		Recommendation	Action	Led by	Timescale
1	Key 1	Broaden the council's focus to an ambitious place shaping agenda	Agreed. This will be considered as part of the review of the Council Plan. The agenda needs to include political support for key projects and proposals (e.g. Local Plan post adoption, significant planning applications), recognising and promoting the benefits of development and the necessity for us to support this under current Govt policy. This work also needs to clearly identify the role(s) the Council wishes to take during and after the delivery of growth through a consistently applied narrative (see Key 3 below), ensuring there is a clear joint, Member and Officer, view and direction of travel.	Executive Members Leadership Team	
2	Key 2	Align all your resources, policies, capacity to achieve your priorities	Agreed. This will be considered as part of the budget review and review of Council Plan	Executive Members Leadership Team	
3	Key 3	Develop a narrative for place	Agreed, it is proposed to develop a place narrative around sustainability as a key issue of importance to the whole district, given the Council declared a Climate Emergency in May 2019. The place narrative will also need to link to the wider Hertfordshire Growth Board work and the place narrative being developed for the whole county	Executive Members Leadership Team	
4	Key 4	Use reserves to fund internal and external transformation capacity	Agreed, to set a "target level" of reserves that provides greater flexibility to fund transformation that aligns to Council priorities. Subject to understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our financial reserves and future reserve baseline	Executive Member Finance and IT SD Resources	

5	Key 5	Take a corporate approach to transformation – top down and programme managed	It is proposed to create a new Director of Transformation post (part-time, fixed term, funded from reserves) and identify appropriate staffing resource to support the director. This transformation team will take the lead on our transformation programme, ensuring a corporate approach	Leader Deputy Leader Managing Director	
6	Key 6	Use external partnerships to benefit North Hertfordshire	Agreed. The Council recognises that the impacts of austerity and the cuts to its budget mean that we need to be an outward looking and ambitious authority, working with partners to deliver our aspirations	Executive Members Leadership Team	
7	Key 7	Best practice needs to look beyond the Hertfordshire area	Agreed. The Council already looks to authorities throughout the country and beyond for inspiration, but this could and should be reinforced and better communicated to ensure we do more and learn from the best examples	Executive Members Leadership Team	
8	Key 8	Be brave	Agreed. Officers and Members should be prepared to question each other if we are failing to be brave in our aspirations, policy setting and decision making, however this needs to be a constructive challenge whilst ensuring that we remain risk aware. We believe the actions set out above show our willingness to be brave. External speaker(s) to inspire innovation/ change of attitude?	Executive Members Leadership Team	
9	Place and Priority setting	Shift service delivery focus towards a more people and place-based approach.	Agreed, this will form a key part of the transformation programme	Executive Members Leadership Team	

10	Place and Priority setting	Realign Town Talk meetings to inform strategic direction, policy shaping and decision making and to proactively take council and place-based issues out to local communities.	We recognise the potential benefits of using Town Talks in this way and will consider how best to utilise them and how they interact with the new Community Engagement Panel	Executive Member Community Engagement SD Legal and Community	
11	Place and Priority setting	Use a strategic needs analysis to inform the council plan and policy shaping.	Agreed	Executive Members Leadership Team	
12	Place and Priority setting	NHDC would benefit from visiting other councils' that have achieved or are some way working towards the objectives and outcomes NHDC is seeking to deliver, such as place shaping, large scale housing development and commercial development.	Agreed. The Council will seek out Councils who have faced and overcome similar challenges, including with areas where large scale housing development by developers has followed adoption of Local Plan. It is also worth noting that part of 'being brave' might mean doing things differently to other Councils. South Cambridgeshire and East Hertfordshire are two immediate neighbours with large-scale, strategic growth projects, recently adopted Plans and existing structures and mechanisms for dealing with delivery. The Council will also consider how best to enable Corporate level 'sounding boards' (or equivalent) for key schemes as it is crucial that there is clear and consistent messaging of the Council's asks and approaches, as well as a common understanding of where compromise on the strict application of all policy requirements (e.g. affordable housing vs open space vs social infrastructure) is required to ensure successful delivery and the best overall outcome.	Executive Members Leadership Team	

