



North
Northamptonshire
Council

Council Position Statement July 2024



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North Northamptonshire Council was formed in April 2021 as a result of local government reform. The history is well documented, but four districts and half of one county council came together to form one of the largest unitary councils in the country.

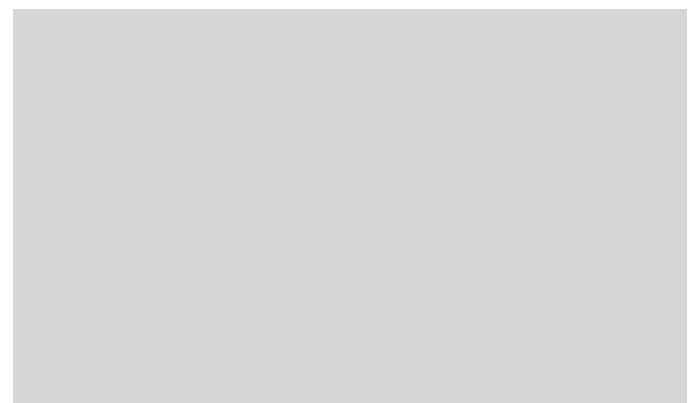
North Northamptonshire is a fast-growing area and an area of contrasts. We grew by 13.5% in the ten years to 2021 compared to a national average of 6.6%. Our population was 359,500 in 2021 and is projected to grow to 380,000 by the end of the current decade. Our residents live in a mix of urban and rural communities, with 69% of people living in urban areas. Our urban areas tend to be poorer with 3 'Levelling Up' areas in parts of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough.

Since vesting in 2021, we have seen demand rise across many of our services, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Highways and Home to School Transport. We are also facing increasing costs in these areas, leading to a well-documented pressure on Council budgets. The Council has agreed a significant investment in highways maintenance and has commenced work to review strategies for managing demand and costs across Adults and Children's Services.

To address these challenges and ensure the best opportunities for our residents we are thinking long-term. We are a still new 'Place' and have invested in the 'Big50' project, to bring together stakeholders from across public, private and voluntary sectors to envision our future and put together practical steps to achieve it. They are identifying our strengths and what puts our area on the map and is a unique selling point for us to attract investment, jobs and opportunity. We are pleased that already, Nike have signed a 20 year lease for 1.3million sq ft of logistics warehousing, offices, sports and recreation facilities

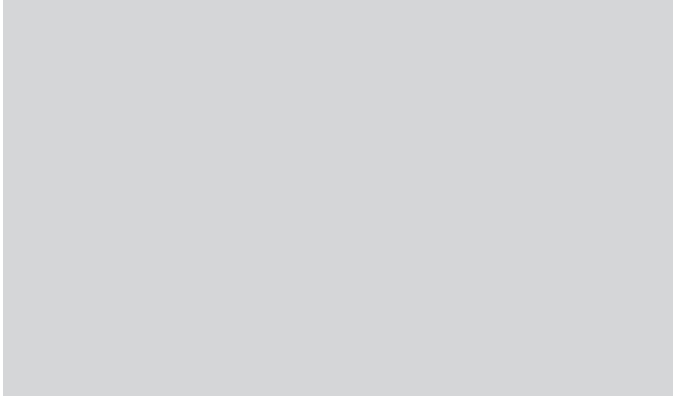
in Corby that is expected to be fully operational in 2027 creating significant employment opportunities.

This development and focus on 'Big50' represents the next phase of our journey as a Council and is led by our new Chief Executive, Adele Wylie, who was appointed in January 2024. It comes as we review our transformation plans and consolidate them into a 'One Council Programme' and work to review our Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to deliver significant savings underpinned by our corporate priorities and a channel shift to digital delivery. Our work to review our corporate priorities and delivery models is being supported by an external delivery partner supporting us to refresh our strategic ambitions and we expect more developed plans to be ready later in 2024.



You will see from this position statement much has been achieved since we formed in 2021. As well as establishing ourselves as a new Authority and 'building our foundations' we have introduced preventative approaches in adult social care and children's services.

In adult social care, the adoption of the Three Conversations model of strengths-based working has led to millions of pounds of savings in care costs, and we have invested in preventative facilities such as Thackley Green reablement provision. In children's services we are piloting several different preventative investments, including Family Hubs.



As we now embark on the next phase of our development as a Council, we welcome this peer review as an opportunity to support us on our journey in continuing to improve outcomes for residents across North Northamptonshire.

We hope that you will be able to see the progress we have made in building not only the foundations of effective services, governance and ways of working but also, that we have focused on delivering transformation to build modern and efficient services.

