

1 March 2024

Our Ref Overview and Scrutiny Committee 12
March 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, GERON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF**

On

TUESDAY, 12TH MARCH, 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 - 9 JANUARY 2024 AND 29 JANUARY 2024	To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 9 January 2024 and 29 January 2024.	(Pages 5 - 28)
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 29 - 30)

To consider the outcome of Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolutions.
- 10. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 2023-2024** (Pages
REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 31 - 40)
COMMITTEE 2023-2024

To consider and comment on the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023-24, prior to consideration by Council.
- 11. COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN Q3 UPDATE AND PROJECTS FOR 2024/25** (Pages
REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES 41 - 78)

This report presents progress on delivering the Council Delivery Plan for 23-24 at the end of Quarter 3 and makes recommendations on the 24-25 Council Delivery Plan.
- 12. SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION NOTE** (Pages
INFORMATION NOTE OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – LEGAL & 79 - 86)
COMMUNITY

Safeguarding Information Note and Appendix A and B.
- 13. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND SCRUTINY MANAGER 87 - 104)

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

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON TUESDAY, 9TH JANUARY, 2024 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Val Bryant (Chair), Dominic Griffiths, David Levett, Nigel Mason, Ralph Muncer, Daniel Wright-Mason and Daniel Allen.*

In Attendance: *Deborah Coates (Principal Strategic Planning Officer), Rachel Cooper (Controls, Risk and Performance Manager), Christine Crofts (Communications Manager), Ian Fullstone (Service Director - Regulatory), Sarah Kingsley (Service Director - Place), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Nigel Smith (Strategic Planning Manager) and Sjanel Wickenden (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer).*

Also Present: *There were no members of the public present at the meeting.*

262 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 9 second

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Matt Barnes, Clare Billing, Adam Compton, Mick Debenham and Ian Moody.

Having given due notice Councillor Daniel Allen substituted for Councillor Debenham.

263 MINUTES - 7 NOVEMBER AND 5 DECEMBER 2023

Audio recording – 2 minutes 38 seconds

The Chair advised that Councillor Ralph Muncer had advised of an error in the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee from the 7 November 2024. This related to his name being wrongly included within the list of Members who had received dispensation from the Monitoring Officer to take part in the Call to Account on the Harkness Court Project. As he was not on the Planning Control Committee, he had not been required to seek a dispensation.

Councillor Nigel Mason proposed, as amended, and Councillor David Levett seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Committee held on '7 November 2023, as amended, and 5 December 2023' be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

264 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 46 seconds

There was no other business notified.

265 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 50 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.

266 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 4 minutes 41 seconds

There was no public participation.

267 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 49 seconds

No urgent or general exception items were received.

268 CALLED-IN ITEMS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 52 seconds

There have been no called-in items.

269 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 58 seconds

No questions had been submitted.

N.B Councillor Dominic Griffiths entered the Council Chamber at 19:36.

270 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Audio recording – 5 minutes 17 seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the item 'Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee' and highlighted:

- The Draft Sustainability SPD was presented to Cabinet with the Overview and Scrutiny referral on the 12 December 2023 and was approved.
- This Committee made a referral to Cabinet in November regarding the Waste Recycling and Street Cleansing Contact Service Design with an amended recommendation to remove the delegation to the Service Director. The amendment was accepted by Cabinet in November 2023 and the item was deferred to the 12 December 2023 Cabinet meeting where it was considered and approved.
- The Leisure Management Contract Award was approved by Cabinet on the 12 December 2023.

Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen 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.

271 Q2 UPDATE ON PROGRESS AGAINST THE COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN

Audio Recording 7 minutes 17 seconds

The Controls, Risk and Performance Manager presented the report entitled 'Q2 Update on Progress against the Council Delivery Plan 2023-24' and advised that:

- This was the second quarter update on Council projects, as approved by Cabinet, and was intended to be an evolving document with updates on project risks.
- The original due date of projects was now included on Appendix A, as highlighted at paragraph 8.3 along with the revised due date. Milestone dates are changed following Cabinet approval.
- There were 13 projects with requested milestone changes, these were highlighted including reasons in paragraph 8.4 of the report.
- Appendix B detailed the prioritisation tool that had been developed for scoring criteria and weighting of each project, from 2024/25 this would be used to evaluate and prioritise the projects to be included on the Council Delivery Plan. A shorter more focused list of key projects would then be presented to the Committee from 2024/25.
- Following discussions at Cabinet in September only relevant milestones will be included going forward in the report, this will reduce the report length. Members can use Ideagen to access further details.
- Appendix A detailed the 27 projects and their current status using the red, amber and green rating. Projects with an upward facing arrow showing an improvement in status and a high risk project had a red risk score. The progress bar on each project showed the percentage completion of each project for the current year milestones only and not for the entire project.
- The Place Narrative project had been completed and would be removed from the plan.
- There were 12 projects that now had amber scores.
- The milestone changes were due to slippage or a requested change in date.
- There had been a requested change to the Charnwood House project to extend the bid period.
- The Memorandum of Understanding had been signed for phase one of the Local Authority Housing Fund and the houses are now occupied.
- There would be a wider discussion of the Museum Storage project as the item was deferred by Cabinet in September.
- The Solar PV Leisure Centre and the Royston Solar Thermal projects were on hold pending the results of a grant application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
- Quarterly assessments were ongoing for red risks not linked to specific projects regarding resourcing and cyber risks highlighted on page 58 of the report.
- There was a link on SharePoint to Ideagen (formerly Pentana), a video guide for users was expected in March.
- Further in depth details of specific projects can be provided from Officers and Executives either offline or at the next meeting.

N.B Councillor Ralph Muncer entered the Council Chamber at 19:46.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Dominic Griffiths
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett

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

- Work was ongoing on the EV charging project the completion due date was now October 2024. Further details of any additional support required to complete this project could be provided.
- The outcome of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme was expected in January 2024.
- Details would be provided on the level of engagement with the Churchgate digital hub.
- Details would be provided on when we can expect to see a proposal for the Churchgate project.
- There had been resourcing issues on the Enterprise Strategy project, details of any outsourcing costs could be provided at a later date, if this was in the interest of the Council to go down that route.
- The proposed number of EV charging points to be installed, in the District was set out in the project specification and would be investigated and provided to the Committee.
- The Enterprise strategy scope was due for sign off after the production date of this report. An update to include the outcome of the briefing held on the 14 December 2023 would be provided.

The following Members took part in debate:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

Points raised during the debate included:

- It was important that the Waste Depots project was completed on time to ensure service to residents was not affected.
- There were concerns regarding the volume of projects that had turned amber especially those that had resourcing issues.

Councillor David Levett proposed and Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee identified any project(s) for which they would like to receive a more detailed update.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the Committee noted the progress against Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (Appendix A) including changes to milestones, performance indicators and risks, and made recommendations and comments to Cabinet.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: 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.

272 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Audio Recording 25 minutes 48 seconds

The Deputy Executive Member for Planning and Transport, Councillor Ian Mantle presented the item entitled 'Local Plan Review' and highlighted that:

- A comprehensive report had been produced with recommendations for a full review supported by the Executive Member and Deputy.
- It would be prudent to commence the full review using the new regulations.
- The Government had recently been discussing the levels of control Councils had creating their local plans.
- It had been 10 years since the current local plan had been created.
- The new plan would incorporate the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- The review should proceed in a timely manner.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

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

- Any strategic sites currently progressing through planning would have a masterplan and where the Full Council agrees with the strategy, they would be unlikely to be rejected by Planning as the work will have been done up front.
- The growth bids mentioned at paragraph 10.3 and 10.4 related to the budget of the Council.
- The majority of the review will be conducted by current staff.

In response to questions the Strategic Planning Manager advised:

- The local plan needed to be reviewed, paragraphs 9.4 and 9.5 of the report stated that any review of the local plan would not affect nor render the current local plan as out of date.
- Subject to the budget being approved the agreed budget for the review was £800K; significantly less than the £1.6M for the current local plan.
- There would be some specialist consultant work for complex matters. The remaining work would be completed using the current staff structure.

In response to a question the Principal Strategic Planning Officer advised that the aim was to reach examination by 2027 with a view to extending the plan period to 2046, ensuring compliance with the 15-year period required by national policy.

The Service Director – Regulatory stated that a number of growth bids had been put forward for consideration at the budget workshops relating to the delivery of the plan and staffing resources. Further instalment funding had been drafted into the budget for consultant fees, with the Executive Member and Deputy receiving regular resourcing updates.

The following Members took part in debate:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Dominic Griffiths

Points raised in debate included:

- This review was important, and an early review was expected as so much had changed.
- Although previously against the Local Plan, a review of the plan would be good for the people of North Herts.
- The reforms had taken a considerable amount of time, a review should be started as soon as possible.
- There had been changes to policies and legislation since the adoption of the current Local Plan.
- Concerns had previously been raised when the local plan was adopted, they strongly welcomed a review.
- The 2011 plan was adopted in 2022, therefore it could be argued that the plan was outdated as soon as it was adopted.
- Design policies should be considered to enhance sustainability and longevity.

Councillor David Levett proposed and Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:

- (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) That Cabinet agree that a full review and update of the NHLP is undertaken.
- (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.
- (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.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: 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.

273 2024 - 2028 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Audio Recording 47 minutes 27 seconds

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Elizabeth Dennis presented the report entitled '2024-2028 Marketing and Communications Strategy' and highlighted that:

- It was important that the Council reviewed how it was positioning, presenting and communicating effectively with all stakeholders.
- There had been a shift from pure communication to more marketing-based communication to help promote the Council narrative and raise awareness of Council priorities.
- Data analysis showed there was an 82% success rate with projects when communication teams were involved from the start
- Communication was not just for the Communications team but down to everybody involved with the authority.
- Other Local authorities and the private sector already recognised and have built on this model of communication.

- There would be a People First approach for marketing and communications, with the refreshed recruitment campaign using existing staff being a great example of this. Other recent examples included the Climate Hive, the Bee Corridor and the Churchgate digital hub.
- There would be a digital first approach across channels, but other channels would still be used. By using different modes of communication, it would allow for adaption to use the most suitable method for the topic and the person reading it.
- There would be quarterly and annual reviews of the communication outputs to ensure that the strategy was being delivered.
- The Council cannot afford to stay still and needs positive engagement to support everyone.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor David Levett

In response to questions, the Leader of the Council advised that:

- A review would be sought from Officers regarding any environmental impact and costs. However, this Committee was currently reviewing the strategy itself and not the products involved.
- New digital products would appear on the fast moving digital market and this strategy was agile and flexible to reflect this.
- Key area to be measured were highlighted in the report and included temperature checks through resident engagement, local resident surveys, and completing 'You said, we did' exercises. These would be conducted quarterly and annually.
- As the strategy would run for 4 years and marketing and communications is fast-moving, the KPIs will be reviewed on a quarterly and annual basis.
- This strategy was prepared alongside the Community survey.
- The strategy would use appropriate language for the audience.

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

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet approves the 2024 - 2028 Marketing and Communications Strategy.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- (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.
- (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) 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.

- (4) It is therefore recommended, that the 2024 - 2028 strategy is a Marketing and Communications Strategy.

274 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS (MARCH - JUNE 2023)

Audio Recording 1 hour 20 seconds

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Elizabeth Dennis, presented the report entitled 'Community Survey Results (March – June 2023)' and highlighted that:

- District Wide surveys had previously been completed every other year by telephone.
- This was the first digital survey conducted for the Council by Zencity and would be conducted every 6 months.
- The use of a digital survey allowed more frequent feedback from residents and saved costs.
- It was important to note that there would be a difference between the data produced from a digital only survey compared to the results from a phone survey. Residents were unable to converse with the interviewer during a digital survey, compared to a phone-based alternative, and evidence suggested that results would be lower due to this.
- There was an 183% increase in response from the 16-34 age bracket.
- Overall, residents were satisfied with North Herts as a place to live and would recommend it to others.
- Trust in the Council was at 40%, however this was 5% higher than the results from the survey conducted in June 2023.
- There was some confusion amongst residents regarding what services North Herts District Council provided and what Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) provided.
- Challenges with Waste and Street Cleanliness were identified and feedback had been given to those teams with work ongoing to address issues raised.
- 84% of those surveyed said that the Council could listen more and work was now ongoing regarding 'you said, we did' communication, to highlight how feedback was turned into actions.
- The services covered by North Herts need to be clearly communicated to residents.
- Residents of Royston had a feeling of disconnection and work was planned to make them feel part of North Herts, which included an extension to the leisure facility.
- It was recommended at 8.5.4 of the report that future results are not brought to Cabinet but published on the Council website. However, Cabinet would monitor and review outside of a formal meeting and address any issues raised.
- There were known data differences on this survey compared to the previous telephone surveys, and the results and feedback had been considered accordingly.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Dominic Griffiths
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

In response to questions, Councillor Dennis advised:

- The surveys were conducted by Zencity so did not incur any Officer time. Officer time was still required to analyse and report the data.
- The survey was promoted by the Council through its mailing list.
- There was some weighting on questions regarding use of the service.
- This first digital survey would be used to benchmark future surveys. The Marketing and Communications Strategy, as well as other policies being developed, should improve

results and especially have an impact on the views of residents as to whether the Council involves, consults and engages with the local community.

