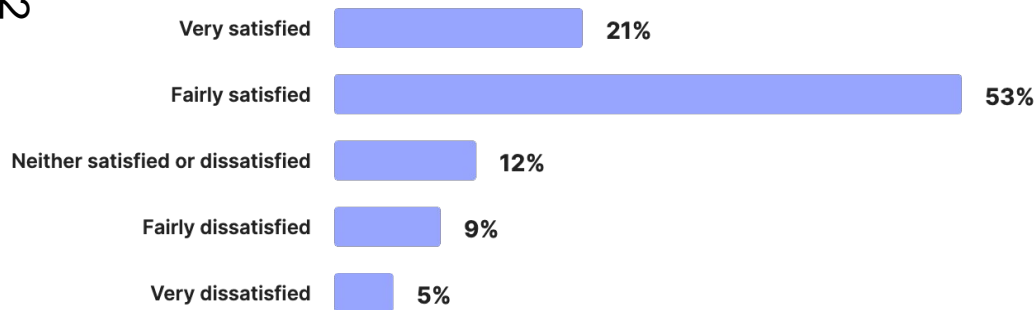
Page 180

| Area | Number of responses (unweighted) |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Baldock and District | 68 |
| Hitchin | 192 |
| Letchworth | 154 |
| Royston | 206 |
| Southern Rural | 95 |

| Group | Number of responses (unweighted) | Distribution target (based on census) |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 16-34 | 113 | 100 |
| 35-54 | 272 | 140 |
| 55+ | 312 | 160 |
| Female | 447 | 208 |
| Male | 250 | 191 |
| White | 627 | 373 |
| Other ethnic groups | 34 | 27 |

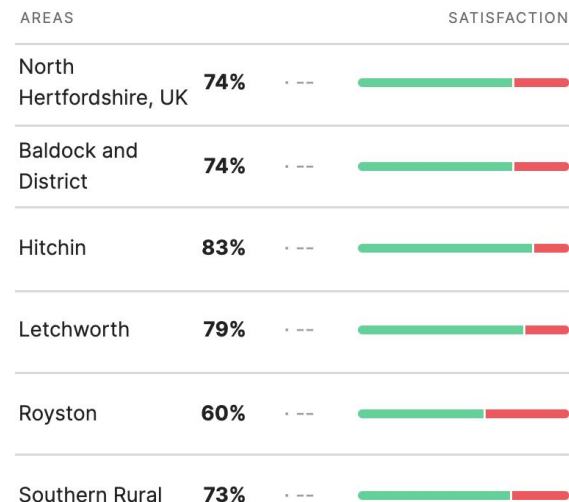
Overall Satisfaction

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with North Herts as a place to live?



74%

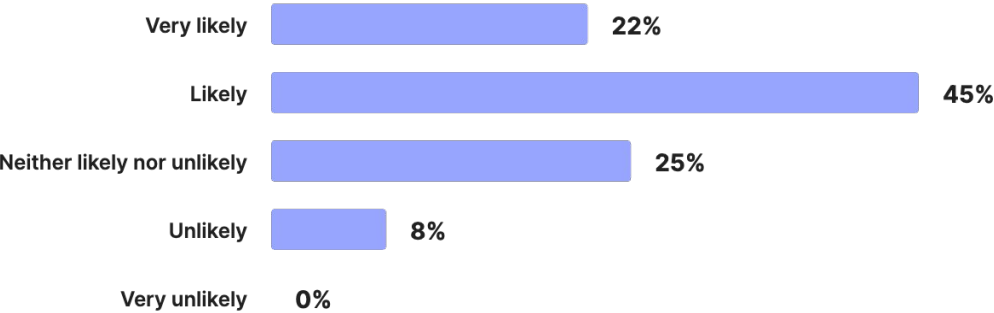
of residents are satisfied with North Herts as a place to live



How likely are you to recommend North Herts as a place to live?

67%
of residents would
recommend North Herts as a
place to live

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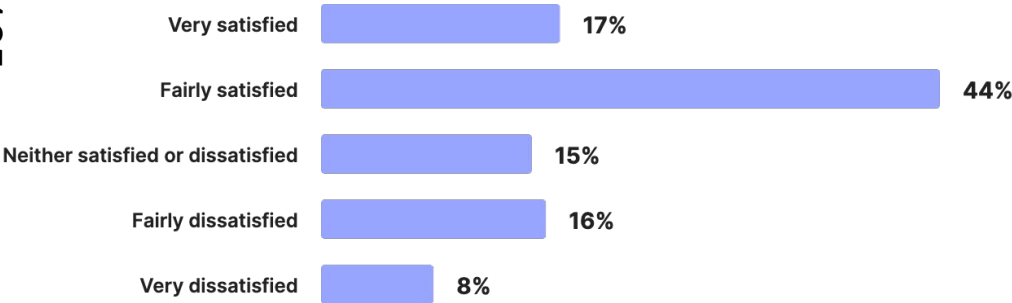


| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|--|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 67% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Baldock and District | 63% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Hitchin | 73% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Letchworth | 71% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Royston | 57% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Southern Rural | 68% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |

Satisfaction with Council Services

We'd like to know how satisfied you are with the current services provided by North Herts Council:
Waste and recycling collection

Page 185

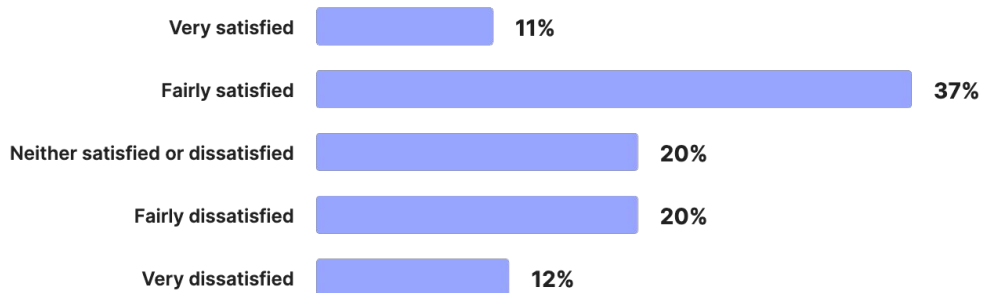


Please note, the sum of percentages may seem slightly different to what is shown in the graph due to the impact of rounding the percentages.

62%
of residents are satisfied with the waste and recycling collection

| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|--|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 62% | | |
| Baldock and District | 71% | | |
| Hitchin | 65% | | |
| Letchworth | 62% | | |
| Royston | 56% | | |
| Southern Rural | 60% | | |

We'd like to know how satisfied you are with the current services provided by North Herts Council: Street cleaning



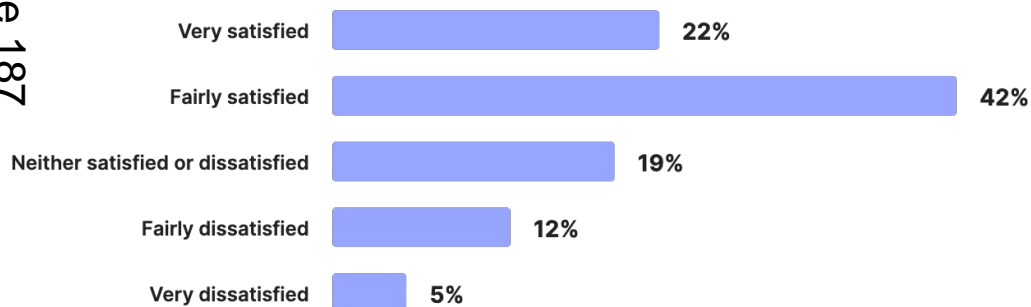
48%

of residents are satisfied with the street cleaning

| AREAS | | SATISFACTION |
|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 48% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Baldock and District | 65% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Hitchin | 50% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Letchworth | 47% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Royston | 41% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Southern Rural | 45% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |

We'd like to know how satisfied you are with the current services provided by North Herts Council: Parks and green spaces

Page 187

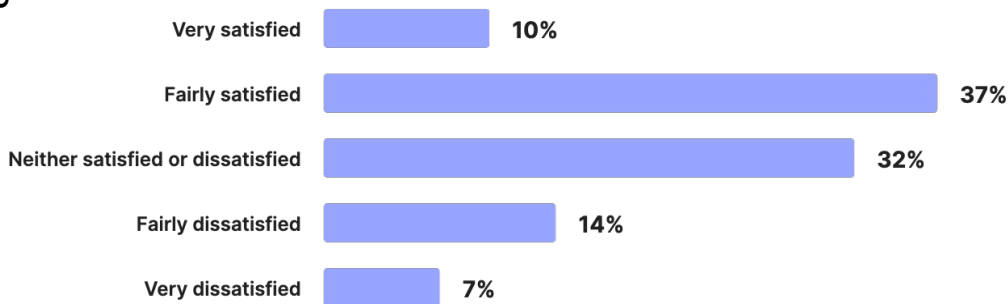


64%

of residents are satisfied with the parks and green spaces

| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|------------------------|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 64% | · · · | <div><div></div></div> |
| Baldock and District | 62% | · · · | <div><div></div></div> |
| Hitchin | 62% | · · · | <div><div></div></div> |
| Letchworth | 72% | · · · | <div><div></div></div> |
| Royston | 60% | · · · | <div><div></div></div> |
| Southern Rural | 65% | · · · | <div><div></div></div> |

