

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



29 August 2025

Our Ref Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9  
September 2025  
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillors Claire Winchester (Chair), Jon Clayden (Vice-Chair), Tina Bhartwas, Sadie Billing, Cathy Brownjohn, David Chalmers, Elizabeth Dennis, Dominic Griffiths, Ralph Muncer, Martin Prescott, Paul Ward and Daniel Wright-Mason

Substitutes: Councillors Matt Barnes, Sam Collins, Sarah Lucas, Caroline McDonnell, Vijaiya Poopalasingham and Claire Strong

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A**

**MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

to be held in the

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

On

**TUESDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER, 2025 AT 7.30 PM**

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Alajooz  
Director – Governance

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

## **Agenda**

### **Part I**

<b>Item</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	Members are required to notify any substitutions by midday on the day of the meeting.  Late substitutions will not be accepted and Members attending as a substitute without having given the due notice will not be able to take part in the meeting.	
<b>2. MINUTES - 10 JUNE 2025</b>	To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 10 June 2025.	(Pages 5 - 14)
<b>3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS</b>	Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency.  The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
<b>4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
<b>5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b>	To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.	
<b>6. URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS</b>	The Chair to report on any urgent or general exception items which required their agreement. At the time of printing the agenda, the Chair had not agreed any urgent or general exception items.	

**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. COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26 (QUARTER 1 UPDATE)  
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES**

(Pages  
15 - 52)

This report presents progress on delivering the Council Delivery Plan for 2025-26.

**10. UPDATE ON PAY ON EXIT PARKING IN COUNCIL OPERATED CAR  
PARKS  
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – PLACE**

(Pages  
53 - 62)

To provide the Committee with an update on the status of the Pay on Exit Parking Project and to provide a comparison between 2025/26 Quarter 1 and 2024/25 Quarter 1 parking transaction figures and the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued per car park.

**11. PRESENTATION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

To receive a presentation from the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council on the proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Hertfordshire.

**12. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME  
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER**

(Pages  
63 - 74)

This report highlights items scheduled in the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025-26 civic year. It also includes items that have not yet been assigned to a specific meeting of the Committee.

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## NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3JF  
ON TUESDAY, 10TH JUNE, 2025 AT 7.30 PM

#### MINUTES

**Present:** *Councillors: Claire Winchester (Chair), Jon Clayden (Vice-Chair), Matt Barnes, Tina Bhartwas, Sadie Billing, Cathy Brownjohn, David Chalmers, Elizabeth Dennis, Martin Prescott, Paul Ward and Daniel Wright-Mason.*

**In Attendance:** *Faith Churchill (Democratic Services Apprentice), Robert Filby (Trainee Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Chloe Hipwood (Shared Service Manager - Waste), Chris Jeffery (Customer and Digital Services Manager), Sarah Kingsley (Director - Environment), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager) and Jeevan Mann (Scrutiny Officer).*

**Also Present:** *At the commencement of the meeting there were no members of the public present.*

*Councillor Amy Allen as Executive Member for Environment, Councillor Daniel Allen as Leader of the Council, and Councillor Val Bryant as Executive Member for Customer Experience were in attendance.*

#### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

*Audio recording – 1 minute 28 seconds*

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dominic Griffiths and Ralph Muncer.

Having given due notice, Councillor Matt Barnes substituted for Councillor Griffiths.

#### 2 MINUTES - 11 MARCH 2025 AND 6 MAY 2025

*Audio Recording – 1 minute 46 seconds*

Councillor Claire Winchester, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Jon Clayden seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2025 and 6 May 2025 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

#### 3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 36 seconds*

There was no other business notified.

#### **4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 43 seconds*

*N.B. Councillor David Chalmers entered the Council Chamber at 19:33.*

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be recorded.
- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (3) The Chair advised that for the purposes of clarification clause 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution does not apply to this meeting.
- (4) The Chair reminded Members of the adopted North Herts Scrutiny Charter and the need to ensure that the meeting was conducted with independence, initiative and integrity. The full Charter was available to Members via the Scrutiny Intranet pages.

#### **5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 2 seconds*

There was no public participation at this meeting.

#### **6 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 7 seconds*

No urgent or general exception items were received.

#### **7 CALLED-IN ITEMS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 11 seconds*

There have been no called-in items.

#### **8 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 15 seconds*

No questions had been submitted by Members.

#### **9 INFORMATION NOTE - FULL YEAR PERFORMANCE UPDATE ON 3CS 24/25**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 23 seconds*

Councillor Val Bryant, as Executive Member for Customer Experience, presented the Information Note entitled 'Full Year Update on Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3C's) 24/25' and advised that:

- This Information Note included a comparison of data with 2023/24.
- The number of compliments received by the Council had decreased and complaints, including those to contractors, had increased which was attributed to the change in leisure contract detailed at paragraph 3.10 of the information note.

- The percentage of Stage 1 complaints resolved within ten days had increased to 91% which was well above the 80% target.
- The percentage of visits and interactions with the Council resulting in a complaint remained below 1%.
- Urbaser saw a 73% decrease in complaints received compared with the previous year.
- The Council and their contractors received 184 compliments across a variety of service areas as shown at Appendix B.
- 24 Stage 2 complaints were received across all service areas but only 9 were justified to be escalated to senior managers.
- 5 complaints were received from the local ombudsman and 2 of these were upheld for fault and injustice, however, the other 3 were closed after initial enquiries.
- Monthly meetings were arranged with the Customer and Digital Services Manager to discuss Customer Service Centre (CSC) related issues.
- CSC staffing had been problematic through some parts of the year but was now at a good level.
- The leisure contract change had caused call volume to increase greatly from April to September 2024.
- Call volume had also increased due to increased resident anxiety which was attributed to some major events throughout the year.
- One of these was Council Tax reminders which were sent to residents earlier in the year and required them to use a new reference number to pay their bill, which a huge number could not find. This was being investigated to make sure that in future, anxieties stemming from new systems like this were pre-empted.
- Increased resident anxiety had also come from the garden waste invoices which some residents had perceived to be a scam. Due to the timing of a police message through Herts Connected which advised residents to contact the business directly if they were unsure, call volume had increased from this as well.
- To reduce resident anxiety resulting from Council correspondence, they would trial human blind testing on documents before they were sent out to residents to test that officer and Member perceptions matched that of residents.
- A suggestion had been made to create another resident panel to focus on pinpointing problems on council forms and applications before they were formally introduced to reduce the likelihood of resident anxiety resulting from these.
- Work would begin to take place on digital inclusion to ascertain the data on digitally excluded residents and how the Council could better reach them through their communication streams. Funding had been dedicated to this and an officer had been recruited to work on digital inclusion, however, they were still at the initial stages of this process.
- The Council had a team focused on developing apps so that residents would be able to apply online for more services such as burials and grants with the latter currently being tested by the Community Partnerships team.
- On a broader spectrum, they would look to make things smoother for residents by utilising modern technology.

The Chair invited the Customer and Digital Services Manager to give a verbal update on the current performance of the Customer Service Centre. They advised that:

- Alongside the 3Cs, the contact centre performance dashboard was requested by a previous Member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee due to a period in 2024/25 in which callers were waiting for much longer than usual to get through to the CSC.
- In Q1, 96% of calls were answered with a high percentage of those answered in 45 seconds.
- In Q2, they began to experience staff shortages due long-term sickness and staff leaving the Council entirely which impacted on performance. Additionally, some staff moved internally to other service areas including HR and Revenues which was positive for the Council, however CSC were still losing staff. At this point, they were still receiving

a very high volume of calls, emails, live chats and in-person visits at the reception from residents.

- In Q3, temporary staff were recruited to ensure that CSC operations could continue, however, existing staff were required to train them which affected resourcing.
- It also took time to recruit the staff required as some recruits were unable to commit to the work patterns and some found jobs elsewhere.
- The customer service element of the waste contract was brought back inhouse in December 2024 and the staff from the waste contractor as well the waste customer contact were transferred over.
- From there, contact levels in January and February became more manageable and they answered 94% of calls.
- However, in March, there was a huge spike in customer contacts due to the garden waste subscription billing period. Digital Services had successfully delivered a Garden Waste Portal which lots of residents signed up to, but many customers still wanted to pay over the phone and this came at the same time as the annual Council Tax billing period which caused a rise in contact.
- Enquiries on the removal of litter bins also in this period meant they were receiving 601 calls on average per day in March compared to 269 in February.
- Alongside the garden waste subscriptions, a new payment system was introduced which some staff experienced issues with while trying to take payments over the phone. This was escalated to the payment system provider but took a while to fix. Consequently, calls were lasting longer which meant that customers were waiting for more time and because of this, they would try to recontact the CSC in different ways such as hanging up and calling again, emailing or visiting reception.
- In May, Council Tax recovery was sent out for the first time since the previous year due to unallocated payments in suspense, which created another increase in contact.
- Automated phone systems were in use for the Revenues and Benefits lines for the past three years which provided customers with information and offered to text links to relevant forms on the Council website.
- The system worked well handling 50-60% of calls, however, the contract with the supplier was expiring and the decision was taken to switch to a system that used AI instead. This system recognised customer intent by voice but would need to be trained over time to handle more calls in the future.
- Another Council Tax recovery period in July was predicted to create another contact spike.
- More contacts were also foreseen in August due to the upcoming waste contract change, but they would get ahead of the potential spike by keeping staffing levels consistent and ensuring that all calls and emails were addressed to in a timely manner.
- Call and email volumes had remained high in Q1 of 2025/26.
- The average wait time in 2024/25 was 4 minutes 10 seconds, and it was noted that recently, for the reasons already outlined, the average wait time had been longer.
- However, comparatively, the wait time on 10 June was detailed as being 1 minute 51 seconds, showing that it could fluctuate.
- In terms of benchmarking, two Councils had similar wait times in Q3 and Q4 of 2024/25 but on the other hand, they had much quicker wait times than many other councils in Q1 prior to staffing problems.
- Staffing was currently in a better position, and they were working more closely with the Waste team to ensure that Veolia were actioning issues effectively.
- Digital Services were integrating more waste services for residents to use on the Council website and onto the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which would allow the CSC team to process enquiries more efficiently.
- Issues with taking payments over the phone had been resolved and CSC team members were able to process these as required.
- To mitigate the impacts of future busy periods, a reminder was sent to all service managers to contact CSC before invoices, leaflets or other documents were due to be sent to residents, as well as to let them know if any big meetings or group interviews



would be taking place at the Council Offices to increase their awareness of an uptick in CSC contacts and allow them to consider resourcing in advance.

- The situation on wait times and staffing had been largely out of their control, but they had slowly started to see some improvements after measures had been put in place.
- Only 2 official complaints had been received regarding the wait times in 2024/25.
- Working in the CSC team was not an easy job with some contacts requiring safeguarding referrals and extra time to process due to their complexity.
- His team had done a good job in navigating this difficult period and they would continue to work towards hitting more targets.
- Members were welcome to visit to the CSC to meet the team and see their work.
- Most cases on the Councillor Portal were completed within 6 working days.
- Of the 23 cases that took the longest to complete, 10 were down to councillors being unresponsive, some were genuine back and forth and others were due to other service areas being busier than usual.
- A reminder had been sent to all service managers to respond to portal requests promptly where possible.
- Councillors were encouraged to log constituent issues through the Councillor Portal to prevent email clog ups.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Paul Ward
- Councillor Sadie Billing
- Councillor Claire Winchester
- Councillor Tina Bhartwas

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

- To investigate repeat caller data, they would have to complete a thorough examination of the phone system.
- The key performance indicator for wait time was to answer at least 80% of calls within 45 seconds.
- The garden waste subscription invoices suspected to be a scam by residents had not been edited to be customer friendly. This had now been addressed by the accounting team and any future documents would be in the North Herts Council document style.
- The AI already in place on the Revenues and Benefits phone lines would be introduced to the Waste line. The AI would recognise caller intent and provide information based on this, but also text relevant links to the website if requested. However, the option to speak to a CSC representative would still be available to residents if needed.
- The AI website chatbot went live on 29 May and was still in the training period, but so far, no complaints had been received on this.
- The average duration of calls was unknown but the information on this would be circulated to Members following the meeting.
- Complaint volume had gradually declined over the year for all Everyone Active sites, especially since the peak in September 2024 due to the introduction of a dishonour charge on lane swimming at the time.
- They would speak to the Leisure and Active Communities team to see if there was a way of improving the response time of Everyone Active to enquiries.
- Staff morale was currently at a good level because staff levels were optimal and the temporary staff were of a high calibre.
- The Customer Service Team Leader and Senior Customer Services Officer helped to provide a supportive structure for CSC staff when any issues arose.
- Staff members could use the Employment Assistance Programme to speak to someone anonymously if needed.