13	Place and Priority setting	Place-shaping could be accelerated and supported by maximising the opportunity of working in closer partnership with the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).	Establish regular meetings with LEP.\n\nPartnership working should also extend to other key local partners such as Hertfordshire County Council, LGCHF, settle, First Garden Cities Homes, neighbouring authorities. England's Economic Heartland and national partners such as Homes England etc\n\nClarity of a common narrative and agenda will enable discussions and engagement to be undertaken with confidence.	Leader\nDeputy Leader\nManaging Director\n\nRelevant Executive Members and Service Directors	
14	Leadership of Place	A clear narrative for place is needed to support partners and staff in understanding how they can better contribute towards outcomes and assess strategically how resources can be deployed for maximum impact.	Agreed. The focus will be on an issue that unites the whole district, for example sustainability, emphasising co-operation between settlements rather than competition. The narrative needs to be carefully prepared in order to enable the Council to provide a focus for the District and not inhibit our ambitions.	Executive Members\nLeadership Team	
15	Leadership of Place	Councillors should be leading the way as brand ambassadors, 'selling' the district and promoting what is good about North Hertfordshire	Agreed	All Councillors\nCommunications Manager	
16	Leadership of Place	Feedback regarding consultation from Citizen's Panel representatives regarding consultation specifically and the future of the district generally	The consultation strategy is due to be reviewed in 2020 and the comments will be considered during that review\n\nThe points regarding the future of the district to be explored further as we develop the clear place narrative	Executive Member Community Engagement\nCommunications Manager	

17	Leadership of Place	More can be done to actively inform citizens of the work NHDC has delivered and how their council tax is being invested.	Agreed. We will look to see what others do that we do not already provide	Leader Deputy Leader Communications Manager	
18	Leadership of Place	Ensure the differences in places, main settlements and villages are recognised in policy making	Agreed, provided those differences are used to build a stronger whole rather than being used to divide and create competition within the district	Executive Members Leadership Team	
19	Organisational Leadership and Governance	There needs to be clarity about the roles and responsibility of officers and members.	Agreed and has already been subject to a development session between the administration and the leadership team. Further consideration will be given to how to clarify the roles and responsibilities	Executive Members Leadership Team	
20	Organisational Leadership and Governance	There is an opportunity to involve staff more in the development of the new organisational development and people strategy.	Agreed, it was always the intention that the Shaping Our Future programme would include widespread consultation at all stages and this was agreed by Political Liaison Board prior to the Corporate Peer Challenge	Service Director Resources	
21	Organisational Leadership and Governance	Peers identified an opportunity to use the RPR process to gather information on career development (as done by other councils) and see career aspirations and personal development as an ongoing conversation as people's circumstances, positions and aspirations frequently change.	This is already a component of the RPR process, therefore no action required beyond reminding managers of approach to RPRs	Learning and Development Manager	Completed
22	Organisational Leadership and Governance	All learning and development should be aligned to the emerging organisational development plan and council plan delivery.	Agreed, to the extent that it does not prevent the individual development requirements of staff and members. This will be explored as part of the Shaping Our Future programme	Service Director Resources	

23	Organisational Leadership and Governance	It is recommended that the emerging organisational development strategy identifies the future skills and behaviour requirements and identifies how those skills and capabilities will be developed across the workforce, either in job design, specific learning interventions or other approaches to ensure skills acquisition keeps up with pace and change of organisational priorities.	Agreed, this was always the intention	Service Director Resources Member Training Champions	
24	Organisational Leadership and Governance	As an integral component of future organisational performance, it is recommended that there is an increased focus on management and political oversight of learning & development (for both officers and members) with regular reporting and assessment of impact and readiness e.g. being ready to cope with future increased planning applications post-Local Plan.	Agreed, the mechanism for oversight will be considered as part of setting up the Shaping Our Future programme and the monitoring of its impacts	Executive Members Leadership Team Learning and Development Manager	
25	Organisational Leadership and Governance	The peer team recommends that there is a focused period of time where all staff have the opportunity to understand the direction of the council and the council plan and ensure there is an increased outward-focus for the organisation to help staff to make the shift to understanding the place-shaping agenda and NHDC's role in facilitating curation of place.	Agreed, this was planned to be part of the development of the Shaping Our Future programme	Leader Deputy Leader Managing Director	

