

**To: Leader and Members of the Executive Board**

**(Councillors D Wright, Barnett, Bell, Clews, Gosling, H Phillips, Reilly, Ridley, Ririe, Simpson, Symonds and Whapples)**

**For the information of other Members of the Council**

**For general enquiries please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01827 719221 or via e-mail – [democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk)**

**For enquiries about specific reports please contact the officer named in the reports.**

**The agenda and reports are available in large print and electronic accessible formats if requested.**

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD AGENDA**

**17 MARCH 2025**

The Executive Board will meet in The Chamber, The Council House, South Street, Atherstone on Monday, 17 March 2025 at 6.30pm.

The day after the meeting a recording will be available to be viewed on the Council's YouTube channel at [NorthWarks - YouTube](#).

### **AGENDA**

- 1 Evacuation Procedure.**
- 2 Apologies for Absence / Members away on official Council business.**
- 3 Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests.**

#### 4 **Public Participation**

Up to twenty minutes will be set aside for members of the public to put questions to elected Members.

Members of the public wishing to address the Board must register their intention to do so by 9:30am two working days prior to the meeting. Participants are restricted to five minutes each.

If you wish to put a question to the meeting, please register by email to [democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk) or telephone 01827 719221 / 719237 / 719226.

Once registered to speak, the person asking the question has the option to either:

- a) attend the meeting in person at the Council Chamber;
- b) attend remotely via Teams; or
- c) request that the Chair reads out their written question.

If attending in person, precautions will be in place in the Council Chamber to protect those who are present however this will limit the number of people who can be accommodated so it may be more convenient to attend remotely.

If attending remotely an invitation will be sent to join the Teams video conferencing for this meeting. Those registered to speak should dial the telephone number and ID number (provided on their invitation) when joining the meeting to ask their question. However, whilst waiting they will be able to hear what is being said at the meeting.

- 5 **Minutes of the Executive Board held on 10 February 2025** – copies herewith, to be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION (WHITE PAPERS)**

- 6 **Local Development Scheme (LDS) February 2025**

#### **Summary**

This report brings to Members a revised up to date Local Development Scheme.

The Contact Officer for this report is Dorothy Barratt (719250).

7 **Contract Standing Orders** – Report of the Head of Corporate Services

**Summary**

This report seeks approval for the revised Contract Standing Orders (CSOs).

The Contact Officer for this report is Trudi Barnsley (719388).

8 **Pay Policy Statement** – Report of the Interim Corporate Director (Resources) and Section 151 Officer

**Summary**

There is a requirement under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 for Councils to have and to publish a Pay Policy Statement, agreed by full Council, which will be subject to review at least annually. This report details the purpose for and the areas to be covered in the Pay Policy Statement.

The Contact Officer for this report is Alison Turner (719374).

9 **Corporate Plan Performance Update** - Report of the Chief Executive

**Summary**

This report asks the Board to note the Corporate Plan Performance Update and identify any areas where further information is required.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438)

10 **Corporate Plan 2023-27: Annual refresh 2025** - Report of the Chief Executive

**Summary**

The purpose of this report is to Board recommend the 2025 annual refresh of the Council's 2023-27 Corporate Plan.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438).

11 **English Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation** - Report of the Chief Executive

**Summary**

Members are asked to recommend for Council's approval the Interim Plan regarding unitary local government.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438)

12     **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To consider, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, whether it is in the public interest that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

13     **Performance Management** - Report of the Head of Corporate Services

The Contact Officer for this report is Trudi Barnsley (719388).

14     **Housing Development** – Report of the Management Team and the Director of Housing

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438).

15     **Amendment to Agreement** – Report of the Interim Corporate Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer

The Contact Officer for this report is Alison Turner (719374).

16     **Exempt Extract of the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 10 February 2025** – copy herewith to be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman,

STEVE MAXEY  
Chief Executive



## **NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**10 February 2025**

Present: Councillor D Wright in the Chair

Councillors Barnett, Bell, Clews, H Phillips, O Phillips, Reilly, Ridley, Ririe, Simpson, Symonds, and Whapples

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gosling (Substitute O Phillips)

#### **52 Declarations of Personal or Prejudicial Interest**

None were declared at the meeting.

#### **53 Minutes of the Executive Board held on 25 November 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 25 November 2024, copies having been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **54 Annual Governance Statement 2023-24**

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) highlighted the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 and set out the arrangements the Council had put in place for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk. These ensure that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and accounted for and is used economically, efficiently and effectively. It also relates to 2023/24 which was prepared by the Section 151 officer but was not presented for approval by members which is a requirement.

#### **Resolved:**

**That the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 be approved.**

**Note: Due to the information in Minute Items 55 and 56, the running order was altered.**

**55 Draft Financial Statements 2023/24**

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) highlighted the position on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, compared with the estimated position previously reported.

The draft accounts for 2023/24 had not been presented to members previously due to the delays with the previous year's accounts and decision on backlog audits. As reported to members on this board in September 2024, we were waiting for clarification from our external auditors Ernst & Young and Azets as to what years would be audited. This has been clarified and the external auditors have disclaimed Accounts for 2021/22 and 2022/23 to meet the backstop deadline 13 December 2024, and Azets will be recommending disclaiming the 2023/24 accounts to meet the backstop deadline 28 February 2025.

**Resolved:**

**That the draft financial statements for 2023/24 be approved.**

**56 External Auditors Completion Report for Those Charged with Governance 2023/24**

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) presented to Members the Financial Statements for 2023/24. The report explained the approach and outcome for the 2023/24 audit. The Government has imposed the backstop date 28 February 2025 for 2023/24 accounts to be audited and an opinion on the financial statements issued.

The opinion of Azets the Council's new external auditors is as a result of the system wide implementation of backstop dates they expect to disclaim the opinion on the 2023/24 financial statements, which is the same as Ernest Young did on the 2021/22 and 2022/23 accounts.

**Presenters of the Report: Chris Brown and Azola Dudula Azets.**

**Resolved:**

- a That the Completion Report presented as Appendix A be approved; and**
- b That Members give the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of The Executive Board delegated authority to sign off the Letter of Representation for 2023/24.**

**57 Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy**

The Chief Executive reminded Members that a report was taken to the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee on 19 November 2024 seeking the adoption of the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Strategy as the basis for utilising natural capital funding across the sub-region. The strategy aligns closely with the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and has the potential to support the delivery of the BAP. The Sub-Committee supported the recommendation that the Natural Capital Investment Strategy be adopted.

**Recommended:**

- a That the Natural Capital Investment Strategy be adopted;**
- b That the progress towards developing a Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan be noted;**
- c That the approach to the governance of the Strategy and the establishment of a Capital Investment Board be agreed; and**
- d That Councillor Simpson be appointed to the Board.**

**58 Local Government Standards System**

The Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer requested that the Board note the draft revised Local Government Standards System which is currently being consulted on and confirm any comments to be submitted to Government.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be noted.**

**59 Data Protection Policies and Procedures**

The Head of Legal Services sought to approve the following policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Data Breach Policy and Procedure
- Access to Deceased Persons Records Policy
- Data Privacy Impact Assessment("DPIA") Procedure
- Legitimate Interest Assessment("LIA") Procedure

**Resolved:**

**That the policies presented by the Head of Legal Services be approved.**

**60 The Proposed 3 Year Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2027/28**

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) proposed the Three-Year Capital Programme and outlined the availability of capital resources to fund the programme. The report recommended the options available.

**Resolved:**

- a That the revised Capital Programme for 2024/25 as set out in the report be adopted:**

**Recommendation to Council**

- b That the Three-Year Capital Programme for the period 2025/26 to 2027/28 as set out in Appendix B, subject to the transfer of funding from the Business Rate Fluctuation Reserve totalling £1,831,591 to fund vehicle purchases be approved; and**
- c That the prudential indicators set out in Section 9, subject to any changes that may be required as a result of decisions taken during this meeting be approved.**

**61 General Fund Revenue Budget – 2024/25 Forecast and 2025/26 Estimates**

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) covered the outturn forecast for 2024/25 and an estimate of expenditure for 2025/26, together with future estimates for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.

**Recommended:**

- a That the revised budget for 2024/25 be accepted;**
- b That the 2025/26 estimates, as presented in the report and included in the overall budget report considered in a later agenda item be approved.**

**62 General Fund Revenue Estimates Summary – 2024/25 Outturn and Tax Set 2025/26**

The Interim Corporate Director – Resources (Section 151 Officer) presented the General Fund revenue estimates for outturn 2024/25 and original 2025/26 as presented to the individual boards and the overall Tax Set Summary for 2025/26 along with the recommendations to support the figures presented.

**Recommendation to the Council:**

- a The outturn budget for 2024/25, as set out in Appendices A,B & C;**
- b The revenues estimates for 2025/26, in Appendices A,B & C;**
- c That the Council Tax base for 2025/26 be noted;**
- d That a Council Tax increase of 2.99% £7.05 per annum (14p per week) on a Band D property for 2025/26 be approved;**
- e That the transfer of £1,831,591 from the Business Rates Fluctuation Reserve fund the vehicles replacement programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28 be approved;**
- f That the transfer of £5m in 2025/26 to a specific capital reserve towards funding future capital commitments reducing borrowing be approved;**
- g That the minimum general fund balances of £1.2m as risk assessed by the Section 151 Officer be approved; and**
- h That the preparation of the Council Tax resolution for consideration by the Council using the recommendations agreed by this board be approved.**

**63 Exclusion of the Public and Press**

**Resolved:**

**That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.**

64 **Staffing Matter**

The Chief Executive sought consideration of a proposal relating to a staffing matter.

**Resolved:**

**That the recommendations set out in the report by the Chief Executive be approved.**

65 **Exempt extract of the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 25 November 2024.**

That the exempt extract of the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 25 November 2024, copies having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

D Wright  
CHAIRMAN

## **Agenda Item No 6**

### **Executive Board**

**17 March 2025**

#### **Report of the Chief Executive**

#### **Local Development Scheme (LDS) February 2025**

### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 This report brings to Members a revised up to date Local Development Scheme.

#### **Recommendation to Executive Board**

**That the Local Development Scheme is approved.**

### **2 Consultation**

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with the LDF Sub-committee on the latest Local Development Scheme (LDS) at their meeting on 26 February 2025. The Sub-committee agreed its contents and seek Executive Board's approval.

### **3 Local Development Scheme**

- 3.1 This report brings to Members an update of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) to reflect the work that is to be carried out and to ensure that the legal process of document production is adhered to.

- ... 3.2 The LDF Sub-Committee report and revised document is attached as Appendix 1. It can be altered / updated at any time.

- 3.3 The revised LDS includes a timeline for the review of the adopted Local Plan. It continues the work on the Employment Development Plan Document (DPD) and includes a list of the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) which it is intended to produce.

### **4 Report Implications**

#### **4.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications**

- 4.1.1 The costs of the programme of work are funded through the Local Development Framework budget.

## **4.2 Legal and Human Rights Implications**

- 4.2.1 It is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that a Local Development Scheme is prepared, and maintained, outlining the work programme to produce the various Local Development Documents required under that Act and other legislation. The Scheme must also specify the geographical area to which each such document relates, set out those documents which will be prepared jointly with others and give a timetable for preparation of the documents concerned.

## **4.3 Environment and Sustainability Implications**

- 4.3.1 Sustainability appraisals are required to accompany all Local Development Documents identified by this Local Development Scheme. Consultants are engaged to work alongside the Forward Planning Team. The Local Development Scheme and the associated plans and documents take into account evidence of housing needs, landscaping appraisal, habitat biodiversity audit and other assessments to inform future development frameworks. All the various assessments help inform a sustainability appraisal.

## **4.4 Equality Implications**

- 4.4.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the Local Plan which sets out the overarching spatial vision for the Borough over the next 15 years.

## **4.5 Links to Council's Priorities**

- 4.5.1 The delivery of the Local Development Framework is linked to all of the Council priorities.

The Contact Officer for this report is Dorothy Barratt (719250).



## Agenda Item No 8

### Local Development Framework Sub-Committee

26 February 2025

#### Report of the Chief Executive

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)  
February 2025**

## 1 Summary

- 1.1 This report brings to Members a revised up to date Local Development Scheme (LDS).

<p><b>Recommendation to Executive Board</b></p>
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<p><b>That the Local Development Scheme is approved.</b></p>
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## 2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with the relevant Members and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

## 3 Local Development Scheme

- 3.1 This report brings to Members an update of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) to reflect the work that is to be carried out and to ensure that the legal process for the production of the documents is adhered to. It can be altered/updated at any time. The revised document is attached as Appendix A.

...

- 3.2 The LDS seeks to produce an Employment Development Plan Document and start the review of the Local Plan as well as, prepare a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

## 4 Report Implications

### 4.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

- 4.1.1 The costs of the programme of work are funded through the Local Development Framework budget.

### 4.2 Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 4.2.1 It is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that a Local Development Scheme is prepared and maintained, outlining the work

programme to produce the various Local Development Documents required under that Act and other legislation. The Scheme must also specify the geographical area to which each such document relates, set out those documents which will be prepared jointly with others and give a timetable for preparation of the documents concerned. The revisions to the scheme which are Appended to the report ensure that the Council continues to discharge this responsibility.

#### **4.3 Environment, Climate Change & Health Implications**

- 4.3.1 Sustainability appraisals are required to accompany all Local Development Plan Documents identified by this Local Development Scheme. The planning policy work takes into account evidence of housing needs, landscaping appraisal, habitat biodiversity audit, climate change and other assessments to inform future development frameworks. All the various assessments help inform a sustainability appraisal.

#### **4.4 Equality Implications**

- 4.4.1 An equality impact assessment was carried out on the Local Plan which sets out the overarching spatial vision for the Borough over the next 15 years. This will be updated as part of the review process.

#### **4.5 Links to Council's Priorities**

- 4.5.1 The delivery of the Local Development Framework is linked to all the Council priorities.

The Contact Officer for this report is Dorothy Barratt (719250).

### **Background Papers**

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act,  
2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date

# ***Draft Local Development Scheme for North Warwickshire***

**February 2025**



**North Warwickshire  
Borough Council**

- 1 North Warwickshire Borough Council is required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS). An LDS sets out a timetable for the production of new or revised Development Plan Documents (such as a Local Plan) over a three-year period to 2028. It is regularly reviewed to keep it up to date. This LDS version supersedes previous versions.
- 2 The Development Plan Documents for North Warwickshire are:
  - North Warwickshire Local Plan 2021
  - Warwickshire Waste Core Strategy (adopted July 2013)
  - Warwickshire Minerals Local Plan
  - Arley Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted December 2016)
  - Austrey Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted June 2017)
  - Coleshill Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted June 2017)
  - Dordon Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted December 2023)
  - Fillongley Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted August 2019)
  - Hartshill Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted March 2017)
  - Mancetter Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted September 2017)
  - Nether Whitacre Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted January 2024)
  - Water Orton Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted June 2022)

Polesworth Neighbourhood Plan has reached the Referendum stage (to take place in March 2025) so will carry weight in a planning decision if there is a positive outcome in the referendum.
- 3 The Statement of Community Involvement was originally adopted in April 2007 and has been updated on several occasions. The document was last reviewed in 2024 and adopted in July 2024.
- 4 A further 3 Neighbourhood Plan Areas have been formally designated. These are:
  - Atherstone covering Atherstone Parish and a small part of Grendon Parish
  - Corley Parish
  - Curdworth Parish
- 5 This LDS confirms the latest work programme of the Borough Council. A timeline for production is attached as Appendix A.
- 6 The work programme will be reassessed as further changes to the NPPF, legislation and guidance are published by Government.
- 7 The Borough Council adopted the Local Plan in September 2021. The evidence underpinning the Local Plan will be reviewed to assess against the new NPPF and a review of the relevant policies will be undertaken.
- 8 The needs of the Gypsy & Traveller community were incorporated into the 2021 Local Plan and will be included in the review of the Local Plan.
- 9 The Borough Council has started to prepare an Employment Development Plan Document. A consultation took place in 2024 with a draft document expected Spring 2025.
- 10 The Minerals and Waste Documents are the responsibility of Warwickshire County Council. The County Council adopted the Minerals Plan in July 2022. Further information can be found on the County Council's website: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk).

- 11 A number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) will also be prepared to assist with the interpretation of policy. These are also outlined in Appendix A.

**Appendix A**

**Development Plan Document**

<b>Document Title</b>	<b>Subject matter and geographical area</b>	<b>Chain of Conformity</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Publication of Submission Draft DPD &amp; Public Consultation</b>	<b>Submission and Examination of DPD</b>	<b>Adoption and Publication of DPD</b>	<b>Policies it will replace</b>
<b>Employment DPD</b>	It will look to allocate sites if necessary	Local Plan and NPPF	Early 2024	Autumn 2025	Late 2025 / early 2026	2026	Some of the employment policies from the adopted Local Plan.
<b>Local Plan Review</b>	An assessment will be made as to the policies which are out of date or require some change	NPPF	Spring 2025 for Reg 18 – Issues and Options	Late 2025	Spring 2026	Late 2026	The review of policies will make this clear.

**Supplementary Planning Documents**

<b>Document Title</b>	<b>Geographical area</b>	<b>Chain of Conformity</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Adoption of SPD</b>
<b>Affordable Housing SPD</b>	Whole Borough	Local Plan	Spring 2025	Winter 2025
<b>Developer Contributions</b>	Whole Borough	Local Plan	Spring 2025	Winter 2025
<b>Design SPD</b>	Whole Borough	Local Plan	Summer 2026	Winter 2026
<b>Site H4 SPD (</b>	Land East of Polesworth and Dordon	Local Plan	Winter 2025	Summer 2026
<b>Site H2 SPD (</b>	Land to north-west of Atherstone	Local Plan	Winter 2025	Summer 2026
<b>Shop Fronts SPD</b>	Whole Borough	Local Plan	Winter 2025	Summer 2026
<b>Lighting</b>	Whole Borough	Local Plan	Winter 2025	Summer 2026

## Further Information Sources

Below are links to websites which will assist should you require further information:

- The Council's website:  
[Local Plan \(Adopted 2021\) | Local Plan for North Warwickshire | North Warwickshire Borough Council](#)
- National Planning Policy Framework  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2)
- Planning Practice Guidance  
[www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance)
- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004:  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents)
- The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012:  
[/www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made)
- Neighbourhood Plan Act  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/contents/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/contents/enacted)
- Planning Advisory Service:  
[www.local.gov.uk/pas](http://www.local.gov.uk/pas)
- Planning Portal:  
[www.planningportal.co.uk/](http://www.planningportal.co.uk/)

## Further assistance:

If you require any further information, please contact the Forward Planning Team:

Email: [planningpolicy@northwarks.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@northwarks.gov.uk);  
Write to: Forward Planning Team, The Council House,  
South Street, Atherstone, CV9 1DE  
Ring: 01827 719499 / 719451 / 719250

**Agenda Item No 7**

**Executive Board**

**17 March 2025**

**Report of the  
Head of Corporate Services**

**Contract Standing Orders**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the revised Contract Standing Orders (CSOs).

**Recommendation to the Council**

**That the updated Contract Standing Orders provided as Appendix 1 are approved.**

**2 Consultation**

- 2.1 Management Team and the Head of Legal Services have been consulted on the changes and have agreed the attached draft (Appendix 1).

**3 Background**

- 3.1 Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) are a set of rules which primarily guide how the Council buys goods, services and works. Councils are legally obliged to have these rules.
- 3.2 The current CSOs were last updated and approved in 2018. Since then, minor updates have been made. CSOs form part of the Council's Constitution. Some amendments have been made in the intervening years to update terminology and reflect minor changes to legislation.
- 3.3 Practical experience of using our current CSOs has highlighted a few areas that need to be more clear, robust and straightforward for officers to follow.
- 3.4 We have carried out a review of the CSOs due to the new Procurement Act (PA23) which came into effect on Monday 24 February 2025 and have carried out briefing for senior managers and principal officers on the key changes or the new Procurement Act.



- 3.5 In general the new Procurement Act 23 which came into force on Monday 24 February 2025 apply when the value of the goods, services or works is above a monetary Threshold<sup>1</sup> set by the EU. However, the Act is accepted as good practice for all procurements and as such used by the Council and other Public Sector organisations to guide purchasing.

#### **4 Contract Standing Orders**

- 4.1 The main changes are summarised below: -
- Modernised the CSOs,
  - Revised the procurement routes and values,
  - Removed the option for obtaining any verbal quotes,
  - Documented the procurement process for the new levels,
  - Documented the new exemption process,
  - Changes made to accommodate for the new Procurement Act (PA23).

#### **5 Report Implications**

##### **5.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications**

- 5.1.1 The draft CSOs have been developed to work with, and support, the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 5.1.2 One of the main aims of CSOs is to ensure the Council purchases goods, services and works which are best value for money.

##### **5.2 Safer Communities Implications**

- 5.2.1 The Council will comply with Contract Standing Orders for any procurement, which they take the lead responsibility for.

##### **5.3 Legal and Human Rights Implications**

- 5.3.1 These Standing Orders have been written to help ensure legal compliance in all procurement and contracting activity.
- 5.3.2 Other legislation and related Council Policy has an impact on how procurement is carried out, on how suppliers are expected to work with us and the nature of the contracts that are ultimately signed. Senior Officers and others involved with procurements are expected to ensure relevant legislation is accommodated and Council Policy applied as necessary.
- 5.3.3 There are no human rights implications.

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<sup>1</sup> Thresholds are currently £213,447 for services and supplies and £5,374,609 for works.