We have built trust and credibility amongst both statutory and community sector partners and as we develop our plans for transformation over the medium term and develop our refreshed corporate priorities, we welcome this peer review as an opportunity for an external perspective to support our ongoing development.

LOCAL PRIORITIES AND OUTCOMES

Since forming in April 2021, we have been focused on improving public services right from the outset. A new corporate leadership team was appointed prior to vesting day at tiers one to three and a new Council was elected along with a new leader and executive.

The Council developed an ambitious Corporate Plan setting out our vision, values, key commitments and priorities for the future. The Corporate Plan was developed following meaningful stakeholder engagement and went through the Council's full constitutional process culminating with its formal adoption at Full Council in December 2021.

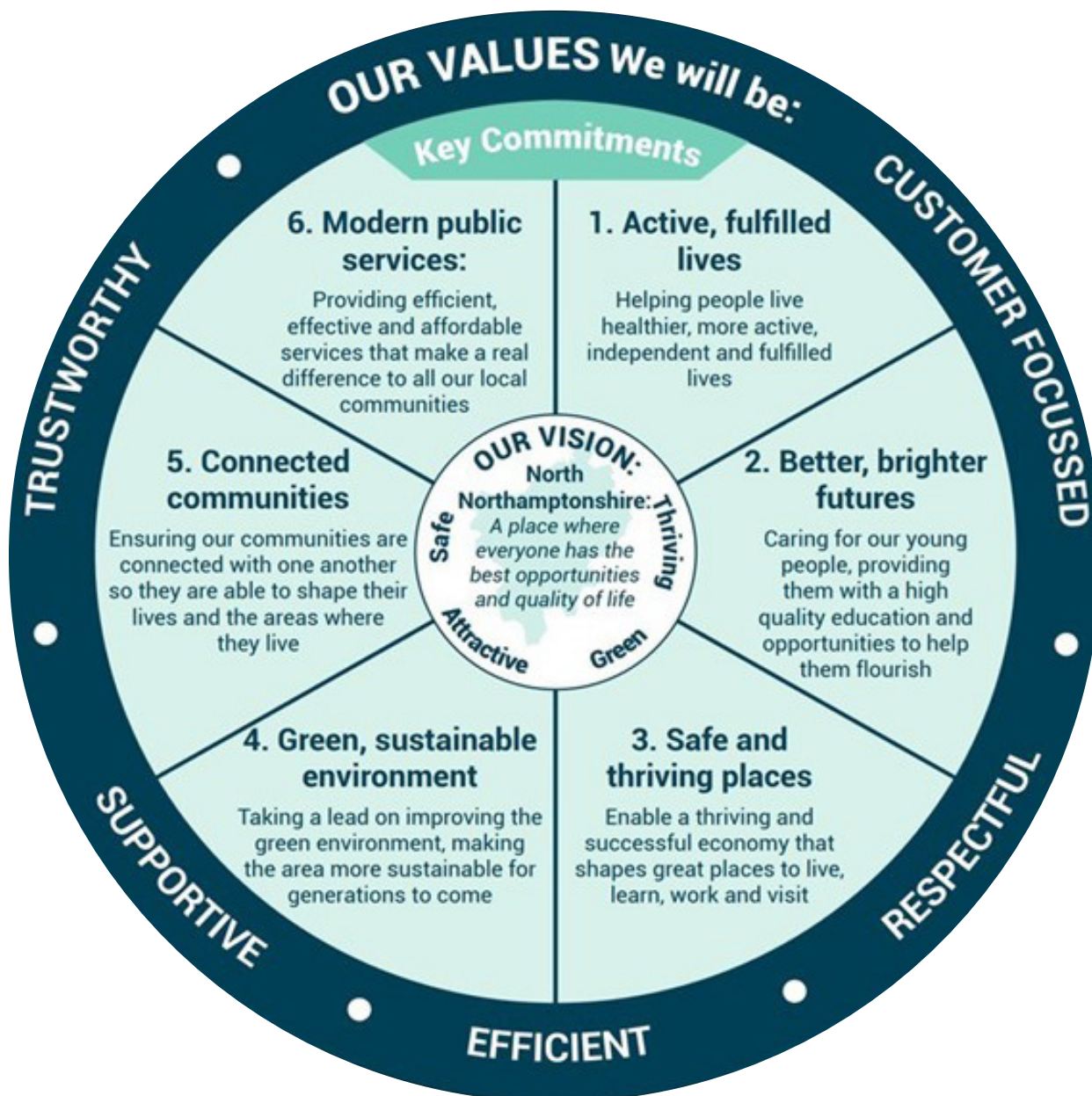
Through the corporate planning process, six key commitments were developed, guiding the Council in delivering the vision to make North Northamptonshire a

place 
 where **EVERYONE** has the
BEST OPPORTUNITIES
 and **QUALITY OF LIFE**

These key commitments help ensure that the priorities set out both now and in future, maintain the necessary breadth of focus in those areas that matter most.