In response to questions, the Communications Manager advised that:

- For two surveys a year the cost was £6K, the telephone surveys previously cost £17.9K and occurred every other year.
- Zencity used software through Google and Facebook ads to reach a representative sample of North Herts residents.
- Some residents answered questions regarding services they had not used. For future surveys residents would not be able to score services which they did not use.

The following Members took part in debate:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Nigel Mason

Points raised in debate included:

- That the survey results should be reported to Cabinet on a regular basis, as they are a measure of the performance of the Council and the effectiveness of the policies of the Council, as perceived by our residents and a formal annual review should be undertaken.
- Some of the questions were the same as in previous surveys, particularly the 2019 survey, which could be used for benchmarking.
- Survey results were generally more generous when completed by telephone.
- Comparison with results from other local authorities would be useful.
- Responders commented on road improvements, however, these are provided by Hertfordshire County Council and not the remit of North Herts.
- Residents are satisfied with the District and environment they live in but not by the provisions and services provided.
- Findings should be compared but the comparison should be of the same thing and in the same way.
- Funding for local authorities had decreased by 33% over the last few years, which could explain concerns with services.

During the debate, Councillor David Levett advised that he felt he had been unable to raise points he wanted to make; the role of the Committee was to act as a critical friend, and he considered that he had been prevented from raising pertinent questions and would take no further part in the debate. He would raise this issue formally.

Councillor Daniel Allen proposed and Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: 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).

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: 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.

275 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Audio Recording – 1 hour 30 minutes 21 seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the item 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme' and highlighted:

- The Committee can add items to the work programme by informing the Chair and the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager.
- On the 29 January 2024 Hertfordshire Police will attend the Committee meeting to discuss issues relating to hate crimes in North Herts.
- Settle had been invited to the Committee Meeting on the 29 January 2024 to discuss complaint handling and any changes relating to the Rental Reform Bill.
- Other items listed for the 29 January 2024 included the Empty Homes Strategy, Council Tax Premiums for Empty and Second homes and the Chairs reports on the Call to Accounts for the Harkness Court Project and Lord Lister Hotel.
- Appendix C highlighted the recommendations from the LGA Corporate Peer Review, with actions and timescales.
- The Scrutiny Officer position had a closing date of the 15 January 2024 and had been advertised utilizing the Essex County Council jobs board, interviews were scheduled for the 31 January 2024.
- The Call to Account preparation briefings would become a standard for any subsequent call to account items.
- Ensuring minutes reflected the decisions of the meeting was now completed, as the resolutions report captured any specific requests.
- Any referral rejected by Cabinet would be reported in the resolutions report at the beginning of each Overview and Scrutiny committee, along with the rejection reason.
- The training items on the report related to post election and would be included in the Induction Programme for Members following the elections in May 2024.
- Items relating to meeting protocols were ongoing and would be further developed by the new Scrutiny Officer.
- The definition of the Committee would be discussed outside of this meeting.
- Work would commence on the Task and Finish group once any topics for consideration were received.

In response to questions from Councillor Ralph Muncer, the Chair advised that the Call to Account reports for the Harkness Court Project and Lord Lister Hotel would be presented at the next meeting of the Committee on Monday 29 January 2024.

Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason proposed and Councillor Dominic Griffiths 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 a list of items to 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 9.07 pm

Chair

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON MONDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 2024 AT 7.30 PM**

MINUTES

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

In Attendance: *Steve Cobb (Licensing and Community Safety Manager), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Jo Doggett (Service Director - Housing & Environmental Health), Jo Dufficy (Service Director - Customers), Geraldine Goodwin (Revenues Manager), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Mark Scanes (Systems and Technical Manager) and Jeanette Thompson (Service Director - Legal and Community).*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting there were four members of the public present.*

276 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1 minute 55 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ian Moody.

277 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 7 seconds

There was no other business notified.

278 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 12 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.

279 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 2 minutes 56 seconds

There was no public participation at this meeting.

280 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 1 second

No urgent or general exception items were received.

281 CALLED-IN ITEMS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 7 seconds

There have been no called-in items.

282 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 12 seconds

No questions had been submitted by Members.

283 PRESENTATION FROM SETTLE

Audio recording – 3 minutes 16 seconds

The Chair invited Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson, from settle Group, to provide Members with a presentation providing information about the organisation, with a focus on the projects they have been working on over the last 12 months. Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided a presentation, accompanied by slides, which advised of the following:

- settle was a Letchworth based housing association with around 10,000 properties of which 8,600 properties were in North Herts.
- settle wanted to help their customers to comfortably live in their homes and to be able to lead the lives they wanted.
- They focused on being a good landlord and providing services that customers valued.
- settle wanted to provide quality affordable home and to also improve the areas where their homes were based.
- settle was regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) which was part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- The Rental Reform Act would not have an impact on settle as it related to private landlords and not landlords providing social and affordable lettings.
- A main area of focus was providing a first-time fix of problems for their customers which was currently at 95%.
- There were robust anti-social behaviour policies in place and specific staff who worked with stakeholders to manage any anti-social behaviour.
- There had been around 400 customer complaints received so far this year.
- settle had a two-stage complaint process. The first stage was the raising of a complaint and if this was not satisfactorily resolved, a resident could escalate this to a stage 2 complaint by taking it to the Housing Ombudsman.
- settle was now investing £13 million in their properties.
- There was 97% customer satisfaction with the work carried out on their properties.
- Decent homes compliance was performing well with 99.6% being graded as decent.

- 37 homes were completed in the summer of 2022 at Kingfisher House.
- The John Barker Place development had only been delayed by 3 months due to the contractor going into liquidation.
- The new planning application for Hawksley Bungalows at Letchworth was close to being submitted and this would provide 157 new homes on a site where currently there were only 80 homes.
- settle provided new homes across North Herts, working with developers through section 106 contributions and were very happy to have been able to provide an adapted bungalow on one site, to meet specific needs of a family.
- They regularly worked with Cala, who lead on private sales and settle would oversee the affordable home sales.

Councillor David Levett advised the committee that he was a settle tenant.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Adam Compton

In response to questions, Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson advised of the following:

- Section 106 contributions in North Herts enabled settle to charge the 80% target affordable rent to any properties with below 3 bedrooms.
- The government provided extra funding through Homes England which enabled settle to provide homes with social rent.
- There was a 32% dissatisfaction rate for complaints and analysis had shown this equated to only 20 customers.
- They had 260 open damp and mould cases and a team of surveyors and operatives had been set up to monitor damp and mould in any of their properties.
- One mal administration case had been filed this year and this was currently being reviewed by the Housing Ombudsman.
- settle had multiple solutions to assist with insulation of properties and would carry out either external or internal insulation depending on the age of the property.
- 63% of properties are at Engineering, Procurement, Construction and Commissioning (EPCC) standard or above and work was being carried out on the 600 properties that were below this to get them complaint.
- settle agreed to share their maps and software system, 'Land Insight' with the Council, which showed ownership of properties.
- settle had a mutual exchange process through which they promoted exchange of their properties through Home Swapper.
- If a property was overcrowded, it would be banded and entered onto the shared housing register which settle had with the Council.
- settle worked with the Council in cases where a property was at undercapacity.
- Robust repair policies were in place and stock investment analysis was carried out to find out what repairs were required.
- settle would not put any residents into hotels whilst they were waiting to move into the new Letchworth development and the decamp would be managed by utilising properties on site.
- settle was 100% complaint with Forward Rate Agreements (FRA) actions.
- Their viability rating had been downgraded to grade 2, which was still a compliant grade, due to changes in development of their financial matrix.

The Chair thanked Mr Anderson and Ms Coulson for their and for taking the time to answer questions from Members.

284 CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS

Audio recording – 41 minutes 55 seconds

The Chair invited Inspector James Lant and Sergeant Chris Adshead, from Hertfordshire Constabulary, to provide Members with a presentation on Hate Crime in North Herts. Inspector Lant and Sergeant Adshead thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided a presentation, accompanied by slides, which advised of the following:

- The objective of the evening was to help Members gain an understanding into Hate Crime in North Herts and to paint a national picture around Hate Crime.
- The National Police Chiefs Council publish figures weekly which were collated by the National Communication Tension Team to produce weekly tension reports.
- These weekly tension reports could be studied over periods to show national changes to reporting of the five hate crimes.
- An international event or disaster would have an impact in national hate crime rolling figures which would produce an increase in all the five hate crime strands.
- The five hate crime strands were:
 - Faith.
 - Disability
 - Sexual orientation
 - Race
 - Transgender
- Hate crime was a crime that was recorded as having a motivation or hostility when committed towards one of the five hate crime strands.
- A non crime incident could be reported under one of the following three circumstances:
 - When it was not clear whether a crime had been committed or not.
 - A crime had to be recorded because of its nature for intelligence purposes.
 - An incident that fell short of criminal activity, but that might lead to criminal conduct.
- Reporting of hate crime had increased and the objective for 2024 was to enable more people to feel able to report hate crimes.
- There was an increase in third party reporting centres to assist people who did not speak English or did not want to come to a police station. The North Herts District Council offices was one of these reporting centres.
- True Vision was a website devised by the Metropolitan police through which hate crimes could be reported anonymously.
- PC Lewis Thomson had been appointed as the new hate crime officer in North Herts, to make people aware that hate crime must be reported and that it was taken very seriously by the police.
- North Herts police followed certain national standards to record crimes where every incident reported was recorded and audited.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Clare Billing
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Mick Debenham

In response to questions, Inspector Lant and Sergeant Adshead advised of the following:

- Communications had been built over the last 12 months with the Jewish community where police officers make connections with community groups to help them to feel safe.
- Crimes against women and girls did not fall under the five strands of hate crime. However, this was a very serious matter and was taken very seriously by the police and a lot of time and work was undertaken to ensure women and girls felt safe in North Herts.
- North Herts had signed up to the White Ribbon UK an organisation who worked with men and boys to challenge cultures that lead to harassment against women and girls.
- Project Vigilant was a new initiative and would be introduced in North Herts in March, whereby a select group of police officers would be trained and then would be put on surveillance from 4pm – 7pm to try to identify individuals that may prove to be a risk to women. This project had been based on training used by Thames Valley Police with the aim to make North Herts a safe place at nighttime.
- North Herts Police were working with Dignify a charity in South Hertfordshire to deliver a comprehensive package to schools about online safety.

The Licensing and Community Safety Officer advised that:

- North Herts were currently working on two main projects, violence against women and girls and anti-social behaviour.
- North Herts Council worked in partnership with the police and were a third party reporting centre.
- A video promoting 'The Women's Safety Charter' was ready to be filmed and it was hoped this would be rolled out by the end of February and would be publicised throughout North Herts.

The Chair thanked Inspector Lant and Sergeant Adshead for their presentation and answers provided to the questions.

N.B. Following the conclusion of this item there was a short break in proceedings until 21:20.

285 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Audio recording – 1 hour 57 minutes 21 seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager presented the item 'Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee' and highlighted:

- The 'Local Plan Review', 'Q2 Update on Progress Against the Council Delivery Plan' and 'The 2024/28 Marketing and Communications Strategy' reports were all approved at the meeting of Cabinet on 16 January following on from the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 January.
- At the same meeting in January, Cabinet noted the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members regarding the 'Community Survey Results March – June 2023' report and added a formal resolution to the recommendations to ensure all future reporting of any survey results would still be submitted to a formal Cabinet meeting.

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

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

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

286 CALL TO ACCOUNT - LORD LISTER HOTEL - CHAIR'S REPORT

Audio recording – 3 hours 1 minute 3 seconds

Councillor Adam Compton, as Chair, advised the committee that Councillor David Levett, as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Civic Year 2022-23, would present the report entitled 'Call to Account – Lord Lister Hotel – Chair's Report'. Councillor Compton also advised Members that supplementary papers including the relevant section of the report and minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 28 September 2022 had been circulated earlier today.

Councillor David Levett advised that:

- Most of what he wanted to say could be found in the lessons learnt.
- The 'Special Urgency' had resulted in the weighing up of community interest against the urgency of the situation.
- The origin of the situation went back to February 2021 and the deadline of 31 August 2021 for completion of the purchase by key stage.
- From the lessons learnt, it had been identified that this matter should have been referred to Cabinet, following the normal procedure, as a non-urgent item.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

In response to questions, Councillor Levett advised that:

- The lessons learnt were set out in the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting and had been circulated to Members prior to this meeting.
- The Council Chamber was a formal environment, and not a suitable place to conduct a Call to Account. The process would have been more beneficial in a less formal environment and encouraged better discussion on the topic.

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

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee referred the report, attached as Appendix A, to Council, together with the copy of the lessons learnt and the appropriate section of the minutes of the meeting of 28 September 2022.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: The recommendations had been made following the Call to Account on 28 September 2022.

287 EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

Audio recording – 1 hour 28 minutes 44 seconds

Councillor Sean Prendergast, as Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health, presented the report entitled 'Empty Homes Strategy' and advised that:

- This strategy would feed into the current Housing Strategy of the Council and bringing empty homes back into use formed a key part of meeting the housing needs of the district.
- Empty homes were a wasted resource and, as often in bad repair, had a negative impact on the local community.