- Management made themselves open and available for individual chats and staff members were comfortable in seeking them for support when working at CSC.
- Statistics on the level of complaints received when Stevenage Leisure Limited were managing the leisure centre contracts compared to now would be sent to Members after the meeting.
- The number of reception visits by residents were outlined on the performance dashboard and they had seen a big increase in customers visiting reception. The visits were logged internally on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and they attempted to log customer sentiment on each visit.
- It was difficult to organise data on why customers visited the reception. If Customers visited purely for information, this was logged as a 'Quick Call' where they could also capture customer sentiment, but with more complex enquiries, cases had to be created and they would have to explore individual cases to gather data on reasons for visiting which would be difficult to do.
- As seen on the performance dashboard, residents were mostly visiting the CSC reception if they were unable to contact them via telephone.
- They were aware that AI could use sentiment analysis to provide feedback on calls but unfortunately, it was not part of their contract with the provider. However, this would be discussed as a possibility with the provider going forward.
- They were more than happy to take feedback on the Councillor Portal in terms of request classifications and could action issues when required.
- At the end of the year, optimisation would take place where the team would revisit existing apps and look to improve their functionality.

In response to questions, Councillor Val Bryant advised that:

- Communication between service areas and CSC would have to be clearer to allow them to draw a timeline of key dates and pinch points throughout the year due to more than one event or billing period taking place.
- Discussion had taken place with the Communications Manager on Everyone Active collecting customer interaction data, but the statistics were unknown so an email would be circulated to Members on this following the meeting.
- Compliments were put onto the internal staff hub each month to be seen by all staff members and to spread good practice across the Council.

The Chair thanked Councillor Val Bryant and the Customer and Digital Services Manager for their presentations and Members noted the report.

## **10 INFORMATION NOTE - MOBILISATION OF WASTE CONTRACT UPDATE**

*Audio recording – 44 minutes 0 seconds*

Councillor Amy Allen, as Executive Member for Environment, presented the Information Note entitled 'Update on Mobilisation of Waste Collection' and advised that:

- The new waste, recycling and street cleansing contract with Veolia had commenced on 4 May.
- Mobilisation of the contract had created minimum disruption to residents.
- Teams were working behind the scenes on IT integrations.
- The delivery of the electric vehicles was delayed due to a manufacturer issue which was out of the control of the Council.
- Over 90% of the new bins had been delivered to North Herts residencies.
- The first draft of the new proposed collection routes had been received and was being examined by officers.
- Service leaflets had been finalised and would be sent to print in addition to letters that would be circulated to inform residents of the new proposed route changes.

- They had successfully recruited for the Waste Communications Officer role and an advert had been released for the Waste Contract Officer vacancy.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Paul Ward
- Councillor Claire Winchester
- Councillor Matt Barnes

In response to questions, the Shared Service Manager – Waste advised that:

- It was difficult to accurately predict the increase in call volumes that the waste contract change might bring, however, additional calls were anticipated, and extra CSC staff had been provisioned for this.
- The Council received 4,000 emails in an average 3-month period. However, during the waste service change in 2018, they received 19,000 over 3 months due to the glitches and data issues that it created.
- However, they knew where they went wrong last time through data analysis and would look at ways to prevent recurrences of issues.
- Phone lines would be available to those who needed additional support and waste officers could respond to problem areas when needed if they could not be resolved over the phone.
- The provision of waste vehicles was part of the Veolia contract, therefore the delay to the delivery of the electric vehicles would incur no additional costs for the Council as Veolia would finance an alternative in the meantime.
- Residents that already required additional waste support services were accounted for and were being contacted regarding the new collection system. They were also contacting medical services to make them aware of the service change so they could make spread awareness of the additional services that the Council offered. More residents were coming forward regarding special waste needs and they were being added to their database.
- The probability for the Material Recycling Facility Contract had reduced to 1 in the Mobilisation Risk Log. It had been procured and was operational as the incumbent supplier was awarded the contract which meant that the transition was seamless. They were in the process of getting the contract signed but no issues were anticipated with the service change.
- Most outstanding new bin deliveries were due to technical glitches in the system and these would be checked over the next four to five weeks before being addressed at the end of the cycle to prevent the disruption of the main mobilisation phase.
- They were also waiting to deliver new bins to complex properties that had communal waste areas or properties that had paper and cardboard sacks.
- There was a list of all the bin deliveries that had occurred to date and Members could report any missed deliveries via the Councillor Portal.
- Waste service changes should not be underestimated and there would always be risks. It was down to them to cope with the pressure but most of their staff had been through the last service change which had greater implications for North Herts than this one.
- Their biggest priority was accuracy and it was imperative for them to check data to ensure that missed collections did not take place in the future. If they got the data evaluation correct, they could focus on supporting residents with the service change rather than resolving day to day issues like missed collections.
- There were a small number of harder to remove litter bins that required additional steps such as pavement reinstatement. The removal of these would be combined with the installation of dual bins and ballot bins.

- Concerns had been expressed by residents over the removal of litter bins rather than an increase in litter, however, they would monitor this.
- Street cleansing schedules were still in the development phase with Veolia.

Councillor Paul Ward advised the Waste team to include both digital and non-digital points of contact where possible as there were some points of contact listed on the website that were digital only.

Councillor Amy Allen thanked Councillor Ward for his engagement with residents and for bringing their attention to any problems that residents had faced regarding waste.

## 11 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

*Audio recording – 1 hour 0 minutes 7 seconds*

Councillor Matt Barnes, as the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in the Civic Year 2024/2025, presented the report entitled 'Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2024/2025' and advised that:

- The report set out the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the previous Civic Year 2024/25.
- The report also contained a foreword which highlighted some of the notable achievements of the Committee in the same period.

Councillor Matt Barnes thanked all Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2024/25 for their contributions and thanked the Scrutiny Officer for her support throughout the year.

The Chair thanked Councillor Barnes for ensuring an easy transition process from Committee Member to Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Daniel Allen, as Leader of the Council, put on record his thanks to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the Civic Year 2024/25 for holding Cabinet to account in this period and for the ideas that they had conceived.

Councillor Jon Clayden thanked the Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the Civic Year 2024/25 for being supportive through the transition process from Committee Member to Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Jon Clayden proposed and Councillor Matt Barnes seconded and following a vote, it was:

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and commented on the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2024/25 as attached at Appendix A.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:** To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider and comment on the report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the work of the Committee in the 2024/2025 Civic Year prior to consideration by Council.

## 12 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

*Audio recording - 1 hour 3 minutes 17 seconds*

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report entitled 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025-26' and advised that:

- Following the work programme workshop delivered by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny on Tuesday 13 May, Members agreed an initial Work Programme for the Civic Year 2025-26 which was attached at Appendix A to the report.
- Two items on the Pay on Exit Parking Scheme and North Herts Town Centres Strategy were scheduled to be presented at this Committee meeting. However, they had been deferred to a later meeting of the Committee and officers had given reasons for the delay which were outlined in the Supplementary Document to the report.
- Members were reminded that they could suggest topics for the Work Programme or Task and Finish groups in the meeting, to the Chair or Vice Chair or by emailing the Scrutiny Officer.
- The Section 106 Task and Finish Group met on Monday 30 April to finalise the scoping document.
- Another meeting was being scheduled to address any questions on scope or S106 obligation with the Strategic Planning Officer and to have a discussion with the Communications Officer on a consultation.
- The Local Government Association Peer Review actions were attached at Appendix C to the report to allow Members to review their progress.
- Information regarding referrals was detailed in the decisions and monitoring log.

In response to a question from Councillor Paul Ward, the Scrutiny Officer advised that the main reason the Strategic Project Board had agreed to defer the report of the Town Centres Strategy was because they felt that it needed to be of a better standard before being presented to both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

Councillor Daniel Allen also advised that had the Town Centres Strategy been presented to both committees, it would not have been representative of all towns in North Herts, therefore further work would take place to ensure that the needs of each town were considered within the strategy.

Councillor Matt Barnes took part in the debate and expressed disappointment that the report for the Pay on Exit Parking Scheme had not been presented at this Committee meeting but understood the reasons for its deferral. He also encouraged Members to put forward items for consideration to be put onto the Work Programme and highlighted topics on Crime and Disorder Issues and Health Partners that were not currently listed on it.

Councillor Sadie Billing proposed and Councillor Jon Clayden seconded and, following a vote, it was:

### **RESOLVED:**

- (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) That the Committee, having considered the most recent iteration of the Forward Plan, as attached at Appendix B, suggest 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 be 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 8.42 pm

Chair

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

### \*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

**TITLE OF REPORT: COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26 (QUARTER 1 UPDATE)**

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: RESOURCES

COUNCIL PRIORITY: THRIVING COMMUNITIES / ACCESSIBLE SERVICES / RESPONSIBLE GROWTH / SUSTAINABILITY

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents progress on delivering the Council Delivery Plan for 2025-26. This is a Quarter 1 update but generally reflects progress up to the point that this report was prepared (mid-August). The report includes:

- For the projects identified by Cabinet, it details milestones and progress against them.
- The risks in relation to the delivery of those projects, as well as the corporate risks that could impact the delivery of all our projects and services.
- Latest data for the Council's key performance indicators (KPIs).

Two projects have an amber delivery status (digital transformation and leisure centre decarbonisation). Four projects have a red risk status (leisure centre decarbonisation, decarbonisation phase 2, Churchgate and Local Plan review). All the over-arching corporate risks are at red status. There are 3 KPIs that have a red status (2 relating to Careline installations and the other relating to CSC calls answered in 45 seconds).

This report also sets out intentions in relation to developing KPIs that align better to the objectives within our Council Plan.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Provide comment on the Council Delivery Plan Quarter 1 monitoring report, including the recommendation to be made to Cabinet i.e.:
  - That Cabinet notes progress against Council projects and performance indicators, as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (Appendix A), and approves new milestones and changes to milestones.
- 2.2 Determine any project they want to receive more detail on, as part of the next monitoring report.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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

- 4.1 In developing the CDP, it was agreed that Cabinet would receive quarterly updates. The updates are also provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (when requested) so that they can provide additional oversight and support to Cabinet.
- 4.2 In relation to adding new KPIs to better reflect delivery of the Council Plan, there would be an option to just retain the current KPIs and accept that they are primarily focused on delivery of core services.

### **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 aware of progress made.
- 5.2 A draft of the Quarter 1 update was provided to the Risk and Performance Management Group (RPMG) in August. The Group has a standing invite to the Executive Member for Resources (has responsibility for performance monitoring), the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (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 can. RPMG were asked to comment on Q1 update. There were no specific issues raised by the Group.
- 5.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to provide comments on the current progress of the CDP, including recommendations to Cabinet.
- 5.4 In August, proposals in relation to adding new KPIs to better reflect the Council Plan were discussed at the internal informal Political Liaison Board of the Executive and the Leadership team. The conclusion was that it would be desirable to have additional KPIs that described the outcomes achieved by the Council Plan.

### **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 CDP brings together projects, risks, and performance indicators in one document. The projects and performance indicators have been rolled forward from 2024/25 into the current year. There has been one project added (decarbonisation phase 2).



## 8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Appendix A provides an update on the progress made in delivering the Council Delivery Plan 2025-26. Whilst it is labelled as a Quarter 1 update, it generally reflects the latest position at the time the report was written (mid-August). Milestones are set as far ahead as possible but are not included where there is too much uncertainty over the scope or timing of the milestone.
- 8.2 Two projects have an amber status, with the remaining ten having a green status. The amber status for the Digital Transformation project reflects delays to two applications (grants database and burials). There have been two new milestones added to reflect additional work on trade waste that was outside the scope of the previous requirement and new work on a Safety Advisory Group platform. The amber status for the Leisure Centre Decarbonisation project reflects the need for Building Safety Act sign off at the end of the works. This change does not affect when the leisure centre facilities will be available or eligibility for grant funding for the project. As detailed in Appendix A, some of the other projects have proposals for changes to (yellow highlights) or new (blue highlights) project milestones.
- 8.3 Our performance indicators reflect the overall performance of the Council. Performance levels are rated as either green (achieving or exceeding the target), amber (not achieving the target level and need to look at actions to get back on track) or red (urgent action needed to get back to the target performance). For this report:
- 6 indicators are rated green.
  - 5 indicators are rated amber.
  - 3 indicators are rated red.
  - 9 indicators do not have a target.
- 8.4 For the performance indicators rated red, the following actions are being taken:
- **Careline installations:** Reduced engineer installation capacity during the quarter due to long-term sickness absence and unfilled vacancies has led to efforts of re-deployment and recruitment of additional resource to manage the situation. The service is currently recruiting two additional technicians, but it will take time to train them once they are in post.
  - **Customer calls answered within 45 seconds:** The Customer Service Centre has faced ongoing staff shortages due to annual leave, sickness absence and leavers. An action plan was put in place, with ongoing recruitment, fast track training, and allocation of temporary members of staff to manage enquiries in reception and on the Waste queue. The staffing in Q1 2025-26 has been consistent and temporary staff have been key in helping us through this busy period and have been retained whilst the new Waste contract is embedded to avoid further disruption where possible. We will continue working towards an improvement in service level in line with the action plan. From 18 June 2025 to the end of the month, the Customer Service team consistently answered over 95% of calls that were offered. Although the percentage of calls answered with 45 seconds is currently below

the target level, a high percentage of calls were answered across the first quarter.

- 8.5 There are 12 risk entries linked to specific projects and four over-arching corporate risks. For this report:

- 3 risks are assessed low risk (green).
- 5 risks are assessed medium risk (amber).
- 8 risks are assessed high risk (red).

- 8.6 As referenced in the 2024-25-year-end CDP report, the Council's Corporate Peer Challenge report included recommendations around better linking KPIs to the Council Plan. An Internal Audit report then provided some benchmarking as to how this could be achieved. A summary was then considered by the informal Political Liaison Board in August, and it was recommended that KPIs are developed that reflect the outcomes achieved by the Council Plan. These will be developed with the Quarter 2 CDP update.