We'd like to know how satisfied you are with the current services provided by North Herts Council: Leisure facilities



47%

of residents are satisfied with the leisure facilities

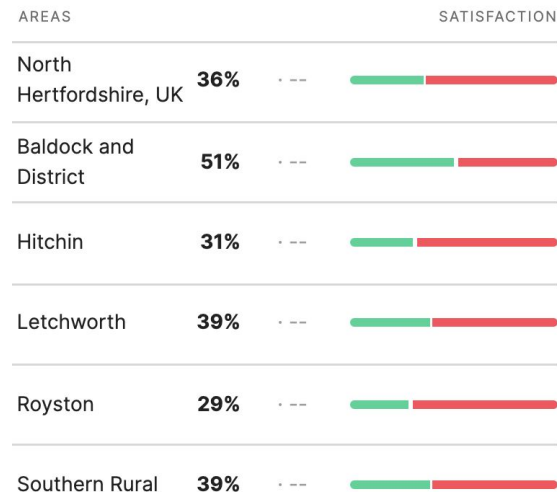
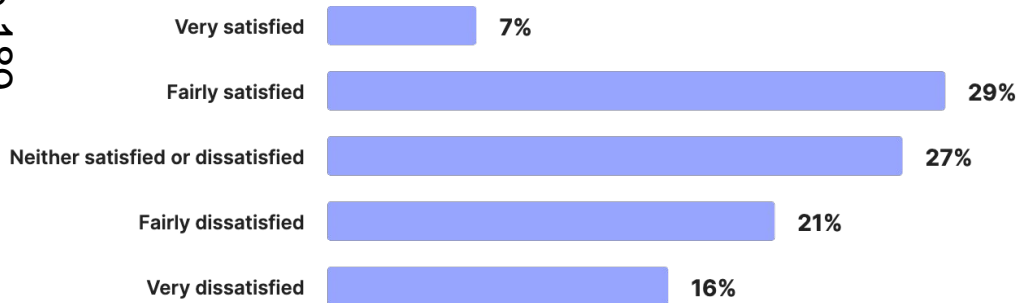
| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 47% | - - - | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Baldock and District | 49% | - - - | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Hitchin | 50% | - - - | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Letchworth | 54% | - - - | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Royston | 39% | - - - | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |
| Southern Rural | 47% | - - - | <div><div></div><div></div></div> |

We'd like to know how satisfied you are with the
current services provided by North Herts Council:

Car parks

36%

of residents are satisfied with
the car parks

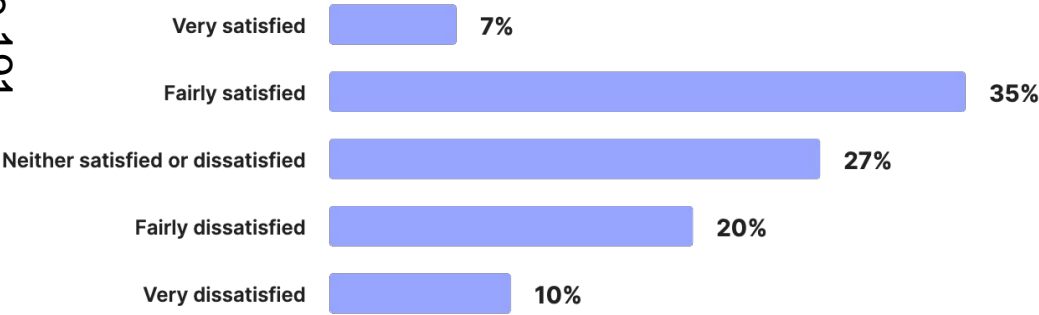


Satisfaction With North Herts Council

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way North Herts Council runs things?