## **5.4 Environment and Sustainability Implications**

- 5.4.1 The Council is aware of its duties under the Public Sector (Social Value) Act 2012 to consider how what is to be procured might improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Borough. Officers are encouraged to consider how their actions could improve the well-being of communities. Any procurement generated through the work of the North Warwickshire Community Partnership, which the Council takes the lead responsibility for, will comply with Contract Standing Orders. Other partners will comply with their procurement regulations as necessary.

## **5.5 Health, Wellbeing and Leisure Implications**

- 5.5.1 The Public Sector (Social Value) Act will help contribute towards improving the well-being of communities. Any initiatives supported by the Council, under this theme, which require procurement of goods and services will comply with Contract Standing Orders.

## **5.6 Human Resources Implications**

- 5.6.1 Significant numbers of Officers and some Members will be involved in procurements at various times. It is important that they understand their roles and levels of responsibility. Briefing notes on the revised CSOs will be developed for staff. The Procurement Team provides advice, guidance and support for Officers who are required to procure on behalf of the Council.

## **5.7 Risk Management Implications**

- 5.7.1 The Council is required to have rules for procuring goods and services. One of the main aims of the Council's CSOs is to help mitigate the risks that could arise through poor or illegal procurement practices.
- 5.7.2 Published advice on the new Procurement Act Regulations, other Council's Contract Rules and templates suggested by legal practices have been reviewed to ensure the draft CSOs are comprehensive, accurate and up to date.

## **5.8 Equalities Implications**

- 5.8.1 Contract Standing Orders require the Council to apply relevant legislation to its procurement activities this includes the commitment to implementing the duties laid down under the Equality Act 2010 as they relate to procurement. We will use the best practice defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on the specific duties relating to procurement.
- 5.8.2 The general equality duty applies to procurement and commissioning activity, regardless of the value, by public bodies such as the Council. However, the value of the contract may impact upon the relevance and proportionality of equality considerations.

## 6 Links to Council's Priorities

- 6.1 Good procurement and commissioning practices, as defined in Contract Standing Orders, support the Council's priority of achieving a balanced budget. However, the outcomes of the various procurement exercises could support and contribute to any one of the Council's priorities.

The Contact Officers for this report are Trudi Barnsley (01827 719388) and Tracey Franik (01827 719474).

### Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date

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NORTH WARWICKSHIRE  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



# CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

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	Officer	Date
<b>Document Author</b>	Head of Corporate Services & Procurement Manager	February 2025
<b>Document owner</b>	Head of Corporate Services	
<b>Legal advice</b>	Head of Legal Services	February 2025
<b>Consultation</b>	Management Team, Executive Board and Full Council	4 March 2025
<b>Approved by</b>	[Insert Board if relevant]	
<b>Review date</b>	2028	
<b>Version</b>		

## PURPOSE OF CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

Procurement decisions and processes are important because the money involved is public money. These Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) are made in accordance with the requirements of Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972. The purpose of these CSOs is to provide a structure within which purchasing decisions are made and ensure that the Council:

- furthers its corporate objectives,
- uses its resources efficiently,
- purchases quality goods, services and works that are best value for money,
- grants service concessions,
- safeguards its reputation from any implication of dishonesty or corruption, and
- protects individuals from undue criticism or allegations of wrongdoing.

Procurement by the Council, from planning to delivery, shall incorporate (where applicable):

- sustainability,
- efficiency,
- equality,
- social value,
- whole life costings, and
- cost savings.

Senior officers are accountable for purchasing and compliance in the sections or divisions for which they are responsible.

Council employees and all contracts entered into by the Council must comply with these CSOs, the Councils Financial Regulations (FRs) and the Council's Procurement and Commissioning Strategy.

Any dispute or difference in the interpretation of CSOs and the FRs or any other relevant policy or document shall be resolved by the Head of Legal Services or the Chief Executive.

Advice on the application of these CSOs is available from the Procurement Manager and the Head of Corporate Services.

## SCOPE

These CSOs apply to:

- the purchase of works,
- the purchase of goods,
- the purchase of services ,
- contracts entered into by, or on behalf of, the Council, including purchase orders,
- the granting of exemptions,
- concession contracts, (these are subject to the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016),
- the disposal of land, property, or other assets (including surplus goods), and
- involvement by the Council in partnerships and other joint working where the money, including external funding, passes through the Council's financial accounts.

CSOs **do not** apply to service contracts under Regulation 10 of the Public Contract Regulations, e.g.:

- the purchase or hire of property,
- arbitration and conciliation services,
- permanent, interim or agency staffing,
- engagement of legal Counsel or expert witnesses, or instructions to Solicitors to act on the Council's behalf provided this is done with prior approval of the Head of Legal Services,

- loans - lending or borrowing of money,
- grants from the Council (except where they are to buy services),
- sponsorships,
- goods, services or works purchased through an existing, valid contract, and
- services provided by another division within the Council.

## PRINCIPLES APPLYING TO ALL CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENTS

All purchases shall be electronic, and a purchase order must be raised on the Council's finance system prior to goods or services being ordered or works commenced. The Council operates a 'No PO No Payment' system for invoices.

The Council must comply with relevant legislation and directives and with Codes of Conduct, Protocols and FRs as set out in the Council's Constitution when dealing with procurement and contractual matters.

To minimise the risk of fraud, bribery, and corruption within procurement, tendering and contracts particular attention should be made to:

- the Council's Counter Fraud Policy,
- the Modern Slavery Act 2015,
- the Council's Anti-Bribery Policy,
- the Council's Information Security Policy,
- the Local Government Transparency Code,
- GDPR,
- Freedom of Information, and
- Subject Access Requests.

The Council must take appropriate measures to avoid, or properly declare, possible conflicts of interest (economic, financial, or personal interests) which might be seen to compromise their impartiality or independence in the context of a competitive tendering procedure.

Every contract entered into on behalf of the Council must comply with these CSOs. However, national legislation, regulations and directives take precedence.

All purchases made, or procurements carried out, must be approved by officers with the appropriate delegated authority regardless of the value, procurement route or method of payment.

An officer may only procure, raise an order, or enter into a contract where there is approved funding, e.g. provision in the Revenue budget or as part of a scheme in the agreed Capital Programme.

Any contract award that involves the transfer of staff (TUPE) from the Council to a third party needs the involvement of the Human Resources Manager and the approval of the Chief Executive.

Officers are expected to manage contracts to cost, quality, time and budget. In the event of variation to any one of these, officers will follow the relevant guidelines in the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23).

The length of a contract should be appropriate for the goods, services or works being procured. A contract should be for no longer than 4 years unless it is tied to:

- the completion of a specific job or project,
- the supply of a fixed quantity of goods, or
- the nature of the procurement demands a longer timeframe, and an extension is available.

When using a framework agreement or a contract let by another public sector body the procuring officer must ensure they comply with the contract terms and any award conditions or restrictions.

All contracts must be checked and agreed by the Head of Legal Services, the Chief Executive (if practising solicitor) or in their absence a member of the Legal team prior to signing by completing the [Contracts Register](#) form, to enable the Council's contract register to be updated automatically. The Council is obliged by the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and FRs to publish to the Councils website annually.



## PROCUREMENT PLANNING

### NEED & SPECIFICATION

Before starting any procurement, it is essential that the procuring officer:

- is satisfied that the goods, service or works are needed,
- has considered any alternative options for meeting the need, and
- sought advice from the Procurement Manager or Head of Corporate Services if the procurement is at tender levels or if unsure about how to proceed.

The procuring must consider which procurement route is most appropriate at level B and above. The routes are:

1. Competitive process,
2. Framework Agreement, or
3. Exemption.

A specification of what is needed must be produced, regardless of the value of the procurement. This may range from a simple description and an estimated price to detailed specifications for high value, complex procurements. Specifications must not include requirements that are discriminatory, or which may distort competition or contain non-commercial interests.

The Councils [Terms and Conditions](#) will form part of any tender specification and contract documentation, and the procuring officer must inform the supplier of these.



### OVERALL VALUE FOR CONTRACTS

An estimate of the total value of the procurement must be calculated at the outset to ensure the correct procurement route is selected. The whole life cost, including VAT, must be used to calculate the **Overall Estimated Value** which can be established by using one of the following methods:

- the expected annual amount (purchase cost and on-going cost) multiplied by the number of years the contract is expected to operate, (e.g. if the contract is a 2+1+1 the years should be equal to 4),
- the value of past annual expenditure multiplied by the number of years the contract is expected to operate,
- the estimated cost of the goods or service for a one-off purchase, or
- a value established through market testing e.g. indicative costs from suppliers.
- this must also include any potential extensions to the contract.

The Council has a duty, under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, to consider how what is being procured might improve the economic, social, or environmental well-being of the Borough.

Officers must not deliberately split requirements to reduce the value of a contract in order to avoid certain procurement routes or to fall below procurement thresholds.

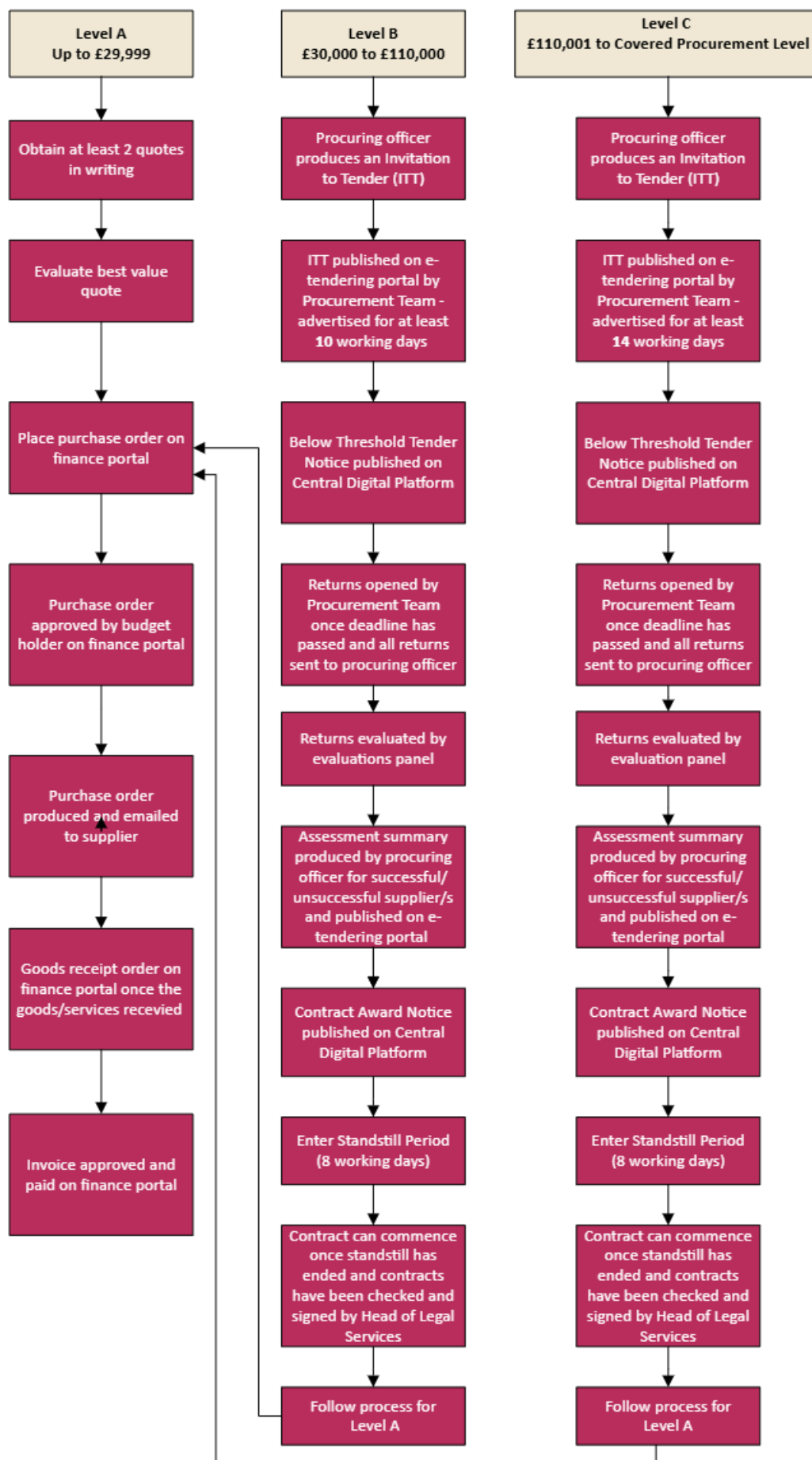


## PROCUREMENT ROUTES AND VALUES

The Corporate Director - Resources, the Chief Executive or the Head of Corporate Services or the Head of Legal Services may revise these figures, however they must be approved by the relevant Board.

Levels and Procurement Route					
Level	Amount	Route	Competitive Tendering Procedure	Award	Notices
Level A	Up to £29,999	Quotations in writing, from at least 2 suppliers and procuring officer must retain an electronic copy for evidence	Not required	Ordered using an official Purchase Order or purchase card.	None required
Level B	£30,000 to £110,000	Tender procedure-responses in writing, responses from at least 3 suppliers	Invitation to Tender on relevant procurement portal for at least 10 working days.	Confirmed by Contract Award Notice & ordered against contract and/or Council Purchase Order (PO)	Below Threshold Tender Notice & Contract Details Notice
Level C	£110,001 to FTS Levels	Tender Procedure-Responses in writing, responses from at least 3 suppliers	Invitation to Tender on relevant procurement portal for at least 14 working days.	Confirmed by Contract Award Notice & ordered against contract and/or Council Purchase Order (PO) and Contract must be sealed	Below Threshold Tender Notice & Contract Details Notice
Covered Procurement	Services and Supplies = £213,447 inc VAT Works = £5,372,609 inc VAT	Covered procurement/ Find a Tender Service	Covered procurement rules	Seek advice from Procurement Manager and Contract must be sealed	Seek advice from Procurement Manager

## COMPETITIVE TENDERING PROCEDURE



## LEVEL A QUOTATIONS

All quotations must be electronic and must be kept as evidence. These may be required by:

- Internal or external Audit,
- the budget holder, or
- the Procurement Team.

### Level B tender value

Where the minimum number of required suppliers has not been achieved, approval must be sought from the Procurement Manager or the Head of Corporate Services so they can determine that no discrimination has taken place to limit participation prior to continuing with the tender.

### Level C tender value

Where the minimum number of required suppliers has not been achieved, approval must be sought from the Procurement Manager or the Head of Corporate Services so they can determine that no discrimination has taken place to limit participation, and further approval must be sought from the Corporate Director – Resources or the Chief Executive prior to continuing with the tender.

### Covered Procurement

Contracts to which covered competitive tendering procedures apply will be awarded in accordance with the rules and approved procedures set out in PA23

### Competitive tendering procedure (for Level B and above)

The following characteristics can help determine which procedures could be used:

OPEN PROCEDURE	COMPETITIVE FLEXIBLE PROCEDURE	DIRECT AWARD
Known requirement	Unknown solution	Prototypes and development
Simple requirement	Complex requirement	Single supplier where only one supplier exists due to technical or IP reasons
Emerging market (SMEs)	Novel/innovative goods and services	Purchase of any additional or repeat goods from existing supplier
Small market	Large market	Pursuant to regulations made by a Minister of the Crown
Established/known market	Would require formal engagement with bidders during the process (i.e. negotiation or dialogue)	Purchase of commodities
	Small specialist market	Urgent requirements

The Procurement Manager or Head of Corporate Services must be consulted well in advance of any planned covered procurements to ensure compliance with regulations, directives, timescales and procedures.

Any Level B or above tender must be advertised and processed on the Council's e-tendering portal. This function is carried out by the Procurement Team, including publishing and administration of the tender. The procuring officer must ensure that an officer is available during this duration to answer any clarification questions.

## EXEMPTIONS TO CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

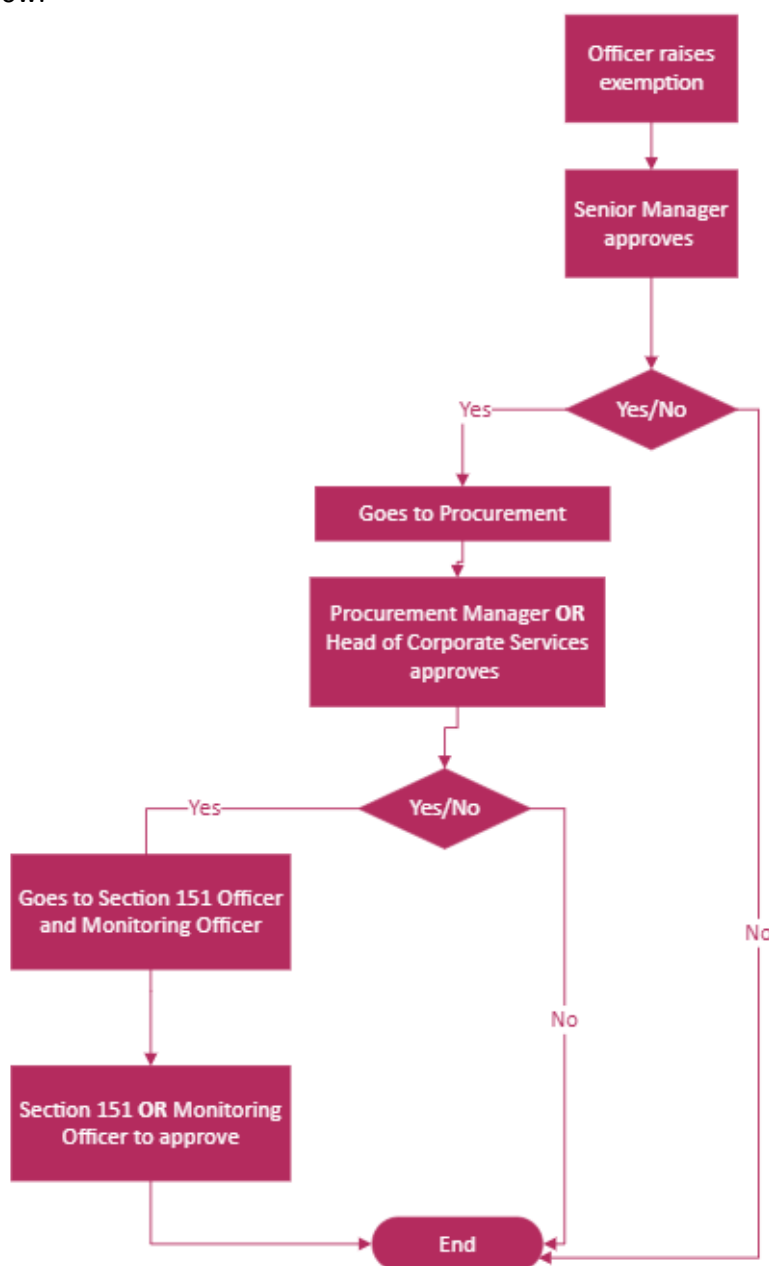
The requirement for the Council to purchase using a [competitive process](#) can be waived in certain circumstances.

### Level A

Exemptions are not required if two or more quotes can be obtained, however if only one quote can be sourced an exemption must be done over the value of £10,001, under £10,001 authorisation must be obtained from the procuring officers line manager.

### Level B and C

Where an officer is intending to seek an exemption they should complete [Contract Standing Orders – Exemption Request Form Updated with Manager Approval](#). All exemptions must be authorised by a senior manager, the Procurement Manager or Head of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer. The exemption process for level B and C is listed below:



### Covered Procurement

Approval must be sought from the Chief Executive (CE) and the relevant Board or CE using emergency powers.

Reasons for an exemption are: -

1. **Framework or collaboration**  
Purchases made using a Framework Agreement made by a Central Purchasing Body or collaborative contracts, e.g. with other Contracting Authorities
2. **Emergency or in exceptional circumstances**  
The purchase of works, goods or services required in an emergency or in exceptional circumstances or so urgently that competition would not be in the Council's best interests or possible.
3. **Disproportionate technical difficulties or financial disbenefit**  
Where the purchase of goods, services or works from a different supplier would result in incompatibility with existing goods, services or assets or would result in disproportionate technical difficulties or financial disbenefit.
4. **Unique supply**  
When there are justifiable technical, specialist or supply market reasons and the works, goods, materials or services can only be obtained from one supplier, and no reasonably satisfactory alternative is available.
5. **Best value for money by purchasing pre-owned items**  
Best value for money can be achieved by the purchase of used or pre-owned vehicles, plant, equipment or materials.
6. **Purchase or sale of properties, equipment or vehicles**  
The purchase or sale of property or articles at an auction sale.
7. **Extension to existing contract**  
Where the work to be done or the goods to be supplied constitute a valid extension to an existing contract and it is in the Council's best interest to negotiate with the existing contractor/supplier.
8. **Unsuccessful competitive tendering procedure**  
Due to an unsuccessful competitive tendering procedure, the Council is permitted to continue with the incumbent supplier, subject to evidence.
9. **Contract or co-operation between public bodies**  
When the contract or co-operation is between public bodies and provided that specific conditions around control, service provision and private sector involvement are met, (for example grants).

## QUOTATIONS AND TENDERING

Before seeking quotations or tenders the procuring officer must:

- satisfy themselves that the Council does not already have a contract in place for supplying the required goods, services or works,
- decide if there is a case for an exemption, and
- decide if the potential works or services could be carried out or supplied by another division of the Council.