- This strategy would provide an opportunity to help bring the vast majority of empty homes back into use which would boost the local economy.
- This strategy was important for addressing shortages, revitalising the community, stimulating local economy and would also help to promote environmental sustainability.

The following Members asked questions:

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

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health advised that:

- Most other local authorities had an Empty Homes Strategy in place.
- This report highlighted that the number of empty homes was increasing across the district.
- Currently the Council could only rely on Council Tax records to identify empty homes, which was not sustainable.
- Having a new officer in post would help to provide resources to identify empty properties.
- The main aim of this strategy was to bring empty homes in the district back into use to meet the needs of the residents.
- It was important to set achievable targets with the resources available and to learn the reasons behind why properties were empty.
- Statistics had shown that there was an increase in the number of homes that had been empty for 2 years to 5 years and this needed to be investigated.
- The strategy would encourage residents to report any empty homes to the Council.

In response to questions, the Environmental Health Manager advised that:

- It was not a legal statutory requirement for the Council to have an Empty Homes Strategy.
- The target of this strategy was to identify empty homes and to prevent them from being a negative impact on the community.
- This was a new target for the Council and it would take time to identify the empty homes and to work with home owners before any results would be seen.
- The residents of North Herts tended to remain in their properties for many years.
- 10% of empty homes in North Herts had been vacant for over 2 years.
- The Council would be contacting owners in North Herts where homes had been vacant for 2 years or more to try to identify the reasons why they were empty.
- Homes that had been empty for longer periods had proved harder to reoccupy.
- There were several reasons why a property was empty.
- The new post of a part time officer had not yet been filled. However, it would enable research into identifying what funding was available for homeowners to improve their properties, when required.
- This new post would also enable research into identifying what funding was available for the Council to further promote owners of empty homes to improve their properties.
- The New Homes bonus, which was currently available to the Council for every house that is brought back into occupancy, was likely to cease, however this was not the reason for this strategy. The main reason was to reduce the number of empty homes in the district.

The following Members took part in a debate:

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

Points raised in the debate included:

- Would the implementation of this strategy be an effective use of resources.
- There did not appear to be anything new to be gained from this strategy being implemented.
- It was up to the homeowner to decide if they wanted their property to remain vacant.
- Empty housing being reoccupied would be a benefit to the community of North Herts.
- The aims of the strategy were worthwhile but would only result in a small number of empty homes being reoccupied.

Councillor Matt Barnes proposed and Councillor Clare Billing seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET:

- (1) That Cabinet adopt the Empty Homes Strategy 2024-29.
- (2) The Cabinet should note that although there is no legal requirement for the Council to have an Empty Homes Strategy, there have been several significant Government-focussed documents and papers highlighting their importance, including a House of Commons Briefing Paper stating that each local authority should have such a strategy to help reduce the number of long-term empty homes in their districts.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) The recommendation and considerations are being made to allow the Council to formerly adopt the 5-year Empty Homes Strategy 2024-29 to allow the Environmental Health service to work directly or with others to identify and deliver the most appropriate intervention programme to allow the Council to aim to bring as many long-term empty homes back into occupation as practicable.
- (2) The strategy allows the Council to state its intention to consider every aspect linked to the housing sector to bring into use as many opportunities as it can to meet the district's housing needs, without having to rely solely on new build. Whilst the number of long-term empty homes is small, and the number likely to be brought back into occupation will be smaller still, this strategy does address this sector which would otherwise be omitted from the overall resource potentially available to form our housing stock.
- (3) By adopting the strategy and allowing for the development of a culture of greater awareness of vacant homes, allows for homes which become vacant to be highlighted sooner, and so they can be monitored and their owners challenged at an earlier point, thus also contributing to hopefully having more homes available for the residents of the district.

288 COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS FOR EMPTY AND SECOND HOMES

Audio recording – 2 hours 26 minutes 7 seconds

Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the report 'Council Tax Premiums for Empty and Second Homes', and advised that:

- This report detailed the proposed changes to Council Tax premiums on empty and second homes which followed the updated government legislation.
- The Council had previously only been allowed to introduce a Council Tax premium on the length of time a home was unoccupied.
- In 2019 the Council introduced the current 100% premium for a property empty for more than 2 years.
- North Herts has 157 properties that have been empty for over 2 years.
- The recent change in legislation allowed a premium to be charged on a home that has been empty for less than 1 year.
- This paper related to the ability for the Council to increase Council Tax premiums to encourage empty homes to be brought back into occupation.
- A premium could be avoided if a homeowner furnished an empty home which changed it into a second home.
- North Herts Council awarded a 10% Council Tax discount on second homes.
- From 1 April 2024 the changes to premium would affect the 43 properties in North Herts which had been empty for over 5 years. The Council would be contacting all of these residents to make them aware of this change.

The following Councillors asked questions:

- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett

In response to questions, the Service Director – Customers, advised that the Empty Homes & Second Homes Premium Policy was still in draft form and could not be finalised until government regulations had been received. The Service Director apologised that the draft policy was not circulated to Members with the agenda and advised that she would circulate a copy to Members following the meeting.

In response to questions, the Revenues Manager, advised that a property that was furnished, but was not in occupation all the time, was classed as a second home. A second home could be in another district to the main home of a resident.

The following Members took part in a debate:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor David Levett

Points raised in debate included:

- Members felt uncomfortable voting on the recommendations without having time to read and scrutinise the content of the draft policy, which had not been circulated before the meeting.
- The second homes premium would have more relevance and impact on other areas of the country, such as Cornwall where there was a higher population of holiday homes, but would not be such an issue for North Herts.

The Chair advised that he split voting on the recommendations into two parts, to ensure Members were clear on the content of each.

Councillor Nigel Mason proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

(1) That in accordance with Section 11B and 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 2 of the Rating (Properties in Common Occupation) & Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, Cabinet considers increasing the council tax premiums on empty homes and introducing a new premium on second homes in a phased approach as follows:

- (1.1) That from 1 April 2025 the Council adopts the following full Premium levy rates:
- Properties empty for one year but less than five will receive a 100% Premium.
 - Properties empty for five years but less than ten years a 200% Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than ten years a 300% Premium.
- (1.2) That from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2025 the following interim premiums are introduced:
- Properties empty for one year but less than two will not receive a Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than two years, but less than five years will receive a 100% Premium.
 - Properties empty for five years but less than ten years a 150% Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than ten years a 200% Premium.

Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason proposed and Councillor Matt Barnes seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

(2) That from 1 April 2025 a 100% Premium is levied on all properties that are determined as a second home, subject to any exceptions once these have been confirmed by Regulations and that the Service Director – Customers in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT is delegated authority to make any amendments following further confirmation of the Regulations.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) To support the principle of bringing unoccupied properties back into occupation in line with the proposed empty homes strategy. At the time of writing there are 43 properties that have been unoccupied for over five years.
- (2) The introduction of a phased approach of increasing the premiums enables us to advertise the changes. As the introduction of premiums for properties unoccupied for between one and two years is new there will be no expectation on the owners of these properties of an additional premium and therefore it is recommended that this aspect is deferred until 2025 to allow time to advertise the change.
- (3) In respect of a premium on Second Homes the Council is required to give one year's notice as this is the Council's first determination in this regard and therefore a resolution must be made before the end of the 2023/24 financial year in order to bring in the premium from 01 April 2025.

- (4) The Council does have the ability to revoke the decision in relation to Second Homes premium, during the year should any consultation that is carried out provide evidence that this would not be effective.

289 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT ('RIPA') ANNUAL REVIEW

Audio recording – 2 hours 56 minutes 19 seconds

The Service Director – Legal and Community, presented the report and supplementary papers entitled 'Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Annual Review' and highlighted that:

- One of the annual functions that the Council had to undertake was to review the procedures in place to deal with RIPA and to see whether any changes were needed to the policy and procedures in place.
- The Council had a few internal monitoring procedures and audits in place and were inspected every 3 years by the Investigatory Powers Commissioners Office (IPCO).
- The IPCO inspection carried out last year was conducted under their new risk-based system, which involved completing a questionnaire detailing procedures in place.
- An assurance letter received from the IPCO following receipt of the completed questionnaire, detailed that the Council was complying with all regulations and that no further action was required. This letter was set out in Appendix A.
- The Council would review any procedures following adoption of the Bill to check if any action was required at a later point.

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

RESOLVED: That the content of the report, and the IPCO's assurance letter Appendix A, was noted by the Committee.

REASON FOR DECISION: To comply with best practice guidance and the Committee's terms of reference.

290 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Audio recording – 3 hours 6 minutes 57 seconds

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

- The most recent version of the Forward Plan uploaded on 5 January was still the most recent version ahead of Cabinet meeting in February.
- The Forward Plan would next be updated on 16 February ahead of the Cabinet meeting in March.
- Members should advise the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager, or email the Scrutiny inbox details of any items for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The report on the Harkness Court Project Call to Account would be presented at the March meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report would also be presented at the March meeting and would then be referred to Council.
- There were no further updates for the Committee regarding the Local Government Association (LGA) peer review.
- The Scrutiny Officer interviews would take place on 31 January. There had been 9 applications, with 4 people shortlisted for interview.

- Audio visual equipment was being installed in rooms 2 and 3 to enable the recording and broadcasting of meetings held in those rooms.

In response to a question from Councillor Ralph Muncer, the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager advised that rooms 2 and 3 would not solely be used for scrutiny meetings but could be used for any smaller committees and also Task and Finish groups to enable meetings to be held in a less formal environment to the chamber.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed and Councillor Val Bryant 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 a list of items to 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 10.42 pm

Chair

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 5 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	
<p>FEB 2024</p> <p>Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 29th January, 2024, 7.30 pm North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk)</p>	<p>Two referrals were made to Cabinet from the Committee on 29 January 2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Empty Homes Strategy 2. Council Tax Premiums for Empty and Second Homes 	<p>Referrals were considered at Cabinet on 6 February 2024.</p> <p>Neither the Chair nor Vice Chair attended the Cabinet meeting, therefore comments on the items from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were provided by the Executive Members.</p> <p>The Empty Homes Strategy item was approved by Cabinet as recommended.</p> <p>The Council Tax Premiums for Empty and Second Homes item was referred onto Full Council, as recommended, for consideration.</p> <p>Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 6th February, 2024, 7.30 pm North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk)</p>	

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 MARCH 2024**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2023/2024

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2023/2024

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: NOT APPLICABLE

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 To consider the Annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the 2023/2024 Civic Year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Committee considers and comments on the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023/2024 as attached at Appendix A prior to consideration by Council.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To enable Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider and comment on the report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the work of the Committee in the 2023/2024 Civic Year prior to consideration by Council.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1. None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

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

5.2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to consider and comment on the draft report prior to consideration by Council, at the meeting of the Committee on 12 March 2024.

6. FORWARD PLAN

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

7. BACKGROUND

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

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The report at Appendix A sets out the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the Civic Year 2023/2024.
- 8.2 Members should note that the statistics in the report cannot be completed until after the meeting on 12 March 2024.
- 8.3 Members are asked to comment on the draft Annual Report prior to consideration by Council.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

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

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

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

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Draft Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023/2024.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 James Lovegrove
Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager
James.lovegrove@north-herts.gov.uk
01462 474204
- 16.2 Melanie Stimpson
Democratic Services Manager
Melanie.stimpson@north-herts.gov.uk
01462 474208

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 Reports to and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the Civic Year 2023/2024.

[Browse meetings - Overview and Scrutiny Committee | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

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**North
Herts
Council**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT
2023/2024**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair's Foreword

To be provided by Councillor Adam Compton ahead of consideration at Full Council

1. Overview and Scrutiny at North Hertfordshire Council

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

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

2. Methods of Scrutiny

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

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

3. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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

3.2 There was one extraordinary meeting of the Committee this year.

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

4. Call-In

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

4.2 There have been no called in items this year.

5. Presentations by Executive Members

5.1 The Committee has in general continued with its decision not to invite Executive Members to speak on their portfolios on a rolling basis and to instead invite them only to present reports from their relevant portfolio that were of interest to the Committee or to address specific issues.

5.2 Executive Members have taken leadership on presenting relevant reports to the Committee during this Civic Year, with Officer support being limited to answering specific or detailed questions.

5.3 Executive Members are also welcomed when attending meetings and encouraged to take part in the meeting when appropriate.

5.4 The Committee are grateful to the Executive Members for making presentations and attending meetings this year.

6. Crime & Disorder Scrutiny

6.1 The Committee is also the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee for North Hertfordshire which is required to meet at least once a year.

6.2 The Committee chose this year to invite Hertfordshire Constabulary and North Herts Citizens Advice to discuss Hate Crimes in North Herts.

6.3 Details of the meeting at which this item was presented can be viewed [here](#).

7. Safeguarding

7.1 The Committee continued to take a close interest in safeguarding matters and received its annual update on the Council's safeguarding performance in September 2023.

7.2 Details of the meeting at which this item was presented can be viewed [here](#).

8. Statistics

8.1 In total, the Committee has considered **41 items** at its scheduled meetings this year.

8.2 It has made **13 recommendations on 12 topics to Cabinet**. At every meeting the Committee also considered the resolutions previously made, referrals onto Cabinet and their outcome and the work programme.