- 8.7 The CDP is intended to be a live document. Councillors and Officers can access Ideagen for the latest position. New projects can be added to the Plan if they are a strategic priority and resources are available to deliver them. Projects will be removed when they are completed, or if they are no longer a priority. Cabinet (following prior review by Overview and Scrutiny Committee) will be asked to approve any changes to milestones. A project plan is being developed for the museum storage project, and it is intended that this will also be added to the CDP.

- 8.8 Overview and Scrutiny Committee can ask for more detail on any of the CDP projects. This can either be provided as a written update or can be included as part of the next quarterly update, to support discussion in the meeting.

- 8.9 Access to Ideagen

All the detail behind the projects, risks and performance indicators is available to view in Ideagen, the Council's performance and risk system. A guest login is provided on the intranet for any Member to use, along with a procedure note and short video on how to view the data.

## **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 Committee 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. 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.

9.4 It is worth noting that a robust and measurable delivery plan is an important tool for the Council to fulfil the 'best value' requirement set out in Section 3 of the Local Government Act. The Act requires authorities, including the Council, to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". Monitoring reports to members and actions arising from those reports will ensure discharge of this statutory responsibility.

## **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 CDP 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 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 will continue to be a need to align Council and Service objectives with available people resources to be able to achieve them. The CDP will help to make that link clearer.

**15. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

**16. APPENDICES**

- 16.1 Appendix A – Council Delivery Plan 25-26 Q1 Monitoring Report

**17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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**18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 18.1 None

### **Supplementary notes on the Council Delivery Plan 25-26 Q1 Monitoring Report for O&S Committee**

Q1 2025/26 data is still required for two KPIs (in italics and at the bottom of the KPIs table):

- Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of domestic household waste.
- Performance against revenue budget (projection against original budget).

















Q1 2025/26 data for 'Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting' is currently only provisional. Awaiting confirmation of final tonnages for all relevant waste streams.

Previously reported milestone due dates have been removed for the 'Local Plan Review' item, and the 'Latest Update' explains why.

Milestones with proposed changes to target dates are highlighted in yellow.

New milestones are highlighted in blue.

## Council Delivery Plan – Status Key

Status	Description
<b>Projects</b>	
	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.
<b>Risks</b>	
	Assessed as a low risk.
	Assessed as a medium risk.
	Assessed as a high risk.
<b>KPIs</b>	
	Data value has met or exceeded the target figure. Performance is at an acceptable level.
	Data value has not achieved the target figure. Need to consider appropriate action to return performance to an acceptable level.
	Data value has not achieved the target figure. Urgent action required to return performance to an acceptable level.
	Data value is reported for 'information only' and there is no requirement to set targets for the KPI.
	Ideagen cannot calculate a status, as officers have not entered a target figure for the period.
	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.
	Ideagen cannot calculate a direction of travel, as previous data is not available for comparison.

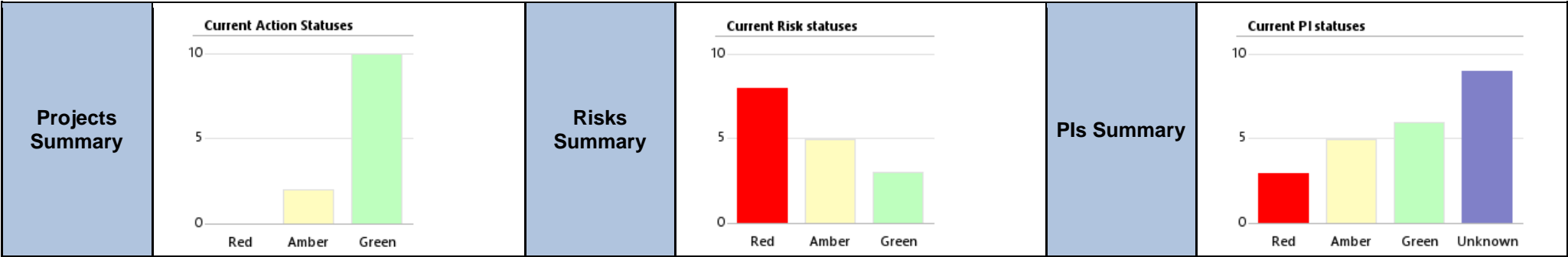
4	7	9
2	5	8
1	3	6

## Council Delivery Plan 25-26 Q1 Monitoring Report - Project Statuses











Project	Status	Risk Level
Digital Transformation		
Leisure Centre Decarbonisation		
Churchgate		
Decarbonisation of Council Buildings - Phase 2		
Engaging the community on our finances and how we spend our money, via the 'Prioritising our Pounds' Digital Budget Hub		
King George V Skate Park		
Local Plan Review		
Oughtonhead Common Weir		
Pay on Exit Parking		
Resident/Public EV Charging in our Car Parks		
Town Centres Strategy		
Waste and Street Cleansing Contract		





















# Council Delivery Plan 25-26 Q1 Monitoring Report - Status Summaries






















## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)


	Latest Update	Current Value	Current Target	Status	Trend (Compared with the same time last year)	2025/26
						Target
Percentage of council tax collected in year	July 2025	36.87% (year to date)	37%		 (37.38%)	97%
Percentage of NNDR collected in year	July 2025	36.94% (year to date)	37%		 (39.47%)	96%
Council's Scope 1-3 emissions (tonnes CO2e)	2023/24	3,197.13	N/A Data Only		 (3,168.30)	N/A Data Only
Number of Stage 1 complaints	Q1 2025/26	44 (year to date)	N/A Data Only		 (53)	N/A Data Only




KPI	Latest Update	Current Value	Current Target	Status	Trend (Compared with the same time last year)	2025/26
						Target
Percentage of Stage 1 complaints resolved within 10 working days	Q1 2025/26	84% (year to date)	80%		 (100%)	80%
Percentage of Stage 2 complaints resolved within 20 working days	Q1 2025/26	100% (year to date)	70%		 (78%)	70%
Total number of alarm calls in a given period	June 2025	91,062 (year to date)	N/A Data Only		 (95,595)	N/A Data Only
Rolling number of Careline service users supported under the HCC contract	July 2025	7,141	N/A Data Only		 (7,027)	N/A Data Only
Percentage of Careline installations completed within 5 working days	June 2025	74.6% (year to date)	90%		 (New KPI from January 2025)	90%
Percentage of Careline installations completed within 10 working days	June 2025	97% (year to date)	100%		 (New KPI from January 2025)	100%
Percentage of CSC calls answered	Q1 2025/26	81% (year to date)	90%		 (96%)	90%
Percentage of CSC calls answered within 45 seconds	Q1 2025/26	47% (year to date)	80%		 (75%)	80%
Sign-ups to the Digital Budget Hub	Q1 2025/26	458	N/A Data Only		 (223)	N/A Data Only
Average number of penalty points awarded per Grounds Maintenance contract monitoring inspection. (Lower numbers are good.)	June 2025	1.97 (year to date)	N/A Data Only		 (5.44)	N/A Data Only


KPI	Latest Update	Current Value	Current Target	Status	Trend (Compared with the same time last year)	2025/26
						Target
Working days lost due to short-term sickness absence in the last 12 months per FTE employee	June 2025	4.26	4.00		 (4.46)	Not Measured for Years
Working days lost due to long-term sickness absence in the last 12 months per FTE employee	June 2025	3.82	N/A Data Only		 (4.43)	N/A Data Only
Staff turnover - rolling 12-month percentage	June 2025	8.78%	15%		 (7.2%)	Not Measured for Years
Percentage of advertised vacancies filled in first round	Q1 2025/26	85% (year to date)	75%		 (70%)	75%
Number of visits to leisure facilities	June 2025	462,992 (year to date)	N/A Data Only		 (399,264)	N/A Data Only
Percentage of all planning applications determined within the relevant statutory or agreed time periods	Q1 2025/26	84.65% (year to date)	80%		 (84.37%)	80%
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Q1 2025/26	59.44% (year to date)	60.5%		 (60.69%)	59%
Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of domestic household waste	March 2025	47 (year to date)	N/A Data Only		 (60)	N/A Data Only
Performance against revenue budget (projection against original budget)	Q4 2024/25	-13.9%	0%		 (New KPI for 2024/25)	0%


	<b>Digital Transformation</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Accessible Services (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	31-Dec-2025	<b>Original Date</b>	31-Mar-2025
<b>Project Summary</b>	Invest in and develop a low code digital platform that can be used to transform our services and applications. Programme to span a number of years, with the Council Delivery Plan project focussing on key activities planned for the short-term.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	07-Aug-2025 Delivery of the grants database was slightly delayed (to August 2025), and the Community Partnership Team now plan to undertake a further period of testing with external partners, followed by Member briefings, before launching the database in mid-November 2025. Resources were diverted from the burials application project to complete delivery in a timely manner. There was also a slight delay fully integrating with Veolia systems and delivering waste services processes. These were completed on 7 August 2025, when we implemented weekly system updates, although there is the potential for some minor ongoing optimisations. However, this delay did not have any impact from a customer perspective, as high priority processes were available for the start of the contract and Customer Services have been able to offer alternative ways of providing outstanding processes until they were fully delivered. The waste updates also include trade waste processes, which were outside of the original project scope. We have developed and are currently testing a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) platform prior to wider testing by NHC teams and external partners. As previously highlighted, resources have been diverted away from the burials application project to focus on delivering the waste and grants database projects. The extended due date of the end of December 2025 for the delivery of the burials application has been agreed with the NHC Burials team. In general, key risks to the programme remain the availability of sufficient resources and unexpected limitations with the low code digital platform, although risks associated with the latter are reducing as projects are completed and our knowledge of the system increases. A key project specific risk relates to the amount of data needing to be imported to the burials application and our ability to do this within the constraints of the revised project schedule.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
Scope and investigate replacement of Burials system.		30-Jun-2024	Yes	Initial scoping for the replacement of the current in-house database completed. Decision made to provide a replacement system via the new digital platform.	
Integrate Netcall into Microsoft Azure for wider integration capabilities.		30-Sep-2024	Yes	The Azure tenancy is ready to go and can facilitate single sign on for customers to sign in via MyAccount or for staff to sign into any applications created.	
Commence development of waste services processes and preparations for integration with new contractors' software.		01-Oct-2024	Yes	Work commenced, with plans agreed with Veolia.	
Hitchin Town Hall booking system developed.		31-Oct-2024	Yes	The Hitchin Town Hall application has been completed and handed over.	
Development and delivery of a Grants database.		31-May-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 28 November 2025.</b> Delivery of the database was slightly delayed (to August 2025), and the Community Partnership Team now plan to undertake a further period of testing with external partners, followed by Member briefings, before launching the database in mid-November 2025. Therefore, the revised due date reflects the 'go live' date rather than the date when the Digital Services team delivered the platform.	
Waste Services - integrations with contractors' software.		30-Jun-2025	Yes	Completed on 7 August 2025. There was a slight delay fully integrating with Veolia systems, caused by late access to Veolia's ECHO system/data (April 2025) and delays clarifying specific data requirements. This delay did not have any impact from a customer perspective.	

Waste Services - project delivery.	30-Jun-2025	Yes	High priority waste services processes were available for the start of the contract, with lower priority/frequency processes completed and delivered by 7 August 2025. Potentially, there is one additional form, Waste Issues, which may not go live until 14 August 2025. This form is to file a complaint to Veolia e.g., if property is damaged during collection, but there is currently an alternative way for Customer Services to do this so any delay will have no impact on the customer experience. Therefore, the milestone is complete, albeit with the potential for some minor ongoing optimisations.			
New milestone - Development and delivery of Trade Waste processes.	07-Aug-2025	Yes	<b>New milestone</b> - This work is outside of the scope of the original Waste Services project. The majority of Trade Waste processes went live on 7 August 2025 when we implemented the weekly system updates. There is a small part still outstanding due to needing process clarity, but the rest are now live. There is minimal impact from this outstanding item and the milestone is considered complete, albeit with some minor ongoing optimisations.			
New milestone - Safety Advisory Group (SAG) platform.	31-Aug-2025	No	<b>New milestone</b> - Developed and currently being tested by the Digital Services team prior to wider testing by NHC teams and external partners.			
Develop and deliver a Burials application.	30-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to be changed to the end of December 2025.</b> Resources have been diverted away from this project to focus on delivering the waste and grants database projects. This extended due date has been agreed with the NHC Burials team.			
Risks			Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<p><b>Risks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Resources within key teams available to deliver.</li><li>2. Unexpected limitations within new digital platform.</li><li>3. Unexpected delays or limitations relating to the new waste contract/contractor.</li><li>4. Amount of data needing to be imported to the burials application and our ability to do this within the constraints of the project schedule.</li></ul>				6	6	3