43%
of residents are satisfied with the way North Herts Council runs things

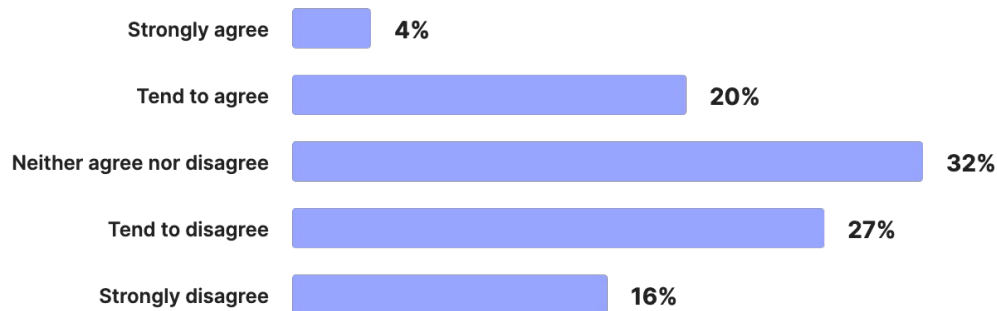
Page 191



Please note, the sum of percentages may seem slightly different to what is shown in the graph due to the impact of rounding the percentages.

| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|--|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 43% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Baldock and District | 58% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Hitchin | 44% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Letchworth | 44% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Royston | 31% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |
| Southern Rural | 50% | <div><div></div><div></div></div> | |

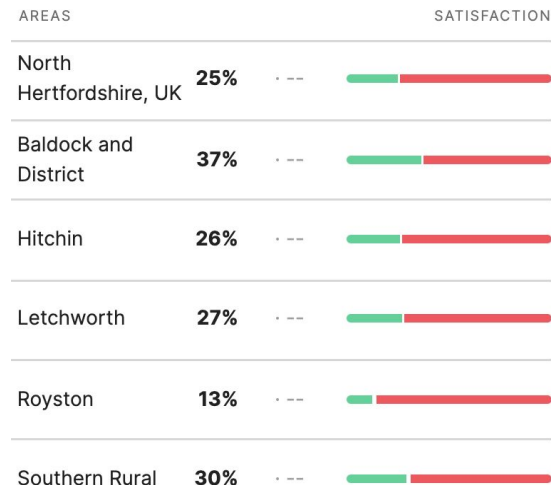
To what extent do you agree or disagree that North Herts Council provides value for money?



Please note, the sum of percentages may seem slightly different to what is shown in the graph due to the impact of rounding the percentages.

25%

of residents agree that North Herts Council provides value for money

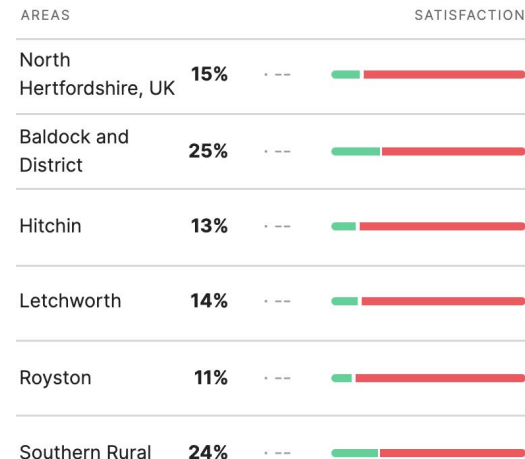
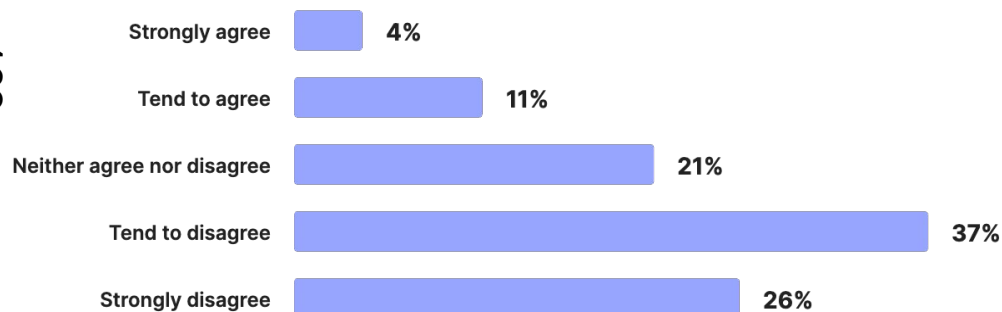


Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

15%

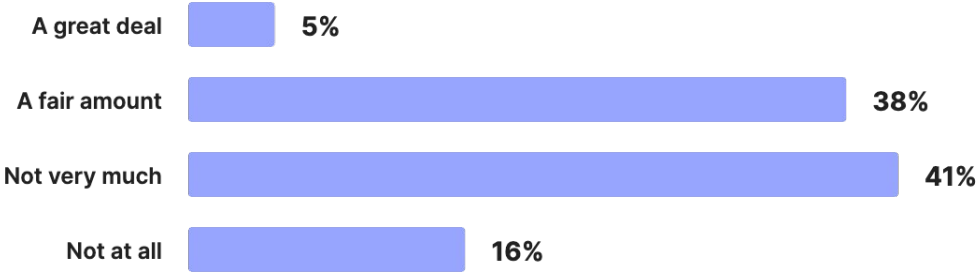
of residents agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area

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How much do you trust North Herts Council?