**North
Northamptonshire
Council**



ACTIVE, FULFILLED LIVES

We will help people live healthier, more active, independent and fulfilled lives.

- Greater access to better quality adult social care
- Value and support our carers and volunteers
- Improve the accessibility and use of leisure, culture, art and sport
- Provide enhanced support to improve mental health and wellbeing
- Tackle the causes of complex problems such as poverty and homelessness

BETTER, BRIGHTER FUTURES

We will care for our young people, providing them with a high-quality education and opportunities to help them flourish.

- Ensure every child has equal access to a high standard of education
- Support partners and the Children's Trust to provide higher standards of support
- Promote better training, further education and employment opportunities for young people

SAFE AND THRIVING PLACES

We will enable a thriving and successful economy that shapes great places to live, learn, work and visit.

- Strengthen the cultural identity of towns, villages and rural communities
- Help town centres and villages respond to changing trends
- Attract tourism, visitors and inward investment
- Working with local businesses and partners to support the creation of high-quality, better-skilled jobs
- Improve the standard of new and existing homes and ensure housing supply meets demand
- Tackle the causes of difficult issues leading to nuisance, crime and anti-social behaviour
- Maintain our highways infrastructure to keep people moving safely around North Northamptonshire
- Enable people to travel across North Northamptonshire and beyond

GREEN, SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

We will take a lead on improving the green environment, making the area more sustainable for generations to come.

- Demonstrate clear leadership on tackling environmental sustainability
- Work with communities and businesses to tackle climate change and improve air quality
- Promote sustainable, active travel
- Embed low carbon technology, sustained and improved green infrastructure, and sustainable forms of transport fit for the future
- Educate, encourage re-use, harmonise our approaches and enforce to keep our environment free from litter
- Protect the countryside and open spaces, and enhance the natural environment and ecology

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

We will ensure our communities are connected with one-another, so they are able to shape their lives and the areas where they live.

- Inform and listen to our communities, giving them a greater say in their future
- Respect and engage our local diverse communities and town and parish councils
- Empower a thriving voluntary and community sector

MODERN PUBLIC SERVICES

We will provide efficient, effective and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities.

- Provide good quality and efficient services valued by our customers
- Enhance the services provided at our Community Hubs
- Invest in and value our staff to become an employer of choice
- Use our assets, skills, knowledge and technology most effectively
- Ensure very robust financial and performance management

The Council's Corporate Plan serves the residents of North Northamptonshire well. However, to best respond to the challenges that lie ahead, we know a more radical approach is required.

In the Summer of 2023 the Council, working with a group of cross-sector stakeholders, launched a draft long-term vision for North Northamptonshire leading up to the year 2050. This vision is known as the BIG50 future vision and cuts across sectors and organisational boundaries.

The aim of this vision is to further develop a vision for North Northamptonshire as a Place and to capitalise our unique role as a leader of Place; an influential voice and a convener of system leaders. Working with partner agencies and key stakeholders, a new vision for the area was set out, centered on creating a place where people in North Northamptonshire can live their best life. This vision is based on around three key priorities:

A PROUD PLACE:

A place with clear goals and a plan of how to get there, where people feel inspired and safe.

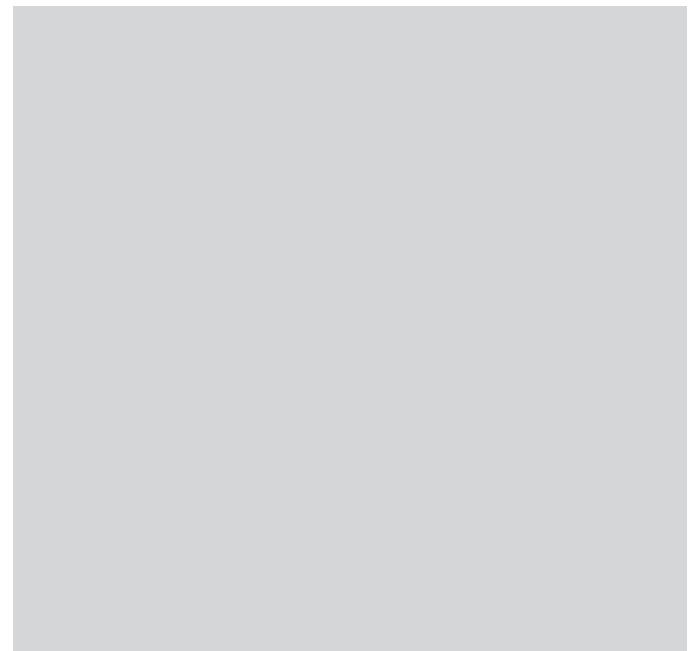
A PROSPEROUS PLACE:

A place full of thriving businesses and a skilled population who can achieve their ambitions.