All tenders must be published on the Council's e-tendering portal and set out details of the proposed procurement by:

- describing the required goods, services or works to be carried out,
- a timetable for submitting bids, including closing date and contract award date,
- include the criteria that the Council will be using to evaluate responses and award the contract, including scoring weightings,
- request relevant supplier declarations, and
- financial information for credit checks.

The procuring officer must decide on the process, any relevant criteria and weightings that will be ultimately used to select a successful supplier, which must be documented and published.

The aim of the evaluation process is to ensure that a supplier that submitted a tender can understand why the tender was either successful or unsuccessful. It also allows unsuccessful suppliers to see how the

Council has determined the most advantageous tender (MAT) in accordance with the award criteria and assessment methodology.

The Procurement Team can advise on weightings.

## TENDERING PROCEDURES –LEVEL B, C AND COVERED PROCUREMENTS

Prior to any tender the following must be adhered to:

- any early market engagement or discussions with suppliers, or subject matter experts, prior to starting the procurement have ceased,
- authority to tender and budget provision has been obtained and that the appropriate tender procedure has been selected,
- that relevant evaluation and tender documentation has been produced in terms of the specification of requirements, selection and award criteria and evaluation method, and
- the Council will produce an advert, relevant notice(s) and documentation for potential suppliers of the Council's requirements in line with PA23 regulations.

### COMMUNICATIONS

All communications with potential suppliers during a tender stage will be handled by the Procurement Team on the e-tendering portal. Officers must not have any contact with potential suppliers at this stage. This includes any alterations to tenders, abnormal tenders or post tender negotiations.

### RECEIPT, OPENING AND REGISTRATION OF TENDERS

Tenders and quotes received via the e-tendering portal are held securely and will not be opened until the published closing date and time, after which they will be opened by a member of the Procurement Team who will then send electronically to the procuring officer.

All tenders must be evaluated by at least three knowledgeable officers, one of whom should be the procuring officer and one of whom should be a subject matter expert. For a complex tender you may wish to appoint a panel of subject matter experts for specific areas of the tender (e.g. HR, IT or Finance).

### ALTERATIONS TO TENDERS, ABNORMAL TENDERS AND POST TENDER NEGOTIATIONS

No alteration of any tender will be allowed after the date and time specified for the receipt of tenders, except:

- Alterations - where typographical, arithmetical errors or discrepancies are found. The tenderer can be given an agreed period to confirm or correct the error or to withdraw the tender,
- Abnormal tenders - if the procuring officer believes a tender to be abnormal given the requirements, the overall estimated value or in comparison with other tenders, the tenderer may be asked to explain and clarify its tender or parts of it,
- Post tender negotiation - this is permissible when a procurement route which allows some negotiation (i.e. Competitive Flexible Procedure) has been used. Otherwise, discussions with tenderers after the submission of a tender and before award with a view to obtaining adjustments in price, delivery or content must only take place in consultation with Legal Services and the Procurement Team and in exceptional circumstances such as where the lowest tender received exceeds the approved budget,
- Disqualified tenders - no tender responses have been submitted or the budget has been exceeded. The procuring officer must terminate the current tender and then revise tender documentation and republish should they so wish.

## SELECTION AND CONTRACT AWARD

### TENDERER NOTIFICATION AND NOTICES

Once the decision to award a contract is made, each tenderer, including unsuccessful tenderers, must be notified electronically. The procuring officer must produce an Assessment Summary and Contract Award Notice and send to the procurement team so they can publish to the e-tendering portal. They should cover:

Unsuccessful tenderer(s)	Successful tenderer
Issue Assessment Summary (stating why they did not win the tender)	Issue Assessment Summary (stating why they did win the tender)
The title, breakdown, weighting, score and the reason behind the scoring of the criterion	The title, breakdown, weighting, score and the reason behind the scoring of the criterion
the score of the successful tenderer	their score against the criteria
the name of the successful tenderer	the standstill period
their score against the criteria	
the standstill period	

If the Council disqualifies a tender at the evaluation stage, then an Assessment Summary is still required stating the reasons for disqualification.

You must not issue the Contract Award Notice until after issuing the Assessment Summary to all tenderers. Once the Assessment Summary has been produced and the tenderers have been notified you must publish the Contract Award Notice to the successful tenderer.

Assessment summaries are not required for:

- Contracts awarded under a framework, and
- Below threshold contracts (level A, B & C procurements).

Consultation with the Procurement Manager or Head of Corporate Services should take place.

Assessment Summaries will be published on the e-tendering portal, the Contract Award Notice will be published on the Central Digital Platform and is available publicly. These functions will be carried out by the Procurement Team.

### STANDSTILL PERIOD

For all tenders (level B and above) the standstill period starts on the day that the Contract Award Notice is published and is for a minimum **8** working days between the publishing of the Contract Award Notice and signing of the contract. There should be no direct communication with any of the tenderers during this period and the contract cannot be commenced until the standstill period has expired, dependant on there being no challenges received, and an official purchase order must be raised. This may be extended if a challenge is lodged by a tenderer, in which case the Procurement Team will advise.

## NOMINATED OR NAMED SUB-CONTRACTORS AND NOMINATED SUPPLIERS

These CSOs apply where a sub-contractor or a supplier is to be nominated to an existing main contractor or contract (subject to contract terms and conditions): -

- Where it is not reasonably practicable to obtain competitive tenders, the appropriate senior officer may nominate or agree the nomination of a sub-contractor or supplier,
- Where competitive quotes or tenders are available, then dependent on the estimated value of the sub-contract or the estimated value of goods or materials to be supplied by a nominated supplier, tenders or quotations must be invited,
- The terms of any invitation for nominated sub-contractors or suppliers must require that, if selected, the firms would be willing to enter into: -
  - (a) a contract with the main contractor on terms which indemnify the main contractor against the main contractor's own obligations under the main contract in relation to the work and goods or materials included in the subcontract; and
  - (b) an agreement to indemnify the Council in such terms as may be prescribed.

The provisions of these CSOs relating to the submission of quotes or tenders; their opening and registration; late tenders; alterations to tenders; and tender acceptance apply to this CSO.

## CONTRACTS AND TERMS

Before entering into a contract with any supplier, the appropriate senior officer must:

- ensure that a financial check of all suppliers is carried out by our Financial Services Team,
- ensure that all Contracts at Level C and above are signed under seal by the Legal Team,
- at the senior officer's discretion and for all tenders at Level B and above the procuring officer must consult with the Corporate Director - Resources to determine if the contract is to include Parent Company Guarantees, Bonds or Liquidated Damages,
- ensure that the supplier is aware of the Council's terms and conditions
- if processing personal data, a Data Protection Impact Assessment must be carried out.

## USING OTHER ORGANISATIONS OR FRAMEWORK CONTRACTS

The Council may choose to use contracts and contract terms other than its own, if the senior officer determines the needs of the Council can be met. This can be efficient, reducing contracting activity, and may include the following types of contracts:

- ICE (Institute of Civil Engineers) and JCT (Joint Contracts Tribunal) Contracts and Agreements and NEC Contracts,
- contracts established by organisations with the legal remit to award public contracts such as Professional Buying Organisations e.g. ESPO,
- contracts tendered and awarded by Government or public sector organisation, which are open to Local Government or this Council, provided they have been let compliantly, legally and under their CSOs.

It is the responsibility of the procuring officer or senior officer to ensure that such contract terms are appropriate, and that Legal Services has had the opportunity to review any contract and decide if such a contract is applicable and acceptable to the Council.

If necessary, it is the responsibility of the senior officer to negotiate modifications to the contract to properly represent the requirements of the Council. Any substantive change must be agreed with the Head of Legal Services. The grounds for modifications under PA23 are as follows:

- urgency and the protection of life, etc,
- materialisation of a known risk,
- for defence authority contracts on developments in technology,
- for defence authority contracts to ensure continuous supply,
- provided for in the contract,



- unforeseeable circumstances,
- additional goods, services or works,
- transfer on corporate restructuring,
- non-substantial modifications, and
- below-threshold modifications

## VARIANCES TO TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Any variations to the Councils Standard Contract Terms and Conditions submitted by suppliers shall not be accepted without advice from the Head of Legal Services.

## CONTRACT DISPUTES

The Council will identify a Dispute Resolution Process. The principles of such will be to establish mutually acceptable resolution of any dispute; to maintain good working relations and avoid lengthy and costly delays.

## USING CONTRACTS

### VARIATIONS WITHIN CONTRACTS

All variations must be in the form of written instruction to the contractor. The validity and likely cost effect of each variation should be assessed before the issue of the instruction to proceed.

If the variation is valid and its cost can be contained within the contract price and approved budget the instruction may be approved by the procuring officer at level A and by the relevant senior officer at level B and above.

Any variation, which will result in the approved budget being exceeded by £10,000 or 10% of the contract sum (whichever is the greater) must be reported to the appropriate board by the senior officer in accordance with FRs.

If the variation would cause the contract price to be exceeded but is within the tolerance defined in FRs (£10,000 or 10% of the contract sum), the senior officer should liaise with the Corporate Director - Resources to establish how any overspend could be contained within approved budgets. If alternative funding cannot be found, the appropriate board will need to submit a supplementary estimate request to Executive Board.

In cases when a variation is urgent and requires immediate action the instruction may be issued by the appropriate senior officer in consultation with the Chief Executive with regard to using their emergency powers. Details of the cost of the variation or overspend and the reason(s) for it, must be reported to board as soon as practicable in accordance with FRs.

### ADJUSTMENTS AND EXTENSIONS TO CONTRACTS

Where the timing of any contract changes for reasons beyond the control of the procuring officer, a contract may be lengthened or adjusted with the approval of the appropriate senior officer. Such discretion is to recognise the efficiency in procurement in situations where issues pull forward or delay a particular programme of expenditure.

### TERMINATING CONTRACTS

The Council is obliged under PA23 to publish a Contract Termination Notice when a contract is terminated or expires on the Central Digital Platform, this function is carried out by the Procurement Team.

## DISPOSAL OF ASSETS

Assets are:

- property,
- land,
- vehicles,
- equipment (IT kit, tools, leisure equipment, etc.),
- furniture.

If assets are no longer required, they should be sold or disposed of in accordance with the law, FR and any Council Protocol for Disposal of Assets.

Assets may be disposed of by submission of electronic bid for “highest bidder wins” on the Councils website and social media up to the value of £10,000.

The Facilities Team, the Financial Services Team and the Legal Team (if property) should be informed of disposals to ensure the Councils Asset Register is maintained.

## LAND AND PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

The CSOs applies where there is a land transaction. Except for any reference to the Council’s Constitution.

### APPROVAL OF MAJOR DISPOSALS

The method of each major disposal must be approved by the Chief Executive. When determining such matters the Chief Executive shall:

- specify the land to be disposed of,
- confirm that the land has been declared surplus to Councils requirements,
- advise upon the proposed method of disposal and set out the reasons for selecting that method,
- in matters where the Council must achieve best consideration, confirm that the proposed method of disposal which has been selected, is most likely to achieve this; and
- in matters where it is proposed that the disposal is for less than best consideration, give reasons for and against and detail the relevant legal powers of the Council.

The principal terms of major disposals (except where the approved method of disposal is by auction) must be approved by the Council on the recommendation of the Resources Board. When determining such matters, the Board shall ensure, after considering advice from a valuation carried out on behalf of the Council, either that the consideration agreed represents best consideration, or following advice from Head of Legal Services that the Council has the relevant legal powers to accept less than best consideration.

In major disposals where the approved method of disposal is the inviting of formal tenders or informal offers, the disposal must be advertised on the Council’s website and social media, and in at least one local, national or specialist newspaper or publication as determined by the Head of Legal Services. Tenders shall be submitted in accordance with the Councils e-tendering portal, this function will be carried out by the Procurement Team.

## OTHER DISPOSALS

The CSOs applies to vehicles, equipment (IT kit, tools, leisure equipment, etc.) and furniture.

### APPROVAL OF OTHER DISPOSALS

The method of each major disposal must be approved by the Head of Legal Services or Corporate Director - Resources. When determining such matters the Head of Legal Services or Corporate Director - Resources shall:

- specify the asset(s) to be disposed of,
- confirm that the asset(s) has been declared surplus to Councils requirements,
- advise upon the proposed method of disposal and set out the reasons for selecting that method,
- in matters where the Council must achieve best consideration, confirm that the proposed method of disposal which has been selected, is most likely to achieve this; and
- in matters where it is proposed that the disposal is for less than best consideration, give reasons for and against and detail the relevant legal powers of the Council.

For disposals more than £10,000 they must be advertised on the Council's website and social media, as determined by the Head of Legal Services.

### TENDER PROCEDURES

#### Dealing with formal tenders and informal offers

All tenders and offers shall be opened by the Procurement Team. All contracts must be checked by the Legal team or the Chief Executive (if practising solicitor) and contracts above £110,000 must be sealed and must be electronic.

Alteration or errors in tenders and offers and late or otherwise invalid tenders and offers shall be dealt with in consultation with Legal Services.

### DISPOSALS BY AUCTION

In disposals where the approved method of disposal is by auction, the auction shall be conducted by a practising auctioneer instructed by the Council.

The Council will pre-determine the lowest and most acceptable price. The price must be disclosed only to the auctioneer and one of the Council's legal team who attends auction.

### ACCEPTING TENDERS FOR THE DISPOSAL OF LAND, PROPERTY AND OTHER MARKETABLE ASSETS.

Decisions on the acceptance of tenders for the disposal of land, property and other marketable assets will be taken as follows: -

Disposal of Land, Property and Assets	
Circumstance	Acceptance by
(a) The highest tender, provided that it is considered to be in the Council's interests, after taking professional advice.	The Chief Executive, (or in their absence the Section 151 Officer) after consultation with the Leader of the Council
(b) A tender other than the highest received, provided that it is considered to be in the Council's interests; is in accordance with statutory requirements; and a written report has been submitted to the appropriate Board by the relevant Senior Officer.	Appropriate Board
Any other circumstances	Appropriate Board

## **Agenda Item No 8**

### **Executive Board**

**17 March 2025**

**Report of the  
Interim Corporate Director (Resources)  
and Section 151 Officer**

**Pay Policy Statement 2025/26**

#### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 There is a requirement under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 for Councils to have and to publish a Pay Policy Statement, agreed by full Council, which will be subject to review at least annually. This report details the purpose for and the areas to be covered in the Pay Policy Statement.

#### **Recommendation to Council**

**To adopt the Pay Policy Statement 2025/26.**

#### **2 Introduction**

- 2.1 The purpose is to provide transparency by identifying
- The methods by which the salaries of all employees are determined;
  - The detail and level of remuneration of the Council's most senior staff.
- 2.2 The policy has been reviewed in line with the requirements and is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.3 Since the policy was adopted at Full Council on 4 July 2012, it has been reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

#### **3 Report Implications**

##### **3.1 Human Resources Implications**

- 3.1.1 As detailed in the report.

##### **3.2 Links to Council's Priorities**

- 3.2.1 This policy statement ensures that the Council meets its obligation under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 for Councils and therefore ensuring compliance with legislation.

The Contact Officer for this report is Alison Turner (719374)

**Background Papers**

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act,  
2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date

## **North Warwickshire Borough Council**

### **PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025/26**

#### **Introduction and Purpose**

Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the “power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the Authority thinks fit”. This Pay Policy Statement (the ‘statement’) sets out the Councils approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council’s approach to setting the pay of its employees by identifying;

- the methods by which salaries of all employees are determined;
- the detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff i.e. ‘chief officers’, as defined by the relevant legislation;
- the Group/Board responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and recommending any amendments to the full Council.

This policy statement is subject to review on a minimum of an annual basis in accordance with the relevant legislation prevailing at that time.

#### **Legislative Framework**

In determining the pay and remuneration of all of its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, The Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations. With regard to the Equal Pay requirements contained within the Equality Act, the Council ensures there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that all pay differentials can be objectively justified through the use of equality proofed Job Evaluation mechanisms which directly relate salaries to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

#### **Pay Structure**

Based on the application of the Job Evaluation process, the Council uses the nationally negotiated pay spine as the basis for its local grading structure. This determines the salaries of the large majority of the workforce, together with the use of other nationally defined rates where relevant. The Council remains committed to adherence with national pay bargaining in respect of the national pay spine. No pay award has yet been agreed for 1 April 2025 onwards.

All other pay related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having been determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery and/or as determined by Council Policy. In determining its grading structure and setting remuneration levels for all posts, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure, balanced against the need to recruit and retain

employees who are able to meet the requirements of providing high quality services to the community, delivered effectively and efficiently and at times at which those services are required.

New appointments will normally be made at the minimum of the relevant grade, although this can be varied where necessary to secure the best candidate. From time to time, it may be necessary to take account of the external pay market in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills and capacity. Where necessary, the Council will ensure the requirement for such is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using appropriate data sources available from within and outside the local government sector.

### **Senior Management Remuneration**

For the purposes of this statement, senior management means 'chief officers' as defined within S43 of the Localism Act. The posts falling within the statutory definition are set out below, with details of their basic salary as at 31 January 2025;

- a) Chief Executive  
The current salary of the post is £132,225. The salary falls within a range of four incremental points between £128,125 rising to a maximum of £132,225.
- b) Corporate Director (Resources)  
The post is currently vacant. The salary falls within a range of four incremental points between £90,200 rising to a maximum of £96,350. The Corporate Director (Resources) is the Council's Section 151 Officer and this was included in the evaluation of the role.
- c) Corporate Director (Streetscape)  
The post is currently vacant. The salary falls within a range of four incremental points between £90,200 rising to a maximum of £96,350.
- d) Directors  
The salaries of posts designated as Directors fall within a range of four incremental points between £70,532 rising to a maximum of £75,713.

Chief Officers' roles are subject to job evaluation under the JNC Job Evaluation Scheme and are paid a salary, which is considered a market rate within districts in the local government sector.

Employment of Chief Officers is in accordance with collective agreements negotiated from time to time by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities for Local Government Services, those set out in the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (currently known as The Blue Book) and as supplemented by:-

- local collective agreements reached with trade unions recognised by the Council
- the rules of the Council

## **Recruitment of Chief Officers**

When recruiting to all posts the Council will take full and proper account of its own Equal Opportunities, Recruitment, and Redeployment Policies. Where the Council is unable to recruit to a post at the designated grade, it will consider the use of temporary market forces supplements.

Where the Council remains unable to recruit Chief Officers under a contract of employment, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a vacant substantive Chief Officer post, the Council will, where necessary, consider and utilise engaging individuals under 'contracts for service'. These will be sourced through a relevant procurement process ensuring the Council is able to demonstrate the maximum value for money benefits from competition in securing the relevant service. The Council currently has four Chief Officers engaged under such arrangements.

Elected Members appoint all Chief Officers. The pay level offered, on recruitment is typically the bottom point of the salary grade. In situations, however, where the individual recruited has a high level of knowledge or skills, and/or previous relevant experience, a higher salary, up to the maximum salary for that post, may be authorised, by the Chief Executive and the Elected Member recruitment panel. The recruitment panel would authorise this for an appointment of a Chief Executive.

## **Additions to Salary of Chief Officers**

The Council does not apply any bonuses or performance related pay to its Chief Officers.

In addition to basic salary, set out below are details of other elements of 'additional pay' which are chargeable to UK Income Tax and do not solely constitute reimbursement of expenses incurred in the fulfillment of duties;

- All Chief Officers were entitled to a lease car. Following consultation this was phased out by April 2015. There is some protection in that when the car was returned the Chief Officer received the 'spot value' less 10% as a travel allowance so long as he/she remains in the role. The 'spot value' depends on the officer's grade. The 'spot values' for each grade are detailed at Appendix 1.

Newly appointed Chief Officers will use their own vehicle and receive an Essential User Allowance. Employees who are not Chief Officers may also receive the Essential User allowance. Essential User Allowances are also detailed at Appendix 1.

The Chief Executive is the Council's Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer (who also manages the elections service) and receives an Election Allowance. The relevant bodies set this allowance. It varies each year depending on the number and type of elections in each year. There is the Warwickshire County Council election during 2025/26.



A Chief Officer may be awarded an honorarium when they 'act up' in a role. The Special Sub Group of Executive Board can authorise these. An honorarium either is a one off payment or can be a monthly allowance for a temporary period. The Council does not currently have any Chief Officers receiving an honorarium.

### **Payments on Termination**

In the case of redundancy, a redundancy payment would be made to a Chief Officer in line with the Council's Retirement Policy & Procedure, and the Redundancy Policy & Procedure, which applies to all staff.

In the case of termination due to ill health, then there would be no termination payment but a higher pension benefit may be approved by the Warwickshire local government pension scheme. The pension benefit may include a lump sum in addition to an on-going pension payment.

On termination of employment, if it is not possible or desirable for the Chief Officer to serve their contractual or statutory notice period, then a payment may be made in lieu of the notice period not worked.

Any contractual payments such as outstanding annual leave are usually included in payments on termination of employment. Similarly, any monies owing to the Council would be deducted from payments made on termination.

The Council may choose to make a payment under a Settlement Agreement to protect against compensation claims that could be expensive or bring the Council into disrepute. The Special Sub Group of the Executive Board would approve any such payment.

Where a Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer cease carrying out these statutory roles, then the post would be re-evaluated to exclude these duties.

### **Increases to Pay**

Any cost of living increases agreed through JNC are applied to Chief Officers pay. This is typically on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

Chief Officers appointed on a salary scale will receive an incremental increase to their pay as follows:

Chief Officers appointed between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> March will receive an increment after six months service.

Chief Officers appointed between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> September will receive an increment on the following 1<sup>st</sup> April.