	<b>Leisure Centre Decarbonisation</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Sustainability (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	07-Jul-2026	<b>Original Date</b>	02-Feb-2026
<b>Project Summary</b>	Using a combination of external funding and NHC capital funding, deliver a project to decarbonise our three leisure centres. The main activities are replacing end of life gas boilers with Air Source Heat Pumps and installing Solar PV panels to enable on-site generation of electricity. Replacing gas heating for our leisure centres with low carbon alternatives is the single most effective action we can take towards meeting our target of being carbon neutral by 2030.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	25-Jul-2025 Salix have approved and paid the Council the full 2024/25 grant funding of £6,165,264. Grant conditions 1-4 were submitted to Salix for approval. These conditions included providing information on the choice of Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP), calculations on the heating demand on the ASHPs, sizing of the heating systems, as well as cost and values of the system. Conditions 2-4 were approved by Salix's consultants and sent on to Salix for final approval. Condition 1 was sent back for a further review by Willmott Dixon Construction (WDC) and resubmission - this is not going to prohibit the project from continuing while the review is conducted. Planning permission has been granted on all three sites. There was some concern around a bat being found at Hitchin and the impact on planning and start on site dates. Thankfully, a full bat survey concluded that there is no permanent roosting at Hitchin, and it is believed that the bat found was using Hitchin as a "rest stop" rather than a home. WDC set up on site at North Herts and Royston leisure centres during the week commencing 14 July 2025 with works commencing from 21 July 2025. WDC will be setting up on site at Hitchin from 1 September 2025. The contract has been going through a number of rounds of negotiations with our lawyers from Trowers & Hamlin and employers agent from Varsity Consulting working on the Council's behalf to liaise with WDC. At the time of writing this update, almost all the clauses are agreed as well as the liquidated damages (LDs). The remaining issue is agreeing how to resolve the issue of Building Safety Act (BSA) sign off in a way that does not unfairly penalise the Council and WDC. The BSA is a new law which is causing all construction projects contract issues. We are hoping to reach an agreement with WDC soon and to sign the contract by the end of July 2025. Many of the project risks have been either eliminated or significantly reduced. The big three which remain and are on the project teams mind are unknown issues that may present themselves when existing infrastructure is being removed, UKPN land easements and closure extensions. Closure extensions and "unknown unknowns" can be managed but if we cannot agree landowner easements for new power cables to power the ASHPs then there may come a point that the project stops until the easements are resolved. This has been mitigated as much as possible by planning 12 weeks into the programme for the legal easements and contacting the landowners to ask if they can be proactive with the agreements. Positive responses have been received from the landowners, and we will continue to remain in contact with them to encourage a speedy response. With the UKPN issue in mind, it is felt that the overall project should retain its current high risk assessment.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
Council approves an increase in capital expenditure for the decarbonisation work and revenue expenditure for the termination and removal fees of gas CHPs.		11-Jul-2024	Yes		
Pre-Construction Services Agreement with Willmott Dixon signed.		29-Jul-2024	Yes	Agreed and signed on 2 August 2024.	
Appoint external Quantity Surveyor to oversee NHC's interests.		30-Aug-2024	Yes	Appointed Varsity Consulting to act as the Employers Agent for North Herts Council on the leisure decarbonisation project. This includes carrying out tasks of Quantity Surveyor, Cost Consultant and Contract Administrator. Decision taken 24 September 2024. Decision notified 27 September 2024.	
Project Board - hold point to decide whether to continue the project.		04-Nov-2024	Yes	Project Board approved a number of recommendations allowing the project to move into the next phase.	
Complete Stage 3 design phases.		11-Nov-2024	Yes	Stage 3 completed.	
Council decision on preferred option.		15-Jan-2025	Yes		
Willmott Dixon Construction submit contract offer.		20-Mar-2025	Yes	Contract offer received from Willmott Dixon. This is now being reviewed by our Quantity Surveyor, prior to the final agreement of costs.	
Provide Salix with required project updates.		01-Apr-2025	Yes	All grant conditions and updates for the 2024/25 financial year have been issued and reviewed. Conditions 2-4 have been approved by Salix consultants and are with Salix to approve. Condition 1 will need to be reviewed, amended, and resubmitted later.	


Further report to Cabinet to approve contract award and additional budget.	20-May-2025	Yes	Cabinet agreed to increase the project capital budget, approved the extension of lido seasons at both outdoor pools, approved changes to the 2025/26 General Fund budget as a result of the increase in net expenditure caused by planned closures and extended lido seasons, and awarded the contract to WDC.
Salix confirm acceptance of our 2024/25 updates.	31-May-2025	Yes	Salix have approved and paid the Council the 2024/25 grant amount in full.
Commence de-carb works at Royston Leisure Centre.	17-Jun-2025	Yes	Willmott Dixon started setting up on site in the week commencing 14 July 2025 and started to shutdown areas of the building to prepare for works in the week commencing 21 July 2025.
Planning permissions obtained.	19-Jun-2025	Yes	Planning permission received for Royston and Letchworth on 19 June 2025, with Hitchin granted on 11 July 2025.
Commence de-carb works at North Herts Leisure Centre.	23-Jun-2025	Yes	Willmott Dixon started setting up on site in the week commencing 14 July 2025 and started to shutdown areas of the building to prepare for works in the week commencing 21 July 2025.
Enter into construction contract with Willmott Dixon.	25-Jun-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 7 September 2025.</b> Contract has not yet been signed. The only thing still to agree is how practical completion will be agreed in a way that complies with the new Building Safety Act. The contract not yet being signed is not a big concern, as we have instructed work under a pre-construction agreement, but it is preferable that we formally get into contract as soon as possible. NHC Legal have confirmed that the construction contract will be signed week commencing 1 September 2025.
Commence de-carb works at Hitchin Swimming and Fitness Centre.	15-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 1 September 2025.</b> It was highlighted in the previous update that there was potential for the start date to come forward.
Complete de-carb works at Royston Leisure Centre.	05-Dec-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 26 May 2026.</b> At the time of the latest update, the programmed date has changed to 26 May 2026. This slip is based on the need to get Building Safety Act sign off before the works can be finally handed over. If the bodies signing off the works act in a reasonable time, then this date could be brought forward.
Complete de-carb works at North Herts Leisure Centre.	27-Jan-2026	No	<b>Due date to change to 26 May 2026.</b> At the time of the latest update, the programmed date has changed to 26 May 2026. This slip is based on the need to get Building Safety Act sign off before the works can be finally handed over. If the bodies signing off the works act in a reasonable time, then this date could be brought forward.
Provide Salix with finalised project data (including costs and energy values) and details of carbon savings monitoring and reporting arrangements.	02-Feb-2026	No	
Complete de-carb works at Hitchin Swimming and Fitness Centre.	07-May-2026	No	<b>Due date to change to 7 July 2026.</b> This slip is based on the need to get Building Safety Act sign off before the works can be finally handed over. If the bodies signing off the works act in a reasonable time, then this date could be brought forward.


Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<p><b>Risks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- NHC responsible for funding all project costs beyond agreed grant funding.</li><li>- NHC paying up front for the larger Air Source Heat Pumps.</li><li>- Unforeseen detailed survey findings require changes to project specifications and lead to additional financial costs.</li><li>- Failure to obtain required planning permissions (no longer a risk).</li><li>- Delays obtaining required Distribution Network Operator approvals lead to delays in commissioning/completing project works.</li><li>- Failure to deliver project in line with agreed grant conditions leads to loss of grant funding.</li><li>- Short programme delivery timeframes impact the ability to drawdown Year 1 2024/25 Salix grant funding within the agreed financial year leading to loss of funding (no longer a risk).</li><li>- Disruption to day-to-day operations during works leads to customer dissatisfaction.</li><li>- Demand on existing officer resources to cover the loss of the dedicated Project Manager.</li></ul>		8	8	6


	<b>Churchgate</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Responsible Growth (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	31-Mar-2026	<b>Original Date</b>	
<b>Project Summary</b>	Progress the long-term regeneration of the shopping centre and surrounding areas. Project will span a number of years. Currently, recorded action relates to key milestones up to the end of 2025/26.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	04-Aug-2025 At Full Council on 10 July 2025, councillors voted to progress with their preferred approach to regenerate the Churchgate area, following extensive public consultation and technical feasibility work. The preferred pathway (and associated milestones and target dates) for moving the project forward is dependent on a further Project Board decision. Extensive work is ongoing to support informed decision making and to prepare for relevant procurement processes, although it is unlikely that this will be completed in time to enable Project Board to make a decision at the latest currently scheduled meeting on 15 October 2025. However, we do expect a decision to have been made and procurement processes relating to the preferred pathway to have commenced later in Autumn 2025. A further report to Full Council is scheduled to be presented in December 2025, to provide an update on both the selected pathway and progress to date.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
Start of engagement.		02-Sep-2024	Yes		
Run workshops.		16-Sep-2024	Yes	Hitchin Market Board workshop held 9 September 2024. Hitchin Forum workshop held 9 September 2024 (in the evening). Tenants workshop held 12 September 2024.	
Start public consultation.		17-Sep-2024	Yes		
Public consultation ends.		01-Oct-2024	Yes	The consultation period was extended to 3 November 2024 to take into account the leaflet drop to all North Hertfordshire households.	
Open 'in-person' Churchgate Regeneration Hub on market days, up to the end of the consultation period.		17-Oct-2024	Yes	Churchgate Regeneration Hub opened in an unused Churchgate unit.	
Feedback to Project Board.		29-Oct-2024	Yes	October 2024 Project Board meeting re-scheduled. Update on progress presented to Project Board on 14 October 2024.	
Feedback to Project Board.		26-Nov-2024	Yes	Project Board meeting re-scheduled to 4 December 2024. Consultation findings were presented to Project Board at this meeting.	
Publish second stage public consultation feedback report.		28-Feb-2025	Yes	Consultation results published in February 2025 and communicated throughout March 2025.	
Complete detailed evaluation of consultation findings and financial options appraisal.		16-May-2025	Yes		
Project Board decision on overarching direction and preferred pathway.		16-May-2025	Yes		
Attend UKREiIF 2025.		22-May-2025	Yes	Anthony Roche, Steve Crowley and Chloe Gray attended UKREiIF - 20-22 May 2025.	
Report to Council and formal decision on overarching direction and preferred pathway.		10-Jul-2025	Yes	At Full Council on 10 July 2025, councillors voted to progress with their preferred approach to regenerate the Churchgate area, following extensive public consultation and technical feasibility work.	






New milestone - Further report to Full Council.	04-Dec-2025	No	New milestone - Agreed to report back to Full Council in December 2025.			
1. Start procurement process for development partner.		No	Due date to be confirmed, although expect this to happen in Autumn 2025. Precise timings and the preferred pathway for moving the project forward, is dependent on a Project Board decision. Currently, the latest scheduled Project Board meeting is 15 October 2025, but it is unlikely that ongoing work to support an informed decision and prepare for the procurement process will have been completed in time to enable Project Board to make a decision at this meeting.			
2. Procurement process for development partner ends and contract awarded.		No	Due date to be confirmed. See note for above milestone.			
Risks			Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<b>Risks:</b> 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 possible high inflation and increasing cost of building materials. 3. Availability of specific funding for consultants beyond previously agreed timeframe. 4. Overspends against agreed project budgets.				9	8	6


	<b>Decarbonisation of Council Buildings - Phase 2</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Sustainability (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	31-Mar-2028	<b>Original Date</b>	31-Mar-2028
<b>Project Summary</b>	Finalise plans and complete works to decarbonise a further four Council buildings - Hitchin Town Hall, North Herts Museum, District Council Offices, and the learner pool at North Herts Leisure Centre. 2025/26 is a planning year, with works commencing in 2026/27 and due to complete by 31 March 2028. Current milestones only relate to the planning year 2025/26.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	28-Jul-2025 2025/26 is a planning year, with works commencing in 2026/27 and due to complete by 31 March 2028. Funding for the project has been secured - £1.98m as part of the Capital Programme 2025-35 and £1.17m of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (Phase 4) funding. A Project Board has been established, and the project is now underway. Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd., who assisted us with our funding application, are conducting a feasibility assessment to validate and update early project assumptions and to provide options for procurement of solutions. A report will be presented to Cabinet in September 2025 seeking funding approval for appointing a Principal Designer and a Quantity Surveyor for the full project. Also in September 2025, Project Board to agree a preferred procurement option for delivering the pre-construction phase. At this early stage, there is a degree of uncertainty associated with many aspects of the project and the overall risk level is assessed as high. However, governance arrangements in place and further activities scheduled for the planning year aim to mitigate associated risks and reduce the assessed risk level.				
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>		
Full Council approve NHC capital budget to deliver project.	27-Feb-2025	Yes	On 27 February 2025, Full Council approved a capital budget of £1.98m as part of the Capital Programme 2025-35.		
Salix funding secured.	30-Apr-2025	Yes	In April 2025, Salix awarded the Council £1.17m of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (Phase 4) funding. Currently, the estimated total project cost is £3.15m.		
Commence engagement with officers delivering the Leisure Centre Decarbonisation project.	21-May-2025	Yes	We have commenced discussions with the project team delivering the Leisure Centre Decarbonisation project to share internal lessons learned and help inform our approach to managing this Phase 2 project.		
Submit first Salix monitoring report.	13-Jun-2025	Yes	We have submitted our first monitoring report to Salix and have met our Salix relationship manager.		
Project Board established.	17-Jun-2025	Yes			
Appoint Quantity Surveyor to review initial feasibility study.	15-Jul-2025	Yes	We have appointed Varsity Consulting (who provide QS support to the Leisure Centre Decarbonisation project) to review the initial feasibility study.		
Feasibility study received from Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd.	01-Aug-2025	Yes	We appointed WDC (the contractor who assisted us with our funding application) to conduct a feasibility assessment. The aim was for this to help us validate the original funding submission, revise/update overall costs, update the project programme, revise cash flow in line with total project value and Salix submission, update anticipated running costs, review planning options, and provide options for procurement of solutions.		
Technical presentation of feasibility study by WDC.	13-Aug-2025	Yes			
Initial meeting with Varsity Consulting to discuss options to take forward to Project Board.	15-Aug-2025	Yes	Initial meeting held, with further meetings to follow.		
Project Board to agree a preferred procurement option for delivering the pre-construction phase.	08-Sep-2025	No			


