

1 June 2026

Our Ref Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9 June
2026
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillors Jon Clayden (Chair), Claire Winchester (Vice-Chair), Sadie Billing, David Chalmers, Elizabeth Dennis, Dominic Griffiths, Nigel Mason, Caroline McDonnell, Ralph Muncer, Martin Prescott, Paul Ward and Daniel Wright-Mason

Substitutes: Councillors Matt Barnes, Sam Collins, Sarah Lucas, Bryony May, Steven Patmore, 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, GERNON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF**

On

TUESDAY, 9TH JUNE, 2026 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**

Item		Page
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Members are required to notify any substitutions by midday on the day of the meeting. Late substitutions will not be accepted and Members attending as a substitute without having given the due notice will not be able to take part in the meeting.	
2. MINUTES - 24 MARCH 2026	To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 24 March 2026.	(Pages 5 - 20)
3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS	Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.	
6. URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS	The Chair to report on any urgent or general exception items which required their agreement. At the time of printing the agenda, the Chair had not agreed any urgent or general exception items.	

7. CALLED-IN ITEMS

To consider any matters referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to a call-in of decision. At the time of printing the agenda, no items of business had been called-in.

8. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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

9. INFORMATION NOTE: FULL YEAR PERFORMANCE UPDATE ON 3C'S 25/26

(Pages
21 - 30)

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE CUSTOMER & DIGITAL SERVICES MANAGER

This information note is to provide an update on the full year (25/26) performance regarding the Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3C's) for the Council and the contractors that provide services on the Council's behalf. This briefing note accompanies the 3C's dashboard at Appendix A, and the breakdown of 3C's by service and type at Appendix B.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following report will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

11. CHURCHGATE REGENERATION PROJECT UPDATE & NEXT STEPS - PART 2

31 - 34

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – ENTERPRISE

To provide an update on the project progress so far, and report on suggested next steps and milestones in preparation for the Cabinet decision in June and Full Council decision in July.

12. CHURCHGATE REGENERATION PROJECT UPDATE & NEXT STEPS - PART 1

(Pages
35 - 40)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – ENTERPRISE

To provide an update on the project progress so far, and report on suggested next steps and milestones in preparation for the Cabinet decision in June and Full Council decision in July.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION FUNDING

(Pages
41 - 46)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES

To seek agreement on how the LGR funding will be allocated, including decision making processes.

- 14. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2025/26** (Pages 47 - 60)
REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2025/26

To consider the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the 2025/2026 Civic Year.

- 15. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2026/27** (Pages 61 - 76)
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

This report highlights items scheduled in the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026-27 Civic Year. It also includes items that have not yet been assigned to a specific meeting of the Committee.

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON TUESDAY, 24TH MARCH, 2026 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Claire Winchester (Chair), Jon Clayden (Vice-Chair), David Chalmers, Elizabeth Dennis, Dominic Griffiths, Ralph Muncer, Martin Prescott, Paul Ward and Vijaiya Poopalasingham (In place of Daniel Wright-Mason).*

In Attendance: *Isabelle Alajooz (Director - Governance and Monitoring Officer), Faith Churchill (PA - Director Governance), Ian Couper (Director - Resources), Steve Crowley (Director - Enterprise), Robert Filby (Trainee Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Jamie Graham (Democratic Services Apprentice), Jeevan Mann (Scrutiny Officer), Polly Simonds (Customer and Digital Project Manager), Nigel Smith (Director - Place) and Melanie Stimpson (Democratic Services Manager).*

Also Present: *Councillor Daniel Allen, as Executive Member for Governance, Councillor Ruth Brown, as a Member of the S106 Task and Finish Group, Councillor Val Bryant, as Leader of the Council, Councillor Sean Nolan, as Executive Member for Customer Experience, and Councillor Donna Wright, as Executive Member for Place, were in attendance.*

At the commencement of the meeting there were no members of the public.

64 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1 minute 31 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tina Bhartwas, Sadie Billing, Cathy Brownjohn and Daniel Wright-Mason.

Having given due notice, Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham substituted for Councillor Wright-Mason.

65 MINUTES - 3 FEBRUARY 2026

Audio Recording – 1 minute 53 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 3 February 2026 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

66 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 30 seconds

There was no other business notified.

67 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 34 seconds

- (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) The Chair informed Members that a Scrutiny Training and Work Programming Workshop for 2026/27 had been arranged for Tuesday 12 May 2026, and that they should try to attend, if available.

68 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 3 minutes 55 seconds

There was no public participation at this meeting.

69 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 57 seconds

There were no urgent or general exception items.

70 CALLED-IN ITEMS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 0 seconds

There were no called-in items.

71 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 2 seconds

No questions were submitted by Members.

72 COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26 (Q3 UPDATE)

Audio recording – 4 minutes 6 seconds

N.B. Councillor Ralph Muncer left the Council Chamber at 19:36.

Councillor Val Bryant, as Leader of the Council, presented the report entitled 'Council Delivery Plan 2025-26 (Quarter 3 Update)' and advised that:

- The report provided the usual, regular updates on the Council Delivery Plan and its projects, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and risks.
- Three projects had been completed, including the recently completed project entitled 'Engaging the Community on our Finances'.
- The Museum Collection Facility had been added to the plan as detailed at paragraph 8.2 of the report.
- Projects with an amber delivery status were outlined at paragraph 8.3.
- Actions to address KPIs with a red status had been set out at paragraph 8.5.
- Waste collection performance data was shown at paragraph 8.6, and officers were working with Veolia with to obtain the data for North Herts on this.
- Implementation of new KPIs into the Council Delivery Plan both in 2025-26 and 2026-27 had been described at paragraph 8.9.
- The Committee could specify areas that they would like to see more information on in the next monitoring report, as per recommendation 2.2 in the report.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Paul Ward
- Councillor Dominic Griffiths
- Councillor David Chalmers
- Councillor Claire Winchester

In response to questions, Councillor Val Bryant advised that:

- Data for North Herts on the KPI entitled 'Missed collections per 100,000 lifts (per month)' had been received and would be forwarded onto Members for information.
- The Customer Service Team communicated with other departments to identify where call demand spikes would occur ahead of time, and as a Council, they were trying to spread the delivery of projects and events to prevent peaks.
- Increased calls to the customer service centre were also caused by residents experiencing anxious events or to verify if communications from the Council were genuine.
- Three Member Workshops on the Churchgate project had been scheduled.
- A unitary authority would be able to pick up the new Local Plan as it was anticipated that it would be ready by March 2028.
- Big projects such as Churchgate and the Museum Collection Facility had precise timelines, which gave them confidence to deliver those, even with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) taking place.

In response to questions, the Director – Resources advised that the error relating to Milestone 12 on page 38 of the report would be corrected to read 'Finalisation and adoption of the Local Plan'.

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

- The next report on Churchgate would be presented to Cabinet in June, but not Full Council. However, future reports on Churchgate would be considered at Full Council once delivery plans had been finalised and the project needed a budget approving.
- Feedback provided by Members at the Churchgate workshops would be taken forward.
- Churchgate was progressing well and professionals had been appointed to assist with the design stage.
- Churchgate was in its early stages and as they continued to carry out work, it was hoped that the risk would decrease as factors became more certain.
- The project plan for Churchgate would be shared with Members.
- Dates relating to the easements of land for the Leisure Centre Decarbonisation project would be clarified to Members at a later stage.

In response to questions, the Chair advised that the report on Churchgate would be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in June before going to Cabinet.

Councillor David Chalmers highlighted that the Council had several large projects underway, and that they would need to continue monitoring how these were being delivered alongside LGR and before the Council ceased to exist.

In response to Councillor David Chalmers, Councillor Val Bryant advised that they had a Council Plan in place, and they would continue working towards the targets within this.

In response to Councillor David Chalmers, Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham advised that they had robust processes in place to manage risks through this Committee and the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, and the approved budget had committed to delivering projects on their respective timelines.

The Chair summarised discussions and outlined the importance of monitoring complex projects to ensure that they could all be achieved, and they would continue to do this going forward.

Councillor Jon Clayden proposed and Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee provided comment on the Council Delivery Plan Quarter 2 monitoring report.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: 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.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide the 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.

73 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

Audio recording – 27 minutes 39 seconds

Councillor Val Bryant, as Leader of the Council, presented an Information Note entitled 'Digital Transformation Update' and advised that:

- The Digital Transformation Programme had accelerated significantly since the adoption of the Netcall platform and the Digital Strategy, which had been revised and shared with Members in January.
- Work had shifted from large scale bills to business process mapping, strengthening resilience, improving customer journeys and ensuring efficient processes ahead of Local Government Reorganisation.
- The programme continued to enhance visibility, transparency and accessibility by improving the digital front door for residents, while maintaining non-digital access routes.
- Grant funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund had been used to expand digital inclusion support provided by North Herts Centre for Voluntary Services, who provided skills training devices and Digital Champions to support digitally excluded residents. The remaining funding been used to create a temporary Digital Inclusion Officer position within the Council to analyse exclusion, improve customer journeys and strengthen accessibility across services.
- The Digital Team continued to build accessible, intuitive and compliant digital services supported by customer services insights and clear user guides.
- Major projects delivered such as the Garden Waste platform had reduced manual workload, and improved both accuracy and customer experience.
- Next steps included focusing on business process analysis, improving customer experience, maintaining transparency and ensuring alignment with strategic priorities.

In response to questions from Councillor Paul Ward, the Customer and Digital Project Manager advised that:

- Further updates to the Safety Advisory Group platform would make events more visible to Members through a read-only diary of upcoming events.
- The Co-Pilot Acceptable Use Policy had been signed off and could be shared with Members of the Committee after the meeting.

The Chair thanked Councillor Bryant and the Customer and Digital Project Manager for their presentation of the Information Note.