26	Organisational Leadership and Governance	Staff reflected that they would like to see more of the Chief Executive and leading more of the internal communication forums.	We have made improvements to the visibility of the leadership team and will continue to look for ways to further improve, in particular as the new Managing Director post develops	Managing Director Communications Manager	
27	Organisational Leadership and Governance	The peer team were surprised that only low / negative PI's were debated at O&S and those reports were shared publicly. Publishing positive performance alongside amber and red performance would provide the public with a rounded summary of performance, allowing NHDC to outwardly celebrate what is being delivered to agreed performance levels.	Agreed. Reports will reflect this going forwards	Chair and Vice Chair Overview and Scrutiny Committee Controls, Risk and Performance Manager	
28	Organisational Leadership and Governance	Peers understand that the full performance report is sent to councillors one month before O&S to provide the opportunity for requesting the appropriate lead executive member and officer to attend O&S to be accountable for questioning. This opportunity has never been requested and should be used in order to strengthen the debate and challenge at O&S.	Agreed. Chair of Overview and Scrutiny to remind committee members of this opportunity	Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Controls, Risk and Performance Manager	

| 29 | Financial Planning and Viability | There is a strong need to ensure there is an agreed risk framework shared between officers and members in order to maximise performance and outcomes and ensure the commercial team begins to deliver benefits.

The peer team recommends that NHDC defines its approach to risk within the context of the council being more outward facing and ambitious for place, as well as being aligned to the council plan. | The Council updated its Risk Management Framework in March 2020

Agreed that there needs to be a strategic approach to the Council's risk appetite, also noting the Peer team's recommendation to 'be brave'. A strategic discussion around risk will be facilitated at the Political Liaison Board, as this is felt to be more of an issue of attitude rather than policy. A review of some existing practices may be needed to achieve this, as it is arguable these have not facilitated the required culture to date. | Leader
Deputy Leader
SD Resources | Framework Complete

31 December 2020 |
| 30 | Financial Planning and Viability | Peers questioned if commercial plan business cases were taking into account non-cash benefits such as increased social value / outcomes, affordable homes, zero carbon homes and not just solely on financial returns. | Business plans do take into account non-cash benefits, although the financial situation of the Council means financial returns have to be prioritised. We will review our approach to ensure we are happy with the balance being taken. | Executive Member Enterprise and Co-Operative Development
SD Commercial | |
| 31 | Financial Planning and Viability | The council should invest some reserve budget into funding the transition to the new council plan and making early investment in capacity to deliver place shaping and transformation, inside and outside the council. | Agreed, to set a "target level" of reserves that provides greater flexibility to fund transformation that aligns to Council priorities. Subject to understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our financial reserves and future reserve baseline | Executive Member Finance and IT
SD Resources | |

32	Financial Planning and Viability	Peers questioned whether a statutory / discretionary service and base-budget review is the priority for delivering transformation. The team recommend that starting with the customer and aligning the council plan objectives with the MTFS is a more appropriate point to initiate the design of and impact on services.	The Council will consider its approach to the reviewing the budget, which has been complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic and delays to the Comprehensive Spending Review and the delay to work on a medium-term funding settlement until 2021/22 (for years from 2022/23 onwards)	Executive Member Finance and IT SD Resources	
33	Capacity to Deliver	Although the introduction of new technologies was viewed as positive, the peer team recommend that the council ensure this approach fits within the strategic context and is sustainable after the IT graduate resources have left their placement.	Agreed. This will be a consideration for the transformation team to ensure work undertaken is sustainable	Executive Member Finance and IT SD Customers	
34	Capacity to Deliver	NHDC would benefit from an agreed target operating model (TOM) which would support an overall approach to how operational services are delivered. A TOM would support closing the gap between customer experience, ensuring that services have a common look and feel, supporting customers to navigate around services with more independence and decreasing more costly and avoidable demand.	The Council has been progressing work in this area for some time, particularly in relation to digital interaction with the Council. For example customer and member portals have been procured and will be implemented during 2020. This recommendation will be considered when setting the objectives for the transformation programme	Leader Deputy Leader Managing Director	