Cabinet report seeking funding approval for appointing a Principal Designer and a Quantity Surveyor for the full project.	23-Sep-2025	No	Services provided by Quantity Surveyor and Principal Designer not covered by existing project budget. Request for funding approval to be included in the first quarter Capital Budget Monitoring Review 2025/26 report to Cabinet.			
Pre-construction Service Agreement signed.	26-Sep-2025	No	Due date is currently an estimate - to be confirmed.			
Surveys of the four buildings completed.	04-Dec-2025	No	Due date is currently an estimate - to be confirmed.			
Design phase commences.	05-Dec-2025	No	Due date is currently an estimate - to be confirmed.			
Confirm to Salix that we intend to proceed with the project into the first delivery year, in line with funding conditions.	16-Jan-2026	No				
Risks			Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<b>Key Risks:</b> - NHC responsible for funding all project costs beyond agreed grant funding. - Failure to deliver project in line with agreed grant conditions leads to loss of grant funding - grant spend scheduled for 2026/27 and 2027/28. - Delays obtaining required Distribution Network Operator/Planning approvals lead to delays in commissioning/completing project works. - Failure to obtain planning permission - particular risk for Hitchin Town Hall as it is a listed building. - Unforeseen detailed survey findings require changes to project specifications and lead to additional financial costs e.g., identification of asbestos.				7	7	5

	<b>Engaging the community on our finances and how we spend our money, via the 'Prioritising our Pounds' Digital Budget Hub</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Sustainability (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	28-Feb-2026	<b>Original Date</b>	28-Feb-2026
<b>Project Summary</b>	To help the community understand how we set our budget, what affects the funding that we receive, why we have less funding than we used to and the implications of that. To engage the community on the choices that we will need to make to ensure that our spend matches our funding, so that we are financially sustainable, and to enable our community to be part of future budget conversations.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	07-Aug-2025 Digital Budget Hub content was updated in May 2025, including further information on the 2025/26 financial year. 2026/27 budget consultation launched (across both digital and non-digital channels, including our online Hub) on 6 June 2025 and closed on 1 August 2025. The results will be reviewed with the Executive Member in the week commencing 18 August 2025. We now plan to delay the MTFS until early December 2025 due to uncertainty over new fair funding formula, in the hope for greater certainty by then. The Digital Budget Hub is only one way of helping us to engage with the community and to manage the associated risks, as we use all our channels (both digital and non-digital) to engage and educate residents and businesses. Overall risk level now assessed as medium, although there remains uncertainty relating to future funding, the scale of any budget gap and our options for addressing this, and the impacts of local government reorganisation.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
Update the Digital Budget Hub content to highlight the funding pressures we face and likely implications.		31-Aug-2024	Yes	Updates: - Homepage copy amended to reflect current situation. - 'How we set our budget' graphic created and added (to show residents the process we go through). - 'Did you know' film created and promoted, showing what services residents' council tax helps to provide. Above promoted across our social media channels and ENewsletters.	
Approve our Medium Term Financial Strategy.		30-Sep-2024	Yes	Council agreed adoption of the MTFS 2025-30 on 19 September 2024.	
Update content (Digital Budget Hub and other communications) through process for setting the 2025/26 budget.		28-Feb-2025	Yes	The content update on the Hub was not completed due to it moving from the Zencity platform to the NHC website. However, we did communicate budget information via other channels, with 2025/26 budget and Council Tax communications being promoted via PR to local media, on our website, across our social media channels and via our ENewsletter.	
Further update of Digital Budget Hub content to align with the start of the 2025/26 financial year.		31-May-2025	Yes	Content updated to include the following: 2025/26 Council Tax pie chart graphic; budget consultation mention (and link to survey) included in homepage copy; timeline updated with the 2025/26 Council budget PR and Waste Service change PR; and finally, timeline order changed so that the newest news date is first.	
Carry out detailed consultation on spend priorities and savings options for 2026/27 onwards.		31-Jul-2025	Yes	Budget consultation (across both digital and non-digital channels) ran for eight weeks. Budget consultation launched on 6 June 2025, and it was open until 1 August 2025.	
Consider feedback in setting the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy and approve the Strategy.		30-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 4 December 2025.</b> Plan to delay the MTFS until early December 2025 due to uncertainty over new fair funding formula, and hoping for greater certainty.	
Consider consultation feedback in forming budget proposals for the 2026/27 budget and approve the 2026/27 budget.		28-Feb-2026	No		


Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<b>Risks:</b> 1. Timing of Government announcements over future funding makes it difficult to engage residents in the scale of the budget gap and the savings that will be required. 2. Lack of engagement means that the consultation doesn't reflect a wide range of views. 3. The scale of the budget gap makes it feel like there are no choices. When making choices it then feels like not taking on board feedback. 4. Local government reorganisation adds uncertainty to medium-term planning.		8	5	2


	King George V Skate Park								
Council Plan Objective	Accessible Services (2024-28)			Due Date	31-Oct-2025	Original Date	31-Mar-2025		
Project Summary	Following complications with the initial procurement exercise in 2023/24, complete a procurement exercise to appoint a contractor to replace the existing King George V skate park and oversee delivery of the completed project.								
Latest Update	08-Aug-2025 Work started on-site on 14 July 2025, with an anticipated 12-week delivery window. Therefore, works currently scheduled to be completed by early October 2025. Exact date of official opening is dependent on the actual works completion date but expect the new skatepark to open sometime in October 2025. The risk level continues to be assessed as low. There are possible reputational risks due to the park being closed during the summer months and delays to project delivery, with ongoing communications during the delivery phase being key to managing stakeholder expectations. Overall, we expect the project to deliver a much-improved facility on budget, which meets the needs and expectations of stakeholders.								
Milestone				Due Date	Complete	Note			
Finalise formal SLA with Groundwork relating to the management of procurement processes.				12-Jul-2024	Yes				
NHC Legal to review relevant procurement documentation prior to Groundwork commencing tender process.				18-Aug-2024	Yes	Legal review of procurement documentation undertaken. This took slightly longer than originally envisaged and was completed in September 2024 rather than August 2024.			
Groundwork confirms procurement timetable.				11-Oct-2024	Yes	Timetable confirmed following Legal review of relevant procurement documentation.			
Commence tender process.				14-Oct-2024	Yes	ITT published on 14 October 2024.			
Award contract following evaluation of tender responses.				17-Dec-2024	Yes	Following evaluation of tenders in November 2024, the contract was awarded mid-December 2024.			
Contractor to conduct further communication/consultation during the early stages of the project prior to project delivery.				30-May-2025	Yes	This was completed in May 2025 prior to commencement of works on-site.			
Contractor confirms project plan and timings.				31-May-2025	Yes	Contract signed on 22 April 2025. Further consultation on the final design held in May 2025. Works commenced on 14 July 2025, with an anticipated 12-week delivery window.			
Contractor to commence on-site project delivery.				14-Jul-2025	Yes	Work started on Monday 14 July 2025 to revamp the skatepark.			
Contractor completes on-site works.				05-Oct-2025	No	Works have commenced. Project plan has works completing in the week commencing 29 September 2025.			
New skate park officially opened to the public.				31-Oct-2025	No	Specific due date to be confirmed. Dependent on works completing by early October 2025, expect the new skatepark to open sometime in October 2025.			
Risks						Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
Risks: - Until precise timings are confirmed, there is a risk that the project will not be completed in line with stakeholder expectations (currently assessed as low risk). - As with all procurement processes, there is a risk that the outcome will be challenged (risk removed, as the outcome was not challenged). - Possible reputational risk due to the park being closed during the construction period (currently assessed as low risk).							2	2	1


	<b>Local Plan Review</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Responsible Growth (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	31-Dec-2027	<b>Original Date</b>	31-Dec-2027
<b>Project Summary</b>	To undertake an update of the Council's statutory Local Plan as agreed in principle by Cabinet in January 2024.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	24-Jul-2025 Secondary legislation and/or guidance is still awaited and is anticipated towards the end of 2025. There are presently no formal details of the 'Gateway' processes or requirements, though Government have reiterated their intention for these to be introduced. The Director - Place role has now been filled. The Strategic Planning Manager role is currently occupied on an interim basis and will be advertised in the Autumn. Two senior planner roles are currently being recruited to assist in the capacity of the wider team. If successful, these will be filled towards the end of the year. The consultation and site analysis digital platform has now been secured, and evidence and scoping work is ongoing. We are currently consulting on a Call for Sites - Expression of Interest for people to submit sites that have the potential for development. This work will inform the site allocations work to support the Local Plan. At this stage, officers are not recommending amendments to the milestones – in part due to a lack of information that might allow any more likely alternates to be identified – but will continue to monitor the situation in consultation with the Executive Member. However, due to the continued uncertainty relating to the process and timings for undertaking required activities, the previously reported milestone due dates have been removed. These will be re-instated once legislation/guidance has been received, and we have been able to assess the implications for our previously approved Local Development Scheme timetable. An update will be provided in the Strategic Planning Matters report to Cabinet in September 2025.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
01. In principle approval that Local Plan review is undertaken.		16-Jan-2024	Yes	Approved by Cabinet in January 2024.	
03. Approval of Local Development Scheme.		14-Jan-2025	Yes	Approved by Cabinet in January 2025.	
04. Notice of start of plan-making given to Secretary of State.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	
04. Complete 'Gateway 1' advisory assessment.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	
05. Complete first mandatory public consultation.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	
06. Complete 'Gateway 2' advisory assessment.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	
07. Complete second mandatory public consultation.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	
08. Complete 'Gateway 3' assessment and submit for examination.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	
09. Receipt of examination outcome.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	
10. Finalisation and adoption of digital plan.			No	Milestone in line with approved LDS, subject to commentary dated 24 July 2025.	


Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government fails to provide regulations and guidance in a timely fashion.</li> <li>- Government introduces different or new or substantive reforms to the planning system and / or national policy.</li> <li>- Failure to retain/recruit sufficiently experienced officers to implement required programme of work. We have been unsuccessful with previous recruitment exercises, with limited interest in roles due to salary vs experience expectations not being in line with other local authorities in the area.</li> <li>- Internal complexities that delay putting necessary resources in place in a timely fashion.</li> <li>- Lack of general resource to accomplish the Local Plan update.</li> <li>- Lack/conflict of direction and vision from Council.</li> <li>- Failure to secure funding to resource the process.</li> <li>- Failure to obtain political and/or Government approval at key stages or gateways.</li> <li>- Government intervention if inadequate progress is made upon Local Plan Review.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Poor scheme outcomes that do not appropriately respond to local character and context.</li> <li>- Adverse appeal findings on other/non-Local Plan sites if progress on the Local Plan Review is delayed or stalled.</li> <li>- Local Government reorganisation proposals divert resources, impact upon the timetable or approach, or result in new workstreams.</li> </ul>		5	7	3





	<b>Oughtonhead Common Weir</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Sustainability (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	31-Mar-2026	<b>Original Date</b>	30-Sep-2024
<b>Project Summary</b>	Complete works to rectify the collapsed weir.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	07-Aug-2025 CMS are currently putting together the specification/contract documents. A meeting is scheduled with Fishtek Consulting to go through questions raised by the Environment Agency (EA) to ensure no further modifications are required. All being well, expect tender process to start in early September 2025. Although dependent on the tender process starting in early September 2025, currently expect to appoint contractor in early November 2025. CMS have confirmed the tender details are complex, so a six-week period will be required for the tender to be open to allow sufficient time for contractors to put their returns together, followed by a two-week period for evaluating and scoring returns. Therefore, the process is expected to last for approximately two months from start to finish. CMS have also been notified that a Fish Pass application (permission to build, modify, or operate a fish pass on a river or watercourse) now needs to be submitted and approved by the EA. The next deadline for submission is 21 August 2025 for review by the panel on 4 September 2025. In the meantime, CMS can still continue with preparations for the tender process. At this time, we are unable to confirm precise timings for subsequent project phases. The project will not be completed in line with previously reported anticipated timeframes and public communications at the end of the procurement process and throughout the delivery phase will be key to managing stakeholder expectations and potential reputational risks. The impact of a delay in completing the project is still assessed as low, as any further deterioration of the existing weir is unlikely to result in significant environmental damage, with water quality actually improving since the damage to the existing weir occurred.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
01. Conduct the further modelling requested by the Environment Agency.		31-Aug-2024	Yes	Cost of completing further modelling circa £3k.	
02. Obtain required Environment Agency permits.		31-Dec-2024	Yes	Permits obtained in December 2024.	
03. Commence tender process for undertaking required works.		19-Sep-2025	No	CMS are currently putting together the specification/contract documents. A meeting is scheduled with Fishtek Consulting to go through questions raised by the Environment Agency to ensure no further modifications are required. All being well, expect tender process to start in early September 2025.	
04. Appoint contractor(s) to undertake required works.		14-Nov-2025	No	Current due date dependent on the tender process starting in early September 2025. CMS have confirmed the details are complex and so expect a six-week period for the tender to be open to allow sufficient time for contractors to put their returns together, followed by a two-week period for evaluating and scoring returns. Therefore, the process is expected to last for approximately two months.	
05. Successful contractor confirms project plan and timings.			No	<b>Due date to be confirmed.</b> Will be confirmed following contract award.	
06. Undertake further communication with the public regarding plans.			No	<b>Due date to be confirmed.</b> Will take place once contract awarded and plans have been finalised.	
07. Commence work on-site.			No	<b>Due date to be confirmed.</b> Will be confirmed when successful contractor confirms project plan and timings.	
08. Works on-site completed.			No	<b>Due date to be confirmed.</b> Will be confirmed when successful contractor confirms project plan and timings.	


Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<b>Risks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External funding from HCC, EA and residents is not available leading to full allocated Capital budget being used (currently assessed as low risk in view of reduced work now being required).</li> <li>- Existing situation deteriorates prior to any works being undertaken requiring further urgent temporary solutions to manage an immediate changing situation (currently assessed as low risk).</li> <li>- Failure to obtain Environment Agency permits or planning permission (no longer a risk).</li> <li>- Lack of contractor appetite to undertake works prolongs procurement process and delays project delivery (prior to tender process, assessed as relatively low risk).</li> <li>- Without confirmed plans for the procurement process and project delivery, there is a risk that the project will not be completed in line with current stakeholder expectations (currently assessed as low risk).</li> </ul>		4	2	1


	<b>Pay on Exit Parking</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Accessible Services (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	28-Nov-2025	<b>Original Date</b>	31-Mar-2026
<b>Project Summary</b>	Replace existing parking machines and update tariff boards to implement pay on exit in all our town centre car parks. Capital budget approved to deliver the project over two years - 2024/25 and 2025/26.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	28-Jul-2025 The target date for installing new parking machines and signage at Norton Common and Hitchin Swimming & Fitness Centre is now the end of November 2025. Completion is dependent on having updated the TROs for both car parks, as from a scheduling and resource perspective, it is preferable for works to be undertaken at a similar time. The Norton Common TRO has already been updated (delegated decision notified 27 June 2025) and discussions are continuing with Leisure regarding the requirements for the updated TRO for Hitchin Swimming & Fitness Centre. Following the temporary update of existing tariff boards, new tariff boards are due to be installed at all other car parks. The schedule now agreed with the contractor is that this will be delivered via a rolling programme that is expected to be completed by the end of October 2025. All works relating to this project are still expected to be completed well in advance of the Capital funding deadline of March 2026. As with the introduction of any new technology, the Council and users have experienced a number of issues associated with the new machines and payment options, including network connectivity issues at some car parks. We have improved initial new signage and continue to work with the contractor to address connectivity issues. There has been both a high demand and pressure on the Parking Team, who have worked tirelessly to respond to and resolve users' issues. This has been key in managing the possible reputational risks associated with a negative public reaction to the changes, and there are indications that things are now starting to settle down. Despite the teething problems, most users have successfully continued to pay for parking following the changes.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
Procure supplier to replace tariff boards.		30-Aug-2024	Yes	Procurement complete. Supplier appointed on 2 September 2024.	
Draft implementation programme received from contractor.		30-Nov-2024	Yes		
Full implementation programme agreed with contractor.		31-Dec-2024	Yes	Full implementation programme agreed in December 2024 with some minor modifications finally agreed early February 2025. Installation of new parking machines scheduled to start mid-February 2025.	
Commence installation of new parking machines on a town-by-town basis, along with new entrance/information signage.		17-Feb-2025	Yes	Rollout commenced in Hitchin.	
Update TROs.		18-Feb-2025	Yes	The majority of updated TROs became effective on 18 February 2025. Updated TROs introduced alternative methods of payment, virtual permits and season tickets, and reviewed the definitions and length of stay for electric vehicle parking bays within the Council's car parks.	
Complete installation of new parking machines and new entrance/information signage.		31-Mar-2025	Yes	Works on site completed. However, as with the introduction of any new technology, the Council and users have experienced a number of issues associated with the new machines and payment options, including network connectivity issues at some car parks. Officers are working hard with the contractor to address these issues.	
Complete installation of new parking machines and signage at Norton Common and Hitchin Swimming & Fitness Centre car parks.		30-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 28 November 2025.</b> This action is dependent on the completion of the new TROs for both car parks. From a scheduling and resource perspective, it is preferable for works to be undertaken at a similar time.	
Installation of new tariff boards completed.		30-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 31 October 2025.</b> The previous due date was an estimate, with the expectation that works would be completed by the end of Summer 2025. However, the schedule for installing new tariff boards agreed with the contractor is that this will be delivered via a rolling programme completing by the end of October 2025.	

Norton Common and Hitchin Swimming & Fitness Centre TROs updated.	30-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 28 November 2025.</b> The Norton Common TRO has been updated (delegated decision notified 27 June 2025). Discussions are continuing with Leisure regarding the requirements for the updated TRO for Hitchin Swimming & Fitness Centre. Currently, the expectation is that the updated TRO will have been progressed and will be effective by the end of November 2025.			
Risks			Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<b>Risks:</b> 1. Budget implications of selected scheme (no longer a risk). 2. Inability to procure suppliers within approved budget (no longer a risk, as procured suppliers within budget). 3. Negative public reaction to changes and disruption during works. 4. Loss of income during associated works and immediate post-installation period. 5. Failure to bring together separate project elements to achieve seamless project delivery. 6. Public have issues using the new parking machines or understanding new payment options.				1	1	1


	<b>Resident/Public EV Charging in our Car Parks</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Sustainability (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	31-Oct-2025	<b>Original Date</b>	31-Mar-2025
<b>Project Summary</b>	Finalise contract/leases with private sector partner and subsequently install new EV charging points in six of our outdoor surface car parks. OZEV grant secured to help deliver the project, although availability of funding has only currently been formally extended to September 2025.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	23-Jul-2025 Installation and commissioning of new EV charging points in all six outdoor surface car parks currently expected to be completed by the end of October 2025, with relevant leases also expected to be formalised in a similar timeframe. Revised target date acknowledges uncertainty relating to the completion of required wayleave agreements and Distribution Network Operator (DNO) tasks to connect power to the new charging points. The first phase of installation works has been completed, with all EV charging points now in place at the six outdoor car parks. Regarding formalisation of leases, all necessary details have been discussed and agreed with the contractor to allow this to happen once EV charging points have been installed and commissioned. An extension of the current grant funding deadline of 30 September 2025 has been requested from the Department for Transport. Outside of the scope of this Council Delivery Plan OZEV ORCS funded project, new EV charging points are also due to be installed in our multi-storey car parks, although the schedule for these works is still to be finalised. Progress continues to be made, although there remain risks associated with wayleave agreements, completion of DNO activities, and formal agreement of further extensions to the grant funding deadline. Therefore, the overall project risk level continues to be assessed as 'medium'.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
NHC to start promoting project.		31-Oct-2024	Yes	Our investment in EV charging infrastructure was included in the Winter 2024 edition of Outlook magazine, which was published in early December 2024.	
Page 45 of 45	Contract finalised with private sector partner.		31-Dec-2024	Yes	Contract finalised 7 January 2025. Contract amended to enable the OZEV ORCS funded project (installation of new EV charging points in our outdoor surface car parks) to progress in advance of the further project to replace existing charging points in our multi-storey car parks, which was delayed by the need to satisfy the Council's property insurer regarding potential fire risks.
	Contractor to commence works.		03-Mar-2025	Yes	Having issued authority-to-proceed letters to the contractor, works commenced at the Civic Centre car park in Royston on 22 April 2025.
	Complete relevant leases with contractor for the length of the contract.		30-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 31 October 2025, in line with the current contractor timeline and the project update reported to DfT.</b> The intention is that all relevant leases will be formalised once EV charging points have been installed and commissioned. All necessary details have been discussed and agreed with the contractor to allow this to happen. The installation and commissioning of new EV charging points in all six outdoor surface car parks is now expected to be completed by the end of October 2025, although there could be further delays linked to the completion of required UKPN connections and relevant wayleave agreements.
Installation and commissioning of all new EV charging points completed.		30-Sep-2025	No	<b>Due date to change to 31 October 2025, in line with the current contractor timeline and the project update reported to DfT.</b> The first phase of installation works has been completed, with all EV charging points now in place at the six outdoor car parks. Some have already been connected, but we are still waiting for UKPN to connect new charging points to the main power grid in all six car parks. For two car parks, this requires the completion of third party wayleave agreements. When charging points are connected, the contractor will then return to complete required works (e.g., introducing related signage) prior to commissioning the charging points.	

Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<b>Risks:</b> 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. Unable to schedule required DNO upgrades in line with implementation programme. 6. Insurance requirements lead to changes to installation plans (no longer a risk). 7. Unable to reach agreement with Garden Square Shopping Centre regarding the replacement of existing charging points in Letchworth multi-storey car park (outside scope of OZEV project and no longer a risk).		5	5	1

	<b>Town Centres Strategy</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Responsible Growth (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	27-Feb-2026	<b>Original Date</b>	31-Mar-2025
<b>Project Summary</b>	Progress development of an overarching Town Centres Strategy, including guidance on developing strategic plans for individual town centres.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	24-Jul-2025 At the time of update, still aiming to take the draft Town Centres Strategy to Cabinet in September 2025, although this is dependent on receiving a first full draft of the Strategy from the consultants in early August 2025. Following Project Board on 15 July 2025, the draft Strategy will now also be presented to PLB prior to the Cabinet meeting. If a completed full draft has been signed off in line with currently estimated timeframes, the draft Strategy is also due to be presented to O&S Committee on 9 September 2025. Should Cabinet be happy with the report recommendations, we will then move on to the public consultation phase followed by formal adoption by Cabinet. Precise timings for related milestones are still to be confirmed, as these will depend on our ability to present the draft Strategy to relevant committees in September 2025 and the outcome of these meetings. Should Cabinet give approval to proceed in September 2025, expect consultation exercise to take place over six weeks during October and November 2025. Dependent on the consultation findings, we would then aim to report back to Cabinet by the end of February 2026 at the latest. Although good progress is being made, there remains uncertainty regarding the timing of receipt of a first full draft from consultants and the outcomes from relevant meetings, and a new approved Strategy will not yet be a material consideration in a planning context as it does not form part of the currently adopted Local Plan. Therefore, the overall project risk level continues to be assessed as 'medium', although it is anticipated that a number of risk areas will reduce as we progress the Strategy throughout the remainder of the year.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
1. Undertake work to complete evidence base.		31-Jul-2024	Yes	Consultants presented initial report on evidence base and stakeholder workshop held to review findings.	
2. Further review/refinement of evidence base and final sign-off.		20-Dec-2024	Yes	Finalised retail evidence base in December 2024. Consultants to review wider evidence base for draft Strategy. To be published as supporting evidence base when consulting on the draft Town Centres Strategy.	
3. Project Board review draft Town Centres Strategy.		20-May-2025	Yes	Project Board members requested further work to be undertaken and to see the revised version prior to submitting the Strategy to Cabinet. There was not enough time to do this in time for Cabinet in June 2025, so we are now aiming for Cabinet in September 2025.	
4. Project Board review and approval of draft Town Centres Strategy.		15-Jul-2025	Yes	Presented the detailed overview and priorities for each of the town centres at the Project Board meeting on 15 July 2025. At this meeting, Project Board suggested the draft Strategy should be presented to PLB prior to the September 2025 Cabinet meeting.	
5. Development and finalisation of draft Strategy.		15-Aug-2025	No	Consultants are expected to provide a first full draft of the Town Centres Strategy by 31 July 2025 for officer review and comment. A completed full draft for officer sign-off is then expected by 15 August 2025. This will subsequently be submitted to O&S and PLB.	
6. New milestone - Present draft Strategy to Political Liaison Board (PLB).		02-Sep-2025	No	<b>New milestone.</b> Due date is dependent on receiving, reviewing, and signing off a final draft by mid-August 2025.	
7. New milestone - Present draft Strategy to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.		09-Sep-2025	No	<b>New milestone.</b> Due date is dependent on receiving, reviewing, and signing off a final draft by mid-August 2025.	
8. Present details of draft Strategy, including guidance sections for each town, to Cabinet.		23-Sep-2025	No	On the Forward Plan, the draft Town Centres Strategy is scheduled to go to Cabinet in September 2025. However, this is dependent on receiving, reviewing, and signing off a final draft by mid-August 2025.	