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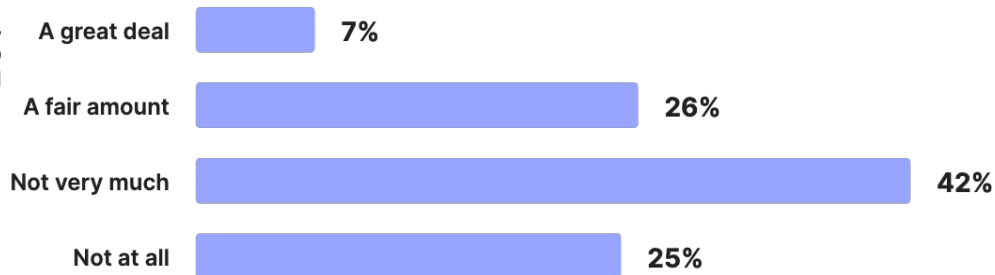
43%

of residents trust North Herts Council

| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|--|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 43% | | |
| Baldock and District | 54% | | |
| Hitchin | 46% | | |
| Letchworth | 43% | | |
| Royston | 33% | | |
| Southern Rural | 46% | | |

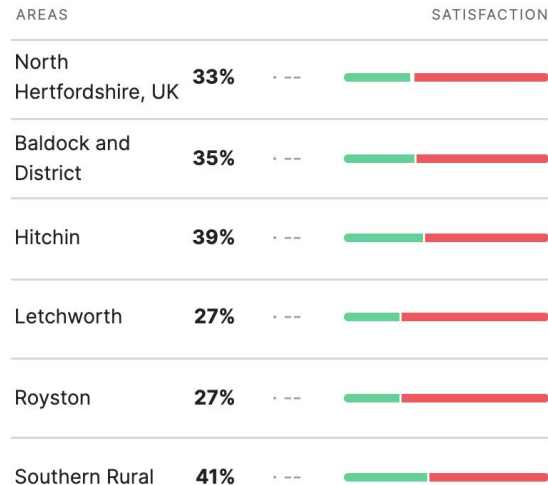
To what extent are you aware of what your local councillor does in your local area?

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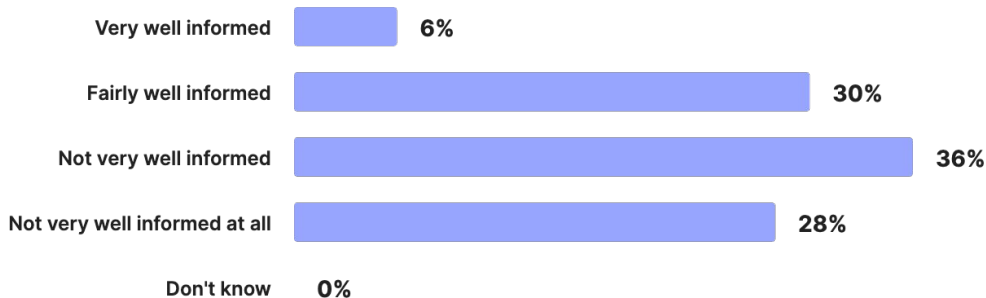


33%

of residents feel aware of what their local councillor does in their local area



Overall, how well-informed do you think North Herts Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?



36%

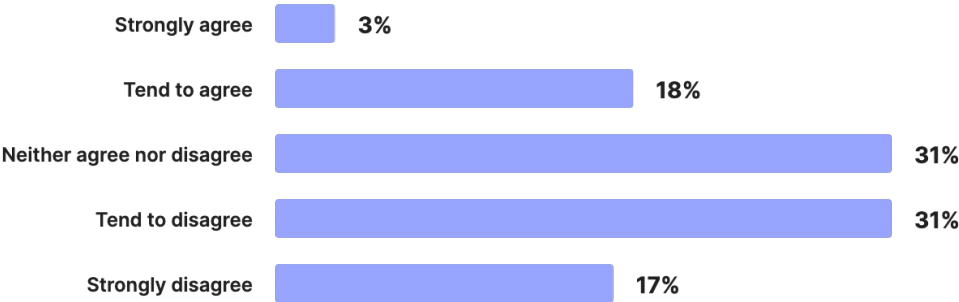
of residents think North Herts Council keeps residents well-informed about the services and benefits it provides

| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|-------------|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 36% | · · · | <div></div> |
| Baldock and District | 41% | · · · | <div></div> |
| Hitchin | 40% | · · · | <div></div> |
| Letchworth | 37% | · · · | <div></div> |
| Royston | 23% | · · · | <div></div> |
| Southern Rural | 48% | · · · | <div></div> |