74 LEASE ON LETCHWORTH MULTI STOREY CAR PARK

Audio recording – 34 minutes 33 seconds

Councillor Sean Nolan, on behalf of the Executive Member for Enterprise, presented the report entitled 'Lease on Letchworth Multi Storey Car Park' and advised that:

- The report set out the surrender of the Letchworth Multi Storey Car Park lease, which would also be presented to Cabinet in April.
- The Martin Group were aiming to undertake a regeneration of the Garden Square Shopping Centre, and as part of this, they had contacted the Council to request a surrender of the lease.
- Negotiations between the Council and The Martin Group on the conditions of the surrender had been detailed at paragraph 8 of the report.
- It was estimated that surrendering the lease would provide a capital saving of £3.4M but could generate a revenue cost of £430,000 over 9 years.

- Plans by The Martin Group to improve the car park included automatic number plate recognition, increased security, and opening the car park for 24 hours.
- Aspirations for residential parking within the car park would be accommodated as surveys undertaken by officers had demonstrated spare capacity.
- Members representing Letchworth wards who attended a briefing with officers had shown support for surrendering the lease, and no follow up questions were received from those that could not attend.
- Thoughts on the report were requested from the Committee before consideration by Cabinet.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Winchester
- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Paul Ward
- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Martin Prescott

In response to questions, Councillor Sean Nolan advised that:

- Parking tariffs had formed part of the negotiations with The Martin Group, and they had recognised the need for competitive pricing with nearby car parks.
- 24-hour parking would be thought to reduce commuter parking around the station where this had become an issue.
- If The Martin Group decided not to redevelop the shopping centre, this would not impact their surrender of the lease.

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

- The Martin Group would have to account for external factors such as tariffs in Council owned car parks and other car parks in the town when setting theirs.
- Season tickets and discounts for wider users of the car park had not been discussed with The Martin Group, but as they were a private company, it was speculated that they would investigate these options to encourage greater usage.
- Comments on the position of The Martin Group regarding the redevelopment could not be provided, but the surrender of the lease had been requested by them to facilitate residential parking, and the feasibility of this had been confirmed by officers.
- The Martin Group were aware of antisocial behaviour in the car park and had detailed additional security measures to address this with 24 hour opening times.

In response to questions, the Director – Resources advised that:

- Operating costs, revenue generated, and other values that the lease held such as parking provision for staff had been factored into the considerations and included in the report.
- The above factors were more helpful than using the asset value of the car park.

Councillor Martin Prescott advised that he agreed with the surrender of the lease, as the car park had never been profitable and there were concerns over the costs of repairs required, which would be at taxpayer expense. Additionally, The Martin Group would look to address the issues with antisocial behaviour and maintain parking provision for staff.

Councillor Martin Prescott proposed and Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That Cabinet approve the surrender of the lease for the Letchworth Multi Storey Car Park.
- (2) That, subject to recommendation 1 above, delegated authority is granted to the Director – Enterprise in consultation with the Executive Member for Enterprise to negotiate and approve the details of any surrender in line with the broad principles in this report.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: After undertaking a review of the current operation and long-term needs of this car park, the surrender of this lease provides a positive outcome to the Council and the conditions that have been negotiated ensure there will be improvements to the car park which will benefit the public and economic vitality of the town centre.

75 COUNCILLOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROTOCOL

Audio recording – 55 minutes 25 seconds

Councillor Daniel Allen, as Executive Member for Governance, presented the report entitled ‘Councillor Learning and Development Protocol’ and advised that:

- The report would ensure the formalisation of Councillor learning and development arrangements, with a clear reporting and monitoring process in place.
- It was proposed to provide an annual report on compulsory training to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which would detail the names of Members who had not completed the required training.
- It was important for Members to complete the compulsory training so that they understood processes and managed risk as there were legal requirements to complete it.
- Two sessions would be held in May for Members to complete their compulsory training, and they were required to attend at least one.
- Members could also complete their compulsory learning ahead of the sessions, but there would be a benefit to attending the sessions as Officers would be able to provide clarifications and support.
- The protocol had been introduced in 2019 and revised to include the processes to be followed when providing compulsory and non-compulsory training for Members.
- Dates for the Member sessions were in the report and had also been shared with Members via email.

N.B. Councillor Ralph Muncer returned to the Chamber at 20:30.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham
- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Paul Ward

In response to questions, Councillor Daniel Allen advised that:

- Non-completion of mandatory training created issues with corporate governance and risk rather than with behaviour or conduct. Because of this, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were best placed to monitor this in their role to hold the authority to account on performance and risk management, rather than the Standards Committee.
- The report would not result in sanctions and would enable transparency and encourage improvement where needed, rather than being presented to the Standards Committee which could result in a quasi-disciplinary process.
- The proposal of naming Members had resulted from other encouragement measures for training being unsuccessful in achieving a 100% completion rate.
- It was understood that Members may have undertaken similar training in their professions or voluntary roles, but this did not negate the requirement to complete the mandatory training provided by the Council.

In response to questions, the Director – Governance advised that:

- It was within the Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to govern the completion of mandatory training as failure to do so damaged the ability of the Council to operate safely, lawfully and legally. Whereas the Standards Committee governed the completion of Code of Conduct training.
- Completion of mandatory training was low, and there had to be accountability for this.
- Failure to complete compulsory training could also be reported to the Standards Committee as it was potentially a breach under Section 17 of the Code of Conduct.
- Paragraph 6.2.7(s) of the Constitution referenced the reasons for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receiving the annual report instead of the Standards Committee, in terms of corporate risk.

In response to questions, Councillor Val Bryant, as Leader of the Council, advised that publishing a list of councillors who had not completed their training should encourage self-reflection and completion of the training.

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

- They did not have details of the learning and development protocols of other authorities or whether any published names of councillors that had not completed their training. However, this was not relevant, and the protocol was a North Herts specific document, which should be considered on its own merits.
- It was noted that Group Leaders had endorsed the protocol.

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis highlighted that naming Members for not completing mandatory training would be inappropriate, unreasonable and an unnecessary measure as many Members undertook similar mandatory training in other roles they held, which meant that they were potentially overtrained.

Councillor Martin Prescott advised that Members should complete their training if they did not want to be named in the annual report.

Councillor Ralph Muncer advised that:

- Hertfordshire County Council did not mandate the completion of training, and this Council should also adopt the same approach.
- Members within his party were encouraged to complete the mandatory training, but a lot of them were exposed to the same training through their professions, and there should be a mechanism for them to be able to demonstrate this.

Councillor Paul Ward advised that:

- This protocol related to the personal conduct of councillors, and they should use the Code of Conduct and the Standards Committee to enforce this.
- The Code of Conduct could be amended within the Constitution to enforce this further.
- If the protocol was implemented, there would be a danger of creating a naming and shaming culture, which would further degrade the Code of Conduct process.

Councillor David Chalmers advised that he felt uncomfortable with this protocol and did not agree with publicly naming and shaming councillors, and undertaking this practice would represent a failure of the Council.

Councillor Ruth Brown advised that she would be withdrawing her endorsement for the protocol.

Councillor Claire Winchester advised that:

- There were new developments in the learning and development protocol such as in-person meetings with officer support.
- It was important to discuss the significance of Member training.
- Monitoring individual behaviour on training might be more relevant to the Standards Committee.
- If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were to consider an annual report, training completion might need to be anonymised to see if the measures introduced had improved completion rates.

In response to additional points made by Councillor Elizabeth Dennis, the Democratic Services Manager advised that:

- The training provided by the Council included information on their reporting mechanisms, which was why they delivered their own training to Members.
- It was not unusual to undertake similar training for different roles as one training course might not be recognised by another organisation.
- The aim of the protocol was not to discipline Members, but to encourage them to complete their training, and any suggestions on how to encourage Members to do this were welcomed as the numerous attempts by Officers had not proved successful.

Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham advised that:

- Failure to complete training could result in the creation of corporate and safeguarding risk.
- Without accountability for Members who had not completed their training, the protocol would be similar to the current version without the proposed revisions.
- Non-compliance by individual councillors would feel more appropriate being dealt with by the Standards Committee, with a bigger picture report being presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Martin Prescott proposed and Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham seconded the amended recommendations, as follows:

- (1) That the Councillor Learning and Development Protocol, attached as Appendix A, be noted and endorsed with the following amendments:

Remove – ‘The report will detail the completion rate of required, compulsory training by Councillors and will detail those individuals who have not completed the specified training by the required date.’

Add – ‘The report presented to Overview and Scrutiny will be a high-level, annual report which will detail the completion rate of required, compulsory training. The Standards Committee will consider individual accountability, particularly in circumstances where Councillors repeatedly fail to attend mandatory training as this is likely to fall below the threshold of expected behaviours of Councillors.’

- (2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scheduled an ‘Annual Report on Councillor Training’ onto their Work Programme for future years.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Martin Prescott
- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Paul Ward
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham
- Councillor David Chalmers
- Councillor Dominic Griffiths

The following points were made as part of the debate:

- It should be publicly reported whether Members had completed their training as the public were entitled to know.
- There had not been sufficient consultation on the protocol and the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny and Standards Committees should have been consulted.
- Adding the protocol to the Work Programme would not be of benefit to the Committee as it did not add value.
- Many elements of the protocol were good such as the in-person Member training sessions.
- The Code of Conduct and Constitution should be strengthened to ensure that sanctions could be imposed by the Standards Committee on councillors that had not completed their mandatory training.
- Decisions taken in Community Forums and Committees were not made unsafe if Members had not completed their mandatory training.
- Training records could be included on the webpages for councillors.
- Risk should be placed on the councillor themselves rather than the authority if they had not completed their training, but it was acknowledged that this risk could never be fully removed.
- The Standards Committee and the Code of Conduct process had been used on multiple occasions to address complaints, and this protocol threatened the integrity of this process.
- Mutual recognition for training completed outside of the authority should be investigated to avoid repetition of training by Members.
- The protocol should be withdrawn and amended before being presented at a future Overview and Scrutiny or Standards Committee meeting.

- It was appreciated that a process was needed to improve training completion rates, but naming Members was not the right method for this.

In response to points raised in the debate, Councillor Val Bryant advised that Political Group Leaders had been consulted on the Learning and Development Protocol 3 weeks ago.

In response to a point raised by Councillor Daniel Allen, Councillor Ralph Muncer advised that implied consent had been given by officers on the protocol on behalf of him and Councillor Ruth Brown.

In response to an additional question from Councillor Dominic Griffiths, the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that the Member sessions on mandatory training would take place irrespective of the decision on the protocol.