Thereafter, all Chief Officers will receive increments annually on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

Chief Officers' pay will be measured against the market, normally on a three to five yearly basis, to ensure we maintain consistency with peer local authorities.

Where there are significant changes in market rates then a pay benchmarking assessment will be carried out for Chief Officers.

A full pay benchmarking assessment on the Chief Executive and Chief Officers posts was undertaken during 2023/24. West Midlands Employers (WME) conducted the assessment, and the analysis report received was considered as part of the review of the senior management structure. The revised pay for the Chief Executive and Chief Officer posts was approved by Executive Board in February 2024. The Council's Executive Board approves increases to Chief Officers pay.

## **Publication**

Upon approval by the full Council, this statement will be published on the Council's Website. In addition, for posts where the full time equivalent salary is at least £50,000, the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts will include a note setting out the total amount of

- salary, fees or allowances paid to or receivable by the person in the current and previous year;
- any sums payable by way of expenses allowance that are chargeable to UK income tax;
- any compensation for loss of employment and any other payments connected with termination;
- any benefits received that do not fall within the above

This policy will be available on our website [www.northwarks.gov.uk](http://www.northwarks.gov.uk)

## **Lowest Paid Employees**

Our lowest paid employees' salary is determined by the grade for their post, which is underpinned by a job evaluation scheme, rather than being paid a market rate for their job. Market supplements are given to some posts where there are recruitment and retention difficulties. Currently none of our lowest paid employees receives a market supplement on their salary to bring it up to market rates.

Whilst we may employ apprentices on a lower wage, i.e. the minimum wage, during their apprenticeship they do have a structured training plan leading to a qualification.

With regard to other aspects of remuneration policy, there is equity across all our employees. The same policies set out above apply to our lowest paid employees.

## **Relationship Between Remuneration of our Chief Officers and Other Employees**

Currently the average (mean) of our Chief Officers pay is 2.41 times that of the rest of our employees. Our top earning Chief Officer earns 4.20 times the mean of the rest of our employees.

Currently the average (mean) of our Chief Officers pay is 3.20 times that of our lowest paid employees. Our top earning Chief Officer earns 5.59 times the mean of our lowest paid employees.

Currently the median Chief Officers pay is 2.52 times that of the rest of our employees. Our top earning Chief Officer earns 4.40 times the median salary of the rest of our employees.

These figures are as at 31 January 2025 and do not include travel allowances or essential car user allowances.

Our policy for 2025/26 is to maintain Chief Officers pay within the following maximums:

Ratio of mean pay (Chief Officers: rest of employees) = 3.31

Ratio of median pay (Chief Officers: rest of employees) = 3.67

And not to exceed the following multipliers for our top earning Chief Officer:

5.5 X mean pay of other employees

5.5 X median pay of other employees

### **Accountability and Decision Making**

In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, the Special Sub Group and the Executive Board are responsible for decision making in relation to the recruitment, pay, terms and conditions and severance arrangements in relation to employees of the Council.

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Retirement Policy & Procedure  
Redundancy Policy & Procedure  
Recruitment Policy  
Disciplinary Procedure  
JNC Job Evaluation Scheme Outline

Date of this review	February 2025
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## Appendix 1

### Annual Spot Value Less 10%

Chief Executive	£3,456
Corporate Director (Resources)	£3,456
Corporate Director (Streetscape)	£3,456
Directors	£3,456

### Annual Essential Car User Allowance

451-999cc	£846
1000-1199cc	£963
1200cc & above	£1,239

**Agenda Item No 9**

**Executive Board**

**17 March 2025**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Corporate Plan Performance Update**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 This report asks the Board to note the Corporate Plan Performance Update and identify any areas where further information is required.

**Recommendation to the Executive Board**

- a That the report be noted; and**
- b Identify any areas where further consideration is needed.**

**2 Report**

- 2.1 Members have adopted the Corporate Plan 2024-27, attached as Appendix 1.

- 2.2 The Performance Update attached as Appendix 2 updates Members on progress against the outcomes of this. Members are therefore asked to note the report and identify any areas where further information is required.

**3 Report Implications**

- 3.1 There are no specific implications.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438).



# Corporate Plan 2023-27



Horiba MIRA Technology Park

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2024/25 Revision

**Protecting the rurality of North Warwickshire, supporting its communities, and promoting the wellbeing of residents and business.**



# Introduction

# 01

2023 was a significant year for North Warwickshire Borough Council, culminating in all out elections for every seat on the Council. That election was the first in which Voter ID was required and resulted in No Overall Control, with 17 Conservatives, 15 Labour and 3 Independent Councillors being returned. A desire amongst Councillors to ensure that the Council continues to operate smoothly is important and the operation of the Council has not been affected.



17

Conservatives



15

Labour



3

Independent

The Council has resolved the key issue of Board Membership and Council leadership at its annual meetings and in the first year of this Plan the Council has largely continued to follow the strategy and actions set out in the Corporate Plan from the previous Council term.

Eighteen months on from the end of COVID 19 protective measures, the Council is very much back to 'business as usual' albeit that a fresh set of challenges need to be addressed. Staff have moved from the temporary working arrangements of 2020 and 2021 with a series of 'Re-engage, Re-energise' workshops being held to help design

the best working arrangements and refocus efforts on delivering excellent outcomes for residents in line with the Council's adopted priorities.

Staff recruitment and retention continues to be an issue, shared with the rest of the sector (and most of the country), not least this year with regard to senior management. Two of the three members of the Council's Management Team have left and that these moves were planned a long time in advance helps with the risk this poses to the Council. The quality of our interim cover has significantly helped and provides a significant boost in our transformation journey, a key Corporate Plan priority and one which fits well strategically with the 'Re-engage, Re-energise' theme. The wider work on transformation is reported regularly to Members. This also presented an opportunity for the Council to review its staffing structure, using the Local Government Association's (LGA) Decision Making Accountability framework to ensure it has an efficient and effective structure and a new structure was agreed as part of the 2024 budget.



Finances remain extremely tight and uncertain in the medium term, significantly impacted by rising prices generally as experienced across the country in the last year. The Council moved quickly to offer residents all the support it can with the well-established Financial Inclusion Partnership coordinating partnership activity including the first cost of living workshop to be held across the County and the Council has added to its capacity to help residents. Whilst the last two years' financial settlements from the Government have been better than anticipated the Council still faces financial uncertainty however the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy reviewed in the autumn of 2023 established that fresh opportunities exist in the short term particularly as a result of the recent revaluation of Business Rates.







Residents: 65,000  
Area: 110 square miles

Bordered by: Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull, Nuneaton, Tamworth, Northwest Leicestershire, Hinckley & Bosworth, Lichfield and South Derbyshire.

Despite these challenges the Council continues to provide excellent services to the public and to deliver on the priorities set by Councillors, as shown in the following very small list of examples:

- Continuing to respond very quickly to fly tipping and prosecute where evidence exists.
- Speedy and effective action on incursions onto public land
- Provide a wide range of increasingly popular leisure facilities despite national uncertainty around changing leisure habits post COVID and rising costs, including the provision of additional health related services. Work continues on the future provision of leisure services via the Service Improvement Plan, review of facilities and significant work on delivery models.
- Proactive work on housing and employment developments in the Borough. Two of the main housing allocated sites are expected to be considered by the Planning and Development Board this year together with the strategically important Council led extension to the MIRA site. Work on major leisure attractions supported by the Council, the Surf Park and the Eternal Wall, continue. The Council is ensuring therefore that there is a good range of housing and employment provided in the Borough.
- Significant investment in play areas within communities and support for grassroots sport clubs and facilities
- Progression of the multi partner recycling facility (MRF) providing a commercial opportunity and more secure pathway for recyclates. Significant housing renovation including the properties in Atherstone which have had a transformative impact in the town.

- Successful bid for UK Shared Prosperity Funding and the commitment of £1.8m to support community facilities and activity and business support.
- Comprehensive response to the risks from some of the protestors at Kingsbury Oil Terminal.
- Adoption of a Corporate Climate Change Strategy and deliver of major 'Green Homes' work in our housing stock.
- Extensive work to support Ukrainians in the Borough with the Council leading the Countywide housing work as well as continuing to support those in housing needs, leading to the lowest use of temporary accommodation in the County.
- Implementation of 'Gov Delivery' to provide targeted communications to residents providing useful help and guidance.
- Introduction of changes to the voting system, particular the requirement for Voter identification
- Maintaining a very high level of customer service with 81% of contacts resolved at first point of contact with an average wait to answer time of 18 seconds and 94% answered in 20 seconds, for the approximately 7000 contacts received each month. The Council has also reviewed its reception arrangements including implementing a Virtual Receptionist.

The start of a new Council term, a review of the staffing structure and review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy provided a good opportunity to review the priorities and actions and the Council engaged in a consultation exercise in late 2023, early 2024 to understand the main issues of importance to residents. A number of the issues from that survey have been included in the main priorities for this Plan. The Council will also have a LGA Corporate Peer Challenge which will be helpful in ensuring the Council is focused on the delivery of its priorities.



# Vision:

Protecting the rurality of North Warwickshire, supporting its communities, and promoting the wellbeing of residents and business.

# Values:

The Council has a group of staff at Principal Officer level that have been working with the Chief Executive on a number of cross-cutting issues. That group have suggested a revision to the Council’s staff values:

Thrive - “to grow, develop, be successful.”

T	We will work with a <b>team</b> mindset and work collaboratively to achieve results – whilst demonstrating flexibility, reliability, resilience and a positive attitude.	
H	We will be <b>honest</b> , transparent and act with integrity in all that we do; our employees have pride in their work and are sincere, trustworthy and accountable.	
R	We will <b>respect</b> all by building and maintaining inclusive, caring and collaborative relationships based on trust and mutual respect.	
I	We will show <b>initiative</b> by being resourceful, thinking proactively and we will promote and embrace service improvements.	
V	We will give a <b>voice</b> to our employees and customers; encouraging open communication and feedback which is listened to and considered in order to develop effective solutions.	
E	We will strive to deliver customer service <b>excellence</b> , and be enthusiastic and passionate about achieving the highest quality standards; our employees say “we go the extra mile” and “we care”.	







**Vision**

Protecting the rurality of North Warwickshire, supporting its communities and promoting the wellbeing of residents and business.



**Values**

Service provider, enabler, point of contact, champion of North Warwickshire



**Priorities and Objectives**

This section of the plan outlines how we will achieve our priorities and objectives and how we will measure our progress.

# Priorities:

**Efficient and sustainable organisation:**

- Finances
- Lean
- Responsive



**Safe, Liveable, Locally Focused communities:**

- Feeling safe
- Place-based enforcement
- Quality of life



**Prosperous, active and healthy:**

- Jobs
- Infrastructure
- Connectivity
- Health



**Sustainable growth, protected rurality:**

- Vibrant growth
- Sense of place
- Recognisably home



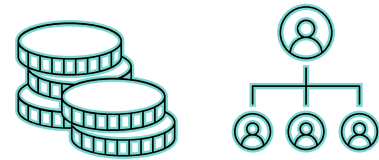
In addition, the Council will continue its work to adopt a meaningful climate change strategy, as well as fully exploring the devolution opportunities available as a result of the Levelling Up agenda, particularly through the ‘Trailblazer Devolution Deal’ for the West Midlands Combined Authority and a potential County Deal for Warwickshire.



# 02

## Efficient organisation

– financial management,  
lean and responsive  
organisation



### Our Strategic Aims:

We need to be the most **focused and prioritised organisation** we can be – clear on our vision and priorities, skilled and motivated staff in the right places.

We need to **know what we are about** but also that we can't cover as many areas as before and will continue to **harness the power of the community particularly via the Councillor Community Grant and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund**.

Our **advocacy for the area** will aim to ensure other parts of the systems we live in recognise the needs of North Warwickshire.

We recognise that North Warwickshire Borough Council is an organisation a lot

of people turn to for help and we are proud of this – it played a vital role in supporting communities through COVID and is one of the reasons for the Council's positive results in the residents' survey. A key reason for this is our **responsiveness – we know the area and can be relied on to respond**. This need to be allied with a greater understanding of you, as residents of the Borough. Recent changes in our working practices have shown the benefit of the **Council truly leaving the building** in every sense, being more problem solving in complex cases and seeing the person as well as the process.



### How we will achieve this:

- Continue to ensure our services are efficient, whilst being as effective as possible for our residents.
- A robust transformation programme to ensure our services and processes are as lean as possible.
- Identifying the resources needed to deliver the Council's plan to provide high-quality priority services to our communities.
- Work through the actions in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- Consider new models of working and providing services including proportionate commercial activity.
- Consider the action plan from the Peer Review due in 2024.
- Develop our staff in the new skills needed, properly supported by IT.
- Develop our vulnerability work from COVID 19 to provide additional assurance to residents who may be experiencing difficulties.
- Ensure as many services are based in North Warwickshire as possible to ensure they reflect and respond to the Borough.
- Continue the Council's sustainability work looking at the business case for reducing our carbon emissions.
- Review our customer service arrangements and how we communicate with residents (RS)
- Further analysis of the key issues raised in the Residents' Survey.

### How we will measure this:

- Balanced budget and savings identified in a revised Medium-Term Financial Strategy. (N)
- A minimum of two major services reviews and reporting on the savings and efficiencies achieved. (PI)
- Review our approach to asset management with an Officer Board, reporting to Members on a coordinated and proactive approach to the use of our assets, linked to service provision and commercial activity. (N)
- Increased commercial activity in areas that will promote the wellbeing of the Borough to assist with market weaknesses and make a contribution to the Council's budget. (N&PI)
- Appropriate charges for Green Waste and Parking to help sustain services. (PI)
- Contact those we know to be vulnerable with information, advice and as often as possible with direct contact to ensure the help available is reaching our residents, in particular with regards to inflationary pressures especially the increased cost of energy. (N&PI)
- Efficiently collect money due to the Council, whilst continuing to offer support. (PI)
- Staff survey results. (PI)
- Customer satisfaction. (PI)

N – Narrative / PI – Performance Indicator



# 03

## Safe, liveable, locally focused communities

– feeling safe, place-based enforcement, quality of life



### Our Strategic Aims:

North Warwickshire is a recognisable community with a distinctive sense of place. It is connected to but separate from the wider West Midlands area as well as the East Midlands and therefore benefits from public services based on its real geography rather than administrative convenience.

Key to our sense of place is **quality of life** - being able to enjoy the rurality and communities within North Warwickshire. **Feeling safe** is of paramount importance to this and as part of our **advocacy role** for the Borough we will work with the Police and other partners on the key safety issues of concern to local residents.

We will adopt a **place-based approach to enforcement** using our powers where appropriate to ensure the protections to residents' quality of life are used. As well as our professional powers in areas such as Planning, Housing and Environmental Health we will use a problem-solving approach to cross cutting and multi-agency issues to ensure people enjoy their homes and communities.



### How we will achieve this:

Continue to play a leading role in the North Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership working with the community, including the Police, Town and Parish Councils and people of all ages, background and areas, to improve public perception of crime and public confidence in feeling safe by contributing towards the achievement of the Partnership plan actions and targets for the current strategic priorities. The Council will also work with partners on road safety particular the issue of dangerous junctions. Following the residents' survey, this will include the public's perception of safety after dark.

Advocate on behalf of the Borough to ensure sufficient levels of key services in the area, particularly Police and street lighting.

To continue to implement Civil Parking Enforcement in North Warwickshire, including working with the County Council in a review of Traffic Regulation Orders and residents' permit schemes, as part of steps to improve and increase, amongst other things, parking in our town centres, and work with partners on improving HGV parking. In addition, the Council will explore options for further parking provision in Coleshill.

Work with partners to resolve Safer Neighbourhood issues, including, where necessary, taking action to address anti-social and nuisance behaviour.

Maintain a very high standard of street cleanliness throughout the Borough, tackling litter and fly tipping as quickly as possible, in particular, using the additional funding allocated by the 2024 Budget for street cleaning.

Support for High Streets via the funding provided in the budget and in support of the Town Centre Plans commissioned by UKSPF funding.

Ensure maximum coordination between enforcement teams to resolve complex social and environmental issues likely to significantly impact on quality of life.



Key to our sense of place is quality of life, feeling safe and using our powers to protect residents' quality of life.



### How we will measure this:

- Reporting on a range of Safer Communities indicators linked to Violent Crime (with a focus on domestic violence and abuse, sexual offences and drug and alcohol related), Anti-Social Behaviour, Road Safety (with a focus on road traffic accidents resulting in killed or serious injuries), Crime in Rural Areas. (PI, N)
- Report on the cleanliness of the Borough. (PI)
- Report on the work of our enforcement teams in Planning, Housing and Environmental Health. (N)
- Satisfaction surveys with residents and key partners such as Town and Parish Councils. (N)



# Prosperous, active and healthy

– jobs, infrastructure,  
connectivity, health

# 04



## Our Strategic Aims:

The first two objectives may be regarded as ensuring the foundations for the organisation and Borough are as firm as possible – the Council should add value to the area and residents should feel at home and secure in their communities.

The next two objectives build on the **quality-of-life theme** to ensure our communities **thrive**, being **prosperous active and healthy**.

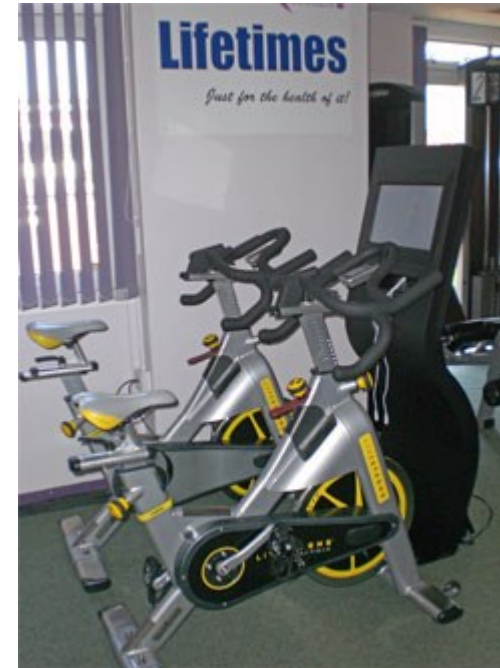
Key to this theme is a **healthy and inclusive economy** with a good supply of jobs, including in emerging 'mega trend' sectors, prioritised in national and regional Industrial Strategies. Ensuring our residents can **acquire the skills** for new and existing jobs is important in this aim. The skills plan to accompany the major new development at MIRA will be an important part of

this as will the ongoing work with HS2 and their contractors.

The Council's work with businesses and funding for skills improvements through the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** will also help with this priority. In addition, the Council has resolved to review its **Local Plan** when the revised guidance and regulations are issued and, in the meantime, to continue to progress the development plan documents in its work programme. That will continue to ensure that the Borough has an appropriate level of development and mix of jobs to ensure the prosperity of the area.

As part of the final aim, ensuring investment into North Warwickshire in terms of sufficient housing and employment for our residents is a generally shared aim as long as the **infrastructure that makes places work** comes with it. The Council has established an ambitious growth and investment programme following years of low input to the area and we will continue to lead on the Borough's input into securing the improvements to roads, schools, community services and environmental assets to **bring quality to growth**. As these plans are long term and take several years to develop, it is important that the Council reviews whether they continue to be fit for purpose. The Government is currently considering revisions to national planning policy and the planning policy evidence base is in the process of being renewed. This is an appropriate point for the Council to review the Local Plan and has resolved to do this once the new national planning policies have been published.

A key component is ensuring we are **connected with the people, places and factors which influence**



**our life** – in terms of transport and physical connection and also technology as COVID produces a generational shift to digital services.

The Government's Levelling Up agenda could be important for this strategic aim, particularly with regard to skills and the local economy.

A number of **health outcomes need to significantly improve** within the Borough. Loss of economic opportunity can often be replaced eventually but reduced health prospects are more damaging. In addition, the Council has a number of ageing leisure and recreation facilities and there is a programme of play area improvements, which will be supplemented by grants from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to improve community facilities in the area. The 2024 budget signalled an ambitious new approach with a commitment to work towards new leisure facilities in Polesworth and Atherstone, as well as a further pump track in Dordon.



We want our communities to thrive, being prosperous and healthy, and ensure we add quality to prosperity and growth.





## How we will achieve this:

Consult on the draft Economic Development Strategy linked to the UK and WM Strategies and emerging sub-regional Economic Development Plans as work in this area moves from Local Enterprise Partnerships to local authorities, including identifying projects to be supported from Government funding.

Implement measures funded by the Business Support element of the North Warwickshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund to provide support to business in the Borough.

Continue to progress the actions in the Local Development Scheme and prepare for a review of the Local Plan.

Progress the business case for replacement Leisure facilities at Polesworth and Atherstone.

Implement a second pump track at Dordon.

Use developer contributions and other funding to maximise opportunities for the employment of local people including addressing skills gaps as well as the improvement of the environment, leisure and other community services that add value to people's lives.

Manage development and work with partners to deliver its associated infrastructure, in line with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Progress the North Warwickshire Transport Strategy to improve strategic roads such as the A5 and A446, improve transport links, including cycle links, footpath links, public transport, and all forms of rail provision.

We will continue to work with partners, particular across the County, to ensure meaningful Levelling Up measures are taken to improve the quality of life in the Borough. This includes continuing the current pilot based on the Mancetter South and Ridge Lane super output area and the formation of a Levelling Up Board, as the successor to the Community Partnership to ensure Levelling Up principles are embedded in all partners' work in the Borough.