Attitudes Towards North Herts Council

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North Herts Council involves, consults and engages with the local community

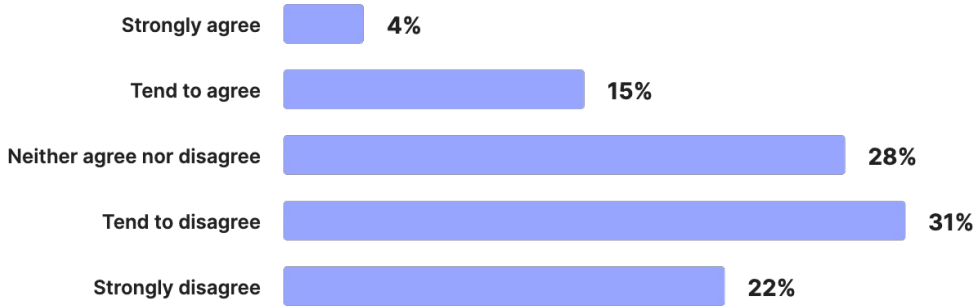


21%

of residents agree that North Herts Council involves, consults and engages with the local community

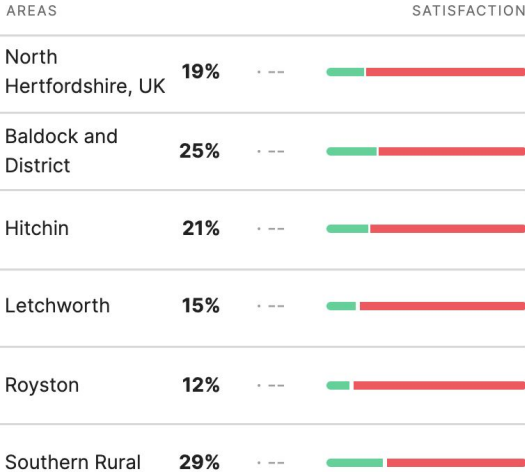
| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|--|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 21% | | |
| Baldock and District | 32% | | |
| Hitchin | 23% | | |
| Letchworth | 16% | | |
| Royston | 11% | | |
| Southern Rural | 32% | | |

North Herts Council makes an effort to find out what people want



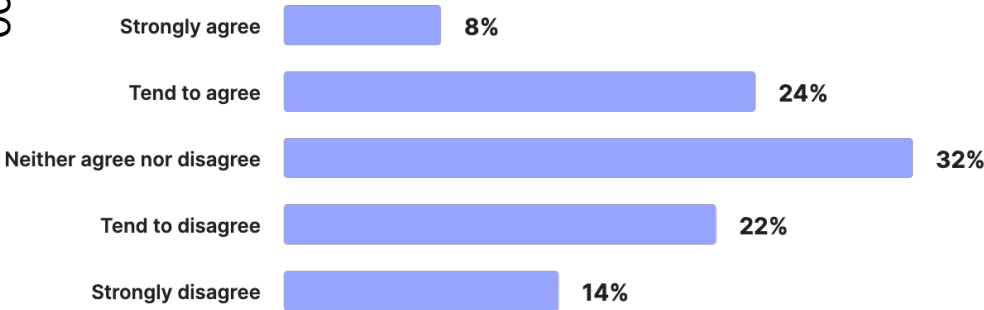
19%

of residents agree that North Herts Council makes an effort to find out what people want



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North Herts Council is working to make the area cleaner and greener



Please note, the sum of percentages may seem slightly different to what is shown in the graph due to the impact of rounding the percentages.