8.3 No written questions were submitted this year.

9. Task and Finish Groups

9.1 Following discussions with the Chair, Vice-Chair and lead Officers, it was agreed that, due to the length of time since the request to hold a Task and Finish Group on Communications Policy, it would no longer be suitable to proceed with this. It was agreed that the policy itself would be reviewed by the Committee and then further monitored once the policy had been implemented.

9.2 Group Leaders have been provided with a document to circulate to their Members outlining the process and function of the Task and Finish Groups. This will allow groups to create a 'pool' of Members who have indicated they wish to sit on a future Task and Finish Group.

10. Public Participation

10.1 The scrutiny process is open to involvement by local people and the Committee encourages public participation.

10.2 Four members of the public attended the Committee's meetings to make presentations this year.

10.3 Although physical attendance at the actual meetings was extremely low, recordings of the meetings on YouTube have received a total of 453 views. The average view duration of a recording was 9 minutes 19 seconds.

10.4 Some of the ways for the public to get involved include suggesting a topic for investigation as a task and finish group; providing evidence to or at a meeting; and being co-opted on to a topic group. The Committee is keen to see more public participation both in its task and finish groups and in its committee meetings.

11. Peer Review 2022

11.1 In 2020 the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) undertook a review, the review report and Action Plan were agreed through Cabinet on 24 March 2020 and 23 June 2020, respectively. A follow up review was undertaken by different LGA CPC Peers during 2022 and a further LGA Peer Committee Support report was issued in January 2023 and a number of further recommendations were made.

11.2 Their initial findings included several recommendations which were first presented to the Committee as an Action Plan at the meeting on 20 June 2023 for consideration and was referred onto Cabinet to approve. The Action Plan was agreed by at the meeting on 27 June 2023.

11.3 Since this the Action Plan was approved, this have been presented throughout the year to the Committee for consideration at each meeting under the Work Programme item.

11.4 Some of the key recommendations included in the Action Plan were:

- To ensure effective training is provided for Members, as well as specific training to opposition Councillors.

- To urgently fund and recruit a dedicated Scrutiny Officer.
- To establish clear lines of questioning and associated processes.
- To develop clear reporting lines between Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny, including providing updates on referrals made.

12. Further Information and Membership

12.1 Further information about the work of scrutiny and contact details can be found here: [Overview and Scrutiny | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/scrutiny)

12.2 Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2023/2024:

Members of the Committee:

Councillor Adam Compton
(Chair)

Councillor Val Bryant
(Vice-Chair)

Councillor David Levett
Councillor Matt Barnes

Councillor Clare Billing
Councillor Mick Debenham
Councillor Ian Moody
Councillor Nigel Mason
Councillor Ralph Muncer
Councillor Dominic Griffiths
Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason

Substitutes:

Councillor Daniel Allen
Councillor David Barnard
Councillor Raj Bhakar
Councillor Sam Collins

Councillor James Denselow
Councillor Lisa Nash
Councillor Sean Nolan
Councillor Mandi Tandi

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
12 MARCH 2024**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN – Q3 UPDATE FOR 2023/24 AND PROJECTS FOR 2024/25

REPORT OF: REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: FIANANCE AND IT

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents progress on delivering the Council Delivery Plan for 23-24 at the end of Quarter 3, 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.

It also makes recommendations on the 24-25 Council Delivery Plan, including:

- The initial projects to be included.
- Over-arching risks
- Approach to performance indicators.

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.
- 2.3. That the Committee recommends to Cabinet the scope of the 24-25 Council Delivery Plan as detailed in paragraphs 8.8-8.10.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 3.2. Making a recommendation on the 24-25 CDP means that the Q1 report will provide the information that the Committee wants. It also helps set the priorities for the Council, as those projects that form part of the CDP will be prioritised.

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.
- 4.2. It is possible to just continue to monitor the existing projects during 24-25, but that would mean that they may not reflect the priorities of the Council.

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 3 update was provided to Performance and Risk Management Group (PRMG) in February. 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 Q3 update.
- 5.3. The CDP is reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and they are asked to provide comments and recommendations to Cabinet.
- 5.4. Service Directors and Executive Members have scored their projects against prioritisation criteria. The results have been moderated by a group made up of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Executive Member for Finance and IT, Deputy Executive Member for Finance and IT, Managing Director and Service Director: Resources.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision first notified on the Forward Plan on the 16 February 2024.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. The CDP brings together projects, risks and performance indicators together in one document. It was implemented in Spring 2022. The CDP is an evolving document that should change over time to reflect Council priorities.

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 3 update, it generally reflects the latest position at the time that the report was written (February).
- 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 15 projects have proposed changes to milestone dates in Q3. These changes are highlighted in yellow in Appendix A. The majority of the changes to the milestone dates relate to available resources. In a few cases this is due to contractor delays, but generally relates to internal resources. Two of the delays are due to changes in approach (i.e., Empty Homes strategy being aligned with Council Tax premiums and budget consultation being focused on decisions in future years). Three of the delays are due to delays in being notified of grant awards (i.e., resident EV charging in our car parks, solar thermal and solar PV).
- 8.5 One project has had new milestone dates added. The Churchgate project has had milestones added for the appointment of specialist support for the masterplan process and investment prospectus presented at UKREiIF event. The first of these has already been completed. New milestones are highlighted in green in Appendix A.
- 8.6 It is recommended that the Digital Transformation project is added to the CDP, including new milestones and risks. This is detailed on page 25 of Appendix A. No projects have been completed during Q3.
- 8.7 At the June Overview and Scrutiny meeting, the need to prioritise projects was discussed, especially given the impact that resourcing was having on the delivery of projects. The Quarter 2 report detailed that a prioritisation tool had been developed (attached at Appendix B) and that this would be used to evaluate all the projects in the current CDP, to determine which would be included in the 24-25 CDP. Paragraph 5.4 provides details of how an evaluation and moderation process was carried out. As part of the moderation process it was determined that the CDP should focus on projects where there is a defined plan of how they will be delivered. This means that some projects will come off the CDP. Work on coming up with a defined plan will still continue

and be included on service plans, although this will depend on available resources. When there is a defined plan in place, then the project will be reviewed as to whether it should be put back on the CDP.

8.8 The conclusion of this project evaluation is detailed in table 1 below. The reduction in number of projects (11-14) that form part of the CDP will help to make the quarterly updates more focused. The budget proposals included additional resource for some of the leisure projects. To help ensure the delivery of the CDP projects it is expected that these will be prioritised, which means other lower priority projects may be delayed. Projects may be added back onto the CDP if they meet the required criteria.

Table 1

Green highlight = to be included on new CDP, Orange highlight = may be included on new CDP.
Red highlight = score that does not meet threshold.

Project	Total Score*	Number of Red indicators*	Number of Amber indicators*	Currently meets CDP criteria*	Comments	Part of 2024/25 CDP
Leisure procurement	81	0	2	Yes	Will be complete by early 2024/25, and move in to business as usual (BAU)	No
Churchgate	76	0	2	Yes	Whilst there is no specific plan, the process of getting to a plan will involve resident and other stakeholder engagement.	Yes
Waste and street cleansing contract	76	0	2	Yes		Yes
Solar PV on leisure buildings	73	0	2	Yes	If Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme bid is successful, then create a wider project for that. Otherwise, a single project to cover solar PV and solar thermal	Yes
Royston Solar Thermal	64	0	3	Yes		
Local Plan	69	0	4	Yes	Rename as 'Review of Local Plan' to make focus clearer	Yes
Master Planning	64	0	5	Yes	To continue as BAU as progress dependent on third parties	No
Digital Transformation	63	0	2	Yes	Added as part of this Q3 report	Yes
Pay on exit parking	56	1	3	Yes		Yes

Project	Total Score*	Number of Red indicators*	Number of Amber indicators*	Currently meets CDP criteria*	Comments	Part of 2024/25 CDP
Museum Storage	55	0	6	No	Continue work looking at options, but remove from CDP until there is a deliverable plan	No
Enterprise Strategy	54	0	5	No	Continue using available resource to develop a strategy. Add back to CDP depending on what the strategy includes.	No
Financial Sustainability	53	0	4	Yes	To remain as an overarching risk, and have a specific project 'Engaging the community on our finances and how we spend our money'	Yes
Delivering housing on Council Land	53	0	4	Yes	Latest report suggests that standard disposal may be the most viable. In that case would be BAU. Consider adding back if we do develop site(s) ourselves.	No
Playgrounds	53	0	4	Yes	For playground renewals then treat as BAU. For significant changes (e.g. new provision, major improvements to the existing) then will be on the CDP.	Yes- but project dependent
Oughtonhead Common Weir	53	0	4	Yes		Yes
Town Centre Strategies	52	0	4	Yes		Yes
LAHF	51	0	6	No	Phase 2 complete by end of March. To consider adding Phase 3 if funding available.	No
Charnwood House	51	0	5	No	Consider retaining if there is a viable plan as that may affect the scoring. Continue to work on options.	TBC

Project	Total Score*	Number of Red indicators*	Number of Amber indicators*	Currently meets CDP criteria*	Comments	Part of 2024/25 CDP
Empty Homes Strategy	49	0	7	No	Strategy has been adopted by Cabinet, so move to BAU	No
Homelessness-others providing accommodation	49	0	8	No	BAU, unless we develop a specific project where we are the delivery lead.	No
Residential/ Public EV charging	49	1	3	Yes		Yes
Cycling networks	47	0	4	Yes	Continue supporting options, but remove until a defined plan as currently all progress is dependent on 3 rd parties	No
Royston Town Hall Annexe	45	2	3	Yes	Continue work as resources allow and engagement from others (e.g. HCC, NHS). But remove from CDP until there is a deliverable plan	No
Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)	43	1	3	No	Proposal for use of 24/25 funding to be considered by Cabinet in March. Reflect any significant individual projects on the CDP.	TBC
Health Inequalities	42	0	7	No	BAU when funding available, may be part of SPF project	No
New waste depot	41	3	3	Yes	Continue to consider any options and assess when there is an absolute need . But remove from CDP until a viable plan.	No
Town Centre Recovery	40	1	2	No	Remove, as recovery phase completed. May tie into Enterprise Strategy or SPF	No
Place Narrative	40	1	4	No	To be continued as BAU	No

* Proposal was that projects should be stopped completely where they scored less than 40 points or had 3 or more red scores. Projects should be challenged where they had 5 or more amber scores. Projects would meet the CDP criteria where they achieved 2 or more

green scores against these key criteria: impact of non-delivery, Council plan alignment, external benefits and contribution towards financial sustainability.

- 8.9 There are currently two over-arching risks that affect (or have the potential to affect) all projects. These are resourcing and cyber security/ IT availability. It is recommended that the availability of financial resources is added to that list.
- 8.10 Before we moved to the current CDP process, we were reporting on a lot of performance indicators that did not provide much insight on how the Council overall was performing (i.e. from a corporate perspective). The idea with the CDP was that we would link performance indicators to the projects. However we have found that very few projects have meaningful indicators. Also, for those projects that do have indicators they tend to only provide meaningful data after implementation/ completion, and by that point the project itself has been removed from the CDP. Whilst it is important that we make sure that projects have achieved their goals, that is probably best assessed through the project management process. It is recommended that we develop a set of performance indicators that give a view of how the Council overall is performing. This could include measures in relation to customer services performance, customer satisfaction and complaints, HR and resourcing, environmental sustainability,
- 8.11 The intention is that the CDP reports provide an overview, as providing all the details on projects and risks would lead to a report that was too long. Requests can be made (especially by O&S) to look at individual projects in more detail. Any such request would be incorporated into the next monitoring report. No requests were made at the last Committee meeting.
- 8.12 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, along with a procedure note on how to navigate the system. Officers will also assist with accessing and using the software.

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 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 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 Q3 monitoring report.
Appendix B- Project prioritisation 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 Jeanette Thompson, Service Director: Legal and Community. jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk, ext. 4346
- 17.5 Ellie Hollingsworth, Policy and Strategy Trainee,. Ellie.hollingsowrth@north-herts.gov.uk, ext. 4220

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

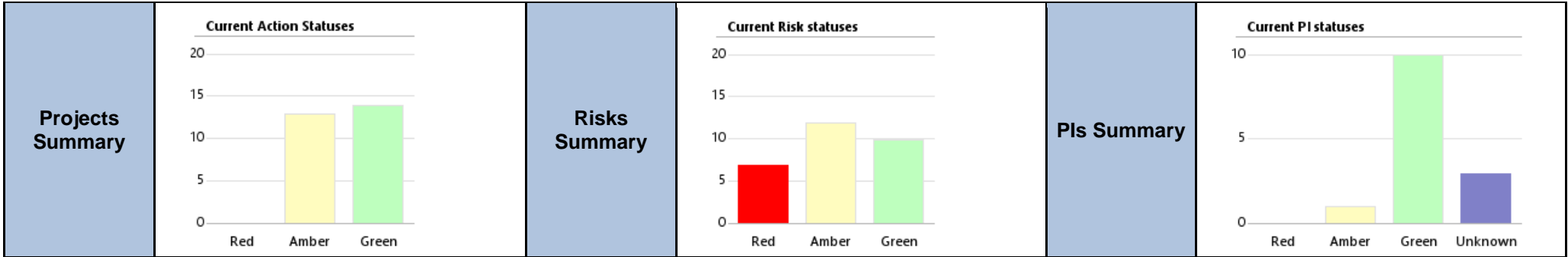
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Council Delivery Plan – Status Key

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.									
	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.									
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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.									