We will work in partnership with other agencies to tackle health inequalities through implementation of the corporate Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and relevant Warwickshire North Place Plan priorities, as part of our advocacy work for the Borough within the health system as well as by ensuring access to leisure and other community service opportunities that promote active, healthy lifestyles.

Ensure our work through a number of services such as Planning, Environmental Health, Leisure and Community Development and Housing contribute to improving the wider determinants of health and to enhancing the physical and mental wellbeing of local residents.

Work with partners in Warwickshire and the West Midlands on further devolution deals and ensure issues of interest to North Warwickshire are included.

Continue to work with partners on digital connectivity, including through the Digital Infrastructure Board and, in particular, on the West Midlands Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator.

## How we will we measure this?

- A dashboard of economic indicators linked to the Economic Development Strategy including skill levels, employment rates, benefit claimant rates, wage/salary data. (PI, N)
- Progress reports on the action plan for the Transport Strategy. (N)
- Progress reports on the action plans for the corporate Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and JSNA and relevant Warwickshire North Place Plan priorities. (N)
- Progress reports on the Local Development Scheme. (N)
- A dashboard of health indicators on key health indicators, including life expectancy, access to mental health services, road mortality, and active lifestyle indicators. (PI)
- Report to Members progress on devolution deals. (N)
- Report to Members on the feasibility of new leisure facilities at Polesworth and Atherstone. (N)
- Continue to progress the Levelling Up pilot in Mancetter South and Ridge Lane. (N)
- Establish a 'Levelling Up Board' as the successor to the Community Partnership.
- Report progress on the UKSPF fund to the Member Panel. (N & PI)

N – Narrative / PI – Performance Indicator





# Sustainable growth, protected rurality

– vibrant growth, sense of place, recognisably home

# 05



## Our Strategic Aims:

Linked to the last theme, one of the most important roles North Warwickshire Borough Council can play is to **shape the type of place** North Warwickshire is and ensure there is a **plentiful supply of houses, of the right type and quality**.

There is a housing crisis in the UK caused by insufficient properties being built over a long period of time. The Council will therefore play its part in providing **sustainable growth, facilitating investment in the Borough**. This will ensure the housing needs of the area are met and provide impetus through new jobs, and good quality facilities and services in North Warwickshire.

The growth however must not come at the

expense of future generations and must seek to **retain the rurality of North Warwickshire**. The new necessary growth must integrate well with existing development and seek to retain a recognisable North Warwickshire, in particular protecting as far as possible our Green Belt and other strategic designations of land.

Working with partner organisations and advocating for the Borough for the infrastructure mentioned in the last objective is key to this aim.



**Sustainable growth providing sufficient houses and jobs, bringing investment into our places whilst keeping our recognisable rurality.**

## How we will achieve this:

We will ensure we have an up-to-date Local Plan, which remains the best way to provide the homes, jobs and other sustainable growth needed in the area. Crucially, it also provides the best mechanism to ensure as far as we can that development only happens in the right areas, and for the protection of the Green Belt. A key part of this is to review Plans at the right time and the Council has committed to starting a review once national planning policy revisions are published. A number of key parts of the preparatory work for this review can commence now.

We will continue to work with regional partners to ensure our Plan fits into the wider regional context and that we are all working together ensure the necessary supply of homes, jobs, and infrastructure.

Use our Design Champions to ensure the best achievable designs are implemented and developed so as to reflect setting and local character. The Council will hold a further round of its Civic Awards scheme.

Seek to secure the protection of the best of the Borough's built and rural heritage, as well as our natural assets such as the Tame Valley Wetlands Partnership.

To press for the maximum mitigation and benefits for the Borough arising from HS2, particularly during construction in partnership with other affected Councils and community action groups

Continue to implement the adopted North Warwickshire Leisure Facilities, Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies, and the accompanying Local Football Facilities Plan, in accordance with their associated Action and Funding Plans. In addition, the Council will progress the business case for a new leisure facility in Polesworth and Atherstone. The Council will review the Green Space Strategy including measures to help with climate change and with the revised Biodiversity Net Gain requirement. The Council will also

continue to review the business case for providing leisure services through a wholly owned trading company given recent external changes in the leisure industry.

To implement our Homeless Strategy, work on private housing and our action plan to meet the new Consumer Standards. In addition, the Council will assess the business case for creating a wholly owned housing company to assist with the provision of housing that will be delivered, particularly on Local Plan allocated sites, in particular whether new approaches can be taken regarding the provision of a wider range of affordable housing.



## How we will measure this:

- Report on progress of the Local Plan and subsequent reviews. (N)
- Report on key planning and housing data such as the five-year housing supply, percentage of affordable homes, amount of land built on brownfield and allocated sites. (PI)
- Report to the Planning and Development Board on pressures on the Green Belt, design and heritage issues including conservation areas. (N)
- Report progress on Leisure Facilities, Playing Pitches and Green Space Strategies. (N)
- Report progress on homelessness, private housing, and other housing issues including action to meet the new Consumer Standards. (N)





**Protecting the  
rurality of North  
Warwickshire,  
supporting its  
communities, and  
promoting the  
wellbeing of  
residents and  
business.**





# North Warwickshire Borough Council



[www.northwarks.gov.uk](http://www.northwarks.gov.uk)





# Performance Report

March 2025

# PERFORMANCE REPORT MARCH 2025

## TRAFFIC LIGHT

Measure improving markedly

Measure improving

No/virtually no change, no trend or measure not “good” or bad”

Measure worsening

Measure worsening markedly

## CORPORATE PLAN 2023/27

Corporate Plan key objectives:

**Efficient and sustainable organisation – financial management, lean and responsive organisation**

**Safe, Liveable, Locally Focussed Communities – feeling safe, place-based enforcement, quality of life**

**Prosperous, active and healthy – jobs, infrastructure, connectivity, health**

**Sustainable growth, protected rurality - vibrant growth, sense of place, recognisably home**

## EFFICIENT ORGANISATION – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, LEAN AND RESPONSIVE ORGANISATION

EO 1 - Delivery the Medium Term Financial Strategy to improve the Council's financial sustainability

Identifying the resources needed to deliver the Council's plan to provide high-quality priority services to our communities

*Balanced budget and savings identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (N)*

*Review our approach to asset management with an Officer Board, reporting to Members, on a coordinated and proactive approach to the use of our assets, linked to service provision and commercial activity (N)*

*Appropriate charges for Green Waste and Parking to help sustain services (PI)*

*Efficiently collect money due to the Council, whilst continuing to offer support (PI)*

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024-29 was reported to the Executive Board in November 2024 and the latest update can be found [here](#). The MTFS was at the heart of the adopted budget, agreed by Council on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

The Strategy is reviewed annually.

A number of projects have been identified in order to implement the Strategy's aim of making the Council's finances more sustainable, such as a review of the Council's assets, a review of fees and charges that was included within the February 2025 budget, appraisal of the case for a commercial housing company (approved by this Board in June and which officer are taking further advice on regarding the preliminary steps for establishing the company), review of leisure provision, and a review of waste collection in the light of Government changes.

		<p>Collection rates for the current year are:</p> <p><u>CTAX</u> – Target for end of Financial year is 98.2% Collection as of 26/02/2025 is 94.85%</p> <p><u>NDR</u> - Target for end of Financial year is 99% Collection as of 26/02/2025 is 95.33%</p> <p><u>Sundry Debts</u> – current collection rate 83% (September's rate was 84%)</p>
<p>EO 2 - A robust transformation programme to ensure our services and processes are as lean as possible</p> <p>Consider new models of working and providing services</p>		<p>A separate update setting out the year's transformation activities was <a href="#">reported</a> to Executive Board in September 2024.</p> <p>As Members will be aware, prior to 2019/20, the Council had no dedicated transformation resources and the progress made by the team has been excellent. A log of the prior achievements, as reported to this Board, is attached.</p> <p>As can be seen from the report, there is a busy work programme which has been supplemented by the new Data Analyst post and the work on a Performance Dashboard report elsewhere on this agenda.</p> <div data-bbox="763 1335 813 1386" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Transformation Team log of achievements.d</p>

		<p>An update on recent work activity is included <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>In addition, the Planning team, working with IT colleagues have successfully bid to join the <a href="#">Open Digital Planning</a> programme which is “A community of forward-thinking Local Planning Authorities working together to shape a more efficient, data-driven planning system”.</p>
EO 3 - Develop our staff in the new skills needed, properly supported by IT		<p><i>Staff survey results (PI)</i></p> <p>Staff appraisals take place on an annual basis and lead to the production of a training plan. The form has been revised this year to explicitly link individual objectives to the Corporate Plan via Divisions’ Service Plans.</p> <p>The Council undertakes an annual staff survey. The 24/25 survey has now closed and the results being collated. They will be reported to Members shortly and included in the September 2025 update of this Performance Report.</p> <p>The key results for the 23/24 survey as are follows:</p> <p>A total of 165 employees completed the survey. This is a response rate of 50%, which is an increase from previous years, which is positive in itself. There were 47 questions in total, which were split over 7 areas.</p>



A summary of the responses is set out in the table below, with last year's result to aid comparison and a graphic summary of the results can be found [here](#)

Section	No of Qs	Summary of Results								
		Best Ever	Significantly Improved	Improved	Slightly Improved	Same	Slightly Worse	Worse	Significantly Worse	Worse Ever
Communication	12	1		1	1	1	2	3	2	1
Training & Development	9		1		1		1	2	4	
Staff Morale	13	1		1			5	6		
Community Engagement	1						1			
Management	8	3					3	1	1	
H&S	1						1			
E Learning	3	1				1	1			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>



As can be seen, the results of this year's survey are statistically lower in comparison to the results from the 2022 survey. However, overall, there were still many positive results. For example, the question "Do you know how you can help the Council to succeed?" may be statistically 'significantly worse' when compared to the 2022 result, however, 82% of respondents answered 'Yes'. There are however some areas that will be considered.

The results have been fed back to staff and Divisional actions plans are being produced to identify 3 key actions within each Team. A new staff engagement group has been created by the staff led Organisational Development Group and it held its first meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February, as a workshop looking at these results, and met again on the 17<sup>th</sup> July. Further meetings are planned in 2025. Three sub groups have been established to look at Communication, Management and Staff Morale and work continues within these sub groups. In addition there are a number of recommendations from the LGA's DMA review which were reported to Members last year that officers will consider, including a People Strategy which will look at these issues.

**Table Summary of Staff Survey Results 2023/24**

Section	No of Qs	Summary of Results								
		Best Ever	Sig. Improved	Improved	Slightly Improved	Same	Slightly Worse	Worse	Sig. Worse	Worse Ever
Communication	12	6	1	2	1	1	1			
Training & Development	9	2	7							

Staff Morale	13	11			1	1				
Community Engagement	1	1								
Management	8	8								
H&S	1		1							
Data Protection	3	3								
TOTAL	47	31	9	2	2	2	1			

47 Questions in total split over 7 areas

EO 4 - Develop our vulnerability work from COVID 19 to provide additional assurance to residents who may be experiencing difficulties

### **Financial Inclusion Update March 2025**

The Council has increased the resources it has to help people with financial issues and improve the sustainability of their finances, with a significant amount of work being undertaken by the Council and with its partners.

### **Financial Inclusion Update March 2025**

- **Financial Inclusion Partnership meetings for 24/25 period:**
- 19/6/24 - TEAMS
- 26/9/24 – F2F (TEAMS link available)
- 5/12/24 - TEAMS
- 19/3/25 – F2F (TEAMS link available)
- **Plan for 25/26:**
  - 'Data Group' now a standing agenda item
    - To develop data led projects and initiatives to support 'take up' campaigns, help identify potential joint project work, emerging issues and funding opportunities
    - Support households with energy saving linked to available EPC data
  - Supporting Vulnerable residents and to consider a Vulnerability register for the LA
  - Food Insecurity and options for support pathways
  - Raise awareness and take-up of 'gateway' Benefits, such as Pension Credit
  - Continue to develop initiatives and support for residents facing challenges with the cost of living, especially fuel

### **Financial Inclusion Support Delivery: April 24 to February 25**

- **181** Households supported with Money Matters by the FI Support Officer
  - **59** had a vulnerability
  - **101** helped to claim additional benefits
  - **39** Food vouchers awarded

- NB: Many in crisis, also accessed other options across the borough who were in crisis
- **33** Fuel Bank vouchers issued (Apr 24 to July 24)
- **144** referred / signposted for additional support services
  - This will include multiple referrals for individuals to various organisations for support
- **39** referred for energy efficiency support and access to insulation schemes / small measures
- **Headlines:**
  - **£58,609.55** – Helped to increase household incomes by this amount through benefit maximisation
  - **£10,256** – helped households to secure in DHP
  - **£161,514** – total debt owed by the households supported
    - NB: this across 22 cases (approx. £7,341 per household)
  - **£167,502.71** – total Council Tax debt owed by the households supported
    - NB: this is across 72 cases
      - **24** Council tax Lump sum payments negotiated
      - **45** Council tax payment arrangements put in place
  - Outreach work developed and available in local venues and schools
  - Attend the Over 65's Social Supermarket to provide advice and signposting
  - Supported initiatives, events and community groups
  - FSM Campaign undertaken as part of Levelling Up work
  - Cost of Living event undertaken as part of Levelling Up work

### Emergency Food Provision

From April 2024 North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC) commissioned and funded through the UKSPF, 'We Care UK' to supply and deliver Emergency Food

provision to residents facing financial hardship across the borough.

The relationship with We Care UK is based on a 3-year period, with the first 12 months being a funded period and the expectation that the following 2 years they will become a fully sustainable service.

We Care UK offer a responsive, seven day per week service, providing well balanced nutritional food for a minimum of three days. This helps support local people and families through an immediate food crisis. Referrals to We Care UK are made by approved agencies and organisations who may be helping to support local people in other ways. Once the simple online referral is made, the resident is contacted within a couple of hours to arrange for the food to be delivered the same day! We Care UK also offer doorstep budgeting sessions from their trained advisers and signposting to our other local partners for support.

#### **April 24 to Feb 25**

We Care UK provided:

- **424** households provided with an Emergency Food Parcels
- **244** households with children
- **85** single occupants
- **50** pensioner households
- **53** disabled households
- We Care UK also offer budgeting sessions on the doorstep and follow ups. They supported:
- **71** households with budgeting support

#### **Christmas Support – We Care Uk**

We Care UK also provided an opportunity for NWBC and partners, to support families with Christmas hampers and children with age-appropriate toys. The support provided:

- **92** Christmas hampers provide to households
- **233** Children received and age-appropriate toy / gift

We are looking forward to continuing the great work with We Care UK to support our local residents facing financial challenges and food insecurity.

#### **Christmas Support – Ediblelinks**

## Ediblelinks allocated NWBC 15 families to refer for Christmas Hampers in Dec 24:

- 6 were identified NWBC teams
- 8 were identified by Racemeadow
- 1 PCSO
- \*A We Care UK case study highlighting



We Care UK - Case Study 1.pdf

their work is attached below:

## Emergency Food Parcels (EFP) – by 'Ward'

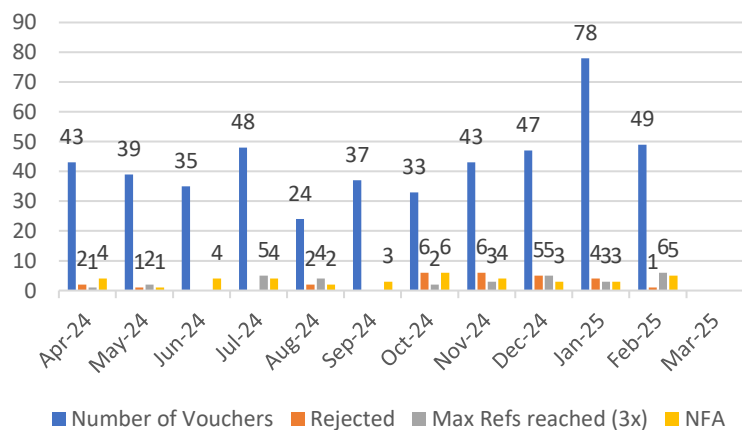
- Embedded is the spread of EFP by ward. This does not include homeless or No Fixed Abode cases.



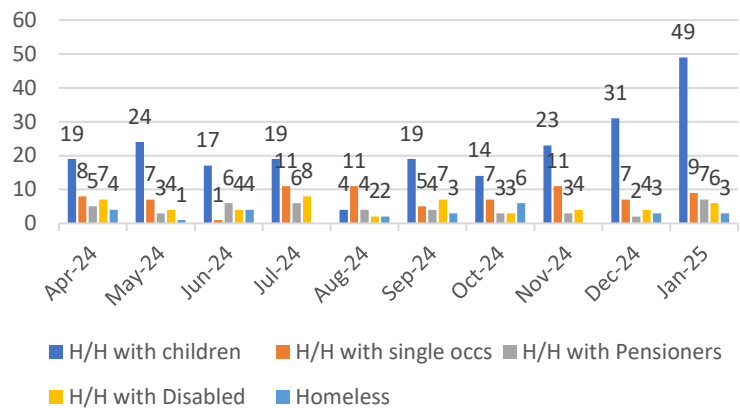
NWBC - Apr 24 - Feb 25.pdf.pdf

## Emergency Food Data – Graphs

Number of Emergency Food Parcels for the period 24 / 25 provided by We Care Uk



### Emergency Food Parcel Household Breakdown for the period 24/25.



### We Care UK – Schools project

We care UK were successful in securing some additional funding from the HSF to work in schools. Following some discussion, it was agreed that the schools would mirror those that NWBC have been working with on FSM in our Creating Opportunities area to help build better outcomes in a concentrated area. The schools included in the project are: Outwoods, St Benedicts, Woodside, Nursery Hill and Arley, plus Racemeadow.

Given that the HSF funding was only awarded in Dec for completion by end of Mar, time was very limited. Schools were slow to take up the initiative and identify a designated lead to refer families. Therefore, the offer has been widened to take referrals from our secondary schools across the area. The data so far:

- **December 2024 - February 2025**
- **362** Households supported with food parcels via schools
  - This included 644 people in total
- **91%** of the referrals had not had a food parcel previously, from any other source
- However, there are additional offers that are offered across the borough which are promoted by our teams and on our website – see link [Food Supply Help | Cost of Living | North Warwickshire Borough Council \(northwarks.gov.uk\)](#)
  - LA staff and We Care UK actively encourage residents to access the Ediblelinks Social Supermarket as a 'next steps' from crisis provision

and as a platform into becoming a more sustainable shopping option.

- The LA also have a supply of **'Emergency' Aldi vouchers** which we use to support many in crisis
  - We have to date, awarded **184** vouchers to the value of **£5,925**

- **Ediblelinks Social Supermarket for over 65's**
- To support pensioners, following the government's announcement regarding the cessation of the Winter Fuel Allowance for all pensioners, Ediblelinks hosted a weekly Social Supermarket session for people over 65. This initiative started on 5<sup>th</sup> November 24.
- **Data:**
  - Period 5/11/24 to 28/1/25 they have supported **246** pensioners to access affordable, nutritional food
  - The NWBC FISO also attends to provide advice and signposting for any additional support

#### **UKSPF funded Projects**

- **NW Connect and Learn**
- Digital sessions started and were made available in 7 local community venues for 10 weeks
- Open to all residents who need to learn computer basics and get online
- Drop ins for residents to ask any question relation to getting online including mobile questions!
- Running alongside the **Money, Money, Maths** (DWP Multiply programme)
  - A cost-of-living workshop helping people to budget and save money
  - The outcomes document, up to end of June 24:



Connect%20and%20  
learn%20report-%2



### Tackling Social Inequalities Funding (TSI)

- Funding to continue to support **NW Connect and Learn** Sessions up to end of Mar 25, (originally funded via UKSPF until end of Mar 24)– a final report is awaited
- **Red Card Gambling** awareness Sessions (up to end Mar 25)
- Open to **ALL** frontline workers, working across the NORTH (NB and NW areas)
- An **CPD accredited** course
- 10 sessions (30 participants per session max) – Completed by Dec 24
- These sessions most closely link to Priority 1 of the WCC Tackling Social Inequalities Strategy which relates to '**upskilling practitioners to increase their skills and confidence in identifying and supporting residents facing financial hardship**'.
- **10** sessions completed to date (end of Aug 24)
  - **98** attendees from across the FI Partnership
  - Feedback:
    - **75%** 'excellent' and **25%** Good
    - **100%** enjoyed the awareness session
    - **85%** commented that the course should be delivered again within their organisation
    - Comments from attendees - 'invaluable', 'insightful', 'informative. 'a real eye opener', 'thanks for sharing your lived experience'
- **REPF**
- Approx 150 Energy Packs purchased, consisting of:
  - Thermal electric throws
  - Slow Cooker
  - Draught proofing
  - Radiator Reflector foil
  - LED Bulbs
- We will be utilising and distributing some packs at the Big Day Out events and

during a data lead project in spring / Autumn 25 in Mancetter south and Ridge Lane area

- We used 2 packs to incentivise engagement at the Mancetter and Ridge Lane Cost of Living event on 23/4/24
- Slow cookers have been provided to community groups as follows: Water Orton, Ridge Lane, St Peters Church in Mancetter to support their offer to the local community

### **Councillor Hardship Fund**

- Following member approval the Councillor Hardship fund went live early 2024
- £5,000 allocated per ward
- Eligibility Criteria and FI team to administer
- The administration is all managed via the TEAMS channel
- **Data** (to close in October 24):
  - Total Fund = £85,000
  - Spend £32,500
  - Balance = £52,500
  - Total number of applications = 25
    - 2 Refused
    - 23 Approved

### **NWBC Winter Fuel Award**

North Warwickshire Borough Council agreed to make a payment to a target group of 'pensioner' residents to partially cover the loss of the Winter Fuel Allowance following the Government's announcement to cease the payment.