31%

of residents agree that North Herts Council is working to make the area cleaner and greener

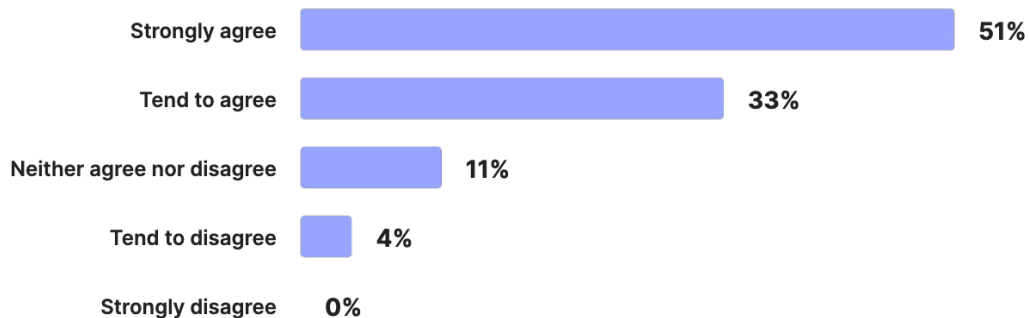
| AREAS | | SATISFACTION | |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|------------------------|
| North Hertfordshire, UK | 31% | - - - | <div><div></div></div> |
| Baldock and District | 44% | - - - | <div><div></div></div> |
| Hitchin | 31% | - - - | <div><div></div></div> |
| Letchworth | 26% | - - - | <div><div></div></div> |
| Royston | 27% | - - - | <div><div></div></div> |
| Southern Rural | 39% | - - - | <div><div></div></div> |

North Herts Council should listen/consult more

84%

of respondents think
North Herts Council
should listen/consult
more

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2023 Community Survey results LGA comparison

| Survey owner | Zencity | LGA |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| Survey mode | Digital (targeted social & Google ads) 2023 | Phone (2023) |
| Respondent engagement level | Potentially new people with no current relationship with us | Random selection of adults |
| Number of respondents | 715 | 1,001 |
| Weighted / Unweighted | Weighted by location, age, gender & ethnicity | Unweighted |
| Survey questions and answers: | | |
| Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with North Herts as a place to live | 74% | 73% |
| NEW How likely are you to recommend North Herts as a place to live | 67% | N/A |
| How satisfied are you with the current services provided by North Herts Council | | |
| a. Waste collection | 62% | 79% |
| b. Street cleaning | 48% | 64% |
| c. Parks and green spaces | 64% | 80% |
| d. Leisure facilities | 47% | 55% |
| e. Car parks | 36% | N/A |
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way North Herts Council runs things | 43% | 60% |
| To what extent do you agree or disagree that North Herts Council provides value for money? | 25% | 42% |
| Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area? | 15% | N/A |
| NEW How much do you trust North Herts Council? | 43% | 56% |
| NEW To what extent are you aware of what your local councillor does in your local area | 33% | 45% |
| NEW Overall, how well-informed do you think North Herts Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides? | 36% | 55% |
| North Herts Council involves, consults and engages with the local community | 21% | N/A |
| North Herts Council makes an effort to find out what people want | 19% | N/A |
| North Herts Council should listen/consult more | 84% | N/A |
| North Herts Council is working to make the area cleaner and greener | 31% | N/A |

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| |
|---|
| OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 9 JANUARY 2024 |
|---|

| |
|----------------------------------|
| *PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT |
|----------------------------------|

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

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND SCRUTINY MANAGER

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.

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 – 15 December 2023
- 16.3. Appendix C – Corporate Peer Committee Support Action Plan in regard to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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

- 17.2. Isabelle Alajooz, Legal Commercial Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Isabelle.Alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk , ext 4346
- 17.3. 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 |
|-----------------|--|---|--|
| 9 January 2024 | Resolutions Report Work Programme Update to the Common Housing Allocation Scheme Communications Strategy Community Survey Results Local Plan Review Q2 Update on Council Delivery Plan 2023-24 | James Lovegrove James Lovegrove Martin Lawrence Christine Crofts Christine Crofts Debbie Coates Rachel Cooper | - - Sean Prendergast Elizabeth Dennis Elizabeth Dennis Ruth Brown Ian Albert |
| 29 January 2024 | Crime and Disorder Matters Invitation to: Settle Resolutions Report Work Programme Q3 Update on the Council Delivery Plan 2023-24 Recovery Plan | - - James Lovegrove James Lovegrove 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 Strategic Housing Policy Update Implementation of the Leisure Contract | James Lovegrove James Lovegrove Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Rachel Cooper Martin Lawrence Louise Randall | - - - Ian Albert Sean Prendergast Steve Jarvis |
| | | | |
| | To be scheduled: Greenspaces Enterprise Service Area Updates | Andrew Mills Enterprise Team | Steve Jarvis Keith Hoskins |