9. Consultation on draft Town Centres Strategy.		No	Due date to be confirmed, as dependent on outcome of relevant Cabinet meeting. If draft Strategy presented to Cabinet in September 2025 and Cabinet are happy with the report recommendations, expect consultation to take place over six weeks during October and November 2025.			
10. Cabinet adopt Town Centres Strategy.		No	Due date to be confirmed. Exact timing dependent on Cabinet approval to proceed to consultation and findings of the consultation exercise. Should Cabinet approval be received in September 2025 and a consultation exercise be completed by the end of November 2025, would expect to report back to Cabinet by the end of February 2026 at the latest.			
Risks			Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
1. Lack of available resource to produce and deliver identified strategies. 2. Lack of strategic direction leads to speculative development that undermines function of town centres.				5	5	1




	<b>Waste and Street Cleansing Contract</b>				
<b>Council Plan Objective</b>	Accessible Services (2024-28)	<b>Due Date</b>	30-Nov-2025	<b>Original Date</b>	31-Aug-2025
<b>Project Summary</b>	Complete procurement and mobilisation of a new Waste and Street Cleansing contract. Plan for and implement agreed service changes included in the contract.				
<b>Latest Update</b>	24-Jul-2025 We have finalised collection rounds for agreed service changes included in the contract and have completed the programme of new bin and caddy deliveries, although work continues to rectify minor identified issues. Preparations continue for the rollout of new services on 4 August 2025, including promoting the new services e.g., via social media and sending letters to all residents. As with all service changes, there is a risk of issues arising in the early weeks and we are putting in place mitigating measures to help manage these e.g., having additional vehicles available to respond to initial teething problems. A briefing session was held on 14 July 2025 to keep Members informed and an update report is now due to be presented to O&S Committee following the initial rollout period. In view of the progress made since the commencement of the contract renewal process, the overall risk level is now assessed as medium. The risk position is much improved, and we can take measures to manage the main categories of risk - operational and reputational.				
<b>Milestone</b>		<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Note</b>	
Evaluation of final tenders and production of Evaluation Report.		17-Jun-2024	Yes		
Project Board sign off of Evaluation Report and award recommendation.		21-Jun-2024	Yes		
Executive and Cabinet approval to award the contract to the preferred bidder.		09-Jul-2024	Yes	Cabinet agreed to award the contract to the preferred bidder, contingent upon the completion of the Letchworth depots lease assignment from the incumbent provider to the Council. The assignment of the Letchworth depots lease was subsequently completed.	
End of contract award standstill period.		12-Aug-2024	Yes		
First meetings held with preferred bidder.		15-Aug-2024	Yes		
Intention to award contract phase completed.		31-Aug-2024	Yes	Milestone completed and communicated in September 2024 that we will be re-establishing a partnership with Veolia.	
Press communication.		10-Sep-2024	Yes		
Commence procurement of new fleet vehicles.		15-Nov-2024	Yes	We approved capital funding of £5.285 million (excluding VAT) for the purchase of waste and street cleansing vehicles for the new contract. This allowed the procurement process for NHC vehicles to commence. This process has now completed.	
Develop IT specifications.		30-Nov-2024	Yes	Full specifications for the garden waste platform and additional forms developed. Relevant build processes commenced. From a technical standpoint, we have the information we needed to scope and plan the project.	
Finalisation and signing of contract (formal contract award).		28-Feb-2025	Yes	Delay did not impact our ability to prepare for contract mobilisation.	
Confirmation of final delivery plans and H&S arrangements.		04-Mar-2025	Yes	Delivery plans finalised and H&S risk assessments completed and received. Delivery plans were revisited in advance of service change.	



## Corporate Risks

Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<b><u>Resourcing</u></b> <b>Risks:</b> Ability to recruit and retain staff, as well as supporting new priorities and external pressures, affects delivery of the projects and actions in the Council Delivery Plan and service plans. This is particularly relevant for certain service areas where it is especially difficult to recruit and retain staff. Also, impacts of emergency planning events on staff resources.		8	9	8
<b><u>Cyber Risks</u></b> <b>Risks:</b> Prolonged widespread disruption to/failure of IT infrastructure/systems. Possible causes: - Deliberate and unauthorised breaches of security e.g., ransomware, denial of service. - Unintentional/accidental breaches of security e.g., action of individual staff/Members. - Weakness/failure of essential IT infrastructure e.g., loss of internet access. - Evolving risk appetite/profile associated with IT systems, as we pursue increased use of hosted systems and associated risks to individual systems are transferred to suppliers. Leading to: - Inability to deliver services/projects. - Unbudgeted costs to enable recovery. - Reputational damage.		8	8	8
<b><u>Financial Sustainability</u></b> <b>Risks:</b> 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) as a result of inflationary increases. 5. Uncertainty over levels of pay inflation required. 6. Local government reorganisation adds uncertainty to medium-term financial planning.		9	9	5

Risks	Risk Level	Original Score	Current Score	Target Score
<p><b><u>Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution</u></b></p> <p><b>Risks:</b></p> <p>The Government have published a White Paper and written to all Local Authorities. This requires Local Authorities to work together to come up with a proposal that results in unitary rather than 2-tier Councils. It also seeks a Combined Authority structure that allows devolution of powers to a Mayor. Those powers include "housing, planning, transport, energy, skills, employment support and more". The risks relate to this being a very substantial project requiring significant change. Specific risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The work to get to a proposal on a unitary structure (noting the need for this to be agreed across 11 Councils) is significant in terms of the negotiations needed and the collation of information and analysis to support that decision making process.</li> <li>- If there is an inability to agree a new structure, it may prolong the period above, or lead to a structure being imposed upon Hertfordshire.</li> <li>- After a new structure is agreed, there would be even more significant work to move towards the implementation of that new structure.</li> <li>- Efficiency is mentioned as one of the reasons for moving to a unitary structure. This may lead staff to believe that their job may be at risk. Alternatively, the additional work of moving to unitary status may be seen as too much.</li> <li>- Focusing on a new structure may lead to decision making that is too short-term (getting things done before they can be de-prioritised by a new larger Council with wider priorities) or too long-term (avoid making decisions and leave them to the new unitary Council).</li> <li>- Ensuring that the views of stakeholders continue to be heard during the transition process and within the new structure.</li> </ul>		9	9	5

<b>OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>9 SEPTEMBER 2025</b>

**TITLE OF REPORT: UPDATE ON PAY ON EXIT PARKING IN COUNCIL OPERATED CAR PARKS.**

REPORT OF: NIGEL SMITH: *DIRECTOR - PLACE*

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: *CLLR DONNA WRIGHT: EXEC MEMBER FOR PLACE*

COUNCIL PRIORITY: ACCESSIBLE SERVICES/ SUSTAINABILITY

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

To provide the Committee with an update on the status of the Pay on Exit Parking Project and to provide a comparison between 2025/26 Quarter 1 and 2024/25 Quarter 1 parking transaction figures and the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued per car park.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the Quarter 1 update of the Pay on Exit Parking Project.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 This report is following the request of the Committee for an update on the Pay on Exit Parking Project and to provide a comparison between 2025/26 Quarter 1 and 2024/25 Quarter 1 parking transaction figures and the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued per car park.

**4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. None

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

- 5.1 The Executive Member for Place is kept updated and briefed on the status and any issues regarding the Pay on Exit Parking project.
- 5.2 Shadow executives are invited to attend quarterly briefings on Planning & Transport matters which has included updates on the status of the Pay on Exit Parking project. A PowerPoint presentation is circulated after the meeting for dissemination to the Groups. In addition, two MIS notes have been published informing all Members on the status of the project (dated 14 February and 17 April 2025).

- 5.3 External organisations including the BID Managers for Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston and Royston Town Council have been kept informed, and officers have met with the various organisations regarding any concerns raised over the usage of the new parking machines.
- 5.4 Two press releases were issued in February and in May informing people about the new machines and in Outlook Magazine published in December 2024, including the recent 2025 summer edition.
- 5.5 There is a [‘Pay for parking at the payment machines’](#) guide on the Council’s website together with a number of FAQs to help assist our customers. The FAQs are reviewed and updated as new issues/queries arise.
- 5.6 The Communications Team also review and address any queries through our social media channels. In some cases, we have had to engage with more active social media groups such as in Royston which have been raising the profile of the parking issues in this area notably beyond others in the District, where we have needed to address some misunderstandings and encouraged residents to rather contact the Council with concerns and queries.

## **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 Council commissioned Flowbird UK (now Arrive) in mid-2024 to replace the parking machines across all its car parks within Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth, Royston and Knebworth.
- 7.2 The installation of the new machines was completed by mid to end March in all the Town Centre Car Parks except for the Norton Common and Hitchin Swim Centre Car Parks. Installation of new machines in these latter car parks is delayed due to the requirement to update the necessary off-street traffic regulation orders. Work has commenced on the review of the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) with the intention for these new machines to be installed later in the year. The revised TRO for Norton Common has recently been completed and came into force from mid-July.
- 7.3 Signage informing people how to pay and reminder signs were also installed across all car parks alongside the installation programme of the new machines.
- 7.4 The new payment machines, are equipped with full-colour touch screens and support various contactless payment options, including Apple Pay and Google Pay.
- 7.5 Visitors can either prepay for their parking session by cash or card or make use of the 'Check In' and 'Check Out' functionality, which allows users to pay only for the actual time parked up to the maximum stay of the car park, thereby eliminating the need to predict parking duration. One of the new machines within each car park, with the exception of Woodside in Hitchin, provides a cash payment option. Woodside is the only Council car park that doesn’t take cash due to previous issues with vandalism and has taken only contactless payments over the last few years.

- 7.6 The system introduces a ticketless system, which eliminates the need for paper tickets and the requirement for users to return to their vehicle to display a ticket, thereby enabling visitors to continue with their journey into the town centre. Receipts are available on request for card payments.

## 8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

### Issues, Steps Taken and Remaining Actions:

- 8.1 As with any new technology we have been experiencing minor issues with some of the new machines which have had an impact on our customers in making payment resulting in a number of calls and negative feedback.

- 8.2 These have included:

- *Searching for network connections* - which can cause the machine to go offline for a few minutes. This can impact on visitors wishing to make payment or complete their 'Check Out' session. The network connections have been improved in most car parks with the roll out of replacement high quality industrial sim cards in each machine and should be completed in the next 2 weeks. The contractors will be undertaking post-implementation signal testing of the machines to address any further outstanding issues.
- *Delay in payments made being registered on the Civil Enforcement Officers handheld device* - resulting in some Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) being issued for non-payment. This software issue has been resolved and the challenges raised by the public have been addressed.
- *Other ways to pay when a machine is off-line or out of order* – consideration is also been given to the possibility of zoning our busier car parks that are adjacent to each other allowing people to use an alternative machine in the case of a machine going off-line or in the case of peak usage, for example zoning:
  - The Portmill Lane East and West Car parks in Hitchin
  - Angel Pavement and Market Place Car Parks in Royston.

In the larger car parks where there is more than one machine, people can make payment at either machine. Alternatively, visitors can 'PayByPhone' and use the accompanying app if they don't want to use the machines or in the case of when a machine is offline.

- *Difficulty in reading the screens in bright sunlight* - the screens are regularly cleaned by our Civil Enforcement Officers to ensure all finger and other marks are removed which can make the screens difficult to read.
- *Confusion between pre-pay and post payment (Check In/Check Out) options* - Whilst payments are being made successfully, there is confusion amongst some visitors between pre-pay and post payment in the case of customers attempting to check out when they have pre-paid. Officers are reviewing the signage in order to address this confusion and have recently reviewed and replaced the signage

in the Hitchin town centre car parks as a trial which will be assessed over August and September to see if this helps reduce the number of calls and complaints being received by the Council's back office.

- *Confusion between blue badge and Season Ticket holders having to register for a parking session* – signage is being installed adjacent to disable bays in the car parks informing blue badge holders that they do not need to register for a parking session and across all the long stay car parks informing season ticket holders that they do not need to register for a parking session. This task will be completed within the next 4 to 6 weeks.

- 8.3 It is to be noted that any customers requiring assistance can speak to our Civil Enforcement Officers when present in the car parks, or they can call the Council using the Parking Services number on our tariff boards (01462 474631) and the Council's Customer Service Centre (01462 474000). As mentioned in paragraph 5.5 above, the Council has a dedicated webpage on its website for the new machines together with a FAQs which seek to address the concerns raised by our customers.

#### Ticket Sales and Penalty Charge Notices

- 8.4 O&S committee have requested a breakdown of the following key data points by locality and comparison for April to June 2025 versus the same period last year since the installation of the new machines:
- Ticket sales
  - PCNs issued
  - PCNs subsequently cancelled/rescinded
- 8.5 The tables below provide the information requested for all off-street car parks operated by the Council where people pay for parking for the current 2025/26 Quarter 1 financial period compared to same period for Quarter 1 in 2024/25.