The **NWBC Winter Fuel Award** was a decision taken by members in October 2024. With only a finite amount of money available, and to avoid undue costs and time, it was decided to specifically target a cohort of Pensioners, who's details were already held and who could be highlighted on our Benefits and Council Tax system. A one-off direct payment of £100 was made to the customers identified by the system. This cohort were determined by the criteria as outlined below:

- Over 66 years of age

- NOT on Pension Credit
- On Council Tax Support as at 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024
- Have less than £3,000 in savings

#### NWBC WFA Data Outcomes:

- **484** - Total number of pensioners that fulfilled the permitted criteria
- **428** – Actual number of pensioners who received a NWBC Winter Fuel Award
- Total Payments made = **£42,800**
- **26** - Pensioners stated that they didn't need or want the payment due to becoming entitled to Pension Credit / passed away
- **8** – pensioners supported to claim Pension Credit
- We have had some lovely feedback and many 'thanks' from our customers for the council support
  - *'It is with a heartfelt thanks for the payment towards Winter fuel and it's so kind as any payment helps, It is appreciated'*

\*Refer to embedded document for further details



WFA%20Final%20evaluation%20DRAFT.1



WFA Infographic draft.pdf

#### Free School Meals

##### Headlines.....

- Countywide FSM working group to look at take up and how it can be promoted better and help to increase numbers - ongoing
- Michael Drayton school received TSI funding from WCC to provide FSM to all children in school for 1 term which has been very successful, and Warwick University are undertaking a study re outcomes – to be completed
- As you are aware NWBC has developed and supported Free School Meal initiatives to ensure that we maximise take up for our children, wherever possible. Therefore, we are supporting the Food Foundation's call for Free School

Meal auto-enrolment which was sent to Stephen Morgan MP in December. A letter requesting the support from our 2 MP's was issued in February 25, which they are both happy to support.

**NWBC FSM Project – *Have your cake and eat it!*  
(‘Creating Opportunities’ aka Levelling Up)**

- Locally, we secured some FSM funding from WCC to work in the Mancetter South and Ridge Lane to support FSM take up
- 5 feeder schools for the area – Outwoods, Nursery Hill, Woodside, Arley and St Benedicts
- We went ‘back to basics’ – letters home in school bags, placemat for every child in school, chatting to parents at school gates, checking FSM entitlement and offering advice drop-in sessions monthly

**FSM Data outcomes:**

- **951** letters and placemats issued to all children
- **12** sessions speaking to parents direct at school gates
- **74** Free School Meal forms completed
- **20** additional FSM to register
- **£187,960** additional Pupil Premium funding for the schools
- **£475** per year saving for each FSM family (190 school days x average school meal @£2.50)
  - **20** FSM families total saving = **£9,500**

\*Refer to embedded documents for more detail

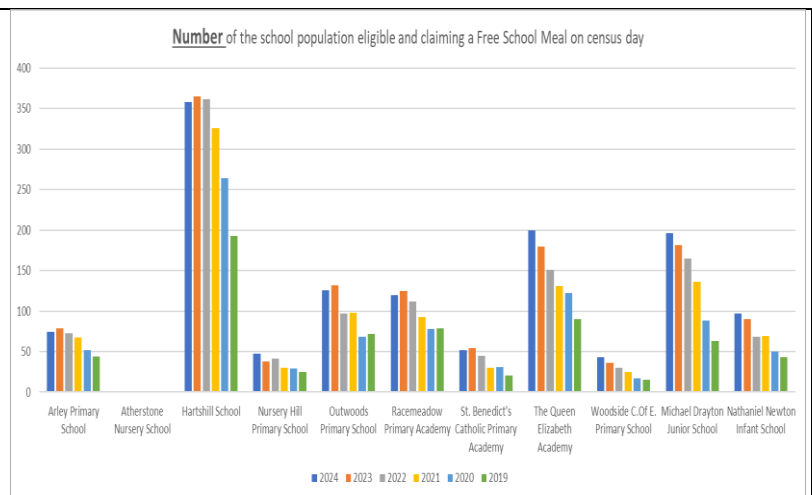


FSM%20Project%20Evaluation%2010%2



**Infographic FSM  
Evaluation Levelling**

**To note:** below is a table that demonstrates that the FSM work undertaken over the last 6 years has made a difference to the FSM numbers and take up in schools.



## Pension Credit Take Up

- Low take up of Pension Credit nationally and in NWBC area pensioners 'may be' missing out on a approx. £4.2 million in North Warwickshire constituency – see below table
- We looked at Revs and Bens data and identified a small 'pilot' cohort of 36 pensioners to work with where it appears that they may be entitled to Pension Credit
- We wrote to all the cohort informing them of a call to discuss and offer a PC check
- We completed calls and pension credit calculation checks to identify potential entitlement
- We discussed how they could apply, if they were able to apply themselves, had family to help, or whether we needed to help them to apply
- **Data Outcomes** – to date. Some are delayed due to delays in PC processing:
  - **7** awarded
  - **7** Did Not Qualify
  - **6** awaiting decision
  - **4** not wishing to pursue
  - **1** deceased
  - **1** moved out of area
  - **2** moved to care homes
  - **8** failed to engage and details passed to housing as NWBC tenants and had additional needs with other issues
- During this process we have also identified some cases where we should

be applying Single Person Discount for pensioners. This has been rectified and an additional **£6,383** has been awarded in Single Person Discount

- MP and Councillor Pension Credit 'drop-in' sessions have been supported across the borough by the FI team. We have been able to advice and to help claim. However, these have had relatively low attendance
- We have recently obtained access to a 'Pensioner Credit Dashboard' which holds a wealth of information regarding our pensioners. This is currently in the process of being revised for a more accurate overview of Pensioners across the borough. Once this is available I will share the information.
- PC Take Up messages have been scheduled to go out via our comms channels in line with the DWP comms toolkit provided
- We will continue to promote the take-up of Pension Credit as it is a vital 'gateway' benefit for many pensioners

Constituency	Predicted total annual amount unclaimed
Stratford-upon-Avon	£3.6 million
Warwick and Leamington	£3.6 million
Kenilworth and Southam	£2.4 million
Rugby	£3.7 million
North Warwickshire	£4.2 million
Nuneaton and Bedworth	£4.8 million
<b>Warwickshire Total</b>	<b>£22.3 million</b>

## CitySave Credit Union

### Affordable Credit

- A working group has been established across Warwickshire to look at more affordable lending options
- Some funding available via WCC and also IMLT (POCA)
- New initiative in relation to 'affordable lending' offer for those who are generally unable to borrow from mainstream, lenders via CitySave Credit Union
- Some funding has been allocated for 24/25 in relation to communication for

CitySave and maximising reach across the county with target groups

- This work will continue to be developed throughout 2024/25, and hopefully 2026
- We will continue to build our relationship and promote Citysave Credit union as an saving and affordable lending option for our residents

#### **NWBC Employee Support**

- City Save CU payroll deduction scheme available and promoted for employees. A direct deduction from salary for 'savings scheme'
- The CU offer of the 'PrizeSaver' Account – where you could win up to £5,000 per month
- We will continue to promote this to employees

#### **Severn Trent Water (STW)**

- We have been working on a setting up a pilot with STW for our Intro tenancies to give a discount of up to 70% on their water bills to support people in the first 12 months
- However, progress has been slow and we are still in the process of trying to get the DSA and appropriate documentation agreed between the two parties – this is still an ongoing issue
- STW will be presenting to the NW FIP re new schemes available
- We have scheduled in some STW refresher training sessions for NWBC and partners
- STW have offered for the FISO and TSO (Housing) to become trusted referral agents for the Big Difference Scheme, however this is dependent on the DSA been agreed and signed. Training will be provided by STW

#### **Creating Opportunities – Mancetter and Ridge Lane**

- The FI team supported local initiatives in relation to 'Creating Opportunities' (aka Levelling Up') – 'Have Your Cake and Eat It! (FSM campaign), SMART Living (cost of

	<p>living event), TIME Out sessions, café and drop-in sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Future initiatives in the coming months and Warmer Home, Healthier You (Project EPC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We will continue to promote messages in relation to FI activity, employment, Move to UC, benefit changes, PC up take and important information in relation to cost of living challenges.</li> <li>○ We work with the Communications team to schedule relevant messages over a period of time</li> </ul>
<p>EO 5 - Ensure as many services are based in North Warwickshire as possible to ensure they reflect and respond to the Borough, including working with partners on digital connectivity.</p>	<p>The Council continues to advocate for as many services as possible to be delivered in the Borough.</p> <p>As reported previously, a number of services have been co-located with leisure services. The Council is seeking to increase the number of related services on offer at its centres, including using advance health measuring scales using funding from the Health and Wellbeing Working Group.</p> <p>The Council continues to implement the UK Shared Prosperity Fund delivery plan, with a total of £1.4m allocated to a range of projects in the community and to support local businesses.</p> <p>As mentioned below in PH5 and PH6, a Warwickshire North Place Health Grant has been created and the Council has bid for funding to support the acquisition of the equipment and staff training that would enable the provision of blood glucose and blood cholesterol testing. This is part of an overall push to integrate our leisure and exercise offer with the related health issues, as part of an overall wellbeing service and more supportive membership journey for those using our Leisure services. Recent additional actions include a weekly Memory Café started at Atherstone Memorial Hall. Officers are working with the George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust on the option of hosting a Cardiac Rehabilitation programme at the Memorial Hall.</p> <p>Our work on Community Safety continues to push for greater Police resource in the Borough and more continuity of service. Successful bids for OPPCC funding</p>



and Safer Streets funding have been made and a number of projects/services will be introduced in to the Borough.

Members are aware of the Council's work to improve its leisure offer. Work continues with partners, particular health to examine if the related services included in the LUF bids can still be included in order to secure and improve the services available in the area.

There have been a number of meetings (the latest on the 13<sup>th</sup> February) with Network Rail and the [West Midlands Rail Executive](#) (WMRE) (part of the Combined Authority arrangements) on the opportunities for more rail services in the Borough, This has focussed initially on Water Orton and Coleshill Parkway.

The Government has announced initial funding of £123m for the Midlands Rail Hub (MRH) project, using funding repurposed following decisions on the future of HS2. This funding will be reviewed as part of this summer's Comprehensive Spending Review, and currently forms part of a £1.75bn investment strategy for the MRH with the aim of more services in and out of Birmingham (and other cities). The Eastern Project section of the MRH will look at more trains per hour from Birmingham to Nottingham and to Leicester which may allow for more services within the Borough. Improvements at Moor Street Station is key to this and services from our area may terminate there rather than New Street.

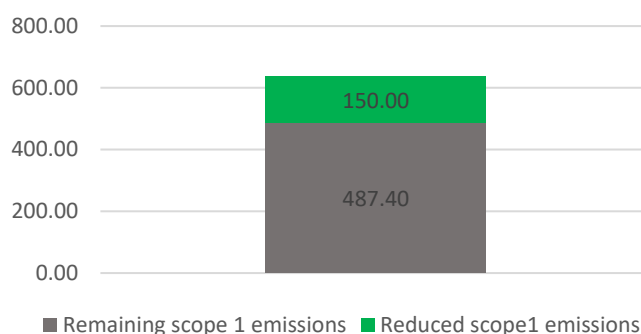
This project is at an early stage but as a result of meeting with WMRE's Head of Rail Policy and Strategy, our wish for additional services (and which cover more of the day) is being advocated for within that development work. The proposal is being finalised for submission ahead of the timetabling process which is then announced in December. This Council and the County Council will be writing again to CrossCountry trains to express its support for these additional services.

The County Council are currently reviewing the 'station prospectuses' for Coleshill Parkway and Water Orton which have been completed in draft and will be discussed as part of the Transport Strategy work. WCC are also reviewing the options to improve services at Polesworth station. There are also longer term aspirations regarding a new Polesworth station and a Kingsbury Parkway station.

	<p>All these projects will form a significant part of the North Warwickshire Transport Plan (see PH4 below)</p> <p>A Member meeting/workshop with Severn Trent Water took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> December and allowed Members to raise a number of concerns regarding the quality of the services in the Borough. A separate email address has been provided for Councillors – Officers are aware that there are times when replies are delayed and this has been raised with Severn Trent Water officers.</p> <p>The Council continues to work with the County Council on improving digital connectivity in the Borough. Devices are being placed with our refuse vehicles (as they cover the whole of the Borough) which will measure the strength, or otherwise, of the mobile phone network in the Borough to give further information on areas with poor coverage.</p> <p>The CSW Broadband project is now complete with 78,000 properties across the region now capable of being connected to the fastest broadband. The final project included new cabinets in Dordon, Grendon and Hartshill.</p> <p>Warwickshire and Leicestershire have been awarded £71m from Project Gigabit and have appointed City Fibre to assess where interventions would be helpful.</p> <p>We are also involved in communications about the digital switch due to happen this year.</p> <p>A workshop with WCC colleagues is being developed in the summer in which the connectivity issues affecting the Borough can be discussed. Member representation will be invited to this workshop.</p>
<p>E06 – Action from the Residents’ Survey</p>	<p>As Members will be aware, the overall <a href="#">results</a> from the Residents’ Survey were very positive.</p> <p>There were a number of issues however which highlighted areas for the Council, and its partners, to work on.</p> <p>The Council is very keen for the Residents’ Survey to remain a ‘live’ document and to influence the Council’s actions and priorities.</p> <p>To that end, the Council’s Budget adopted last month continued to reflect the issues raised and provided further initial funding towards examining the feasibility of replacement leisure facilities given the general support for enhanced leisure provision set out in the survey results.</p> <p>The top priorities for households included inflationary pressures on the cost of living and the Council has</p>

	<p>increased the staffing resources in our Financial Inclusion Team (see E04 above for an update on the Council's Financial Inclusion work). It also provided a payment to older residents to offset some of the loss of Winter Fuel Payments.</p> <p>In addition the appearance and cleanliness of the Borough was identified and the Council identified further funding for street cleaning (£125,000) and a High Street Grant fund £100,000). Both of these projects have now been agreed for a second year.</p> <p>The issue of feeling safe after dark was also highlighted and Officers will seek to discuss this with partners with the North Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership.</p> <p>How we communicate with residents, in particular our reception and customer service arrangements, also came out as a priority and the Interim Corporate Director Resources and Head of Corporate Services will lead a review into these areas which will start in the next few months.</p>
<p>E07 – Continue the Council's sustainability work looking at the business case for reducing our carbon emissions</p>	<p>The Council has declared a climate emergency and adopted a <a href="#">Climate Change Action Plan</a> and the latest position is set out below:</p> <p><b>Fleet electrification</b></p> <p>The Council recently approved a report looking electrify the small fleet (vehicles less than 3.5 tonnes). This decision will lead to a significant reduction in scope 1 (direct) emissions for the Council. As the electricity grid continues to become less carbon intensive as more renewable projects are connected, this will see the electrified fleet emissions reduce down to net-zero.</p> <p>The Council fleet produces an estimate 550-600tonnesCO<sub>2</sub> annually. It is believed that by electricity the small fleet these scope1 emissions be reduced by an estimated 100-200 tonnesCO<sub>2</sub> annually. With the remaining emissions coming from the Council's heavy fleet refuse and recycling vehicles.</p>

### Estimated impact of electrification of the small fleet - Scope 1 emissions



To support this development, a tender is currently live to allocate an installer of Electric Vehicle Charging points at Sheepy Road Depot. This will enable the Council charge the vehicles overnight, and aim for a cheap electrical tariff allowing low carbon, and cheaper energy to run vehicles than internal combustion counterparts.

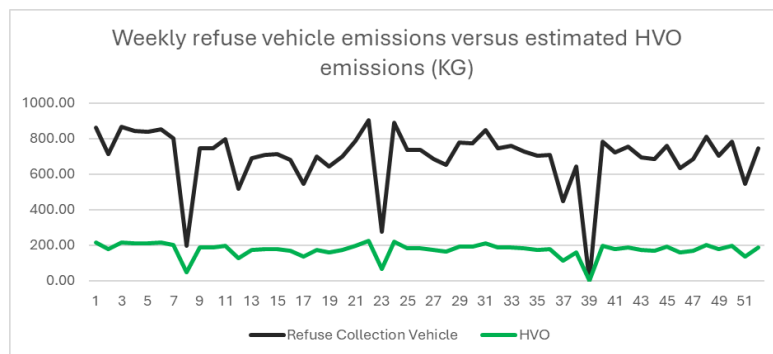
### Low Carbon Diesel replacement pilot

It is likely not viable to replace the heavy fleet with electric vehicles prior to their replacement towards the end of the decade. However, it is important that work is undertaken to continue to reduce emissions to achieve the Council's net-zero target.

Alternative fuels are available that provide a significant emissions reduction when used in place of diesel. One such fuel is known as Hydrotreated vegetable Oil, HVO. The emissions saving can be between 70%-95% simply by using this drop in alternative fuel.

Whilst the Council explores if HVO is a valid proposal for the Council's net-zero plan, a joint pilot has been undertaken alongside Warwickshire County Council.

HVO fuel will be used in a single vehicle of North Warwickshire to monitor vehicle performance, any mileage impacts, cost impacts of alternative fuels and sustainability. This pilot has been operation since 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025, with no vehicle issues reported by the vehicle manager. The emissions savings will be calculated in time, as the exact emissions per litre of fuel cannot be provided at fuel delivery. But should the pilot prove successful, it is possible that HVO or another alternative fuel, may offer an option to reduce emissions, prior to electrification

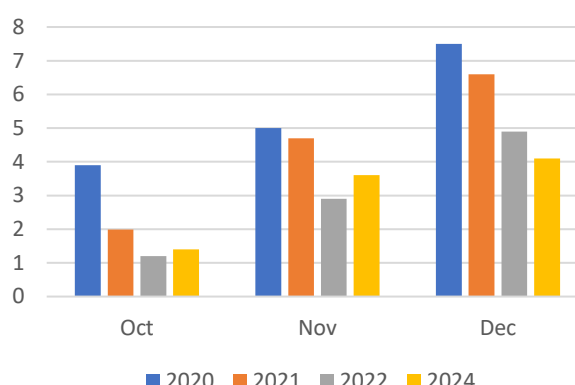


### Gas usage

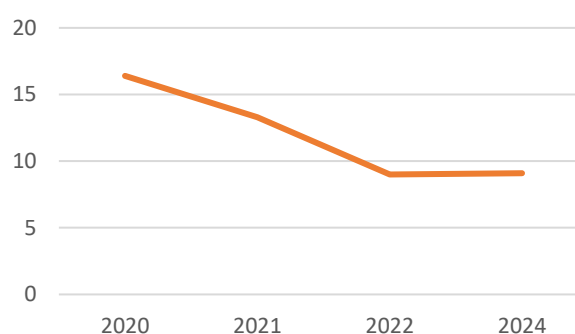
Data processing of utilities is an ongoing issue that is being resolved through ongoing communication with the energy providers, the production of internal systems and the installation of smart meters. Despite these challenges the data is already able to indicate trends in gas usage across the Council.

The Council House demonstrates that there has been a reduction in gas use from 2020 to 2024. This is a positive step as the burning of gas is a direct cause of CO2 emissions, hence minimising gas use is an essential step to reaching net-zero emissions. Gas usage can be reduced through improving the fabric of the building (insulation), reducing heat loss (air tightness, Heat recovery) or behaviour change (reducing thermostats, etc). However, these methods will always reach a limit on the level of reduction attainable. A net-zero future will see gas boilers widely removed and replaced with low carbon technologies such as heat pumps, or other electrical systems. The levelling off of gas usage reductions at the Council house in 2022 and 2024 may suggest that the gas usage has hit a point that a more significant retrofit is now required. If the gas boiler were replaced with an electrical system the emission would reduce in line with the electricity of the UK energy grid. With the current labour government aiming for a carbon free grid by 2030.