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

Status Summaries



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	Finalise Pay on Exit Parking Review	Due Date	31-May-2024	Progress	50%	Original Date	30-Sep-2022
Project Summary	Procure suppliers and start replacing all existing parking machines in early 2024.						
Latest Update	29-Jan-2024 Progress continues to be made. Appointment of contractor to replace existing parking machines via a framework mini competition expected to happen by the end of January 2024, or shortly thereafter. Now expect procurement of contractor to replace tariff boards to be completed by the end of May 2024, as resources have been focussed on the initial parking machines procurement. The update of TROs is ongoing and now expected to be completed and advertised by the end of April 2024. Preliminary works (e.g., site surveys) could still commence by the end of March 2024, but the majority of installation works will be undertaken during 2024/25. Still anticipate all works being completed by 31 March 2025 in line with allocated Capital funding, although if unexpected issues do arise, we have the option to implement a phased approach. Risk level still assessed as low, with low risks associated with the procurement of contractors, public reaction to changes/associated disruption, and the impact on future parking income.						
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note				
Procure supplier by framework mini competition to replace existing parking machines.	31-Jan-2024	No	Exercise commenced November 2023 and will complete January or early February 2024.				
Procure supplier to replace tariff boards.	29-Feb-2024	No	Due date to change to May 2024. Linked to resources being focussed on the initial parking machines procurement.				
Contractor to commence preliminary works (with the majority of works being undertaken during 2024/25).	31-Mar-2024	No	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.				
Update TROs.	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to April 2024. Ongoing but now expected to be completed and advertised by the end of April 2024.				

Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Budget implications of selected scheme. 2. Inability to procure suppliers within approved budget. 3. Negative public reaction to changes and disruption during works. 4. Loss of income during associated works.		1	1	1					

	Financial Sustainability/Balancing our Budget	Due Date	30-Sep-2025	Progress	<input type="text" value="50%"/>	Original Date	28-Feb-2023
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Project Summary	To deliver a medium term balanced budget for the Council that reflects Council priorities.
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Latest Update	01-Feb-2024 Council adopted the Medium Term Financial Strategy on 23 November 2023. Regarding engagement on budget setting, developed a communications plan to align with the budget being considered by Council at the end of February 2024. This will now extend in to a longer-term plan through the budget cycle to set the 2025/26 budget. Consultation on funding reform now expected in summer 2025 at the earliest, as will be after the General Election.
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Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note
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Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council.	23-Nov-2023	Yes	Council adopted the Medium Term Financial Strategy on 23 November 2023.
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Communications on how the Council sets its budget.	30-Nov-2023	No	Due date to change to 29 February 2024. Developed a communications plan to align with the budget being considered by Council at the end of February. This will now extend in to a longer-term plan through the budget cycle to set the 2025/26 budget.
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Budget for 2024/25 approved by Council.	29-Feb-2024	No	
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Respond to expected consultation on funding reform.	30-Sep-2024	No	Due date to change to September 2025. Not now expected to have consultation until at least summer 2025, as will be after the General Election.
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Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
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1. Funding reductions as a result of new funding formula. 2. Sales, fees, and charges income shortfalls, either due to rates not tracking inflation and/or reductions in demand. 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. 5. Uncertainty over levels of pay inflation required.		9	9	5					
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	Health Inequalities	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="60%"/>	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 March 2024).								
Latest Update	09-Jan-2024 HCC satisfied with mid-point evaluations submitted in October 2023. Meeting planned with HCC for February 2024 to finalise plans for 2024/25 (likely to be that all current projects continue). Certainty regarding 2024/25 funding arrangements means the short-term risk level associated with the delivery of projects and support services is low. However, there is less certainty regarding funding and the level of service provision possible in later years.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Royston Men's Club - November 2023 course.	30-Nov-2023	Yes	Seven participants attended – course data received.						
Review 2023/24 projects and submit proposed annual delivery plan for 2024/25 projects to HCC.	31-Jan-2024	No	Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Meeting with HCC scheduled for February 2024 to discuss 2024/25 plans. No annual delivery plan template or deadline issued yet by HCC, although expect 2024/25 plans to be finalised/agreed by the end of 2023/24 at the latest.						
Royston Men's Club – January 2024 course.	31-Jan-2024	No	Course begins late January 2024.						
Letchworth Horticultural Therapy.	31-Mar-2024	No	Budget of £5K to deliver individual placements of 12/24 weeks during 2023/24.						
Royston Emotional Wellbeing project.	31-Mar-2024	No	Two groups meeting every week throughout 2023/24.						
Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inability to achieve funding for future years. - Delays in achieving funding. - Restrictive funding terms. - Staff shortages/competing priorities. Leading to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cessation of current projects/services. - Delays in achieving outcomes. - Limited scope of projects. - Limited progress with pursuing funding opportunities/delivering projects. 		7	3	3					


	Master Planning	Due Date	30-Jun-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="44%"/>	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	30-Jan-2024 Progress remains ongoing on these projects; however, no milestones were reached in the latest quarter. Progress on the North Stevenage masterplan was paused by the applicant while an outline planning application was prepared and submitted. Work is now expected to resume to complete the masterplan. Sites at Baldock, Letchworth and Luton have been considered by the Council's internal Project Board and subject to public consultation (or imminently will be). Following the last update, a permanent professional post was advertised in Autumn 2023 but was not successfully recruited to and alternative options are currently being considered. Resolving issues on the client-side equally remains a significant influence on progress. These delays, alongside the upcoming 'all out' Council elections, mean that formal decisions on masterplans are now likely to take place after May 2024.
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Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for GA2 North-east of Great Ashby (Local Plan Policy SP18).	31-Dec-2023	No	Due date to change to 30 June 2024. See update dated 30 January 2024.
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for NS1 North of Stevenage (Local Plan Policy SP16).	31-Dec-2023	No	Due date to change to 30 June 2024. See update dated 30 January 2024.
Further consideration of Highover Farm masterplan by Planning Committee (18/01154/OP, Local Plan Policy SP17).	31-Dec-2023	Yes	Application re-presented on 12 October 2023 and resolved that permission be granted subject to conditions and completion of a legal agreement.
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for Baldock sites (Local Plan Policies SP14, BA2, BA3 & BA10).	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to 30 June 2024. See update dated 30 January 2024.
Approval of pre-application Strategic Masterplan for LG1 North of Letchworth (Local Plan Policy SP15).	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to 30 June 2024. See update dated 30 January 2024.
Approval of Strategic Masterplan for EL123 East of Luton (Local Plan Policy SP19).	31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to 30 June 2024. See update dated 30 January 2024.

Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
<p>1. Risk of poor scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to local character and context.</p> <p>2. Risk that strategic sites do not maximise contribution to corporate objectives and priorities of climate change, environment, economy and place.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>4. Failure to secure funding to resource the process.</p> <p>5. Reduction in pre-application income and delay to income from planning applications.</p> <p>6. Failure to retain/recruit sufficiently experienced officers.</p> <p>7. Risk of adverse appeal findings on other/non-Local Plan sites if delivery is delayed or stalled.</p>		5	5	3					



	New Ways of Delivering Housing on Council Land	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	66%	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	01-Feb-2024 Following receipt of the initial external Chartered Surveyor market research report, we 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 and the need to engage with Finance in relation to the appraisal of internal rates of return, we now expect the further report on preferred options to be delivered by 31 January 2024. If required, 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 identified options.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
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	Due date to change to 31 January 2024. Linked to consultant being heavily committed to other projects on our behalf and the need to engage with Finance in relation to the appraisal of internal rates of return.						
If required, and dependent on market research findings, develop milestones/timings to report and make a formal decision on the preferred way forward.	31-Mar-2024	No	Although still to be confirmed, expect to have developed plans for moving things forward by the end of March 2024.						
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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	Oughtonhead Common Weir	Due Date	30-Sep-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="75%"/>	Original Date	30-Sep-2024		
Project Summary	Replace the collapsed weir.								
Latest Update	12-Jan-2024 Still anticipate design documentation and consent submissions being completed by the end of January 2024. This will then allow us to tender for the required works in February/March 2024 and to award the contract in April 2024. Risk level assessed as low, as we still expect to complete the required works by the end of Summer 2024. The situation remains unchanged despite the recent heavy rain and any further deterioration of the partially collapsed weir is still assessed as being unlikely to result in a significant impact.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Design documentation and consent submissions completed.	31-Jan-2024	No							
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 February/March 2024 and awarding the contract in April 2024. Works to hopefully commence in late spring/early summer 2024 when water levels are low, although this will depend on the project plan agreed with the successful contractor.						
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. - 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.		4	2	1					


Leading to: - Full allocated Capital budget being used. - Planned timeline for delivery not being achieved. - Further urgent temporary solutions being required to manage an immediate changing situation.									
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	Playground Renovation Programme	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="33%"/>	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	12-Jan-2024 Groundwork progressing the two projects. Currently concluding procurement processes for both and expect to award the contracts in the week commencing 15 January 2024. Now expect both projects to be completed by the end of March 2024, although this will depend on the project plans agreed with the chosen contractors and there being no supply issues with required equipment/materials. Risk level still assessed as low.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Change to due date - Complete replacement of one piece of equipment and associated surfacing at Serby Avenue Recreation Ground.	31-Dec-2023	No	Now expect project to be completed by the end of March 2024.						
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					

	Pursue commercial leasing opportunity for Royston Town Hall Annexe	Due Date	30-Jun-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="40%"/>	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	25-Jan-2024 Plans are in place for the new Estates Surveyor to take a fresh look at this project. North Herts Council own the freehold interest in three separate titles in this location and the Estates Surveyor needs to review all of these in detail to understand whether access rights are in fact needed from HCC, as a preliminary look has suggested there may be a possibility of gaining access elsewhere. In the meantime, we are attempting to contact the agent that HCC are using on this matter. The plan is to complete the review and understand exactly where we stand by 14 February 2024. As part of the review, we will touch base with the previously interested party and explore other potential interest in the site. At this stage, the previously recorded milestones with a 30 June 2024 due date remain unchanged, although any future actions and timings will be subject to the outcome of the February 2024 review. Due to the uncertainty around how the project proceeds, the risk level is still assessed as medium.						

Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Commencement of negotiations with HCC regarding the acquisition of vehicular access rights over their land from the public highway.	15-Dec-2023	No	Due date to change to 14 February 2024. Review of our freehold interest at the location to understand whether access rights are in fact needed from HCC due to be completed by this date. In the meantime, attempting to contact the agent that HCC are using on this matter so that negotiations can commence quickly should access rights be required.						
Completion of negotiations with HCC regarding the acquisition of vehicular access rights over their land and arrangements formalised.	30-Jun-2024	No	Milestone and due date subject to the outcome of the February 2024 review referenced above.						
Maintain ongoing dialogue with interested party whilst seeking to acquire access rights from HCC.	30-Jun-2024	No	Milestone and due date subject to the outcome of the February 2024 review referenced above.						
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					

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	Resident/Public EV Charging in our Car Parks	Due Date	31-Oct-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="50%"/>	Original Date	31-Mar-2023
Project Summary	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.						
Latest Update	29-Jan-2024 Following a delay, we have now received confirmation that the OZEV grant is being paid to us. Contract documentation has been prepared and we are awaiting the supplier's response. We now anticipate the contract being finalised by the end of February 2024. Due to the contract delay, anticipate relevant leases being completed by the end of April 2024 and works commencing in June 2024, although this is dependent on the implementation programme still to be agreed with the supplier. Although precise timeframes still to be confirmed, all units expected to be installed in the eight car parks in accordance with the OZEV grant requirements. Currently, without agreed contract, lease arrangements and implementation programme, there remains a level of uncertainty regarding delivering the project on time and to grant requirements, and so risk level still assessed as medium. To address the recently highlighted operational risk associated with EV charging points, planned locations have been shared with HCC Insurance and supplier responsibilities for ongoing inspection and maintenance are included in the contract, along with related service level KPIs.						
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note				
Contract finalised with private sector partner.	31-Dec-2023	No	Due date to change to February 2024. Linked to a delay in receiving confirmation of when the OZEV grant will be paid to us. The contract documents are with the private sector partner, and we are awaiting their response.				
Complete relevant leases with contractor for the length of the contract.	31-Jan-2024	No	Due date to change to April 2024. Linked to the delay referenced above. Timings still to be confirmed, as dependent on contract documentation and revised implementation programme being agreed with our partner.				
Contractor to commence works and NHC to start promoting project.	29-Feb-2024	No	Due date to change to June 2024, although precise timings dependent on the implementation programme agreed with our partner. Linked to delays completing earlier milestones. Still expect project to be delivered in accordance with OZEV grant requirements.				