A PROACTIVE PLACE:

A place which understands the issues its people face and how to address them early, so everyone can live the best life.

Upon appointing a new Chief Executive at the start of 2024, the Council entered the next phase of its improvement and development journey. Our 'One Council Programme' has been launched that is developing new ways of working, both in terms of the provision of services and to further develop our role as an enabler and place-shaper.



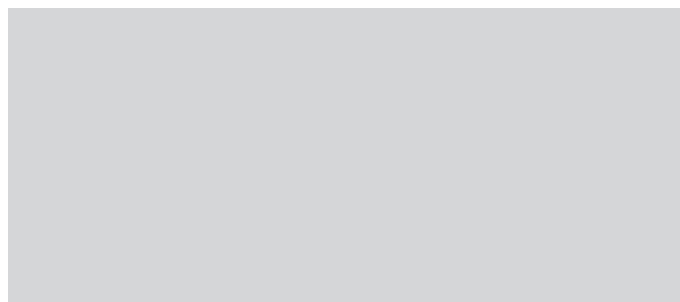
The Council has commissioned external support to help develop an outline delivery plan to transform public services in North Northamptonshire by focusing on our 'Strategic Ambitions'. This, along with the engagement with partners in developing the 'Big 50 Vision' for North Northamptonshire will help set the focus and approach for the future. This work is underway now and we expect it to conclude later in 2024.





During 2023 the Council co-produced a new Communities Strategy in partnership with the large network of over 360 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) organisations across North Northamptonshire. This was overseen by the North Northants VCSE Oversight Group who comprise of Council and VCSE Infrastructure contract holder representatives along with members of the county-wide VCSE Assembly.

The Communities Strategy emphasises and strengthens the role the VCSE, residents and communities have in delivering the BIG50 Vision, the North Northamptonshire Council's Corporate Plan and the Northamptonshire Integrated Care System's Live Your Best Life Strategy.



The VCSE has a role to work alongside the Council in delivering almost all of its strategic objectives as they relate to outcomes for our people and places. However, it is important to ensure that where the Council is grant-funding VCSE delivery, the investment is demonstrably contributing to strategic priorities. The Communities Strategy develops a co-ordinated vision and framework for effective partnership working on equal terms, and, wherever possible, co-production with the VCSE organisations and partner organisations.

It sets out the Council's approach to the considerable financial investment it makes into the VCSE, which promotes sustainability, through access to a range of funding sources, including strategic and small grant giving by NNC; and future infrastructure support into the sector. Finally it seeks to strengthen the ability of the VCSE sector to deliver services and connect communities through engaging residents, leading community action, supporting volunteering, supporting people in the most vulnerable situations, and brokering relationships between statutory bodies and communities.

The Council recognises that to reduce demand on services, it must make substantial cultural changes, placing residents, communities and the VCSE sector at the heart of improving community resilience. Investing in prevention and early intervention is critical, for example through social prescribing, an approach that links patients in primary care and residents with non-clinical sources of support within the community.

In North Northamptonshire this includes Primary Care link workers based in GP Practices, Activity on Referral Schemes through our Leisure Services and SPRING Social Prescribing, a Health and Public Health funded outcomes-focussed model delivered by a collaboration of organisations to provide interventions for residents with one or more long term health condition.

In addition in mid-2023 NNC was instrumental in supporting the VCSE to develop a new VCSE-led whole-system, early intervention service, Support North Northants (SNN), as a test and learn programme. SNN is a system-wide collaborative service model with the VCSE, statutory and other agencies to provide earlier intervention and prevention of escalation of issues for adults over 18 and their families.

During the first year of operation a small SNN team has been recruited, hosted across three VCSE organisations, and additional investment has been made into other VCSE organisations to provide key support services which have been identified as gaps early on, such as benefits checks for all SNN service-users and home repairs and safety where needed. It has taken the majority of its cases from the Adult Social Care front door, having a positive impact on demand. SNN is a practical emerging example of the collaboration between the Council with the VCSE by the VCSE across the sectors, as part of the ICS Place programme, but also as an innovative and transformative example of how the Council is leading and enabling place shaping.