The Council House | gas emissions (tonnes)  
October - December 2020-2024



The Council House Gas emission (Tonnes) October - December

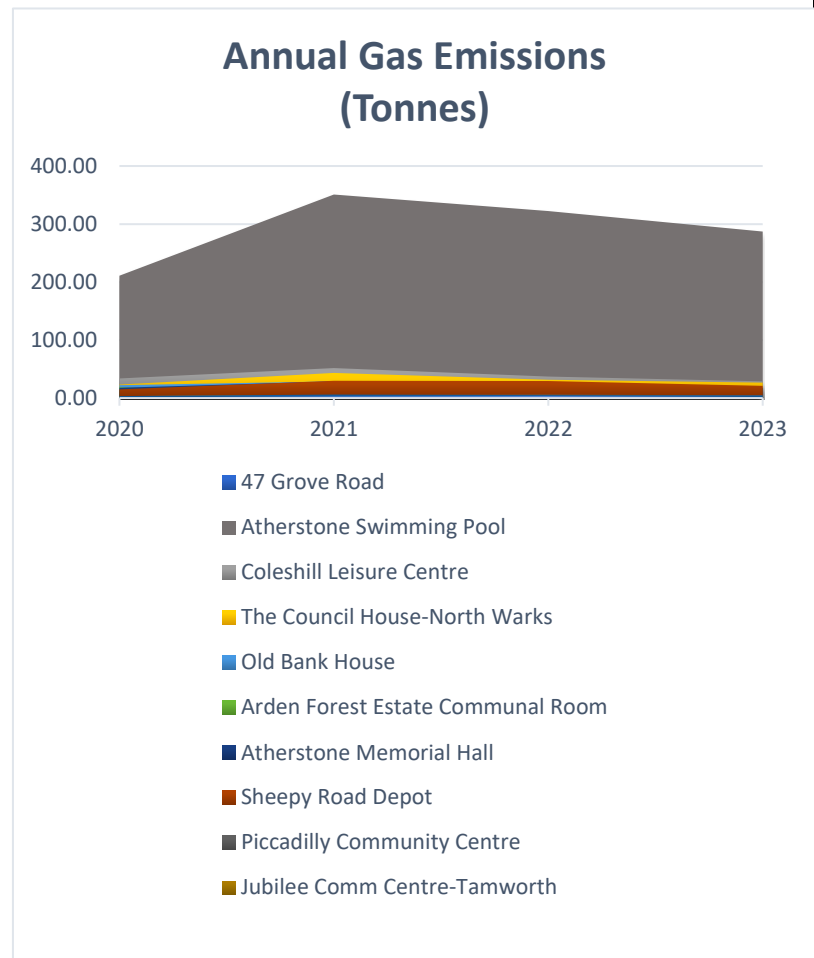


### Atherstone leisure redevelopment

Atherstone leisure centre is the Council's greatest user of gas. This gas is used to heat the pool and the building. The gas consumption of Atherstone accounts for roughly 68% of the Council's entire gas usage, and directly emits around 300 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere each year.

The recent discussions regarding the redevelopment of the Atherstone leisure complex presents an opportunity to significantly reduce the Council's emissions and take a substantial step towards the net-zero target. If any new heating system were electrical, and the grid's carbon intensity reduces as expected towards 2030, it will be possible to negate the direct emissions currently released from the leisure centre. Failure to electrify heating will likely lead to a substantial gas consumption well beyond the 2030 net-zero target. Discussion regarding the leisure centre are still ongoing. But it is hoped energy efficiency,

gas usage and emissions will be a part of those discussions.



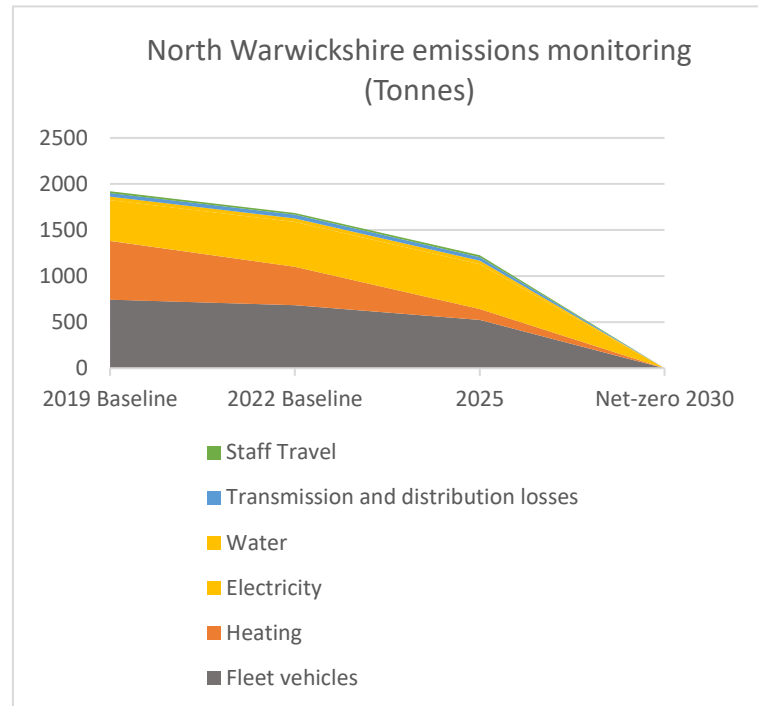
### Emissions trajectory

There is still a considerable amount of work to complete in order to achieve net-zero by 2030. However, if the outlined developments are successfully completed,

Project	Estimated Emissions reduction (tonnes)
Electrification of the small fleet	150
HVO for a single refuse vehicle	9
Electrified heating for Atherstone leisure	300

Then it is estimated that this could reduce the Councils emissions by 459 tonnes. A 63.5% reduction compared to the 2019 emission baseline. This level of reduction will support the Council in the continued drive for net-zero by

2030, and whilst acknowledging the challenge in achieving this goal the outline reduction continues keeps the target in sight.



## SAFE, LIVEABLE, LOCALLY FOCUSSED COMMUNITIES – FEELING SAFE, PLACE BASED ENFORCEMENT, QUALITY OF LIFE

COM 1 - Continue to play a leading role in the North Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership working with the community, including the Police, Town and Parish Councils and people of all ages, background and areas, to improve public perception of crime and public confidence in feeling safe by contributing towards the achievement of the Partnership plan actions and targets for the current strategic priorities. This will be particularly important for those who have spent considerable periods of time shielding against the risk caused by COVID 19.

*Reporting on a range of Safer Communities indicators linked to Violent Crime (with a focus on domestic violence and abuse, sexual offences and drug and alcohol related), Anti-Social Behaviour, Road Safety (with a focus on road traffic accidents resulting in killed or serious injuries), Crime in Rural Areas (PI, N)*

Updates regarding the key Safer Communities issues are reported to the Safer Communities Sub Group

The latest agendas can be found [here](#), and [here](#), with a further meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> March.

As discussed in E06 above, the recent residents' survey has provided further insights into residents' views on feeling safe. The vast majority of residents (94%) say that they feel safe in their local area during the day, and this is



COM 2 - Work with partners to resolve Safer Neighbourhood issues, including, where necessary, taking action to address anti-social and nuisance behaviour

in line with the LGA national benchmark 93%) but above the regional benchmark (89%).

However, the figure for feeling safe after dark (62%) underperforms both LGA comparators (73% national and 67% regional). Officers have arranged to meet with the County Council's Community Safety analysts to discuss what further work can be done to understand the reasons behind this issue. The County Council, on behalf of the District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships, have undertaken a survey of reported cases and perceptions of Community Safety which will help with this further work. The 'Your Say on Community Safety' survey last summer, hosted on the Ask Warwickshire website: <https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk> The survey asked people who live, work and/or study in Warwickshire for their views on a range of community safety issues. The results were used to inform the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessments, which was undertaken in the autumn and used to set new CSP priorities. They will be analysed down to Ward level, so should give us a helpful insight into the views of residents and those who work and study in the county. This will be reported to the March Safer Sub committee but the draft priorities are as follows:



This reflects the motion approved by the Council on Domestic Violence at its February meeting. A brief overview of work to date on this subject will be taken to the March Safer Sub committee with a fuller presentation at the next meeting.

A monthly 'Problem Solving Meeting' is Chaired by the Police Inspector to consider data and target hot spot locations using the SARA problem solving approach and to implement Problem Solving Plans. Current plans include:

- Theft from motor vehicle offences – **Operation YARD** is focussing on Corley Services. Several arrests have been made linked to organised crime.
- **Operation REDUCE** - tackling, disrupting and dismantling county lines drug supply activities.

	<p>Work is to be undertaken at several locations in North Warwickshire. Offenders are believed to be cross-border from the West Midlands</p> <p>Four projects have been approved for funding via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner including Off Road Bike Projects (K Barrier Installation and fencing),, a Road Safety Project and Crime prevention equipment to address acquisitive crime in NW.</p> <p><b>Serious Violence Project.</b></p> <p>One project has been approved to fund a Virtual Reality knife crime programme that will visit secondary schools in North Warwickshire.</p> <p>Members will be aware that work on a Public Spaces Protection Order in respect of Atherstone Town Centre covering a number of anti social activities has been approved by this Board earlier this year. The legal process post adoption has now been completed and the Order is in effect.</p> <p>The CCTV system in Atherstone continues to be well used and effective, supported by funding from the UKSPF. This was further supported in the February 2025 budget.</p> <p>In addition there has been other significant funding on CCTV. As a result of successful funding applications via Safer Streets Funding and UK SPF - 12 new cameras have been purchased with 4 cameras allocated to Parish Councils. North Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership therefore currently has 20 cameras.</p> <p>The Housing team continues to work with the Police's Safer Neighbourhood Teams on issues of anti-social behaviour. The Tenancy Services Team and our Solicitor have recently tackled two serious cases of anti social behaviour. In one an injunction was obtained to protect residents. In the other close liaison with the Police and mental health services enabled the team to safeguard the joint tenant and neighbours.</p>
<p>COM 3 - Advocate on behalf of the Borough to ensure sufficient levels of key services in the area, particularly Police and street lighting.</p>	<p>See update on EO 5 above</p>

COM 4- Maintain a very high standard of street cleanliness throughout the Borough, tackling litter and fly tipping as quickly as possible		<p><i>Report on the cleanliness of the Borough (PI)</i></p> <p>The latest position on fly tipping was reported to the Community and Environment Board meeting on the <a href="#">5th February 2025</a></p> <p>The Council has created a new post of Environmental Crime Officer and following a successful recruitment exercise Andy Timmins started work in last year and has presented on the detail of his work to date to the C&amp;E Board.</p> <p>Since August the Council has investigated 218 cases. 9 Fixed Penalty Notices have or will shortly be issued, four cases are being listed for prosecution, there has been one formal caution and 4 Community Protection Warnings</p>
COM 5 - Ensure maximum coordination between enforcement teams to resolve complex social and environmental issues likely to significantly impact on quality of life.		<p><i>Report on the work of our enforcement teams in Planning, Housing and Environmental Health (N)</i></p> <p>The Planning, Environmental Health and Legal teams continue to work together on cross cutting issues.</p> <p>One recent example of this was the traveller incursion at the Cattle Market car park in Atherstone where members from all three teams ensured there was an injunction served and the car park recovered within a week of the incursion.</p> <p>The structures for both the Environmental Health team and Planning teams have been reviewed in recent year and additional posts added, for example in the February 2025 budget which provided money for a further Planning Enforcement Officer. Regular updates on this work are provided to the Planning and Development and Community and Environment Boards.</p> <p>The Chief Executive continues to chair joint working project groups on issues as necessary, for example on the safety issues relating to protests at Kingsbury Oil Terminal, fly tipping cases, the Lea Marston Shooting Ground, and more recently the Abattoir in Arley on which Environmental Health and Planning Officers are working closely together. The case is due to be reported to the Planning and Development Board shortly.</p>

COM 6 - Support for High Streets  
via the High Street Grant Fund  
and UKSPF funding'

The Communities team continue work with the three Partnerships in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth, in delivering a range of activities to both enhance the attractiveness of the market towns, increase footfall and support local businesses. The Market Towns Officer role, funded through UKSPF, will continue to be delivered until March 2025, and focuses on supporting the Partnerships. This includes seeking funding to support their continued work, as well as working more generally with businesses to identify their concerns and ideas for future growth.

The Shop Front Improvement Grant, announced in the Council's Budget in February last year and renewed in this year's budget, has proved extremely popular:

	Number of businesses	Value of projects
Atherstone	24	£35,605
Coleshill	16	£32,770
Polesworth	8	£15,120
Rest of North Warwickshire	9	£24,773
TOTAL	57	£108,268

Some examples of the improvements can be found on this document:



Shop Front grants -  
completed projects.doc

Further work will be required, with the Heritage and Conservation Officer, to ensure that grants are well spent and the work conforms to appropriate planning regulations.

## Prosperous and healthy –

### Jobs, Infrastructure, connectivity, health

#### PROSPEROUS AND HEALTHY – JOBS, INFRASTRUCTURE, CONNECTIVITY, HEALTH

<p>PH 1 - Produce a revised Economic Development Strategy linked to the UK and WM Industrial Strategies, including identifying projects to be supported from Government funding.</p>	<p><i>A dashboard of economic indicators linked to the Economic Development Strategy including skill levels, employment rates, benefit claimant rates, wage/salary data (PI, N)</i></p> <p>A revised draft Economic Development Strategy, to complement the employment land strategy within the adopted Local Plan, was considered by this Board last year before being consulted on, together with a number of Forward Planning documents. The consultation responses are currently being considered and a final draft Strategy will be reported to Members in due course. However there are a number of other pieces of work which need to be prioritised, such as a review of the Local Plan</p> <p>The Council has also input into the Warwickshire Strategy, a Coventry and Warwickshire Strategy and a West Midlands Investment Strategy.</p>
<p>PH 2 - Use developer contributions and other funding to maximise opportunities to support business and the employment of local people including addressing skills gaps as well as the improvement of the environment, leisure and other community services that add value to people's lives.</p> <p>Implement measures funded by the Business Support element of the North Warwickshire UKSPF</p>	<p>The Council issues an Infrastructure Funding Report every year, the latest being 2024 which has been published recently and since the last performance update, having been <a href="#">considered</a> by the Planning and Development Board in February 2025. Each year's report can be found <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>The County Council's statements can be viewed <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>There is an extensive Infrastructure Delivery Plan linked to the adopted Local Plan which will seek developer contributions on a range of issues <a href="#">IDP 2018</a></p> <p>Work continues to offer support to those seeking jobs and further training. In particular, a skills plan is being developed with local partners to support the employment land allocation in the Local Plan for Horiba MIRA which was recently granted planning permission.</p> <p>Work also continues with HS2 in order to ensure barriers to employment within our area are reduced with regular meetings between Officers, HS2's contractors, DWP and WCC officers and a number of drop in events and increased promotion of jobs opportunities. This</p>

supplements the allocations made within the People and Skills element of the UKSPF work. There has been considerable progress on this as shown in the tables below. In quarter 3 22/23 the number of people who had been unemployed who were now working on the HS2 project from North Warwickshire was 8 however by quarter 3 23/24 that had increased to 27. Similarly, the number of apprenticeship starts by our residents has increased over the same period has increased from 14 to 17.

## HS2 Workless Job Starts

### West Midlands Region

#### Q3, 2022/23

Birmingham	255
Solihull	46
Sandwell	113
South Staffordshire	38
Coventry	49
Dudley	26
Walsall	51
Lichfield	16
North Warwickshire	8
Stratford-on-Avon	11
Rugby	13
Wolverhampton	45
Cannock Chase	2
Shropshire	4
Telford and Wrekin	11
Warwick	13
Nuneaton & Bedworth	10
East Staffordshire	4
Stafford	7
Staffordshire Moorlands	1
Herefordshire	6

## HS2 Apprenticeship Starts

Birmingham	155
Solihull	49
Sandwell	29
South Staffordshire	18
Coventry	23
Dudley	18
Walsall	18
Lichfield	14
North Warwickshire	14
Stratford-on-Avon	7
Rugby	8
Wolverhampton	7
Cannock Chase	7
Shropshire	7
Telford and Wrekin	6
Warwick	5
Nuneaton & Bedworth	7
East Staffordshire	3
Stafford	3
Staffordshire Moorlands	1

399

#### Q3, 2023/24

## HS2 Workless Job Starts

### West Midlands Region

Birmingham	551
Solihull	84
Sandwell	202
South Staffordshire	60
Coventry	94
Dudley	51
Walsall	105
Lichfield	26
North Warwickshire	27
Stratford-on-Avon	22
Rugby	17
Wolverhampton	80
Cannock Chase	4
Shropshire	10
Telford and Wrekin	13
Warwick	24
Nuneaton & Bedworth	22
East Staffordshire	5
Stafford	9
Staffordshire Moorlands	2
Herefordshire	6

## HS2 Apprenticeship Starts

Birmingham	191
Solihull	60
Sandwell	44
South Staffordshire	21
Coventry	30
Dudley	21
Walsall	21
Lichfield	17
North Warwickshire	17
Stratford-on-Avon	7
Rugby	13
Wolverhampton	7
Cannock Chase	7
Shropshire	7
Telford and Wrekin	8
Warwick	6
Nuneaton & Bedworth	9
East Staffordshire	4
Stafford	6
Staffordshire Moorlands	2
Herefordshire	1

399

The latest position overall is:



	Job Starts	Apprenticeship Starts
<b>Birmingham</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>277</b>
Solihull	107	78
Sandwell	258	55
South Staffordshire	73	28
Coventry	129	39
Dudley	72	28
Walsall	123	27
Lichfield	33	23
North Warwickshire	33	19
Stratford-on-Avon	26	9
Rugby	20	18
Wolverhampton	102	12
Cannock Chase	8	14
Shropshire	11	9
Telford & Wrekin	15	9
Warwick	33	9
Nuneaton & Bedworth	25	12
East Staffordshire	6	5
Stafford	10	6
Staffordshire Moorlands	2	3
Herefordshire	7	1
	<b>1780</b>	<b>681</b>

The Council has [adopted](#) a revised Supplementary Planning Document relating to developer contributions earlier this year, including for Open Space, Sport and Recreation contributions.

The Council continues to allocate UKSPF funding with £1.465m committed to December with further projects approved at the December meeting.

Total allocations to date:

	Total allocation			Total left to allocate
	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	
Communities & Place	£181,044	£278,088	£506,970	£49,136
Local Business	£27,500	£117,000	£239,250	£27,443
People & Skills	£30,000	£82,000	£503,750	£341,835
Rural England		£280,000	£215,639	£283,947

The Council will award a further £255,000 additional funding to communities via the Councillor Community Grant scheme announced as part of the Council's adopted budget in February 2025.



PH 3 - Manage development and work with partners to deliver its associated infrastructure, in line with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The Council [resolved](#) to undertake a review of the adopted Local Plan, once national policy changes have been confirmed. Whilst the Government has recently issued a revised National Planning Policy Framework for consultation, the revised regulations on Local Plan making have not yet been issued. However Government officials have confirmed that the intention is to issue those in the summer this year.

Work continues on the delivery of the adopted Plan. This is particularly important in relation to the strategic allocations.

The Local Development Scheme has been updated to reflect the work programme and at its meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> February the LDF Sub committee [agreed](#) to commence the review of the Local Plan.

The programme for this review is set out in the report to the LDF Sub committee at the link above and as set out in the revised Local Development Scheme:

Appendix A  
Development Plan Document

Document Title	Subject matter and geographical area	Chain of Conformity	Consultation	Publication of Submission Draft DPD & Public Consultation	Submission and Examination of DPD	Adoption and Publication of DPD	Policies it will replace
Employment DPD	It will look to allocate sites if necessary	Local Plan and NPPF	Early 2024	Autumn 2024	Late 2024/early 2025	2026	Some of the employment policies from the adopted Local Plan.
Local Plan Review	An assessment will be made as to the policies which are out of date or require some change	NPPF	Spring 2025 for Reg 18 – Issues and Options	Late 2025	Spring 2026	Late 2026	The review of policies will make this clear.

PH 4 - Progress the North Warwickshire Transport Strategy to improve strategic roads such as the A5 and A446, improve transport links, including cycle links, footpath links, public transport, and all forms of rail provision.

#### *Progress reports on the action plan for the Transport Strategy (N)*

Warwickshire County Council has developed a revised Transport Strategy and the strategy relating to North Warwickshire will now be contained within that document. The County Council has now [approved](#) the Strategy.

		<p>An initial officer meeting took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February regarding the North Warwickshire Local Transport Plan. The draft timeline for this work was produced and transport issues relating to health and employment/skills is likely to be a key issue, as identified through the initial work on Levelling Up. However due to the election last year and staffing changes at the County Council this work has yet to start.</p> <p>The County Council has now commissioned consultant to do some initial work on the Area Strategies and we expect conversations with WCC in May/June.</p> <p>Nearly £80m was allocated for the first phase of improvements to the A5 in the March 2020 budget, one of only three schemes in the country allocated funding. Project meetings have started on that scheme and Members will be aware that a consultation on the options for the Grendon to Dordon part of the road, together with proposals for the roundabout at Holly Lane took place last year. The wider upgrade from the M42 to the M69 is now thought more likely as a result of the funding for the first phase. That scheme is one of the pipeline projects being developed as part of the Government's next <a href="#">Road Investment Scheme</a> (RIS3), the only one currently in the Midlands.</p> <p>National Highways have recently raised concerns about the rising costs of the A5 work and that further funding may be needed. We are working with them, the County Council and Homes England on this issue and National Highways submitted further details to the Department for Transport in the summer.</p> <p>National Highways are now looking at seven projects along the A5 from the M42 to the M69 and officer working groups have been established. Progress and any further announcements on funding will be reported to Members when made.</p>
<p>PH 5 - We will work in partnership with other agencies to tackle health inequalities through implementation of the corporate Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and relevant Warwickshire North Place Plan priorities, as part of our advocacy work for the Borough within the health system as well as by ensuring access to leisure and other community</p>		<p><i>Progress reports on the action plans for the corporate Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and JSNA and relevant Warwickshire North Place Plan priorities (N)</i></p> <p><i>A dashboard of health indicators on key health indicators, including life expectancy, access to mental health services, road mortality, and active lifestyle indicators(PI)</i></p> <p>The Council's Health and Wellbeing Action Plan is reported to the Health and Wellbeing Working Party, with</p>

service opportunities that promote active, healthy lifestyles.