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 15 December 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 |
|--|-----------------------|---|------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Stray Dogs Policy | | Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health | 16 Jan 2024 | | Frank Harrison, Environmental Health Manager frank.harrison@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Council Tax Reduction Scheme | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Jo Dufficy, Service Director - Customers johanne.dufficy@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Public Health Burials Policy | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Frank Harrison, Environmental Health Manager frank.harrison@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Empty Homes Strategy | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Frank Harrison, Environmental Health Manager frank.harrison@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Half Yearly report on Risk Management Governance 2023-24 | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@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 |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Q2 2023-24 Progress against the Council Delivery Plan | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Communications Strategy | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Christine Crofts, Communications Manager christine.crofts@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing Scheme | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Local Plan Review | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Deborah Coates, Principal Strategic Planning Officer deborah.coates@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| SECOND QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) MID-YEAR REVIEW 2023/24 | | Cabinet | 16 Jan 2024 | | 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 |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Update to Common Housing Allocation Scheme | | Cabinet | 6 Feb 2024 | | Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25 | | Cabinet | 6 Feb 2024 | | Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Permit Review | | Cabinet | 19 Mar 2024 | | Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| 24-25 Council Delivery Plan | | Cabinet | 19 Mar 2024 | | Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| Q3 update on Progress against the Council Delivery Plan | | Cabinet | 19 Mar 2024 | | Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| 2024/2025 Performance Management Measures | | Cabinet | 19 Mar 2024 | | Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |

| Decision required | Overview and Scrutiny | Decision Maker | Date of Decision | Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker | Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested | Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker | Procedure for requesting details of other documents |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Adoption of a new Housing Strategy (2024-2029) | | Cabinet | 19 Mar 2024 | | Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| THIRD QUARTER INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) REVIEW 2023/24 | | Cabinet | 19 Mar 2024 | | Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk | Yes | Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6 |
| THIRD QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 | | Cabinet | 19 Mar 2024 | | Ian Couper, Service Director - Resources ian.couper@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 | May 2024 | |
| 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 | May 2024 | <p>Training to be part of May 2024 induction.</p> <p>Session provided in 2023 is available to watch via GrowZone</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|----------------|--|
| 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 feedback from live meetings, further training to fill any gaps in knowledge and skills. | Will be incorporated within the Member training programme being developed. | Democratic Services Member Champions Learning + Development | May 2024 | Training to be part of May 2024 induction |
| 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 | In progress | Scrutiny Officer role vacant from 03/11/23. Role being advertised. |
| 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 | Ongoing action | Forward Plan included in every Work programme report and Executive have been made aware of meeting dates. |
| 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 | Ongoing action | Chair and Vice Chair have been sent meeting dates for Cabinet and advised of need to attend where referrals have been made |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|----------------|--|
| 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 | Not started | 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 action | Scrutiny Officer actively follows up on item requests at meetings. |
| 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 | May 2024 | Training to be part of May 2024 induction. |
| 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 | May 2024 | Training to be part of May 2024 induction. 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 | Not started | No requests for Task and Finish Groups have been made by the Committee, previous requests cancelled due to lack of interest from Members |

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| 12 | It was observed by some members that the preparation for the special scrutiny meeting on the 'call to account' was beneficial and lessons learnt on how this preparation helped scrutiny should be considered in taking forward scrutiny in the future. | For Scrutiny Officer to work through with the Chair. | Chair of Scrutiny Scrutiny Officer | Complete | Briefings will become standard before 'call to account' to best prepare Members for the item. |
| 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 | May 2024 | Ensure meetings take place with Chair and Vice Chair to set a provisional work programme for the Civic Year (subject to change) |
| 14 | Provide O&S training in Charing Skills. | Will be incorporated within the Member training programme being developed. | Democratic Services Member Champions Learning + Development | May 2024 | Training to be part of May 2024 induction. |
| 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 action | Referrals will be included in the Committee's Resolutions report so the Committee can follow up on recommendations. |

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| 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 action | Exec Members expected to present their relevant reports to O&S and have been advised of the dates of the committee |
| 18 | Ensure minutes reflect the decisions of the meeting – e.g., requests for agenda items to be recorded in the minutes and added to the forward plan. | Committee Services and the Scrutiny Officer will make sure everything is accurately captured. | Scrutiny Officer | Complete | Resolutions report captures specific requests, supported by minutes produced and access to the YouTube recording of the meeting |
| 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 action | Scrutiny Officer has advised the Executive of Committee dates for 2023-24 and will provide notice when required to attend meetings. |

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| 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 action | Will ensure both Chair and Vice-Chair are included to attend so at least one is able to present referrals |
| 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 | Complete | Reasons for a recommendation not being accepted by Cabinet will be included in the Committee's Resolutions report. |