Having been proposed and seconded, subject to the amendment, the motion was put to a vote, following which the vote was tied.

The Chair used their casting vote and, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Councillor Learning and Development Protocol, attached as Appendix A, be noted and endorsed with the following amendments:

Remove – ‘The report will detail the completion rate of required, compulsory training by Councillors and will detail those individuals who have not completed the specified training by the required date.’

Add – ‘The report presented to Overview and Scrutiny will be a high-level, annual report which will detail the completion rate of required, compulsory training. The Standards Committee will consider individual accountability, particularly in circumstances where Councillors repeatedly fail to attend mandatory training as this is likely to fall below the threshold of expected behaviours of Councillors.’

- (2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scheduled an ‘Annual Report on Councillor Training’ onto their Work Programme for future years.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that the Councillor Learning and Development Protocol is current, relevant and includes clear reporting on the completion rate of compulsory Member Training with accountability.

N.B. Following the conclusion of the item, there was a break in proceedings and the meeting reconvened at 21.36. During the break, Councillors Dominic Griffiths and Martin Prescott left the Chamber and did not return.

76 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (‘RIPA’) ANNUAL REVIEW

Audio recording – 2 hours 5 minutes 21 seconds

Councillor Daniel Allen, as Executive Member for Governance, presented the report entitled ‘Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (‘RIPA’) Update and Annual Review’ and advised that:

- The report provided the annual update on the use of powers by the Council under the RIPA, along with the latest outcome of the policy review.
- The Council had not used any of the RIPA powers in the last year, which reflected the cautious approach they took to only use them in exceptional circumstances.

- The amended policy gave several clarifications and updates on Member and Officer roles and responsibilities, guidance on online investigations into social media, and other areas, which were detailed in the report.

Councillor Paul Ward highlighted a formatting error with the flow chart on page 141 of the report.

Councillor Jon Clayden proposed and Councillor Paul Ward seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the content of the report.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: The adoption of the amended RIPA Policy (Appendix A).

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) The Council is required to ensure it has an up-to-date, compliant and operationally usable RIPA framework that reflects current legislation and codes of practice and supports effective governance and assurance.
- (2) Approval of the updated policy reduces legal, regulatory and reputational risk, supports lawful enforcement activity where required, and strengthens transparency and democratic oversight.

77 SECTION 106 TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT

Audio recording – 2 hours 9 minutes 5 seconds

Councillor Ralph Muncer, as Chair of the Section 106 Task and Finish Group, presented the report entitled 'Section 106 Task and Finish Group Report' and advised that:

- The Local Plan adopted in 2022 would deliver 13,000 homes across the district, and reformed Government policies would only add to the burden to deliver housing.
- Communities deserved infrastructure that accompanied housing developments.
- The report provided a review of the current mechanism for S106 contributions, assessed whether it was fit for purpose and made recommendations to improve it.
- A disconnect between the Council and its communities on infrastructure priorities had been identified, and the recommendations would make communities feel that they were more involved.
- Other Members of the S106 Task and Finish Group, the Director – Place, Development and Conservation Manager, Hertfordshire County Council Officers, the Scrutiny Officer and the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager should be thanked for their support and contributions towards the group.
- S106 contributions was a broad policy area, and they had tried to address this through focused recommendations, that would deal with its issues directly.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Winchester
- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham
- Councillor David Chalmers
- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Paul Ward

In response to questions, Councillor Ralph Muncer advised that:

- Lessons could be learned from the workings of the group to help inform the workings of any future task and finish groups.
- It had been disappointing to see a lack of consultation responses, particularly from some parties like the NHS Integrated Care Board, therefore, unilateral engagement might be needed.
- It was accepted that the roles of Community Partnership Officers would have to be reprioritised to deliver the proposed recommendations as resourcing was an issue.
- S106 training in recommendation 3 could potentially be offered to Members as well, and communication reporting would keep them better informed about S106 funding.
- There was an organisational readiness and excitement to engage in this proposed new process, as it would have the potential to deliver real benefits to communities now and in the future. However, the focus of engagement as part of this had been with Senior Officers, who had highlighted concerns about resourcing, and it would be for Cabinet to consider whether this would be an appropriate use of Community Partnership Officers.
- Engagement had taken place with Community Partnership Officers. However, more work would be required to explore what the training provided would look like and that it would appropriately delivered to support Officers to feel confident in this proposal to support communities. This work would be explored further should the recommendations be adopted by Cabinet.
- This work would provide resilience to communities ahead of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and a strong foundation for a new unitary authority to build upon.
- Chairs of Community Forums had not been consulted on the recommendations, but it had been decided that they would be the best place to consider community infrastructure priorities for unparished areas.
- Regulations for the S106 process could not be changed, therefore, the recommendations focused on simplifying the process for stakeholders and closing the gap between local authorities and the communities they served to deliver better outcomes.
- If recommendation 8 was approved, they could explore different ways of making the Government aware of this such as writing to Government Ministers.
- Recommendation 7 may not be fully achievable within current Government regulations, but it would aim to encourage more community engagement by developers and build on the Statement of Community Involvement.
- The response rate to the consultation had been disappointing, therefore, they had released it a second time to capture more views.
- It was hoped that this process would encourage more engagement on planning related consultations in the future if consultees could see that their views had been listened to through the recommendations.
- The lone developer response to the consultation, which suggested having a standardised S106 agreement template, had been noted, and could be considered by the Planning Team to make any improvements to the current process.

In response to questions, the Director – Place advised that:

- The Planning Team were pleased with the recommendations that had been put forward, and they were already investigating the implementation of some of them through the Local Plan review and other mechanisms.
- They were also investigating how they would work with Parish Councils under the new plan making system to help them submit Neighbourhood Priority Statements.
- Pre-application engagement by developers could not be mandated, but they could explore tools to encourage this, such as through a Development Charter.
- The Local Plan and its underpinning evidence meant that developers were not liable to pay S106 contributions for developments of 9 homes or less, but a viability assessment had been commissioned to investigate the possibility of this in the Local Plan review.

In response to questions, Councillor Donna Wright, as Executive Member for Place, advised that the recommendations set out clear, practical measures that could improve how S106 contributions were managed by increasing transparency and community involvement.

In response to questions, Councillor Paul Ward advised that:

- It had been concluded that improving the current S106 contributions mechanism would be more beneficial than replacing it with the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Recommendations 1-4 would increase transparency of the mechanism, improve skills for those involved, and better prepare stakeholders to respond with their priorities.
- Recommendation 7 had been formed not only to improve community engagement by developers, but also to improve the outcomes from it by ensuring that developers demonstrated how they had considered the feedback from it in their applications.

In response to questions, Councillor Ruth Brown advised that:

- Community Partnership Officers understood communities and could act as a conduit between the Council, Parish Councils and communities where there was a disconnect.
- Timing and community priorities were the main issues with the current S106 mechanism.
- Good community engagement by developers should be recognised through an award mechanism to promote good practice, even if it could not be mandated.

Councillor Ralph Muncer proposed and Councillor Jon Clayden seconded the recommendations in the report.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham
- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Claire Winchester

The following points were made as part of the debate:

- An additional recommendation should be included for councillors to be trained, empowered and supported to work alongside Community Partnership Officers on the S106 mechanism.
- Councillors should be engaging with community groups already and be provided with S106 training to fulfil their roles.
- Recommendations 2 and 3 should be undertaken with caution as corporate risk would materialise as advice given by Community Partnerships Officers on S106 applications would be open to scrutiny, therefore, the feasibility of this should be properly investigated.
- A response from the Community Partnership Team to the recommendations should be provided before any decisions were taken by Cabinet.
- It was unclear whether Community Forums were the right place to consider S106 contributions, and their Chairs should be consulted.
- Recommendation 1 would ensure that projects could be quickly identified in the S106 process.
- S106 training for Parish Councils would mean less reliance on Community Partnership Officers to help them respond to S106 consultation forms.
- Recommendation 2 had been made after seeking advice from several sources and considering other alternatives.
- Additional resources to better support communities would be strongly welcomed.

- Recommendation 4 was an easy win and would improve the transparency of the S106 mechanism.
- It was acknowledged that recommendations 7 and 8 were needed and made sense, but it would be hard to fully implement them, and they might have little impact if they could not be made mandatory.

In response to points raised in the debate, Councillor Val Bryant, as Leader of the Council, advised that there would be elections to a shadow authority in 14 months, the budget for 2026/27 had already been approved, and the Executive Member for Governance had not been consulted on the recommendations, therefore, there would be drawbacks in implementing them.

In response to points raised by Councillor Val Bryant, Councillor Ralph Muncer advised that:

- Planning applications would continue to be submitted to the Council up until April 2028, and communities would continue to suffer if they did not act now.
- It was acknowledged that there would be challenges in implementing the recommendations.
- Senior Officers had been consulted on the recommendations to ensure that they would be deliverable.
- Although Executive Members had not been consulted on the recommendations, there would be an opportunity for them to consider the report and its recommendations at the next Cabinet meeting.

Councillor Claire Winchester summarised the discussions and outlined that:

- Upskilling Community Partnership Officers, Councillors and other staff to support S106 applications had been discussed, but they should be aware of the capacity of Community Partnership Officers, who should be consulted on the feasibility of changing their roles.
- Chairs of Community Forums should be consulted on how lists for Community Infrastructure Priorities would be drawn up as these were important.
- It was noted that the budget for the next financial year had been set, and that the Council would cease to exist in two years, but the work undertaken by the S106 Task and Finish Group had been important and could be carried forward to a new unitary authority.
- Better communication and transparency around the S106 process was vital, and work on this was encouraged.
- While recommendations 7 and 8 were less achievable, it was understood why they had been formed.

Having been proposed and seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- (1) Noted the content of the report and its recommendations.
- (2) Provided comment on the proposed recommendations and confirmed which recommendations were to be recommended to Cabinet.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That recommendations 1-8, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be considered by Cabinet.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to scrutinise the s106 Task and Finish Group report and to consider which recommendations should be considered by Cabinet.