35	Capacity to Deliver	Project and programme management resourcing and planning could be improved as peers identified that resources and timescales were often underestimated, resulting in projects being delayed and staff having to manage the pressure of delivering day-to-day operational requirements whilst taking projects forward.	It is worth noting that whilst there may have been delays on some of the Councils most complex and high-profile projects, many progress without issue. The resourcing of projects is considered on a project by project basis and with the change to a single Managing Director post we recognise that this has resource implications for delivering projects. The Council has a pool of trained project managers with different skills and experience and we will look at that pool to see if there is a suitable project manager, whether they are within the commissioning department or not. This will also give the opportunity for staff to broaden their experience of different areas of the Council. This recommendation and the recommendations of the independent review of the District Wide Museum project will be considered as projects are established	Executive Members Leadership Team	
36	Capacity to Deliver	The peer team recommend that the organisational development plan addresses the future skills needs and supports staff, managers and leaders in building the required place-shaping capacity at a strategic level.	Agreed, this was always the intention for the Shaping Our Future programme	Service Director Resources Member training champions	
37	Capacity to Deliver	The peer team suggest that there could be a pooling of roles with generic, flexible skills that could move around the organisation where the work dictates. This pool could operate as a corporate transformation resource pool and be assigned to projects through a programme management approach.	A transformation team will be established to support a new Director of Transformation, initially to deliver the transformation programme on a time limited basis funded from reserves. Once the initial programme is concluded further consideration will be given to this recommendation, as it clearly has financial implications given the budgetary pressures on the Council.	Managing Director	

38	Planning Committee	Have planning training provided by an external trainer with broad experience, to aid understanding of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and what are material planning considerations.	Agreed. An ongoing training programme will be developed for members and officers, to cover the planning basics plus new policies and specific areas of interest and relevance. Initial contact has already been made with Planning Advisory Service (PAS) for web-based training in light of social distancing restrictions. Training will also be considered for other groups such as Parish Councils.	Planning and Conservation Manager Member training champions	Post Annual Council and appointment of new committee members, however timescales may not allow external training to be implemented prior to the first planning committee in the new civic year.
39	Planning Committee	Submit 'issues paper' to the planning committee early in the process so officers are aware of the concern's members want addressing. This will ultimately lead to less deferments.	Agreed for major and strategic applications and must go on website for public scrutiny. Members need to identify issues in advance of the Committee so they can be addressed in advance of the application being heard. This will allow engagement with the applicant to seek to limit deferments and any refusal to extend the statutory deadline.	Planning and Conservation Manager	

40	Planning Committee	Arrange specific training for the Chair and Vice Chair of planning committee as they have a key role, and this will support the development of a strongly led committee.	Agreed, see above comments regarding training generally for the Committee. Additionally training on chairing meetings has been identified for Chairs and Vice Chairs.	Planning and Conservation Manager	Post Annual Council and appointment of chair and vice chair, however timescales may not allow external training to be implemented prior to the first planning committee in the new civic year.
41	Planning Committee	Lessen the number of call-ins by tightening up criteria for a call-in. Give reasons related to material planning considerations only, not simply in the "public interest" which is too vague and raises objectors' expectations for refusal.	Proposal to Full Council to tighten the criteria, to be supported by training for all councillors on appropriate use of the call-in procedure. Planning Advisory Service (PAS) training can include this item, important as current objections from a Parish Council require Ward Councillor support and the training should reinforce that public interest is not a planning ground for call in.	Group Leaders Monitoring Officer Planning and Conservation Manager	Annual Council (May/June 2020)
42	Planning Committee	Consider starting meetings earlier. Members and officers are not performing at their best at late night meetings after a full day's work and there is an increased risk of challenge from applicants if it was perceived that an application had been rushed because of a long meeting.	Moving meeting times is not supported politically at the current time due to concerns it may dissuade people with caring responsibilities from standing to be Councillors. Alternative of allowing officers to attend meetings virtually from home to be explored	Group Leaders Monitoring Officer	

			It is proposed that this is reviewed once the other recommendations have been implemented regarding call ins, issues paper, training and chairing of meetings to establish whether it remains an issue or has been resolved by other action.		
43	Planning Committee	Consider reducing the size of the planning committee.	Proposal to Full Council to reduce Committee size to 12	Group Leaders Monitoring Officer	Annual Council (May/June 2020)
44	Planning Committee	Produce supplementary report to table on evening of the planning committee that updates members on changes / updates since publication of report. Currently there is a verbal update at committee which is time that could be saved.	Agreed, noting may still need some verbal updates if any last minute changes after publication of supplementary report which would need to be published the day before the Committee to allow participants time to read it. Tabling a supplementary report at the Committee will simply replace time taken for verbal update with reading time.	Planning and Conservation Manager	
45	Planning Committee	Have specialists at planning committee for example, highways officers where there are highways issues.	Agreed and this already occurs where possible, subject to the availability of those specialists who may not be employed/contracted by the Council.