Installation of all new EV charging points completed.			31-Oct-2024	No	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 (awaiting confirmation of OZEV grant requirements and related dates).				
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					


	Royston Leisure Centre Solar Thermal	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="50%"/>	Original Date	31-Mar-2023		
Project Summary	Installation of Solar Thermal technology at Royston Leisure Centre.								
Latest Update	17-Jan-2024 As previously reported in the Q2 2023/24 Council Delivery Plan monitoring report, this project is currently on hold. Now to be included and considered as part of a wider Corporate Decarbonisation Project. As part of this wider project, we have applied 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 March 2024 at the latest. In the meantime, no further action to be taken to progress the installation of Solar Thermal technology at Royston Leisure Centre until we know whether our application has been successful, and we have considered the findings of any decarbonisation review undertaken. 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						
Proposed change to due date - Decision received on our Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant application.	31-Jan-2024	No	Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Now expect to receive a decision in March 2024 at the latest.						
If project proceeds, further milestones to be developed and incorporated into the Council Delivery Plan.	31-Mar-2024	No	Further action is dependent on grant application outcome and decision to proceed with project.						
Review report findings and decision on project viability.	31-Mar-2024	No	Timings uncertain, as dependent on whether a decarbonisation review of our main buildings is undertaken or an independent decision on project viability is required.						
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					


	Solar PV on Leisure Centres	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="16%"/>	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	15-Jan-2024 As previously reported in the Q2 2023/24 Council Delivery Plan monitoring report, this project is currently on hold. To now be included and considered as part of a wider Corporate Decarbonisation Project. As part of this wider project, we have applied 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 March 2024 at the latest. In the meantime, no further action to 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 we have considered the findings of any decarbonisation review undertaken. If we are unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding, we will then have to decide whether to proceed with the originally planned project.
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Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note
Proposed change to due date - 2. Decision received on our Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant application.	31-Jan-2024	No	Now expect to receive a decision in March 2024 at the latest.
3. Appoint specialist to complete design specification and manage procurement of contractor and subsequent installation. (On Hold)		No	Due date 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.
4. Design specification completed. (On Hold)		No	Due date 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.
5. Procurement of contractor to undertake installation works. (On Hold)		No	Due date 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.
6. Complete installation of Solar PV. (On Hold)		No	Due date 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					



	Waste Depots	Due Date	01-May-2025	Progress	<input type="text" value="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	28-Feb-2024 Draft leases for the Works Road depot site for the waste and recycling contract from May 2025 have been issued to bidders. Negotiations are progressing on the assignment of the existing lease to the Council. It is anticipated that the leases will be assigned prior to contract award. 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. We continue to consider options and assess when there is an absolute need for a new waste depot, and the proposal for 2024/25 is to remove this element from the Council Delivery Plan until we have a viable plan in place.						
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note				
Assignment of Letchworth depot lease.	01-Jan-2024	No	Due date to change to 1 August 2024. Draft leases issued to bidders. Negotiations progressing on the assignment of the existing lease to the Council. Anticipate leases will be assigned prior to contract award.				

Review of new depot project costs.			01-Mar-2024	No	Consultant to be procured. Proposal is to remove the new waste depot element from the 2024/25 Council Delivery Plan until we have a viable plan in place.				
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					

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	Work with relevant partners to prevent and relieve homelessness whenever possible	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	33%	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	05-Feb-2024 As part of developing the Council's new Housing Strategy, a Member in-person briefing was held on 18 December 2023 to highlight the Council's roles and responsibilities and to provide Members with an opportunity to feedback their views on our proposed priorities going forward. Consultation with residents and stakeholders via an online survey has commenced and will close on 11 February 2024. 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				
Develop funding bid for DLUHC's Supported Housing Accommodation Programme (SHAP).	10-Nov-2023	Yes	DLUHC invited the Council to bid under its SHAP. Options developed with partners, including Herts CC, DLUHC, Homes England, Helping Herts Homeless and One YMCA.				
Develop Single Homeless Pathway Plan.	30-Nov-2023	No	Due date to change to 31 March 2024. This action identifies the key actions required to stabilise and supplement the accommodation and support services for single homeless people and will now be completed by March 2024. Currently consulting on a new Housing Strategy (which Cabinet will consider in March 2024), with resultant actions relating to the Single Homeless Pathway Plan featuring in the Year One action plan of the new Strategy.				
Develop temporary accommodation forecasting model.	30-Nov-2023	No	Due date to change to 31 March 2024. Develop temporary accommodation forecasting model to help manage demand from homeless households in conjunction with Herts CC. Action will now be completed by March 2024. Currently consulting on a new Housing Strategy (which Cabinet will consider in March 2024), with resultant actions relating to the temporary accommodation forecasting model featuring in the Year One action plan of the new Strategy.				



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. After adoption by Cabinet, implementation of changes is likely to take a number of months.						
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			101	N/A Data Only

	Charnwood House	Due Date	30-Apr-2024	Progress	<div style="width: 70%;"><div style="background-color: #4f81bd; height: 10px;"></div></div> 70%	Original Date	30-Apr-2023			
Project Summary	Leasing the property as a Community Hub.									
Latest Update	13-Feb-2024 Formal marketing exercise closed 26 January 2024. No proposals were forthcoming, and this leaves us with no formal interest. A meeting has been held with Procurement to prepare for early discussions with Hitchin Bid/Creative/Initiative to discuss future plans. A working group will be established to agree the next steps ahead of 31 March 2024.									
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note							
Undertake formal marketing exercise.	31-Jan-2024	Yes	After extensions to the marketing period, exercise concluded on 26 January 2024. Although we anticipated that potentially two parties would present proposals, none were forthcoming, and this leaves us with no formal interest.							
Following marketing exercise, evaluate options.	31-Mar-2024	No	Following conclusion of marketing exercise, a meeting has been held with Procurement to prepare for early discussions with Hitchin Bid/Creative/Initiative to discuss future plans. A working group will be established to agree the next steps ahead of 31 March 2024.							
Present report to Cabinet on the preferred options.	30-Apr-2024	No	Timing of Cabinet report still to be confirmed.							
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 actions and dates still to be confirmed. Likely to commence 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. 3. Viability of Listed Building consent conditions. 4. Demand for community hub. 5. Delays due to Asset of Community Value (ACV) listing.			5	5	3					



	Churchgate	Due Date	31-May-2024	Progress	<div style="width: 72%;"><div style="width: 72%;"></div></div> 72%	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	30-Jan-2024 As outlined at the Councillor event on 9 November 2023, we have now entered Phase 2 of the project. A mini competition exercise is currently being undertaken to procure specialists to support the masterplan process and we expect to make the appointment by mid-February 2024. Although specific activities and timings are dependent on the work programme agreed with the successful bidder, the aim is to develop visioning and masterplan options and produce an investment prospectus in time for the UKREiIF event being held between 21-23 May 2024. This event will bring together the public sector, Government, investors, funders, developers and more, and will enable us to highlight opportunities relating to the project and to potentially facilitate new relationships to drive the regeneration forward. The permanent in-person hub is on hold until further notice. We are 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, ongoing communication is via the digital hub. Risk level still assessed as high, as although the project is expected to regenerate the area, we are still in the early stages and have yet to determine the best way to achieve this. Progress and areas of concern continue to be monitored via regular Project Board meetings.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
New milestone - Appointment of specialist support for the masterplan process.	16-Feb-2024	No							
New milestone - Investment prospectus presented at UKREiIF event.	23-May-2024	No							
Open in-person project hub. (On Hold)	31-May-2024	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 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, 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					



	Cycling Network	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	<div style="width: 66%;"><div style="width: 66%;"></div></div> 66%	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	29-Jan-2024 Following HCC adoption of the LCWIP for North Hertfordshire on 18 September 2023, we still expect HCC to adopt the complementary Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy in early 2024. Currently, waiting for HCC to confirm exact timings. Cycle parking standards and facilities incorporated into the Sustainability SPD, which is currently out for consultation. As previously reported, no longer intend to develop a separate Cycling Strategy for North Herts, with officer effort directed at seeking funding to assist with the design and delivery of schemes outlined in the LCWIP. We 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 lead on 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						
Adoption of LCWIP by HCC Highways Transport Panel/Cabinet.			31-Oct-2023	Yes	Adopted by HCC on 18 September 2023.						
HCC adopt Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy.			29-Feb-2024	No	Expected in early 2024. Waiting for HCC to confirm exact timings.						
Further milestones dependent on adoption of LCWIP and Hertfordshire Active Travel Strategy.			31-Mar-2024	No	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.						
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					

	Empty Homes Strategy	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">75%</div>	Original Date	01-Sep-2022				
Project Summary	Develop and start to implement a strategy to reduce numbers of empty homes.										
Latest Update	22-Jan-2024 The need for the new Empty Homes Strategy to coincide with the review of Council Tax requirements for 2024/25 means that it will now be presented to Cabinet in February 2024 rather than January. Previously reported delays are due to resourcing issues, with the Environmental Health Manager having to prioritise undertaking numerous day-to-day officer/manager tasks to cover absences/vacancies, and meeting these competing demands remains challenging. Still anticipate advertising and appointing to the new Housing Improvement Officer role by March 2024, once Strategy is adopted. Post adoption, Council Delivery Plan details to be reviewed and if required, updated to reflect key implementation stages and risks to the successful achievement of stated objectives.										
Milestone			Due Date	Complete	Note						
Present to Cabinet for adoption of the Strategy.			16-Jan-2024	Yes	Agreed by Cabinet in February 2024.						
Commence implementation of Strategy post adoption, including advertising and appointing officer to post.			17-Jan-2024	Yes	Milestone for Ideagen purposes, with the completion date of 7 February 2024 simply reflecting that implementation of the Strategy commenced following its adoption by Cabinet.						
Attempt to recruit to new Housing Improvement Officer role, created to help deliver approved Strategy.			31-Mar-2024	No	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
Development of Strategy Risks: - Staff shortages/competing priorities limit progress with developing Strategy. - Potential political/reputational risk associated with not having an agreed strategic approach in place.				4	2	1					

- Resource implications/limitations relating to the different options available. <u>Implementation of Adopted Strategy</u> Risks (dependent on the agreed approach): - Securing the resources required to deliver the Strategy and achieve objectives. - Limited number of empty homes that we can actually take forward under the Strategy. - Cost to Council of maintaining empty properties that we acquire. - Political/reputational risk associated with a perceived lack of progress and/or cost/benefit analysis of our approach.									
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	Enterprise Strategy	Due Date	30-Sep-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="25%"/>	Original Date	16-Jan-2024		
Project Summary	Development and approval of an Enterprise Strategy, incorporating Commercial, Economic Development and Tourism.								
Latest Update	30-Jan-2024 Previously reported delays were due to the Enterprise Team prioritising other areas of work. It has now been agreed that the presentation of the draft Strategy to Leadership Team and PLB, prior to going to Cabinet for adoption, will now take place after the May 2024 local elections. The initial scope was signed-off at the Executive Member briefing in December 2023, and the Local Enterprise Partnership are now assisting us with the preparation of the Economic Development and Tourism elements, while the Enterprise Team are refining the Commercial element. The plan is to have a final draft approved by the end of May 2024, but due to the likely scheduling of committee meetings and the associated reporting deadlines, the presentation of the Strategy to Cabinet for adoption is unlikely to happen until September 2024. Officers continue to provide regular updates to the Executive Member and despite the delays referenced above, the project continues to be assessed as low risk.								
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note						
Detailed Strategy scope agreed by Exec Members.	14-Dec-2023	Yes	Scope prepared and signed-off.						
First draft prepared for comment – Leadership Team/Exec Members.	26-Feb-2024	No	Due date to change to May 2024, to reflect the timetable agreed with the LEP and the revised timetable for presenting the draft Strategy to Leadership Team and PLB, prior to Cabinet adoption.						
Present Strategy to Leadership Team/PLB.	11-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to May 2024. Draft Strategy to be reviewed/amended in line with feedback from Leadership Team and Executive Members. See above milestone.						
Present Strategy to Cabinet for adoption.	19-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to September 2024. As the draft Strategy will now be finalised after the May 2024 local elections, it is unlikely that Cabinet will have opportunity to adopt the Strategy until September 2024 due to the likely scheduling of committee meetings in 2024/25 and the associated reporting deadlines.						
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					


	Leisure Contract Procurement	Due Date	01-Apr-2024	Progress	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">84%</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	17-Jan-2024 Contract awarded to Sport and Leisure Management (SLM) trading under the brand name Everyone Active. The new contract has secured a business case for further investment into facilities and will improve the management fee received despite broadening the scope of services to include a new Active Communities Programme. Mobilisation kick-off meeting held early January 2024 and contractor submitted detailed mobilisation plan. Three-month mobilisation period should provide adequate time for the required changes to be made. In view of the progress made and the arrangements in place to ensure effective mobilisation in time for the 1 April 2024 start date, the risk level is now assessed as low.									
Milestone		Due Date	Complete	Note						
Deadline for revised tender submissions (if required).		08-Nov-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Evaluation of tenders.		17-Nov-2023	Yes	Evaluation completed on the revised target date of 17 November 2023.						
Present report to Cabinet.		12-Dec-2023	Yes	New Extraordinary Cabinet meeting date. Report presented to O&S on 5 December 2023 prior to going to Cabinet.						
Notification of outcome to bidders.		20-Dec-2023	Yes	Completed.						
Finalise Contract Award.		02-Jan-2024	Yes	Completed.						
Mobilisation period - 3 January 2024 to 31 March 2024.		31-Mar-2024	No	Mobilisation period commenced on 3 January 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. (No longer applicable.) - Limited flexibility in project plan leaves little room for manoeuvre if key milestone dates are not met. (No longer applicable.) - Poor quality specification will impact contract delivery. (No longer considered a risk in view of specification produced.) - Lack of responses to tender. (No longer applicable.) - Low value bids from respondents. (No longer applicable.) - Awarding contract to new supplier could lead to mobilisation/operational issues at handover.			5	3	3					