78 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Audio recording – 3 hours 20 minutes 11 seconds

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

- Decisions from the previous meeting were attached at Appendix C to the report.
- The recommendations from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Follow Up report had been approved at the Cabinet meeting on 17 February 2026.
- A recommendation to note the Decisions and Monitoring Tracker had been missed out of the report but would be incorporated into the report for the next meeting.
- The Work Programme had been attached at Appendix A, and Members were encouraged to provide questions to officers on reports ahead of meetings.
- The most recent Forward Plan published on 13 March was attached at Appendix B.
- Scrutiny Training, which would include Work Programme development for the 2026/27 Civic Year, would take place on 12 May 2026.

Councillor Jon Clayden proposed and Councillor Paul Ward seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee prioritised topics for inclusion in the Work Programme attached as Appendix A and, where appropriate, determined the high-level form and timing of scrutiny input.
- (2) That the Committee, having considered the most recent iteration of the Forward Plan, as attached at Appendix B, suggested a list of items to be considered at its meetings in the coming civic year.
- (3) That the Committee noted the Decisions and Monitoring Tracker, attached as Appendix C to the report.

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 effectively policy development and meaningful policy and service change.
- (2) The need to observe Constitutional requirements and monitor the Forward Plan for appropriate items to scrutinise remains a key aspect of work programming.

The meeting closed at 10.55 pm

Chair

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
09 JUNE 2026

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: Full Year Update on Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3C's) 25/26

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE CUSTOMER & DIGITAL SERVICES MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COUNCILLOR SEAN NOLAN

PRIORITY: ACCESSIBLE SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This information note is to provide an update on the full year (25/26) performance regarding the Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3C's) for the Council and the contractors that provide services on the Council's behalf. This briefing note accompanies the 3C's dashboard at Appendix A, and the breakdown of 3C's by service and type at Appendix B.

2. STEPS TO DATE

- 2.1 The Council has a well embedded policy and procedures for handling customer feedback; the 3C's Policy. We welcome feedback from our customers about our services so that we can continue to learn about how we can make improvements and what we do well.
- 2.2 The 3C's policy sets out clearly the definition of a comment, compliment, and complaint as well as how to escalate a complaint either to stage 2 of the process or the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). Customers can give feedback in a number of ways and can do this directly to the Council or to the contractors who provide key services on our behalf.
- 2.3 The 3C's Policy was updated in September 2025 to ensure alignment with the LGO's Complaint Handling Code, which sets standards for resolving complaints promptly and using feedback to improve services. Most changes formalised practices the Council was already following, making procedures clearer and easier to understand. It strengthened clarity around complaint handling timescales, escalation routes and the consistent management of customer feedback.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

- 3.1 During 25/26, the number of complaints and compliments received directly by North Herts Council increased in volume compared to the previous year, whilst the number of comments decreased slightly.
- 3.2 The areas that generally receive the highest amount of feedback are those where there is the highest level of contact or interactions from residents such as the waste and recycling service and the leisure facilities.

- 3.3 The number of complaints received by both the Council and our contractors increased from 591 in 24/25 to 633 in 25/26 (a 7% increase). Of the total 633 complaints, 219 (35%) relate to services delivered by our leisure centres. Another 35% of this total relates to the Waste service, which is explained further at 3.7.
- 3.4 The percentage of stage 1 complaints resolved within the SLA of 10 days has decreased from 91% in 24/25 to 82% in 25/26, which is still 2% above the target of 80%. April saw the lowest number of complaints logged with (8), with May having the second lowest with only (13) logged.
- 3.5 Waste recorded the highest number of complaints not resolved within the 10/20-day timeframe (52). This was mainly due to the introduction of a new waste service, which led to a significant increase in customer contact volumes. At the same time, the shared Waste team experienced the departure of key staff members responsible for complaint handling, resulting in reduced capacity meaning that some complaints took longer to deal with.
- 3.6 The summary dashboard at Appendix A shows annual comparisons of both 3C's received directly at North Herts Council and 3C's received by our contractors. The dashboard also details the percentage of interactions resulting in a formal complaint. It is worth noting that the percentage of interactions/collections/visitors resulting in a complaint is currently below 0.1%.
- 3.7 Appendix B provides a breakdown of all 3C's received by service and type. The areas of highest complaints reported directly were Waste (220) and Revenues. The highest frequency of Waste complaints were regarding missed and on-going missed bins, with the most reports in October. The higher level of missed bin complaints reported reflect the initial implementation phase of the new service. During this period, a system issue incorrectly updated some communal properties to a three-weekly collection frequency, which required manual correction by the waste team. In addition, early technical issues associated with the new waste system resulted in some collections being manually recorded and amended, contributing to an uplift in reported missed bins. Most complaints related to assisted collections and flats, which were disproportionately impacted. The number of complaints received per month has since improved as these issues have been resolved and processes stabilised.

Revenues Billing & Recovery received 29 complaints; however, these have informed on-going work to strengthen customer communication and case management within the Revenues service.

- 3.8 In 25/26, the volume of 3C's received by the leisure centres totalled 412 – marking a 50% decrease from the previous year. This indicates that 3C's have decreased to a more consistent level, as shown in 22/23 (507) and 23/24 (334).

In 24/25, the leisure centres received a total of 823 3C's. This large total related to the start of the new contract with Everyone Active, which commenced on the 1 April 2024, and new processes and systems implemented as a result. From 1 April 2024, KPI data started to be collected by the Leisure and Active Communities team and will be used as baseline data to be able to monitor trends moving forward.

- 3.9 There were 173 compliments received directly to the Council. The Careline service received the highest number, with 42. These are generally submitted by a client's family following an incident where the Careline staff had provided an emergency response service, these included:

- Customer said “a big thank you for all Careline does for her. She says that this system has really saved her life twice now.”
- Customer called to say, “thank James, Careline Engineer, for his wonderful service on his recent visit and to express how grateful he and mother-in-law are in general for the excellent service Careline provides.”

3.10 There were 33 stage 2 complaints over the course of the year; 16 of which were for Waste. Of the 33 stage 2 complaints, 15 were deemed to be justified, and 13 of those were for Waste. The other two justified complaints were for Homelessness and Housing Advice.

3.11 If a complainant remains dissatisfied with the complaint outcome after completing our process, they may escalate their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). Complaints escalated to the LGO will usually have exhausted our internal complaints process.

3.12 North Herts Council received 6 LGO complaint decisions during this period. It’s prudent to note that the LGO Annual Review Letter and the Council figures may not always match, this is because some complainants may contact the LGO without going through the council’s process first, these are called premature complaints. The LGO will refer premature complaints to the council to go the 3Cs process, recording them on the Annual review statement as premature. Further information can be found on the LGO’s website, by searching for the reference numbers found in the table below. ([Decisions - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#))

There are also 2 cases currently in the ‘initial enquiries’ stage, that started within the 25/26-year period, for which we are awaiting outcomes.

The table below summarises the LGO decisions on those 6 complaints:

Service (as classified by the LGO)	LGO Decision	Further information
Housing	Not upheld: No fault	24 009 344 – “Mr X complained the Council initially did not allow him to join its Housing register, then after letting him join the Housing register did not consider him for properties which had a planning restriction for local parish residents only.” The LGO found the Council were not at fault.
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Closed after initial enquiries – no further action	25 000 531 – “We will not investigate this complaint about a vehicle the Council removed and destroyed because it believed it to be abandoned. This is because there is not enough evidence of fault by the Council.”
Planning & Development	Closed after initial enquiries – no further action	25 002 634 – “We will not investigate this complaint about the planning advice the Council provided to the complainant. This is because we are unlikely to find fault.”
Housing	Closed after initial enquiries – out of jurisdiction	25 005 123 – “We will not exercise discretion to investigate this

		complaint about the Council's offers of unsuitable temporary accommodation and its discharge of the homelessness duty following an unsuitable offer of rented accommodation. This complaint was received outside the normal 12-month period for investigating complaints. There is no evidence to suggest that Mr X could not have complained to us sooner."
Benefits & Tax	Closed after initial enquiries – no further action	25 021 104 – "We will not investigate this complaint about the Council's Council Tax reduction scheme. This is because we cannot achieve the outcome Miss B seeks."
Housing	Premature complaint – no complaint decision recorded	25 021 608 – "We will not pursue the complaint because it has not yet exhausted your own complaints procedure."

3.13 Following an audit conducted by the Shared Internal Audit Service, we received a reasonable overall assurance that there are effective controls in operation for the LGO processes. One of the low priority recommendations was to highlight details of the LGO complaints to the Overview and Scrutiny committee, including what the remedy was and what service improvements have been made. As none of the above complaints were upheld, there are no service improvements to advise on from this period.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 3C's performance will continue to be monitored and reported to this Committee on a yearly basis.
- 4.2 The Customer Service Manager (CSM) will continue to keep up to date with guidance and case studies from the LGO, sharing any key learning.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix A – Dashboard
- 5.2 Appendix B - Breakdown by service area

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

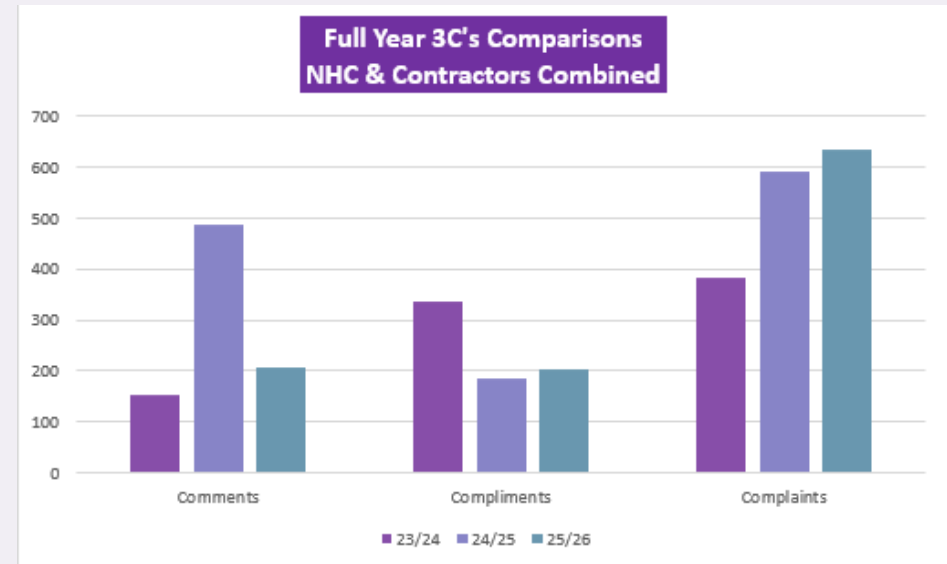
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3C's Performance Summary: 2025/2026