Alternative of allowing external specialists to attend meetings virtually to be explored.

Consideration will be given to including sessions with specialists as part of the training programme, so that their role and input is better understood | Planning and Conservation Manager | |
| 46 | Planning Committee | Strong and clear legal advice can help. | Agreed. A Planning Control Committee decision aide memoire has already been agreed with the Chair, Vice Chair, Group Leader and relevant officers to assist. | Service Director Legal and Community | |

47	Planning Committee	Strong chairmanship of committee required, especially post Local Plan.	Agreed. Chair and Vice Chair will receive the planning training and chairing training referred to above.	Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Control Committee	
48	Planning Committee	Committee reports - Highlight in bold the key material planning considerations.	Report template to be reviewed to ensure material planning considerations are clear to reader	Planning and Conservation Manager	Review prior to training
49	Planning Committee	Committee reports - Location plan to show wider context.	Agreed. Will be included in review of report template	Planning and Conservation Manager	Review prior to training
50	Planning Committee	Committee reports - Training will help understanding of the key points.	Agreed. Review of template to be undertaken prior to training so that it can be included. Training can be delivered by officers as part of the training programme.	Planning and Conservation Manager	
51	Planning Committee	Have up to date council plan and supplementary planning documents.	Council Plan is reviewed annually each summer SPDs will be reviewed post conclusion of Local Plan Examination	Executive Member Planning and Transport SD Regulatory	
52	Planning Committee	Cabinet member or Leader to speak in support of applications at planning committee that support the Council's priorities and where the specifics would amount to a material planning consideration.	Agreed, where it is appropriate	Leader and/or Executive Member	
53	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Executive members should lead at O&S and be visibly accountable for decisions and performance.	Agreed as recommendation	Executive Members	Immediate

54	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Future meetings would benefit from taking a longer-term view of the key issues for the district (not just focussing on the next immediate meeting), fewer, more targeted agenda items, and be focused on key areas informed by performance reports and a forward work plan. Fewer agenda items will support more allocated time for meaningful scrutiny and related debate.	Agreed. To be taken forward as part of the training for the committee members	Chair and vice chair of O+S Scrutiny support	
55	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	The current membership of O&S was considered to be too large and would benefit from reducing from 15 members to 11 or 9.	Proposal to Full Council to reduce Committee size to 12	Group Leaders Monitoring Officer	Annual Council (May/June 2020)
56	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	It is recommended that all O&S members undertake formal training to ensure a robust base of skills and expertise can be deployed in the O&S environment.	Formal scrutiny training has previously been provided to the Committee, but given changes to committee membership agree it makes sense to put in place further training and ensure that any new members receive training in the future	Chair and Vice Chair of O+S Scrutiny support Member training champions	
57	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Use the task and finish programme to support early engagement and involvement with policy making.	Agreed. To be taken forward by the Leader (on behalf of Cabinet) and Chair and vice chair of Overview and Scrutiny, to discuss work programme	Leader Chair and Vice Chair of O+S Scrutiny support	

58	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	It is recommended that finish times should be agreed in the constitution and meetings end promptly at those times. There was a concern around individual personal effectiveness, accessibility, external public perception and health & safety / personal welfare of both members and officers from such excessively long and late meetings.	Moving meeting times is not supported politically at the current time due to concerns it may dissuade people with caring responsibilities from standing to be Councillors. Alternative of allowing officers to attend meetings virtually from home to be explored A 'guillotine' provision on committee meetings is not supported politically at the current time due to concerns it might stifle debate. It is proposed that this is considered once the other recommendations have been implemented regarding work programme, training and chairing of meetings to establish whether it remains an issue or has been resolved by other action. Training is provided to Chairs and Vice Chairs, but this could be reviewed to ensure that Chairs and Vice Chairs are able to confidently manage meetings to ensure they proceed in a timely manner	Service Director Legal and Community Member training champions	
59	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Peers recommend clarification of the governance arrangements between O&S and cabinet panels.	Proposal to Full Council to clarify relationship	Group Leaders Monitoring Officer	Annual Council (May/June 2020)
60	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Ensure the O&S forward work plan includes scrutiny of external partners and contractors as a contribution to the leadership of 'place'.	Agreed as recommendation	Chair and Vice Chair of O+S Scrutiny support	Immediate