	Local Authority Housing Fund	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	<div style="width: 85%;"><div style="background-color: #4F81BD; height: 10px;"></div></div> 85%	Original Date	31-Mar-2024			
Project Summary	Delivery of additional housing through Registered Providers.									
Latest Update	05-Feb-2024 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 has been delivered. Following Cabinet in June 2023, we submitted our validation form for round two of the scheme - two providers were interested, delivering a further eight units. However, Home Group subsequently pulled out at a very late stage and settle were understandably unable to pick up the extra units, so the overall delivery, now via settle only, is four units (three x resettlement and one x temporary accommodation). Risk level assessed low for both likelihood and impact, as there are only a small number of units to be delivered, round one delivery has been completed, and round two funding is going ahead.									
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note							
Agree Memorandum of Understanding with settle relating to Round One allocated funding.	15-Nov-2023	Yes	Completed.							
Agree Memorandum of Understanding with Registered Provider(s) to deliver housing via Round Two allocated funding.	30-Nov-2023	Yes	MOU for Round Two signed with settle. DLUHC sent revised MOU for Round Two reflecting only four units will now be delivered in total.							
Delivery of housing by settle via Round One allocated funding.	31-Dec-2023	Yes								
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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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		New for 2023/24	2	2
						Local Authority Housing Fund - Number of bridging element (larger) homes delivered via Round One allocation		New for 2023/24	1	1


	Local Plan Delivery and Review	Due Date	30-Sep-2024	Progress	<div style="width: 33%;"><div style="background-color: #4F81BD; height: 10px;"></div></div> 33%	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	30-Jan-2024 Cabinet resolved in January 2024 that the Local Plan should be subject to a full review. This followed a comprehensive officer review of the Plan's policies and wider factors. Further guidance and regulations are awaited following enactment of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act. These will provide further detail on the steps the review will need to follow and may stipulate a timeframe within which North Hertfordshire should commence or progress this. The Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is currently out for public consultation. The commencement date for statutory Biodiversity Net Gain on major sites has been confirmed as 12 February 2024. A range of accompanying guidance has been published.			
Milestone	Due Date	Complete	Note	
Approval of draft Sustainability SPD for consultation.	31-Dec-2023	Yes	Approved by Cabinet December 2023.	
Publication of initial recommendations in relation to the review of the Local Plan as required by Policy IMR2.	31-Dec-2023	Yes	Draft recommendations were published in December 2023 before being considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and then Cabinet in January 2024.	
Adoption of Sustainability SPD.	31-Mar-2024	No	Consultation on draft SPD runs from 4 January to 16 February 2024. Consultation responses will then be reviewed to determine if Cabinet timetables for March are achievable.	
Approval of draft Biodiversity SPD for consultation.	31-Mar-2024	No	The Government has delayed the introduction of mandatory Biodiversity requirements until 12 February 2024. Detailed guidance has recently been published. This, and the proposed timelines for production of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by Herts County Council, will be reviewed to inform the scope of any Biodiversity SPD which this Council might produce.	
Adoption of Biodiversity SPD.	30-Sep-2024	No	As below.	
Approval of draft Design Guide SPD for consultation.	30-Sep-2024	No	Strategic Planning Matters report to Cabinet (November 2023) identified this is likely to occur in Summer 2024. Revision agreed in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy.	


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Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Inadequate guidance leads to scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to, or contribute towards, corporate objectives and priorities of climate change, environment, economy and place. - Poor scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to local character and context. - Failure to 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					

	Museum Storage	Due Date	31-Mar-2024	Progress	57%	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	22-Jan-2024 Position remains the same as previously reported. Executive members considered potential options for the project, but identifying the right way forward now needs to be considered as part of wider discussions around ongoing and future budgetary pressures. In the meantime, officers looking at alternative options and timelines. September 2023 Cabinet report deferred, and a revised date has not yet been confirmed. We continue to manage the risks associated with the current storage facilities to the best of our ability within available resources.									
Milestone			Due Date	Complete	Note					
Consider the best way to deal with currently stored items should the project progress.			31-Mar-2024	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 (31 March 2024 due date is for administrative purposes only). 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.					
Develop further milestones to reflect Cabinet decision e.g., appoint Project Manager/Quantity Surveyor, finalise Business Case and detailed specifications.			31-Mar-2024	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 (31 March 2024 due date is for administrative purposes only).					
Report presented to Leadership Team, PLB and Cabinet seeking a decision on the preferred way forward. (On Hold)			31-Mar-2024	No	September 2023 Cabinet report deferred. Timing of report not yet confirmed and so we are unable to propose a revised due date (31 March 2024 due date is for administrative purposes only).					
Risks		Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
<p>1. Funding the project and ongoing/future budgetary pressures.</p> <p>2. Unforeseen issues with the development.</p> <p>3. Lower utilisation of the commercial storage opportunity than expected.</p> <p>4. Until the project is completed, risk of damage to items stored at the current facility (mainly reputational, but potentially financial).</p>			5	5	3					


	Shared Prosperity Fund	Due Date	30-Apr-2024	Progress	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">66%</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	02-Feb-2024 Update on the progress of Town Centre Programmes and related SPF funding provided via the Town Centre Recovery update. In line with the programme agreed with the contractor, installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Hitchin and Letchworth is now expected to be completed in mid-April 2024, slightly later than the previously reported timescale of March 2024.						
Milestone			Due Date	Complete	Note		
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 change to 30 April 2024. Groundworks (who are leading the project) have procured a contractor and the 10-day standstill period ends on 20 January 2024. After this date, the works will start progressing and the project is expected to be completed by mid-April 2024.		

Installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Letchworth.			31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to 30 April 2024. Groundworks (who are leading the project) have procured a contractor and the 10-day standstill period ends on 20 January 2024. After this date, the works will start progressing and the project is expected to be completed by mid-April 2024.				
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 style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">83%</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	31-Jan-2024 The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) is open until March 2025. All towns, except Baldock, have developed projects and been funded in Year 1 (2022/23) and Year 2 (2023/24). They are now developing items for 2024/25. Baldock have no fundable entity yet to whom to give grants. Following the Save the High Streets and the HCC Growth Board Traders Association project, meetings have been held and they organised a Christmas Shop Window Competition. Some core members are looking to form a legal entity with whom we can work in the future. The group has some short term and medium term ideas, which may require some SPF funding when they are formally established. 2023/24 town centre improvement funding is now allocated, and Leadership Team and Members are currently reviewing SPF plans for 2024/25 including the town centre allocation. We will be assessing the impact of recovery work undertaken by each town towards the end of the project via footfall metrics and local surveys. 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/plan 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. 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				
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-Sep-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="40%"/>	Original Date	31-Jan-2023			
Project Summary	Progress development of overarching Town Centre Strategy and individual Town Centre Strategic Masterplans.									
Latest Update	29-Jan-2024 Additional technical expertise secured in December 2023 to help prepare evidence base for the overarching Town Centre Strategy. The work programme agreed with consultants now means that recorded milestone dates need to be amended. Completion of the evidence base and preparation of the draft Strategy is now expected by the end of June 2024. A scoping report to Cabinet providing an overview of the draft Strategy and project/governance arrangements for individual Town Centre Strategic Masterplans will be presented in September 2024 (2024/25 committee dates still to be confirmed), 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						
Appoint consultant to prepare evidence base for overarching Town Centre Strategy.		31-Oct-2023	Yes	Project Officer and temporary consultant now in place.						
Undertake work to complete evidence base and prepare draft Strategy.		31-Mar-2024	No	Due date to change to June 2024. Linked to delay in procuring additional technical expertise. Revised date aligns with the work programme agreed with consultants.						
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	Due date to change to September 2024. Linked to the fact that completion of the evidence base and preparation of the draft Strategy will now not be completed until June 2024. Also linked to the likely scheduling of committee meetings over the summer months.						
Progress work on Letchworth Town Centre strategic masterplan, confirming/commencing detailed work following presentation of the Cabinet report.		30-Jun-2024	No	Due date to change to September 2024. Aligns with Cabinet report milestone above.						
Page 72	Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
	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					



	Waste and Street Cleansing Contract Procurement	Due Date	01-Aug-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="28%"/>	Original Date	01-Apr-2024
Project Summary	Procurement of the Waste and Street Cleansing contract.						
Latest Update	28-Feb-2024 Cabinet and East Hert's Executive approved changes to the contract service design in December 2023, in light of affordability concerns. Final tenders are due to be issued to bidders at the end of February 2024. Contract award is expected to be in July 2024.						
Milestone		Due Date	Complete	Note			
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.		01-Mar-2024	No	Final tenders to be issued at the end of February 2024. Deadline for responses still to be confirmed.			

















Evaluation of final tenders and production of Evaluation Report.			01-May-2024	No							
Project Board sign off of Evaluation Report and award recommendation.			01-Jul-2024	No							
Executive and Cabinet approval.			19-Jul-2024	No							
Contract award.			01-Aug-2024	No							
Risks			Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Risks: - Unable to secure interested bidders (although this risk is unlikely to materialise). - Capacity of key staff. - Depots not fit for purpose/available. - Governments Resources & Waste Strategy differs from specification (outcomes of new Strategy 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					





New Project Introduced for the Q3 Monitoring Report

	Digital Transformation	Due Date	31-Dec-2024	Progress	<input type="text" value="0%"/>	Original Date	31-Dec-2024			
Project Summary	To invest in and develop a low code digital platform that can be used to transform our services and applications. The programme will span a number of years, but this Council Delivery Plan project only focuses on key activities during the next 12 months.									
Latest Update	23-Jan-2024 Current progress relates to the CRM build, which was mostly completed in December 2023, with a few minor tasks carried into January 2024. Testing of the system and training will be undertaken during January and February 2024. A full project plan supports this element of the wider Digital Transformation programme. The draft Digital Strategy has been developed and will go to Cabinet in February 2024. Risk level currently assessed as medium, with uncertainty around available staff resources, unexpected limitations within the new digital platform being identified as the programme progresses, and unexpected delays/limitations associated with the new waste contract.									
Milestone		Due Date	Complete	Note						
Development of a new Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) and customer portal.		04-Mar-2024	No	CRM build was mostly completed in December 2023, with a few minor tasks carried into January 2024. January and February 2024 to be used for final user testing and training.						
Develop a Digital Strategy.		31-Mar-2024	No	Draft Strategy developed. On Forward Plan for Cabinet on 6 February 2024.						
Scope and investigate replacement of Burials system.		30-Jun-2024	No	Replace in-house access database. If this can be built using new digital platform, then will avoid a new cost.						
Patchin Town Hall booking system developed.		30-Sep-2024	No	Replace existing system.						
Integrate Netcall into Microsoft Azure for wider integration capabilities.		30-Sep-2024	No	Needed for wider integration.						
Develop waste services processes and integrate with new contractors' software.		01-Oct-2024	No	Full scoping to start in early 2024.						
Risks		Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score	Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
1. Resources within key teams available to deliver. 2. Unexpected limitations within new digital platform. 3. Unexpected delays or limitations relating to the new waste contract/contractor.			6	6	1					

Risks and PIs Not Linked to Specific Projects

Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<p>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 and retain roles in some key areas.</p>		8	9	2
<p>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.</p>		8	8	8

Performance Indicators	Status	Trend	Value	Target
Percentage of NNDR collected in year			90.10%	86.5%
Percentage of council tax collected in year			91.89%	91.5%
Museum general admittance visitor numbers			22,826	20,750
Miles driven by NHC full electric vehicles			77,408	41,250
Hitchin Town Hall income		New for 2023/24	£221,866	N/A Data Only
Value of sales at Bancroft Cafe Kiosk		New for 2023/24	£21,603	N/A Data Only
Percentage of raised sales invoices due for payment that have been paid			95.57%	97%
Percentage of payments received that were paid by electronic methods			99.38%	99.3%
Kg residual waste per household			245kg	264kg

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting			58.81%	57.5%
Electricity and gas energy consumption (kWh) - 100% of reported energy consumption is from green energy sources			1,432,709	1,645,668

Scoring criteria and weightings

	Score
Impact of non-delivery (excluding political and financial impacts which are assessed separately)	
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	60
2 or fewer	Number of red	0	6	1	0
Concern if 5 or more	Number of amber	4	3	6	4
		Should it be on the Council Delivery Plan?			
2 or more	Number of greens against first 4 criteria	2	0	0	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?	
2 or more	Number of greens against first 4 criteria	2	

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 March 2024

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Boards (HSAB) and Hertfordshire Children Safeguarding Partnership (HSCP) update of recommendations

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR LEGAL & COMMUNITY

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COUNCILLOR ALISTAIR WILLOUGBY (EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS)

PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council needs to have robust procedures in place that govern how staff and members deal with concerns about children and adults at risk of abuse to maintain our statutory duty to safeguard their welfare. Work is ongoing to ensure that these procedures are understood and followed throughout the organisation.
- 1.2 North Herts Council is a partner of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board a multi-agency partnership led by Hertfordshire County Council, (the local authority), the East and North Herts and Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Groups and Hertfordshire Constabulary.
- 1.3 This information note also provides an update in following the Shared Internal Audit Service (SAIS) report recommendations as presented to the Committee in September 2023. SAIS recommended that in addition to the Annual Report to the Committee, updates were provided in-year, on recommendations “until fully completed” and are therefore provided as an information note and Appendices.