3C's Received directly at NHC - Annual Comparisons			
	23/24	24/25	25/26
Number of Comments received	35	60	44
Number of Compliments received	142	131	173
Number of Complaints received	179	200	411
Total received	356	391	628
% complaints resolved within 10 working days	86%	91%	83%
% of complaints justified	31%	43%	71%
Complaints received by the LGO	6	5	6

Contractor Complaints Data (all contractors)			
	23/24	24/25	25/26
Number of Comments received	120	427	164
Number of Compliments received	195	53	29
Number of Complaints received	205	391	222
Total received	520	871	415

Combined Totals			
	23/24	24/25	25/26
Number of Comments received	120	487	208
Number of Compliments received	195	184	202
Number of Complaints received	205	591	633
Total received	520	1262	1043



Percentage of interactions resulting in a formal complaint		
	Number of interactions /	% of
NHDC	127,398	0.32
Urbaser/Veolia	5.5 million collections	0.00
North Herts Leisure Centre	678,356	0.01
Hitchin Swim Centre & Archers	606,685	0.01
Royston Leisure Centre	354,045	0.01

Waste and Recycling Data (combined)				
	Comments	Compliments	Complaints	Totals
25/26	21	21	222	264
24/25	17	29	41	87
23/24	26	86	98	210

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Breakdown of 3C's by service area – stage 1 & 2's combined

1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

Place	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
Planning Control & Conservation	0	12	20
Planning Policy	0	2	3
Parking Enforcement	2	0	8
Building Control	0	0	3
Environment	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
Leisure	0	0	23
Green Space	2	9	8
Waste Management	21	21	220
Regulatory	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
Licensing	0	3	4
Housing Needs	0	5	16
Homelessness & Housing Advice	0	18	25
Environmental Health – Protection	0	6	10
Environmental Health - Commercial	0	1	1
Customers	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
MSU Post & Administration	7	5	0
Careline	1	42	16
Customer Service Centre	6	26	16
Information Team	0	2	0
Digital Services	1	0	0
Resources	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
Benefits	0	3	3
Revenues Billing and Recovery	3	12	29
Revenues Technical	1	0	1
Enterprise	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
Hitchin Town Hall	0	1	0
Churchgate	0	0	1
Governance	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
Electoral Services	0	0	2
Community Health & Wellbeing	0	1	0
Communities	0	1	0
Community Safety	0	3	2
Totals	44	173	411
Contractor Data	Comments	Compliments	Complaints
Waste (Urbaser)	0	0	2
JOC	0	0	1
North Herts Leisure Centre	54	7	82

Hitchin Swim Centre	62	10	90
Royston Leisure	48	12	47
Contractor Totals	164	29	222
Combined Totals	208	202	633

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 9 JUNE 2026
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*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: Churchgate Regeneration Project Update & Next Steps

REPORT OF: Director - Enterprise

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Executive Member - Enterprise

COUNCIL PRIORITY: Thriving Communities; Responsible Growth; Sustainability;

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide an update on the project progress so far, and report on suggested next steps and milestones in preparation for the Cabinet decision in June and Full Council decision in July.

The proposed Cabinet decision is as follows: Approval to commence the next steps as set out in the report, subject to Full Council approval, which will enable the Council to commence procurement in order to select a supplier to evaluate the viability, feasibility, and deliverability of the Churchgate Regeneration Zone.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That the recommendation to Full Council and to Cabinet decision is noted, and that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee also note the provided update/next steps of the project.

2.2. That Cabinet recommends that Council approves the allocation of additional funds referencing the Part 2 report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. The recommendation is to ensure that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are content with the decisions being put forward to Cabinet on 16 June 2026 and to Full Council on 16 July 2026. This report provides an overview of the recent work completed and details how the project team and Project Board propose to move forward – providing the Committee with an opportunity to ask any further details.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED
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4.1. None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

5.1. The Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member/s have been kept up to date on this decision via either/or Project Board attendance or scheduled Executive Member

Briefings.

- 5.2. The team hosted three All Member Briefings throughout April and May 2026.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 15 May 2026.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. This report has been written to provide the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Churchgate Regeneration Zone project, in line with the pending Cabinet decision. This is an opportunity for Members to discuss the progress of the project and ask the Executive Member and Project Team any relevant questions in preparation for the Cabinet meeting.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. Since the last update provided to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in February 2026, the project team have made significant progress and remain on track against the project timeline. Please see below for a breakdown of the progress to date:

Mid 2026 – Governance and Direction:

In March 2026 the team (with Project Board approval) launched a Soft Market Testing exercise to find out what the level of interest is from the developer/partner market. This consisted of a series of meetings with registered interested parties and included an overview of the Councils position (due diligence carried out so far, consultation, direction of travel, Local Government Reorganisation etc). This step was valuable and allowed the project team to determine the level of interest and gain detailed feedback on what the developer industry would like to see in the projects next steps. The team reported that whilst the developers continue to work in a volatile market, the level of interest in Churchgate is high but requires more viability, de-risking and further due diligence before stepping into the delivery Procurement phase. The team met with 12 organisations (of different types), and gaged different levels of interest – with most reporting a strong market interest and viewed the project as a high-quality, investable opportunity.

Throughout April and May, the team organised three all Member briefings via Zoom and in-person. The sessions were attended by a total of 43 Members, and the team gave a presentation on the projects progress to date. This provided Members with an opportunity to meet the team, ask questions and find out more about the project. The sessions were constructive and received positive feedback by those attended.

The project team, with Lambert Smith Hampton, recently attended the UK Real Estates and Investment Forum (UKREiIF) event in Leeds. This is the third time that the team have represented the Churchgate project at this event, alongside colleagues at Invest Hertfordshire (neighbouring Councils). The team hosted a breakfast event, consisting of a presentation from the team (Chloe, Rumi, Steve and Anthony) on progress to date and next steps. Attendees included those who have registered their interest in the project, and those who are keen to work alongside the Council in the upcoming interim procurement activity. Attendance was healthy and emphasised that there remains a

high level of interest in the project from the market/industry. The team received positive feedback and continue to manage interested parties via the Pre-Market Engagement activity.

Mid-2026 – Late-2026 – Partner Procurement:

In May the team launched a Pre-Market Engagement exercise, alongside Procurement colleagues. This exercise will appoint a partner to advise on and deliver an optimal strategy for the site’s disposal and development – in preparation for the larger delivery Procurement in late 2026. This was in line with the feedback from the soft market testing and will provide the Council with a comprehensive development proposal for the site, a clear, evidence-based assessment of deliverability and financial viability, and recommendations on optimal development strategy and disposal route.

Please see below for an outline of upcoming project milestones:

Mid 2026 Governance and Direction	Mid-2026 – Late-2026 Partner Procurement	Late-2026 – Early-2027 Feasibility / Shaping Phase	2027–2028 Planning & Pre-Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMT exercise • Member/ Councillor engagement • Cabinet approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-market engagement • Competitive procurement • Partner appointed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Manager appointed • Feasibility, viability, and option testing • Development Agreement agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning application • Pre-development and mobilisation

As of writing this report, the Pre-Market Engagement exercise has not yet concluded and is due to close on 5th June 2026. Therefore, a verbal update on the level of interest and any additional and relevant information will be provided during the Committee meeting on 9th June. An addendum will also be provided as part of this report to provide the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with any additional information.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The purpose of this report is for Overview & Scrutiny to note the decision being taken to Cabinet and thereafter to Full Council and is therefore not a decision-making committee.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. We recognise that we require additional budget for this part of the project, and therefore this will be addressed within the Part 2 report.

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. This project is closely monitored under the Council's Pentana system. The project team meet with the Risk Officer bi-monthly to reassess and discuss updates to the project. The levels of risk are assessed according to the project milestones and are reported to Committee regularly.
- 11.3. The reason for conducting the Pre-Market Engagement exercise is to derisk the project, ensuring that the Council are in control of the process and are appointing the most relevant developer to assist the team in the next phase. It will provide the Council with an importance evidence base for the Cabinet report and next stage of work – a procurement strategy and scope of the next phase of feasibility work. The outcome will be a robust evidence base and a clear recommendation on what can be delivered, how it can be delivered and what the most appropriate route forward is.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. This report updates on the procurement approach to be followed. Depending on the value and scope of any procurement, Social Value will be considered and incorporated as relevant.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 No impact.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 None.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Chloe Gray	Enterprise Manager	chloe.gray@north- herts.gov.uk, Tel: 01462 474 223

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 None.

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CABINET
TUESDAY, 16 JUNE 2026

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: Funding for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

REPORT OF: Director - Resources

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Executive Member - Devolution & Local Government Reorganisation,
Executive Member - Resources

COUNCIL PRIORITY: Sustainability

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To seek agreement on how the LGR funding will be allocated, including decision making processes.