**Table 1: Total Number of Ticket Sales by Locality:**

Off-Street Car Parks Pay for Parking by Town	Q1 2024/25 Total Number of Ticket sales/transactions April to June 2024	Q1 2025/26 Total Number of Ticket sales/transactions April to June 2025	Q1 2025/26 % Increase on previous year
Baldock	1,820	2,142	18%
Hitchin	172,608	174,006	1%
Knebworth	3,649	3,063	-16%
Letchworth Garden City	46,251	52,138	13%
Royston	57,021	67,542	18%
<b>Total all car parks</b>	<b>281,349</b>	<b>298,891</b>	<b>6%</b>

- 8.5.1 *It is noted the figures in Table 1 include all off-street car parks where people pay for parking and all forms of payment options, i.e. those at the machines and PayByPhone.*



**Table 2: Total Number of PCNs issued by Locality for All Contraventions**

Off-Street Car Parks Pay for Parking by Town	Q1 2024/25 Total Number of PCNs Issued April to June 2024	Q1 2025/26 Total Number of PCNs issued April to June 2025	Q1 2025/26 % Increase on previous year
Baldock	12	31	158%
Hitchin	1042	1656	59%
Knebworth	11	15	36%
Letchworth Garden City	270	519	92%
Royston	250	332	33%
<b>Total all car parks</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>2553</b>	<b>61%</b>

**Table 3: Total Number of PCNs Challenged and Rescinded for All Contraventions**

Off-Street Car Parks All PCN Contraventions	Q1 2024/25 Total Number of PCNs Issued April to June 2024	Q1 2025/26 Total Number of PCNs issued April to June 2025
Number of PCNs issued	1585	2553
Number of PCNs Challenged	502	1114
<b>Percentage of PCNs Challenged</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>44%</b>
Number of PCNs challenges responded to	502	1035
Number of PCNs challenges resulting in cancellation	332	806
<b>Percentage of challenges responded to that have been cancelled/rescinded</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>78%</b>

8.5.2 It is noted the PCN figures in Tables 2 and 3 include all types of contraventions that are legally enforced within the off-street car parks, this includes:

- Parked without payment,
- Parked after expiry of paid for time,
- Parked in electric vehicle charging place without charging
- Parked for longer than permitted
- Parked in restricted area of car park
- Not parked correctly within markings of bay
- Parked in disabled space without a valid blue badge
- Parked in car park or area not designated for class of vehicle
- Parked in a car park when closed

8.5.3 The 'parked without payment' contraventions include not displaying a pay and display ticket; and parked without payment of a parking charge. Customers who have either failed to pay or have made an error in their payment at a machine or on PayByPhone, are included in these contraventions.

- 8.6 It is to be noted that visitors are using the machines and making payments successfully. The number of ticket sales/transactions made at the machines since the new machines were installed for 2025/26 Q1 compared to Q1 for 2024/25 for the same period has increased overall by 6% (See Table 1 above). But caution is expressed when looking at only a few months of data. As the weather, special events, economic climate etc, can impact customer behaviour and number of visitors to our town centres which could impact on the number of transactions made per locality.
- 8.7 It is to be noted that the figures quoted in Tables 2 and 3 above include all types of contravention codes in car parks (see note at para 8.5.2 above). As indicated in Table 2, the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued has increased in Q1 2025/26 by 61% compared to the same period last year. This increase is mostly due to the introduction of the new form of payment methods at the new machines and the requirement for people to enter their Vehicle Registration Mark (VRM) number correctly. By not entering this correctly, means their VRM is not registered on the CEO handheld and a PCN is issued for 'parked without payment of the parking charge' (see explanation at para 8.5.3 above).
- 8.8 It is also to be noted that at Q1 in 2025/26 the Parking Enforcement Service had a full complement of CEOs staff compared to Q1 in 2024/25, where the team were down by 4 officers. This means the general coverage of both on and off street parking restrictions has increased, – but the ratio of PCNs issued between on and off street has remained similar – i.e.: 59% for on-street PCNs issued vs 41% for PCNs issued in off-street car parks in Q1 2024/25 compared to 56% on-street PCNs issued vs 44% off-street car park PCNs issued in Q1 2025/26.
- 8.9 This increase in PCNs has resulted in an increase in the total number of PCN challenges received against notices issued for Q1 2025/26. i.e. 44% compared to 32% in Q1 2024/25 as indicated in Table 3. Table 3 also shows the percentage number of challenges that have been cancelled/rescinded, the percentage increase in 2025/26 Q1 i.e. 78% compared to 66% in Q1 2024/25 is mostly attributed to people not entering their VRM number correctly where the Council has taken a more lenient approach on the first occasion that a customer makes such an error and has rescinded the PCN.
- 8.10 It is noted that the number of PCNs being issued since April to July 2025 against the 'parked without payment of a parking charge' contravention code is reducing, i.e. by 26% over the last 4 months, this means people are getting used to the form of payment and making less errors when entering their VRM number and should result in less challenges being made. It is assumed that this trend will continue and will bring the figures back in line by the end of the financial year as people become more familiar with the machines when registering their parking session.
- 8.11 There is an outstanding matter regarding the requirement for visitors to enter a VRM number for the separate post '3pm free' subsidised parking session in the Royston car parks and how this can be adequately enforced, which may require the need for issuing a voucher and at the time of writing this report is currently under investigation. This data is required as part of the agreement between the Council and the Royston Town Council and RoystonFirst Bid in subsidising the Free after 3pm scheme. At present we are reminding visitors by way of notice on their windscreens to register their VRM number when parked after 3pm in the Royston car parks. PCNs are not presently being issued for any failure to comply with this request.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications from this report which is an update to the Committee.

However, section 14.6.10(b) of the Council Constitution provides delegation to the Service Director, Place to exercise the following functions powers and duties except those reserved to Council, Cabinet or a Committee in relation to:

*“(ii) Car Parking including enforcement of on and off-street parking orders including residential parking zones”.*

- 9.2 Further, pursuant to the Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny committee found in section 6 of the constitution and in particular paragraph (s), the committee can:

*‘...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 areas. To consider risk to the achievement of those objectives/ priorities. To make recommendations to Cabinet’*

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 A capital budget of £300 000 has been set aside for the implementation of the Pay on Exit Parking project. This budget will cover the full installation and set up costs associated with the new machines, the associated signage, replacement of the tariff boards and associated lighting across all car parks. This Budget is profiled over 2 years 2024/25 and 2025/26. The Project is anticipated to be completed by March 2026.
- 10.2 The ongoing maintenance of the new machines will be funded through an existing revenue budget which covered the old machines and will be rolled forward as part of the new contract.

## **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 Pay on Exit Parking is listed as a Corporate Risk relating to a key project in the Council Delivery Plan. The main risks are around failing to bring the separate project elements together, negative public reaction to the changes in payment options and disruption during works on site, and potential impact on income with technology issues during the bedding in period. These risks are reviewed and updated each quarter, to feed into quarterly Council Delivery Plan monitoring reports.

## **12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment,

victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 12.2. While there are no equalities implications associated with this report, an equalities assessment was undertaken as part of the initial project proposal, this considered the different payment options , particularly around retaining the cash payment option, which would be monitored for a 12-month period following the implementation of the new machines together with additional payment options to determine if there is a downward trend in cash payments. The outcome of this monitoring will be reported initially to the Executive Member for consideration of next steps.

### **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, although an Environmental Impact Assessment was taken into consideration as part of letting the initial contract for the replacement and installation of the new parking machines.

### **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 As with any new project there has been some impact on existing staff resources both within the Parking Enforcement Team and the Management Support Unit Parking Services Team in responding to public queries, processing the increased number of PCNs issued and addressing the increased number of PCN challenges. These issues are being addressed through senior management, and it is anticipated that the impact will reduce as the public become more familiar with the new machines.

### **16. APPENDICES**

- 16.1 None

### **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 18.1 The following background papers relating to the implementation of the Pay on Exit project are available on request:
- Cabinet Report 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021
  - Car Park Payment Options Feasibility Study July 2022
  - Political liaison Board Report 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022
  - Political liaison Board Report 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023
  - Record of Decision Made under Delegated Authority dated 15 April 2024 to award Flowbird UK Ltd the contract for the replacement of payment parking machines and associated back-office software across all Council operated car parks.

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 SEPTEMBER 2025

### \*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

**TITLE OF REPORT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2025-26**

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: NOT APPLICABLE

COUNCIL PRIORITY: THRIVING COMMUNITIES / ACCESSIBLE SERVICES / RESPONSIBLE GROWTH / SUSTAINABILITY

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report highlights items scheduled in the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2025-26 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.

#### 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 an Action Plan, all actions in the plan have now been completed and the Action Plan will no longer be part of this report.
- 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 2025-26.
- 8.2 When considering additional topics their risk assessment and prioritisation will ensure that the most appropriate items taking forward to the work programme.

### Forward Plan

- 8.3 The Forward Plan for August can be found at Appendix B. Members can view currently published forward plans here: [Browse plans - Cabinet, 2025 | North Herts Council](#)
- 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.

## **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 2025-2026

16.2 Appendix B – Forward Plan – 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025

## **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

17.1 Jeevan Mann, Scrutiny Officer, [Jeevan.Mann@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Jeevan.Mann@north-herts.gov.uk) , ext 4295

17.2 James Lovegrove, Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager, [james.Lovegrove@northherts.gov.uk](mailto:james.Lovegrove@northherts.gov.uk) , ext 4204

17.3 Isabelle Alajooz, Legal Commercial Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, [Isabelle.Alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Isabelle.Alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk) , ext 4346

17.4 Tim Everitt, Performance and Risk Officer, [Tim.Everitt@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.Everitt@north-herts.gov.uk) , ext 4646

## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

18.1 Previous Reports to the [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#) and [Forward Plans](#).

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KEY
Items identified for work programme
Annual reports
Scrutiny reports
Completed

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2025-26

MEETING DATE	ITEMS AT MEETING	EXECUTIVE / REPORT AUTHOR
10 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O&amp;S Annual Report</li> <li>3C's – info to note</li> <li>Waste Contract</li> <li>Work Programme &amp; Decisions and Monitoring Tracker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillor Matt Barnes</li> <li>Councillor Val Bryant</li> <li>Councillor Amy Allen</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>
9 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council Delivery Plan &amp; Performance indicators - Q1 Update</li> <li>Pay on Exit Parking</li> <li>Town Centre Strategy</li> <li>Museum storage</li> <li>Local government Reorganisation</li> <li>Work Programme &amp; Decisions and Monitoring Tracker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillor Ian Albert</li> <li>Councillor Donna Wright</li> <li>Councillor Donna Wright</li> <li>Councillor Tamsin Thomas</li> <li>Councillor Laura Williams</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>
11 November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual review of Safeguarding</li> <li>3C's Half year update</li> <li>Environmental Health</li> <li>Leisure contract</li> <li>Local plan</li> <li>Director Update on Health Equalities</li> <li>Effectiveness of Council Tax Reduction Scheme</li> <li>Work Programme &amp; Decisions and Monitoring Tracker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillor Daniel Allen</li> <li>Councillor Val Bryant</li> <li>Councillor Amy Allen</li> <li>Councillor Amy Allen</li> <li>Councillor Donna Wright</li> <li>Councillor Amy Allen</li> <li>Councillor Ian Albert</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>
6 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crime and Disorder Issues – Hertfordshire Constabulary</li> <li>Council Delivery Plan &amp; Key Performance Indicators – Q2 Update</li> <li>Community safety</li> <li>S106 Task and Finish Group Report</li> <li>Work Programme &amp; Decisions and Monitoring Tracker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hertfordshire Constabulary</li> <li>Councillor Ian Albert</li> <li>Councillor Mick Debenham</li> <li>Councillor Ralph Muncer (Chair of Task and Finish Group)</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>
3 February 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget Topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillor Ian Albert</li> </ul>

MEETING DATE	ITEMS AT MEETING	EXECUTIVE / REPORT AUTHOR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Transformation and Inclusion</li> <li>• Enterprise portfolio Update</li> <li>• Work Programme &amp; Decisions and Monitoring Tracker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Val Bryant</li> <li>• Councillor Tamsin Thomas</li> <li>• Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>
24 March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RIPA</li> <li>• Council Delivery Plan &amp; Key Performance Indicators – Q3 Update</li> <li>• Work Programme &amp; Decisions and Monitoring Tracker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Daniel Allen</li> <li>• Councillor Ian Albert</li> <li>• Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>

**For further investigation:**

- Decarbonisation
- National Planning Changes
- Officer recruitment / retention – grow your own / apprentices / career grading

**Candidate topics to be scheduled:**

- Cabinet Panel
- Environmental Health
- Impact of the Council's grant policies
- Officer recruitment & retention
- Sustainability
- Tackling Homelessness in North Herts

# NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 22 August 2025

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
Land Required for Access to GA2		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Philip Doggett, Principal Estates Surveyor philip.doggett@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Draft Developer Contributions SPD		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Clare Skeels, Senior Planning Officer clare.skeels@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
North Herts Council Draft Town Centres Strategy		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
3C's Policy Update		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Chris Jeffery, Customer and Digital Services Manager chris.jeffery@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Flood Response Policies		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Ian Couper, Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

<b>Decision required</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Date of Decision</b>	<b>Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>	<b>Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested</b>	<b>Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker</b>	<b>Procedure for requesting details of other documents</b>
Procurement Strategy		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Ian Couper, Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Economic Development Strategy 2025-2028		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Chloe Gray, Enterprise Manager chloe.gray@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
FIRST QUARTER CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2025/26		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Ian Couper, Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
FIRST QUARTER TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2025/26		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Ian Couper, Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
FIRST QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2025/26		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Ian Couper, Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Codicote Neighbourhood Plan		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Clare Skeels, Senior Planning Officer clare.skeels@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Decarbonisation Phase 2 Feasibility		Cabinet	23 Sep 2025		Sarah Kingsley, Director - Environment sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6



<b>Decision required</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Date of Decision</b>	<b>Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>	<b>Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested</b>	<b>Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker</b>	<b>Procedure for requesting details of other documents</b>
Local Government Reorganisation in Hertfordshire		Cabinet	25 Nov 2025		Anthony Roche, Chief Executive anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

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