INFORMATION TO NOTE

2. STEPS TO DATE

- 2.1 Highlights from Appendix B –
 - 2.1.1 A self-paced basic level e-learning course has been purchased and offered to officers who, due to shift work or relocation of their home address, are unable to attend the scheduled basic face to face training.
 - 2.1.2 All officers who were overdue training have been contacted, along with their line managers, and individual updates are provided in Appendix B.
 - 2.1.3 Members training - NOTE that of the current Overview & Scrutiny Committee – since the Annual report was last presented in September 2023, only 2 Members have completed the Safeguarding training. Members should log on to Growzone and complete the module as soon as possible (*it will take up to 20 minutes*).

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The Safeguarding team will present the Annual Review of Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Adults and timely updates in regard to the respective boards and partnerships.

4. APPENDICES

- 4.1 Appendix A - HSAB/HCSP recommendations to district councils.
- 4.2 Appendix B Updated SIAS Audit Action Tracker.

5. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 5.1 Jeanette Thompson, Service Director Legal & Community: jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk
- 5.2 Reuben Ayavoo, Policy and Communities Manager
Reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk
- 5.3 Lisa McDonald, Safeguarding Administrative Support Officer
lisa.mcdonald@north-herts.gov.uk
- 5.4 Helen Rae, Community Wellbeing Team Leader helen.rae@north-herts.gov.uk

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 HSAB Adults Annual Report 22-23 [About the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and Business Unit | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- 6.2 HSCP Annual Report 22-23 [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- 6.3 [Overview and Scrutiny Annual Review of Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Adults \(2022-23\)](#)
- 6.4 SIAS audit as reported to O& S on the September 2023 - [HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) /Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Updates Since September 2023

HSAB

Trix

In September HSAB moved its policy and procedures guidance to the online 'Trix' platform.

- You will be able to access Trix via the HSAB webpage and you do not need login details to access the platform.
- Trix provides a platform to host their trusted procedures that underpin social care practice and the safeguarding partnership and board responsibilities, promoting the best possible outcomes for vulnerable adults. The Policy and Procedures are intended for use by all practitioners, volunteers, services, and partner agencies in Hertfordshire.
- The platform is user friendly and easy to navigate. Once you have accessed Trix you will see there is a 'Amendments' tab which will notify you of any amendments that have been made to any of the policies.

7 Minute Briefings

These are shared once a month and topics all relate to themes that have come out of Safeguarding Adult Reviews. Topics covered have been:

- Escalation
- Fire Safety
- Professional Curiosity

Lunch and Learn

Lunch and Learn sessions on Fire Safety have been offered and are facilitated by Lauren Merritt, Vulnerable Person's Team Leader from the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. These sessions will cover:

- Improving the understanding of Fire Risks in the home including hoarding, smoking, emollient creams.
- Services offered by Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- The importance of multi-agency working
- What service are offered by the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- How to refer people for Home Fire Safety Visits.

Annual Report

The Annual Report for 2022-23 is available to view on the HSAB website.

[hsab-annual-report-22-23.pdf \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hsab-annual-report-22-23.pdf)

HSCP

Child Protection Medicals

The HSCP, Hertfordshire Community Trust and East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust have developed a guidance document for patients and carers relating to Child Protection Medicals. Please see [CP medicals article for HSCP \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/cp-medicals-article-for-hscp)

HSCP Lunch and Learn

HSCP were running Lunch & Learn sessions on Female Genital Mutilation by Dr Olive Hayes, Consultant Community Paediatrician, Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children ICB and Jen Sarsby, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children ICB, are facilitating the sessions on FGM to share their knowledge and expertise, to help professionals become more informed. These were cancelled and dates will be rearranged.

Annual Report

The annual report for 2022-23 is available to view on the HSCP website.

[Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

HSAB & HSCP

HSAB and HSCP Winter 2023 Newsletter

The newsletter key highlights are:

- Water safety for children
- Key insights to inform thinking on the proposed mandatory reporting duty in England and Wales for disclosures of child sexual abuse.
- Online Safety Act has received Royal Assent putting rules to make the internet safer in the UK, into law. The Act initiates Ofcom's new powers and places legal responsibility on tech companies to prevent and remove illegal content, such as bullying, content promoting self-harm and eating disorders and pornography.
- Launch of Support for Dads webpage.
- HSCP Outcome Bees Framework is available for use across all partners that Hertfordshire County Council work with.
- Cuckooing Survey has now closed, and the results will be shared in due course and the public facing campaign launched in January 2024
- HSAB/HSCP Housing Conference was attended by around 150 colleagues, who explored themes of Domestic Abuse, Fire Safety and Mental Capacity.
- Safe and Well visits from Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service can be requested by anyone and all professionals can refer people for advice on fire safety.
- HSAB Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) can be viewed on their website.
- The platform to access HSAB procedures online, was launched and training sessions will be available in 2024.

HSAB & HSCP Learning Hubs

The Learning Hub is an important two-way feedback loop between front line practitioners and the Strategic Safeguarding Partnership/Board, ensuring learning on priority issues is shared and acted on at all levels in a timely way.

In March 2024 the focus is on Trauma Informed Practice and training sessions are aimed at all professionals working with adults, children, and families.

Legal & Community - Risks Overview

Generated on: 06 February 2024

Legal & Community - Current Actions Overview

Generated on: 06 February 2024

Action Title	Action Description	Original Due Date	Due Date	Latest Note See SIAS report Background paper 7.4
Page 83 Safeguarding - No. 1	<p><u>Safeguarding (June 2023)</u> <u>Safeguarding Training</u> <u>SIAS Recommendation</u> We recommend:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where officers have outstanding or overdue safeguarding training, the safeguarding team continues to work with these officers to schedule the outstanding training as a matter of priority. For the Casual Careline Operator mentioned, they must undertake the same level of safeguarding training which has been assessed as required by other Careline Operators (this was the basic adult and child safeguarding training at the time of testing). The Council reviews whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current aim of scheduling basic or advanced safeguarding training for completion within three months is timely or whether this needs to be shortened. - E-Learning training is sufficient in the interim time where officers are waiting to receive basic or advanced safeguarding training. Backing evidence must be adequately retained to demonstrate officers have attended/completed safeguarding training courses. Officers assessed as requiring only E-Learning safeguarding training, must renew this training on a scheduled basis (e.g., every two years). <p><u>Management Response</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible Officer: The member of staff/ their line manager/ follow up by the Safeguarding Team. Corporate issue. If they have failed to attend an organised Basic or Advanced level training course, then should (if reasonably practical) undertake the 	31-Dec-2023	31-Dec-2023	<p><u>Update February 2024</u> <u>Finding/Associated Risk</u> Officer Safeguarding Training The officer with a start date of 23/08/21 has now left North Herts Council. The officer whose start date was 29/03/21 completed the online safeguarding course in February 2024. The officer with a start date of 30/06/19 requires the safeguarding handout due to their job role. The relevant Manager and Service Director has again been contacted.</p> <p>There were three Officers whose basic child training expired in June 22 and as of February 2024, they have now all completed training and are up to date.</p> <p><u>Timeliness of Training Completion – new on line completion:</u> All new starters have completed the e-learning and some officers have completed the relevant training sessions and are being booked onto relevant courses.</p> <p><i>NB:</i> All staff that either have not attended a course or need their 3 yearly refresher are invited and booked onto available courses. Any reasons for not being able to attend are logged, so any trends can be identified. An e-learning report is provided every month to update the safeguarding training database with dates that the e-learning module has been completed. All new starters are required to complete the e-learning module as part of induction, which is monitored.</p>

Action Title	Action Description	Original Due Date	Due Date	Latest Note See SIAS report Background paper 7.4
Page 84	<p>Introductory E-learning within a week. (Start by end of June 2023, once staff and their line managers aware.)</p> <p>2. Responsible Officer: The Careline staff, their line Manager and the Service Director: Customers.</p> <p>To ensure undertaken Introductory e-learning within the week and then to attend the next basic course arranged. Otherwise, will be reviewing with ECP if there are alternative ways to provide Basic and Advanced training.</p> <p>Casual Careline Operator has undertaken E-Learning. (31 December 2023 for ECP Training.)</p> <p>3. Reviewed and considered to be sufficient, as the courses are run every month and should be undertaken within the probation period of up to 6 months. No further action required.</p> <p>All new staff will undertake e-learning within the week, and those who just have to undertake this level of training, every 3 years.</p> <p>4. The Safeguarding team already do this, so N/A.</p> <p>5. Responsible Officer: Safeguarding Team/ Learning and Development Team.</p> <p>Agreed, albeit every 3 years. (Start implementation from July 2023.)</p>			<p>Evidence of Training Completion February 2024 - All registers are scanned, and the training provider provides a link to all the certificates and individual officers receive their certificates from the training provider. The Safeguarding team how has that evidence.</p> <p>E-Learning Training February 2024 - There is a new e-learning platform being introduced in July 2024, and once this new platform is operational, staff will be scheduled to renew the e-learning every 3 years.</p>
Safeguarding - No. 2	<p><u>Safeguarding (June 2023)</u> <u>Councillor/Member Safeguarding Training</u> <u>SIAS Recommendation</u></p> <p>1. We recommend, as a minimum, all Members complete the safeguarding E-Learning module. This is to be renewed on a scheduled basis (e.g., every two years).</p> <p>2. We further recommend, that adult and child safeguarding awareness sessions are run on a scheduled basis for Members (e.g., every two years) or when there is a significant change in membership. We are aware the Council intends to run sessions in 2023/24 following the May 2023 elections.</p> <p>3. Members with responsibility for oversight of the Councils safeguarding arrangements (e.g., members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), should attend the awareness sessions.</p> <p><u>Management Response</u></p>	31-Dec-2024	31-Dec-2024	<p><u>Finding/Associated Risk</u> <u>Councillor/Member Safeguarding Training</u></p> <p>Historically, Councillor uptake of safeguarding training below what auditors expect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - during 2023- date, only 4 Members have completed training. - only 2 Members of Overview & Scrutiny have completed the training since this was last reported through in September.

Action Title	Action Description	Original Due Date	Due Date	Latest Note See SIAS report Background paper 7.4
	<p>Responsible Officer: Committee, Member & Scrutiny Officer/ Safeguarding Team (and Service Director: Legal & Community). Responsibility is also with the Members. Dependent on self-audit (i.e., if they have undertaken before/ similar or equivalent within the last year), every 4 years.</p> <p>1. We shall undertake an audit of those elected to check they have undertaken e-learning and seek to ensure outstanding e-learning is taken by them within 6 months. Failing this, this will be completed post all out elections from June 2024. (31 December 2023 for current Members. 31 December 2024 for newly elected Members in May 2024.)</p> <p>2. E-learning is sufficient, so not accepted, as a proportionate level for District Councillors.</p> <p>3. See above, not accepted without Members agreement. This will be reviewed with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee when the Annual Safeguarding report is presented at the September 2023 meeting. At present, E-learning should be completed.</p>			

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 MARCH 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 January 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 – 16 February 2024
- 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

MEETING DATE	ITEMS AT MEETING	REPORT AUTHOR	PORTFOLIO HOLDER
12 March 2024	Resolutions Report Work Programme Draft Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023-2024 Council Delivery Plan 2024-25 Q3 Council Delivery Plan 2023-24 Update Call To Account – Chair’s Report – Harkness Court Project (Nov 2023)	James Lovegrove James Lovegrove Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Rachel Cooper Rachel Cooper Cllr Adam Compton	- - - Ian Albert Ian Albert
	To be scheduled: Greenspaces Enterprise Service Area Updates Implementation of the Leisure Contract	Andrew Mills Enterprise Team Louise Randall	Steve Jarvis Keith Hoskins Steve Jarvis

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 16 February 2024

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
Empty Homes Strategy		Cabinet	6 Feb 2024		Frank Harrison, Environmental Health Manager frank.harrison@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
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
Council Tax premiums for Empty and Second Homes		Cabinet	6 Feb 2024		Jo Dufficy, Service Director - Customers johanne.dufficy@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
North Herts Digital Strategy		Cabinet	6 Feb 2024		Jo Dufficy, Service Director - Customers johanne.dufficy@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
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
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
Expansion of the FlexCollect Project		Cabinet	19 Mar 2024		Chloe Hipwood, Service Manager chloe.hipwood@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

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
Shared Prosperity Fund process		Cabinet	19 Mar 2024		Chloe Gray, Enterprise Manager chloe.gray@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Permit Review		Cabinet	Before 30 Jun 2024		Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing scheme		Cabinet	Before 30 Jun 2024		Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
LEISURE INVESTMENT OPTIONS		Cabinet	Before 30 Jun 2024		Louise Randall, Leisure Manager louise.randall@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Baldock Strategic Masterplan		Cabinet	Before 30 Jun 2024		Nigel Smith, Strategic Planning Manager nigel.smith@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
The Continuation of the Air Quality Management Intervention		Cabinet	Before 30 Jun 2024		Frank Harrison, Environmental Health Manager frank.harrison@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

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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	SO appointed in Feb 2024, due to start on 26 March 2024
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

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.

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.

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.