As part of the budget for 2026/27 onwards, £2 million was allocated towards the costs of LGR. This is made up of £1 million in 2026/27 and a further £1 million in 2027/28. The funding was allocated for three purposes:

- County-wide costs associated with the LGR project management and transition costs.
- Additional staffing costs arising from additional LGR work and/or back-filling to allow Officers to contribute towards the LGR programme.
- Training costs for our staff to allow them to be in the best place for LGR transition, and in turn support the new organisations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Cabinet approve that up to £1 million of the available funding be allocated to county-wide costs. Any contribution will be based on a fair share from each Council and can be approved by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member for Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation and Executive Member for Resources.
- 2.2. That Cabinet approve that up to £1 million of the available funding be allocated to additional staffing costs, noting that £450k has already been allocated. Any spend can be approved by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Resources, except where the Constitution already requires different approval processes.
- 2.3. That Cabinet approve that up to £200k of the available funding can be spent on additional training costs. Any spend can be approved by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Resources.
- 2.4. That any spend is subject to cap of £1 million in 2026/27 and £2 million overall.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. This is intended to provide a practical framework for agreeing LGR costs. It aims to allow timely reactions in what will need to be a fast-moving project.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. All spend could be approved as it arises without delegation but that may then require use of urgency provisions.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. Relevant Executive Members have been consulted on this decision. The report will also be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1. This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 15/5/2026.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. As part of the budget for 2026/27 onwards, £2 million was allocated towards the costs of LGR. This is made up of £1 million in 2026/27 and a further £1 million in 2027/28. The funding was allocated for three purposes:
- County-wide costs associated with the LGR project management and transition costs.
 - Additional staffing costs arising from additional LGR work and/or back-filling to allow Officers to contribute towards the LGR programme.
 - Training costs for our staff to allow them to be in the best place for LGR transition, and in turn support the new organisations.
- 7.2. On 22 April 2026, the Chief Executive made an urgent decision to allocate £450k of the funding for 4 posts (two in IT and two in HR). Each post was for a 2 year fixed-term period. See background papers for the decision notice.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. LGR is a huge change project that brings together a wide range of professional expertise and project management resource to achieve a successful transition to the new Unitary Councils in April 2028.
- 8.2. The Chief Executives Co-ordinating Group (CECG) have agreed a project structure including service workstreams, enabling workstreams, project support and a delivery unit. This will use a combination of funded staff (new appointments and continuation of appointments for staff where there was no funding in place), in-kind support from staff across the Councils (doing LGR work alongside their core role) and expert consultancy advice. There will also be other non-people costs incurred. CECG have agreed an interim budget for this work. This budget is currently being funded from the promised Government Grant funding. The funding is provided as a minimum of £900k per new Unitary Council (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions-statements>)

[statements/detail/2026-03-25/hcws1455](#)), so Hertfordshire could receive between £1.8 million and £3.6 million, depending on the decision on structure. The current allocated funding is under £1.8 million, but the total funding required will ultimately exceed Government funding, even at the higher level. The final version of the Hertfordshire LGR Reorganisation proposal to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) identified various one-off costs of which a proportion would be incurred prior to vesting day, i.e. programme management, contract novation/renegotiation, communications and rebranding, estates and facilities reconfiguration, and specialist support and advice. The estimated overall total of these (including contingency) is just under £40 million. The element of these costs that is incurred prior to vesting day will need to be funded from the existing Councils. It has been agreed that costs will be shared 50% to the County Council and 5% to each of the ten District and Borough Councils. District and Boroughs have generally each set aside at least £1 million for LGR costs as part of their 2026/27 budget. Where the allocation by a Council is £1 million (rather than a greater amount) this is understood to be for these central county-wide costs only. It therefore seems reasonable that there should be delegated authority for spend up to £1 million. The spend on these costs may ultimately be above £1 million (prior to vesting day) but that would be subject to the additional requirements to allocate more budget (e.g. through the 2027/28 budget-setting process). To ensure equity the decisions need to be taken jointly, and are therefore currently being co-ordinated through the CECG. So the recommended delegation is to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Member for Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (as relevant Executive Member), in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources.

- 8.3. Each Council will need to provide in-kind (unfunded) staff resource towards the LGR programme. There is a central list being maintained of the staff resource being provided as sub-workstream leads and project managers. The North Herts staff on that list are (currently): HR Services Manager (Workforce sub-workstream co-lead), IT Services Manager (Technology sub-workstream lead), Customer and Digital Project Manager (Technology project manager), Director- Customers (Director lead on the Technology workstream) and Director- Resources (Resources sub-workstream lead), Director for Governance (Democratic, Legal and Assurance workstream co-lead). The list does not include the Chief Executive (Workstream Co-Chair and significant other time on strategic direction, oversight groups and joint decisions through CECG) and other staff that are contributing to workstreams (large number with some contributing 1-2 days per week, or more). It is expected that the level of resource required will increase throughout the LGR programme.
- 8.4. This resource input will have an impact on normal service delivery. Some of this will be accommodated through a reduced need to undertake normal activity, as it is work that will be superseded by the new Unitary arrangements. To help mitigate the impact there will be a need for non-core projects to be significantly limited. In some areas (e.g. HR and IT were identified in the decision notice of 22nd April 2026) there will be a need for additional North Herts focused work and capacity as part of the transition process. The Officer Leadership Team has started to consider how North Herts can be a good ancestor (i.e. what can we do now to make things easier for the new Unitary Councils) which could also create more resource pressure. It is therefore proposed that the Chief Executive (as Head of Paid Service) be given authorisation to approve up to £1 million of the funding for additional temporary staffing resource. That delegation would be in consultation with the Leader of the Council. As £450k (amount may be lower due to the time taken to recruit) has already been allocated, that leaves around £550k that can be

allocated. If any appointment requires additional approval (e.g. Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer posts) then that will be obtained.

- 8.5. The LGR process is an uncertain time for staff. Ultimately there may be change to job roles and (for some roles) there may be a need to be selected for those new roles. Staff will be supported through the process and kept informed. There is also a commitment to make training and development available to staff to put them in the best possible place for any new roles and opportunities. Those options will be different for everyone (from no requirement or available from free resources, through to professional qualifications), so it is difficult to estimate a budget requirement. It is proposed that up to £200k can be allocated on training and development opportunities. This allocation would be approved by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council. As this is likely to be made up of many low value requests, the HR team will support with the allocation of this funding. All requests will require approval by the Line Manager.
- 8.6. The maximum amount that can be allocated under these delegations is £2.2 million. There will be monitoring processes in place to ensure that (1) the total allocation does not exceed £2 million and (2) the amount incurred in 2026/27 does not exceed £1 million.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Paragraph 14.6.5 a) i) determines that the Chief Executive shall “carry out the duties of the Head of Paid Service (section 4 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989) which includes all necessary powers for exercising overall managerial responsibility for staff”.
- 9.2. Paragraph 5.7.3 states that Cabinet are “to take decisions on resources and priorities ... and implement the budget and policies decided by the Full Council”.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. This report sets a process for allocating the LGR funding that has been agreed by Full Council as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process. It also highlights that there could be additional costs (beyond the amounts allocated) of the LGR process prior to vesting day. That would require a separate process (with approval by Council) to allocate further budget.
- 10.2. There are no capital implications arising from this report. There is a “Flexible Use of Capital Receipts” direction that allows Councils to use capital receipts to fund transformation programmes, which would include the LGR process. Capital receipts are the money that is received from the sale of assets. The Council does not currently have any available capital receipts, although there are forecasts of future capital receipts. Currently the Council has sufficient General Fund revenue reserves to fund its expected (pre-vesting day) LGR costs.

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. LGR is a corporate risk on the Council’s risk register with a score of 9 (red risk). A significant element of the risk arises from the resource input required and the impact on staff. The allocations for staff resource and training aim to mitigate some of that risk.

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 specific equalities implications arising from this report. Opportunities for training will be available to all staff. Any prioritisation will be based on objective assessment.

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. There are significant HR implications arising from the LGR process, which are referenced in section 8.

16. APPENDICES

16.1. None

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

Ian Couper	Director - Resources,	ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk,
Anthony Roche	Chief Executive	anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk
Isabelle Alajooz	Director - Governance	Isabelle.alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk
Rebecca Webb	HR Services Manager	Rebecca.webb@north-herts.gov.uk
Tim Everitt	Performance and Risk Officer	Tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1. Delegated Decision Notice (22 April 2026)
<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-04/12.%2022%20April%202026%20-%20LGR%20Funding%20for%20HR%20and%20IT.pdf>

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 9 JUNE 2026**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE 2025/26**

REPORT OF: CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2025-26

COUNCIL PRIORITY: All Priorities;

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the Annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the 2025/2026 Civic Year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider and provide comment on the draft Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2025-26, attached as Appendix 1, prior to consideration by Full Council.

That the Committee recommend to Full Council:

- 2.2. That the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2025/2026, as attached at Appendix 1, be noted.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. 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 2025/2026 Civic Year prior to consideration by Full Council.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. None

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

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

6. FORWARD PLAN

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

7. BACKGROUND

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

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. The report at Appendix 1 sets out the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the Civic Year 2025/2026.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The Local Government Act 2000 establishes that a Council should have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the decisions and policies of the executive. This obligation is reflected in Section 6 of the Council's Constitution.
- 9.2. Section 6.2.6 of the Constitution states that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the Full Council on their workings with recommendations for its future work programme and amended working methods if appropriate.
- 9.3. Section 4.4.1 (ee) of the Constitution states that Full Council will receive Annual reports from the Overview & Scrutiny, Finance, Audit and Risk and Standards Committees.
- 9.4. Full Council has therefore routinely received an Annual Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review. This Annual Report is in accordance with precedent, the Council's Constitution and the Council's statutory requirement.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

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

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no direct Human Resource Implications arising from this report.

15.2 The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager, Scrutiny Officer and Committee Member and Scrutiny Officers support the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

16. APPENDICES

16.1 Appendix 1 – Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2025/2026.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

Jeevan Mann	Scrutiny Officer	jeevan.mann@north-herts.gov.uk
James Lovegrove	Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager	James.lovegrove@north-herts.gov.uk
Melanie Stimpson	Democratic Services Manager	Melanie.stimpson@north-herts.gov.uk

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 Reports to and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the Civic Year 2025/2026.

[Browse meetings - Overview and Scrutiny Committee | North Herts Council](#)

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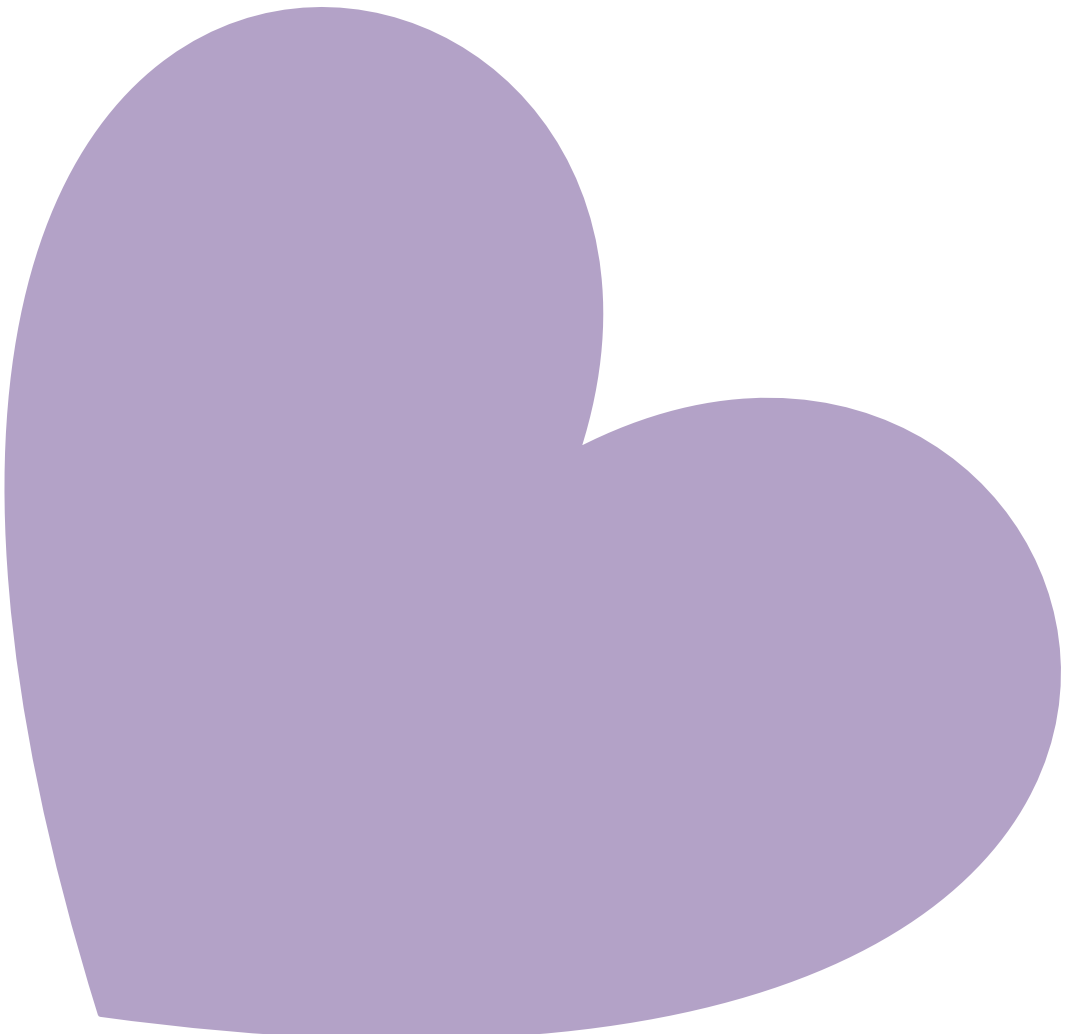


**North
Herts**
Council

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT
2025/2026**

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair's Foreword

Reflecting on a year as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it's clear that we have done much of what we set out to achieve, although there is always scope to improve.

We have continued to work within the framework of our Scrutiny Charter, creating a space for open and apolitical discussions with meaningful and consequential results. I have been proud to be part of a truly cross-party body, and thankful for the astute and thoughtful participation from committee members and the constant support of my Vice Chair, Cllr Clayden.

At a time when this Council has a number of complex major projects underway, scrutiny is an essential process that makes decisions better, fairer and more robust. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have provided significant insight across portfolios including Enterprise, Customers, Resources, Regulatory, Environment and Place.

This year, we took steps to ensure that Executive Members and Officers present reports as a united team, so that questions could be successfully fielded by the most appropriate person.



We presented a measured and evidence-based report and recommendations to Cabinet from the Task and Finish Group on Section 106 contributions. I am grateful to members of this group for their commitment and focus on this important work, led by Cllr Muncer.

Although this Authority may not have the time to generate another Task and Finish project, we look to take our learnings into new authorities. As we move forwards, we aim to sharpen our focus and maximise our impact, whilst adapting to the changing situation in local government reorganisation.

In fulfilling our scrutiny function, we have benefited from co-operative working relationships with Directors and Officers. I greatly appreciate this engagement and clear commitment to working productively together. I hope we can continue to build mutually respectful relationships that support service improvement and champion good practice.

My deepest thanks go to the dedicated Officer team who facilitate this committee. Jeevan Mann, James Lovegrove and Robert Fillby have provided warm, unstinting and professional support that has made us a more effective team.

I look forward to continuing to contribute to the important work of Overview and Scrutiny, with full confidence in Cllr Clayden who takes on the Chair and the gavel for the next civic year.

Councillor Claire Winchester

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2025-26

1) Overview and Scrutiny at North Hertfordshire Council

- a) The depth and breadth of the Council's work means that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must use its resources efficiently and effectively to scrutinise topics in the time available. It does so by:
- Considering a number of issues during its Committee meetings and making recommendations to Cabinet.
 - Appointing dedicated task and finish groups which can examine issues in depth and make recommendations to improve services.
 - Through briefings, verbal and written, provided to Members by Officers and Executive Members.

2) Methods of Scrutiny

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

3) Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- a) There were six scheduled meetings this year and all proceeded as planned, in person in the Council Chamber, making effective use of the facility for officer presentations to be delivered remotely.
- b) There were no extraordinary meetings of the Committee this year.
- c) The Committee has considered a range of topics including scrutinising key decisions going to Cabinet, checking whether the Council has met its performance indicators and reviewing other issues which the Committee has decided would benefit from closer scrutiny.



4) Scrutiny Charter



a) Following the Local Government Association Peer Review, a recommendation was made to develop and adopt a definition of what

Scrutiny is at the Council.

- b) The Charter has been developed alongside publications from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny which provides best practice for scrutiny committees.
- c) The Scrutiny Charter was adopted unanimously at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 3 September 2024.
- d) Members are reminded of the Scrutiny Charter at each meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny to ensure that the meeting is conducted with independence, initiative and integrity, and the Charter is made available in full on the Council's intranet pages for Members.
- e) Details of the meeting at which this item was presented can be viewed [here](#).

5) Call-In

- a) The call-in process allows the Chair of the Committee, or five members of the Council, to call in a decision which is the responsibility of the Executive, which has been made but not implemented. The Committee can ask the Executive to reconsider the decision or can refer it to Council.
- b) No items were Called In for civic year 2025-26.

6) Presentations by Executive Members

- a) The Committee invites Executive Members to speak on their portfolios and to present reports from their relevant portfolio that were of interest to the Committee or to address specific issues.
- b) Executive Members have taken leadership on presenting relevant reports to the Committee during this Civic Year, with Officer support being limited to answering specific or detailed questions.
- c) Executive Members are also welcomed when attending meetings and encouraged to take part in the meeting when appropriate.
- d) The Committee are grateful to the Executive Members for making presentations and attending meetings this year.

7) Crime & Disorder Scrutiny

- a) The Committee is also the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee for North Hertfordshire which is required to meet at least once a year.
- b) The Committee chose this year to invite Hertfordshire Constabulary to discuss Crime against the LGBTQ+ community and Cybercrime against elderly residents.
- c) Details of the meeting at which this item was presented can be viewed [here](#).

8) Safeguarding

- a) The Committee continued to take a close interest in safeguarding matters and requested to receive its annual update on the Council's safeguarding performance in September 2025.



- b) The report was postponed in order to carry out work to update the format of the report, revisions of the training offer for both staff and councillors and the monitoring of completion of both the in person training and e-learning module, and develop a safeguarding handbook and one page reference sheet for the making of referrals.
- c) The updated report will be presented at Overview and Scrutiny in September 2026.

9) Statistics

- a) In total, the Committee has considered 30 items at its meetings this year.
- b) It has made 26 recommendations on 9 topics to Cabinet. At every meeting the Committee also considered the resolutions previously made, referrals onto Cabinet and their outcome and the work programme.
- c) No written questions were submitted this year.

10) Task and Finish Groups

- a) At its meeting on Tuesday 3 September 2024, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved that a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group should be established to investigate and ensure the Section 106 mechanism provides the best outcomes for communities in North Hertfordshire, prior to the adoption of the Local Plan.
- b) Details of the meeting at which this item was presented can be viewed [here](#).
- c) The draft Section 106 scoping document was discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Tuesday 12 November 2024.

- d) Details of the meeting at which this items was presented can be viewed [here](#).
- e) Background training in Section 106 Obligations and Planning Enforcement was provided to all Councillors on Monday 13 January, which was followed by a background paper on Section 106 Obligations was provided to Councillors on Thursday 20 January 2025.
- f) Group Leaders were asked to nominate members for the Task and Finish Group and 5 politically proportionate panel members were confirmed to undertake the investigation. These Members were Councillor Ruth Brown, Councillor Ian Mantle, Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason, Councillor Paul Ward, with Councillor Ralph Muncer elected as Chair of the Group.
- g) The Panels first meeting was an informal meeting on Wednesday 30 April 2025, followed by its first formal meeting which took place on Wednesday 16 July 2025.
- h) The Panel concluded its business at its final meeting on Thursday 29 January 2026.
- i) Eight recommendations were identified as part of the Task and Finish group Consultation and presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on Tuesday 24th March 2026.
- j) Details of the meeting at which this item was presented can be viewed [here](#).
- k) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to cabinet to consider recommendations 1-8.
- l) Cabinet considered recommendations 1-8 at their meeting on Tuesday 14th April 2026.
- m) Details of the meeting at which this item was presented can be viewed [here](#).
- n) Cabinet tasked the Executive Member for Place and the Executive Member for Governance, together with relevant Officers, to further consider the recommendations and develop proposals for report to a future meeting of Cabinet.
- o) The Scrutiny Officer is developing a form to receive feedback regarding the Task and Finish Process. This will be circulated to Panel members and Officers who took part or contributed to the Task and Finish Group. Output from the form will be utilised to develop the Task and Finish Group process.



11) Public Participation

- a) The scrutiny process is open to involvement by local people and the Committee encourages public participation.
- b) No members of the public attended the Committee's meetings to make presentations this year.
- c) Although physical attendance at the actual meetings was extremely low, recordings of the meetings on YouTube have received a total of 750 views. The average view duration of a recording was 17 minutes 21 seconds.

Meeting	Views	Duration
10/06/25	111	08:25
09/09/25	140	31:18
11/11/25	114	15:44
06/01/26	135	13:07
03/02/26	107	16:43
24/03/26	143	18:54

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

12) Call to Account

- a) The Call to Account process allows Members to scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with any Councils functions. Members may request for Cabinet, Head of Paid Service and/or any appropriate Officer to provide an explanation of any matters within their remit, including but not limited to, explanation of:
 - any particular decision or series of decisions
 - the extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy; and/or
 - their performance
- b) No Call to Accounts took place in Civic Year 25/26.

13) Further Information and Membership

- a) Further information about the work of scrutiny and contact details can be found [here](#)
- b) Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2025/2026:

Members of the Committee:

Councillor Claire Winchester (Chair)
Councillor Jon Clayden (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Cathy Brownjohn
Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
Councillor David Chalmers
Councillor Dominic Griffiths
Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
Councillor Martin Prescott
Councillor Paul Ward
Councillor Ralph Muncer
Councillor Sadie Billing
Councillor Tina Bhartwas

Substitutes:

Councillor Caroline McDonnell
Councillor Clare Strong
Councillor Matt Barnes
Councillor Sam Collins
Councillor Sarah Lucas
Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 9 JUNE 2026**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
2026-27**

REPORT OF: SCRUTINY OFFICER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: NOT APPLICABLE

COUNCIL PRIORITY: All Priorities;

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
1.1 This report highlights items scheduled in the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026-27 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 1 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 2, suggests a list of items to be considered at its meetings in the coming civic year.
2.3. That the Committee, note the Decisions and Monitoring log, as attached at Appendix 3.
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 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 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 1 contains the work programme for 2026-27.
- 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 May can be found at Appendix 2. Members can view currently published forward plans here: [Browse plans - Cabinet, 2026 | 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 meet 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 service delivery and other projects.
- 10.2 Although not significant, a committee attendance allowance of £25.17 per Officer per evening meeting can be claimed by officers in attendance. This is in addition to providing time off in lieu or overtime as an alternative.

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 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 1 – Work Programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2026-2027
- 16.2 Appendix 2 – Forward Plan –May 2026
- 16.3 Appendix 3 – Overview and Scrutiny Decisions and Monitoring Log

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

Jeevan Mann	Scrutiny Officer	Jeevan.mann@north-herts.gov.uk
James Lovegrove	Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager	james.Lovegrove@northherts.gov.uk
Natasha Jindal	Legal Team Manager	Natasha.Jindal@north-herts.gov.uk
Tim Everitt	Performance and Risk Officer	Tim.Everitt@north-herts.gov.uk

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2026-27

KEY
Items identified for work programme
Annual reports
Scrutiny reports
Completed

MEETING DATE	ITEMS AT MEETING	EXECUTIVE / REPORT AUTHOR
Tuesday 9 June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual O&S Report Annual 3C's Update LGR Budget Churchgate Work Programme & Decisions and Monitoring Tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Claire Winchester Councillor Val Bryant Councillor Ian Albert Councillor Tamsin Thomas Scrutiny Officer
Tuesday 8 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of Safeguarding Annual Council Learning and Development Report LGR future plans update Work Programme & Decisions and Monitoring Tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Daniel Allen Councillor Daniel Allen Councillor Laura Williams Scrutiny Officer
Tuesday 10 November 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonisation of Council Buildings Work Programme & Decisions and Monitoring Tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Amy Allen Scrutiny Officer
Tuesday 05 January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Safety Report Work Programme & Decisions and Monitoring Tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Mick Debenham Scrutiny Officer
Tuesday 02 February 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking Climate Emergency update Work Programme & Decisions and Monitoring Tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Donna Wright Councillor Amy Allen Scrutiny Officer
Tuesday 9 March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RIPA Work Programme & Decisions and Monitoring Tracker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Daniel Allen Scrutiny Officer

Spotlight Review

- Communal Waste Collections – October 2026

Task and Finish Group

- None Scheduled

Site Visit

- Riverside development – to be scheduled
- Museum Collection Facility – to be scheduled

Briefing

- Crime and Disorder Matter (topic tbc) – January 2027

Candidate items to be scheduled

- None

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 15 May 2026

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
Developer Contributions SPD		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	Developer Contributions SPD	Clare Skeels, Senior Planning Officer clare.skeels@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
North Herts Design Code SPD		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	North Herts Design Code SPD	Nigel Smith, Director - Place nigel.smith@north-herts.gov.uk, Sohanna Srinivasan, Principal Planning & Urban Design Officer sohanna.srinivasan@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Waste Vehicles Fuel Arrangements		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	Waste Vehicles Fuel Arrangements	Sarah Kingsley, Director - Environment sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

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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
CHURCHGATE REGENERATION - UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	CHURCHGATE REGENERATION - UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS	Rumi Bose, Churchgate Project Manager Tel: 01462 474443 rumi.bose@north-herts.gov.uk, Chloe Gray, Enterprise Manager chloe.gray@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Funding for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	Funding for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)	Ian Couper, Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
2025-26 Q4 Council Plan Update		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	2025-26 Q4 Council Plan Update	Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
2025-26 Year end report on Risk Management Governance		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	2025-26 Year end report on Risk Management Governance	Rachel Cooper, Controls, Risk and Performance Manager rachel.cooper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

Decision required	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be submitted to Decision Maker	Contact Officer from whom documents can be requested	Confirmation that other documents may be submitted to the Decision Maker	Procedure for requesting details of other documents
Revenue Budget Outturn 2025/26		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	Revenue Budget Outturn 2025/26	Antonio Ciampa, Accountancy Manager antonio.ciampa@north-herts.gov.uk, Ian Couper, Director - Resources ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Treasury Management End of Year Review 2025/26		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	Treasury Management End of Year Review 2025/26	Dean Fury, Corporate Support Accountant dean.fury@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Capital End of Year Review 2025/26		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	Capital End of Year Review 2025/26	Dean Fury, Corporate Support Accountant dean.fury@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
GA2 Access Land		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	GA2 Access Land	Philip Doggett, Principal Estates Surveyor philip.doggett@north-herts.gov.uk, Stephen Hensby, Estates Surveyor stephen.hensby@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6
Allocation of MHCLG Homelessness grant (Part 2)		Cabinet	16 Jun 2026	Allocation of MHCLG Homelessness grant (Part 2)	Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk	Yes	Via the Contact Officer named in Column 6

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DECISIONS

Item number	Recommendation/ Referral	Details from Cabinet	Status
COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26 (Q3 UPDATE)			
30	<p>RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee provided comment on the Council Delivery Plan Quarter 2 monitoring report.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: 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.</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring report provides the 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.</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 24th March 2026 7.30 pm</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted progress against Council projects and performance indicators, as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (Appendix A), and approved new milestones and changes to milestones.</p> <p>REASON FOR DECISION: 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.</p> <p>Cabinet - Tuesday, 14th April 2026 7.30 pm</p>	Open

Item number	Recommendation/ Referral	Details from Cabinet	Status
LEASE ON LETCHWORTH MULTI STOREY CAR PARK			
31	<p>RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:</p> <p>(1) That Cabinet approve the surrender of the lease for the Letchworth Multi Storey Car Park.</p> <p>(2) That, subject to recommendation 1 above, delegated authority is granted to the Director – Enterprise in consultation with the Executive Member for Enterprise to negotiate and approve the details of any surrender in line with the broad principles in this report.</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <p>After undertaking a review of the current operation and long-term needs of this car park, the surrender of this lease provides a positive outcome to the Council and the conditions that have been negotiated ensure there will be improvements to the car park which will benefit the public and economic vitality of the town centre.</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 24th March 2026 7.30 pm</p>	<p>RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:</p> <p>(1) Approved the surrender of the lease for the Letchworth Multi Storey Car Park.</p> <p>(2) Granted delegated authority to the Director of Enterprise in consultation with the Executive Member for Enterprise to negotiate and approve the details of any surrender in line with the broad principles in this report.</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <p>After undertaking a review of the current operation and long-term needs of this car park, the surrender of this lease provides a positive outcome to the Council and the conditions that have been negotiated ensures there will be improvements to the car park which will benefit the public and economic vitality of the town centre.</p> <p>Cabinet - Tuesday, 14th April 2026 7.30 pm</p>	Open

Item number	Recommendation/ Referral	Details from Cabinet	Status
REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT ('RIPA') ANNUAL REVIEW			
32	<p>RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: The adoption of the amended RIPA Policy (Appendix A).</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) The Council is required to ensure it has an up-to-date, compliant and operationally usable RIPA framework that reflects current legislation and codes of practice and supports effective governance and assurance. (2) Approval of the updated policy reduces legal, regulatory and reputational risk, supports lawful enforcement activity where required, and strengthens transparency and democratic oversight.</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 24th March 2026 7.30 pm</p>	<p>RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL: (1) Noted the content of the report; and (2) Resolved to adopt the amended RIPA Policy (Appendix A).</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: The Council is required to ensure it has an up-to-date, compliant and operationally usable RIPA framework that reflects current legislation and codes of practice and supports effective governance and assurance. 3.2. Approval of the updated policy reduces legal, regulatory and reputational risk, supports lawful enforcement activity where required, and strengthens transparency and democratic oversight.</p> <p>Cabinet - Tuesday, 14th April 2026 7.30 pm</p>	Open

Item number	Recommendation/ Referral	Details from Cabinet	Status
SECTION 106 TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT			
33	<p>RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That recommendations 1-8, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be considered by Cabinet.</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to scrutinise the s106 Task and Finish Group report and to consider which recommendations should be considered by Cabinet</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 24th March 2026 7.30 pm</p>	<p>RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL: (1) Noted the report. (2) Tasked the Executive Member for Place and the Executive Member for Governance, together with relevant Officers, to further consider the recommendations and develop proposals for report to a future meeting of Cabinet.</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to scrutinise the s106 Task and Finish Group report and recommendations.</p> <p>Cabinet - Tuesday, 14th April 2026 7.30 pm</p>	Open