PH 6 - Ensure our work through a number of services such as Planning, Environmental Health, Leisure and Community Development and Housing contribute to improving the wider determinants of health and to enhancing the physical and mental wellbeing of local residents

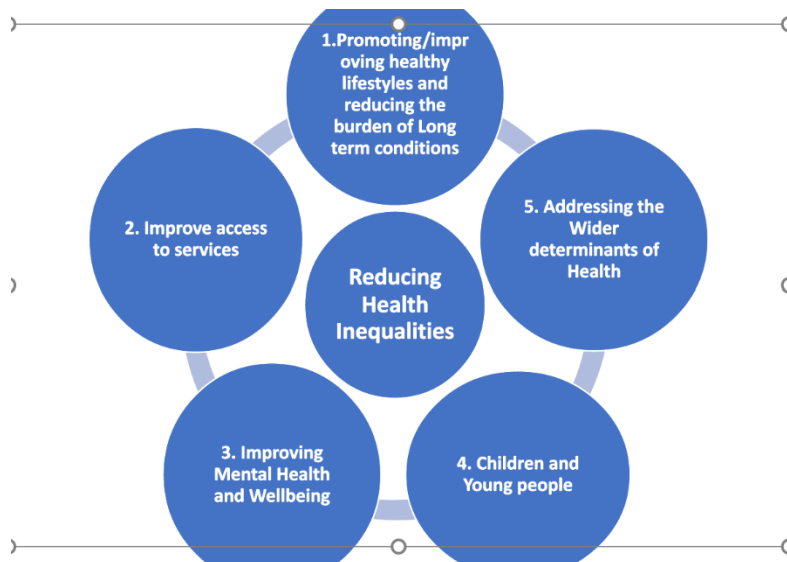
the minutes of that body report to the Community and Environment Board. A draft revised Action Plan 2023-27 was [agreed](#) in February last year.

The Warwickshire North Plan is attached here and a partnership day is being held on 7<sup>th</sup> March to review these priorities.



WN Place Plan.pdf

The Warwickshire North Health and Wellbeing Board has identified four priorities, identified through workshops



The Council's contribution to these priorities can be found in this attachment.



WN Place Progress  
Report Feb25.PPTX

Funding for Coventry and Warwickshire has been obtained from the Government's [WorkWell](#) fund which is aimed at those not currently in the labour market due to health issues. This is a key issue within North Warwickshire and more details are available [here](#)

Officers continue to attend the Local Estates Forum which looks at physical assets available to promote health and wellbeing

Members will be interested in a practical example of work that has been undertaken by the Warwickshire North Delivery Group, which includes officers from this Council, on a practical project to boost whooping cough vaccinations.

As set out in the case study below, the take up rate has increased from a low of 14.8% in May 2023 to 64.5% a year later, with higher rates in other months.

#### WNP Delivery Group

August's WNP Delivery Group continued the cycle of presenting a case study aligned to one of the Place priorities at each bi-monthly meeting. The focus for August was Maternity, Children and Young People, and the case study presented was the Maternity Vaccinator project, funded by the Integrated Care Board's (ICB) Health Inequalities funds.

Action is needed to improve vaccination rates, with uptake for both the flu and whooping cough vaccines for expectant mothers at George Eliot Hospital (GEH) sitting at 35% for 2022/2023, compared to the national targets of 75% and 60% for flu and whooping cough vaccinations, respectively.

Previously, GEH offered maternity vaccinations on Monday afternoons or Saturdays, with high percentages of non-attendances and generally low uptake. To improve this, the Public Health Midwife successfully bid for just over £53,000 to the ICB to secure a dedicated Maternity Vaccinator within the GEH Maternity team.

The role focuses on engaging with 'at risk' communities and 'hard to reach' areas locally, offering specialised support to families and dispelling any myths around vaccines. Patients no longer have to attend specifically on limited days for the vaccinations and are instead opportunistically vaccinated when attending for their 20-week scan appointment, reducing time and costs associated for patients.

The below table shows the difference in uptake rates for whooping cough vaccinations since the Maternity Vaccinator started in post in mid-January 2024.

	2023	2024
<b>January</b>	40.2%	36.3%
<b>February</b>	32.3%	75.0%
<b>March</b>	32.7%	66.1%
<b>April</b>	20.7%	64.6%
<b>May</b>	14.8%	64.5%
<b>June</b>	31.5%	47.2%
<b>July</b>	31.2%	69.3%

A total of 1,211 whooping cough vaccinations were delivered by the team from January to June 2024, vastly increasing the rate of expectant mothers receiving their vaccination. The project continues to develop, looking to deliver the Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccination from September 2024 and continue reducing the risk to babies.

The Council's work on Air Quality continues and has been reported to the Health and Wellbeing Working Group last month.

PH 7 - Progress the business case for replacement leisure facilities

The Council has agreed to explore the feasibility of improving the leisure facilities within the Borough.

Reports of progress are regularly taken to the Community and Environment Board together with informal briefings.

The latest report can be found at

## SUSTAINABLE GROWTH, PROTECTED RURALITY – VIBRANT GROWTH, SENSE OF PLACE, RECOGNISABLY HOME

SG 1 - We will ensure we have an up-to-date Local Plan, which remains the best way to provide the homes, jobs and other sustainable growth needed in the area. Crucially it also provides the best mechanism to ensure as far as we can that development only happens in the right areas, and for the protection of the Green Belt.

*Report on progress of the Local Plan and subsequent reviews (N)*

*Report on key planning and housing data such as the five year housing supply, percentage of affordable homes, amount of land built on brownfield and allocated sites. (PI)*

*Report to the Planning and Development Board on pressures on the Green Belt, design and heritage issues including conservation areas (N)*

The North Warwickshire Local Plan was adopted on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021. As mentioned above, the Council has resolved to review the Local Plan.

Regular updates are [reported](#) to the Planning and Development Board on recent appeal decisions

Monitoring information on the development provided during each year will be report to Board on an annual basis with the most recent report considered at the [LDF Sub committee](#) in February 2025.

SG 2 - We will continue to work with regional partners to ensure our Plan fits into the wider regional context and that we all working together ensure the necessary supply of homes, jobs and infrastructure.

The Duty to Cooperate was a key component in the North Warwickshire Local Plan and the housing allocations make a substantial contribution to the wider regional housing need, a requirement given that North Warwickshire is part of both the Coventry and Warwickshire and Greater Birmingham Housing Market Areas.

The review of the Local Plan mentioned above will consider the role the Borough needs to play with regard to wider than local needs.

<p>SG 3 - Use our Design Champions to ensure the best achievable designs are implemented and developed so as to reflect setting and local character.</p> <p>SG 4 - Seek to secure the protection of the best of the Borough's built and rural heritage, as well as our natural assets such as the Tame Valley Wetlands Partnership</p>	<p>Members will be involved in Master Planning for the Strategic Allocations.</p> <p>Design Champions will continue to be involved with developers at both pre-application and application stages of the process</p> <p>A new round of Civic Awards for the best development and heritage work within the Borough is part of the Forward Planning Team's Service Plan for 25/26</p> <p>Officers to continue to sit on the board of the Tame Valley Wetlands Partnership</p> <p>Opportunities for biodiversity net gain will be explored and developed, particularly as the Environment Act has been enacted. Reports on these matters have been considered by the <a href="#">LDF sub committee</a> in February 2025, and on the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy to this Board's <a href="#">last meeting</a></p>
<p>SG 5 - To press for the maximum mitigation and benefits for the Borough arising from HS2, particularly during construction in partnership with other affected Councils and community action groups</p>	<p>Officers continue to meet with HS2 regularly to discuss the project. In particular, officers attend regular consents meetings with the main works contractors and HS2 staff, as well as the Special Management Zone Meeting.</p> <p>One current issue is concerns about dust in Water Orton and links to local health concerns. As mentioned above, external funding has been obtained for five monitors in the village and the results will be reported to Members.</p> <p>HS2 have agreed to fund a planning officer to deal with consents under the HS2 Act and an appointment to this role was made in January 2022 and was renewed in December 2023. Funding for an additional Environmental Health officer has also been obtained and an appointment made.</p> <p>Recent work has related to the Bromford Tunnel extension and the associated Transport and Works Act Order. An appeal hearing in respect of the Bromford Tunnel Portal took place in April 2022. The decision on this appeal was issued on the 14<sup>th</sup> May. The appointed Inspector agreed with the Council on the main issue in the case, however the Secretaries of State for Levelling Up (as it was then) and Transport disagreed with the Inspector and granted consent. The Council has issued a claim for a Judicial Review of that decision and this was heard at the High Court in London on 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> February. Judgment has been reserved and will be reported to Members as soon as possible.</p>

	<p>As a result of the legal challenge, the decision of the Transport and Works Act Order still remains undetermined, following objections from the Borough Council and others, and a decision about how the application will proceed has been successively postponed.</p> <p>Members are engaged in consultation on the design and appearance of the Delta Junction viaducts, overbridges, embankments and other structures, via a Subgroup of the Planning and Development Board.</p> <p>Officers continue to be part of the national HS2 Planning Forum.</p> <p>Officers liaise with the Constituency Member of Parliament, and have engaged the HS2 Minister and Department for Transport officials, with regards to concerns about the adherence to due process and the bounds of HS2 Act powers in respect of works advancing ahead of the consents process and in respect of the preservation of archaeological heritage.</p> <p>Officer's continue to work to achieve legacy community benefit from the HS2 development, including connectivity improvements (cycling/walking) and heritage interpretation.</p> <p>With regard to walking and cycling, the Chief Executive chairs a multi agency meeting to improve routes around the line of the railway, as shown on the map below.</p> <div data-bbox="751 1341 807 1411" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>LCWIP_Coleshill Delta Junction walki</p>
<p>SG 6 - Continue to implement the adopted North Warwickshire Leisure Facilities, Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies, and the accompanying Local Football Facilities Plan, in accordance with their associated Action and Funding Plans.</p>	<p>Progress with regard to work undertaken within leisure facilities and in respect of the Borough Council's green spaces and playing pitches is regularly reported to the Community and Environment Board and the Board <a href="#">adopted</a> the revised Playing Pitch Strategy at its meeting held in January 2024.</p> <p>The latest <a href="#">update</a> was reported to the October C&amp;E meeting</p> <p>As mentioned above, a revised Open Space, Sport and Recreation Supplementary Planning Document has also been approved by the Borough Council.</p> <p>The Council continues to undertake considerable work in support of local sporting facilities and announced as part</p>



	<p>of the adopted budget in February further funding to assess the condition of pavilions/changing facilities within the Council's ownership.</p> <p>Following the dissolution of the Atherstone Town Community Football Club management company, Officers worked speedily with the new management to resolve the Health and Safety issues at the ground and to allow games to be scheduled there again. Officers continue to monitor the position but considerable progress has made.</p> <p>£250k has been obtained from the Football Foundation through which to develop the Ansley Workshops Sports Ground into a high quality, community-managed facility and Community Development has been working on a number of funding applications (Inclusive Communities Fund, Social Fabric Fund, Lottery and UK SPF) through which to try and improve the on-site ancillary accommodation. Further details can be found <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>Significant developments relating to open spaces in Atherstone (Royal Meadow Drive Recreation Ground), Grendon (Boot Hill Recreation Ground), Ansley Workshops and Baxterley have been undertaken in conjunction with external partners, whilst Play Area Development Programme improvements have been made in Corley, Dordon, Hurley, Mancetter, Polesworth and Wood End.</p> <p>The Borough Council recently opened the Borough's second pump track at Dordon on the <a href="#">1st March 2025</a></p>
<p>SG 7 - To implement our Homeless Strategy and work on private housing.</p>	<p>Report progress on homelessness, private housing and other housing issues (N)</p> <p>The Council's Housing Task &amp; Finish Group continues to meet to discuss current Housing issues and direct service delivery. Joint meetings are held with the Borough Wide Tenants Forum in order to share views on the delivery of the Council's landlord's services.</p> <p>The Council's own homelessness strategy has been reviewed and will be published. A review of Countywide homelessness is underway. In North Warks the strategy review indicated an increase in use of temporary</p>



accommodation and applicants seeking alternative accommodation due to domestic abuse.

The operational arrangements for the Private Sector Team have been reestablished following the return as an in house service. All of the necessary policies and procedures are in place. During 2025 we will anticipate the passage of the Renters Reform Bill and seek to draft a Private Sector Housing Strategy.

The extensive major works programmes to blocks of flats over the last 5 years culminates with the completion of works to Abbey Green Court, Polesworth.

The new structure of the Maintenance Service is now established and tenant satisfaction feedback about the service remains above the national averages. The team is focussed on delivering services which ensure regulatory compliance and meeting the Decent Homes Standard. Ensuring the Council's properties are not in disrepair is fundamental to the delivery of the service.

A proactive, directed case management approach to dealing with damp and mould in tenanted properties will be introduced in April 2025 in advance of the implementation of Awaab's law.

A review of how the Housing Management Team provides services to address anti social behaviour/ neighbour nuisance will be completed in March and will be reported to the Housing Task and Finish Group and Borough Wide Tenants Forum initially.

## **Agenda Item No 10**

### **Executive Board**

**17 March 2024**

#### **Report of the Chief Executive**

#### **Corporate Plan 2023-27: Annual refresh 2025**

### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to the Board the 2025 annual refresh of the Council's 2023-27 Corporate Plan.

#### **Recommendation to the Council**

- a That the main issues set out in the Appendix be agreed as the basis for the 2025 Corporate Plan Annual refresh; and**
- b That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to finalise the format of the Plan;**

### **2 Report**

- 2.1 Members will recall that the Council has adopted a high level Corporate Plan for the life of this Council, from 2023 to 2027. This has been subject to annual refreshes and this is the second one

- 2.2 The current Corporate Plan is appended to the Corporate Plan Performance Update elsewhere on this agenda and it is proposed to use the same format/style.

- 2.3 It is suggested that the majority of the key issues such as the vision and key aims remain the appropriate aspirations and key outcomes that the Council should work towards achieving. There are some suggested changes to the strategic aims and particular to the key actions to reflect the current set of key issues. The main ones relate to the Devolution/Local Government Reorganisation agenda and the announcements (particularly on Planning) from the new Government.

- ... 2.4 The vision, aims and actions are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

- 2.5 As in previous years, delegated authority is sought to finalise the Plan.

### **3 Report Implications**

#### **3.1 Finance and Value for Implications**

- 3.1.1 The Corporate Plan is deliverable within the Council's agreed financial and human resources.

#### **3.2 Risk Management Implications**

- 3.2.1 The main risk is ensuring that the Council prioritises its resources to enable it to deliver its priorities. The performance monitoring arrangements, to be reviewed as set out above, provide the mechanism to ensure that remedial action can be taken to review progress and ensure that priority outcomes are delivered.

#### **3.3 Other Report Implications**

- 3.3.1 Any further implications resulting from the proposals in the report will be the subject of further reports to the Board.

#### **3.4 Links to Council's Priorities**

- 3.8.1 These are set out in the Appendices.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438).

# Revised Corporate Plan – Context

Appendix 1

- Devo/LGR
- Budget
- Residents' Survey
- MTFS
- LGA Peer Review September
- Local Plan review
- Demographics
- New Government – new NPPF, funding review, waste changes etc



# Revised Corporate Plan – Priorities

## Foundational aims:

- Efficient **and sustainable** organisation:
  - Finances, lean, responsive
- Safe, Liveable, Locally Focussed communities:
  - Feeling safe, place based enforcement, Quality of life

## Quality of life aims:

- Prosperous, **active** and healthy:
  - Jobs, Infrastructure, connectivity, health
- Sustainable growth, protected rurality:
  - Vibrant growth, sense of place, recognisably home

# Priorities – Efficient and Sustainable Organisation

## – Strategic Aims - Revised

- Focussed and prioritised organisation
- Skilled staff in the right place
- Know what we are about
- Harness the power of the community particularly with the Community Grants and additional year of the UKSPF
- Advocacy for the area
- Responsiveness – know the area and be relied on
- Complex problem solving, focussed on individuals

# Priorities – Efficient and Sustainable organisation

## – How? - Revised

- Delivery the Medium Term Financial Strategy to improve the Council's financial sustainability (Instead of 'Savings')
- Transformation
- Sustainability
- Identifying the resources to deliver the Council's plan
- Consider new models of working including proportionate commercial activity
- Develop staff and improve retention particularly in the light of possible LGR
- Develop our vulnerability work
- Ensure as many services as possible as based in North Warwickshire
- Review our customer service arrangements and how we communicate with residents (RS)
- Further analysis of the key issues raised in the Residents' Survey
- LGR submissions

# Priorities – Safe, Liveable, Locally Focussed Communities – Strategic Aims - Revised

- Sense of place – WM but connected to other areas
- Quality of life
- Feeling safe
- Place based enforcement



# Priorities – Safe, Liveable, Locally Focussed Communities – How? Revised

- Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Focus on safety after dark (RS)
- Services in the Borough, particularly Police
- Address anti social behaviour
- High standard of street cleanliness using the increased funding from the Budget and tackle litter and flytipping asap (RS)
- Support for High Streets via the funding provided in the budget and in support of the Town Centre Plans commissioned by UKSPF funding
- Coordinate enforcement activity using the extra resources allocated – Planning Enforcement Officer and extra resources in Environmental Health

# Priorities – Prosperous, active and healthy – Strategic Aims - Revised

- Jobs
- Infrastructure
- Connectivity
- Health
- Improved leisure provision

# Priorities – Prosperous, Active and Healthy – How? Revised

- Healthy, inclusive economy
- Increase in skills
- UKSPF measures on business support and people and skills
- Revised Local Plan
- Infrastructure delivery
- Bring quality to growth
- Connected - transport and technology
- Improved health outcomes
- Increased use of improved leisure facilities and services (RS)
- Implement new Leisure facilities and review how operated in line with our Leisure Strategies (RS), implement another pump track and review changing facilities

# Priorities – Sustainable growth, protected rurality

## Strategic Aims - Revised

- Vibrant growth
- Sense of place
- Recognisably home

# Priorities – Sustainable Growth, Protected Rurality – How? - Revised

- Review the Local Plan to ensure we maintain an up to date Local Plan aligned to regional needs and revised national guidance, including a Green Belt review
- Design Champions
- Protection of best of built, rural and natural heritage including a Civic Award scheme
- Mitigate and benefit from HS2 and press for A5 funding and rail connectivity from repurposed HS2 funding
- Implement the revised Green Space and Playing Pitch strategies including exploring the opportunities from Bio Diversity Net Gain and assist with climate change (RS)
- Homeless strategy and improve private sector housing including appraising the business case for a commercial Housing Company and new ways of providing affordable housing
- LGR submissions

## **Agenda Item No 11**

### **Executive Board**

**17 March 2025**

#### **Report of the Chief Executive**

#### **English Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation**

### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 Members are asked to recommend for Council's approval the Interim Plan regarding unitary local government.

#### **Recommendation to the Council**

- a That the Interim Plan be agreed; and**
- b That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be given delegated powers to make any necessary amendments to the Interim Plan ahead of submission to Government.**

### **2 Report**

- 2.1 Members will recall from the Council meeting on the 15 January that the Government has issued a [English Devolution White Paper](#) with the stated aim of ensuring all areas in England are covered by a Mayoral Strategic Authority. The White Paper also sets out the Government's aspiration that all remaining two tier local government areas are replaced by single tiers of unitary Councils.
- 2.2 Since then the Member Working Group has met twice (20 February and 6 March) and, by the time of this Board's meeting, there will have been two all Member briefings (15 January and 12 March). In addition to these Member meetings, the Leader and Chief Executive have had extensive discussions with those from the other Councils in Warwickshire, and there have been a considerable number of meetings and webinars with Ministers, Officials and other Councils across the country.
- 2.3 Since the White Paper was published, the Government wrote on the 5 February to all two tier areas asking for submission of Interim Plans relating to Local Government reorganisation (LGR) by 21 March and then full submissions by 28 November. Officials have confirmed that the Interim Plans are by way of position statements on work and thoughts to date, have no statutory basis or influence on the final submissions and decisions to be made thereon but are a useful opportunity for Councils to share initial thinking and to receive feedback ahead of the final submissions.



- 2.4 The Government have confirmed that LGR proposal can include either a single unitary Council for the County, more than one unitary Council for the County or one or more unitary Council for an area larger than the County.
- 2.5 On this latter point, Coventry City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council were initially written to in December as 'small neighbouring unitary Councils'. However they were not written to on the 5 February and Officials have confirmed that the Government has not asked those Councils for LGR proposals, in contrast to a number of areas, such as Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, where adjacent unitary Councils have been asked for their proposals.
- 2.6 On that basis therefore, a realistic assessment suggests there are only two credible options – a single unitary council and two, based on 'North/South' geography (North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth and Rugby and Warwick and Stratford).
- 2.7 Member have informally indicated that they would wish to openly and thoroughly consider both options in order to suggest a final submission which is in the best interests of the area within the criteria identified by the Government.
- ... 2.8 The draft Interim Plan attached has therefore been agreed by the five Borough and District Councils in Warwickshire, given that Warwickshire County Council have [proposed](#) a separate response.
- 2.9 The draft Interim Plan reflects, as mentioned above, that only two credible options remain for LGR however it flags up that, whilst theoretically therefore LGR is a straight forward matter for Warwickshire, the consequences with regard to Devolution, namely the choice of Strategic Authority, is more complex and this needs to be borne in mind when a LGR option is chosen by the Government.
- 2.10 Finally, the Interim Plan sets out the engagement that has been done to date and that further engagement will be undertaken ahead of the November deadline. To date this Council has engaged with the two MPs for the area and Town and Parish Council representatives.
- 2.11 The recommendation therefore is that this Board agrees the Interim Plan for approval by Council. Given the aim of coordinating this response across the other Warwickshire Councils, as requested by Government, it is suggested that the Chief Executive is given delegated powers to make any necessary adjustments to the Interim Plan, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, that may arise out of this coordination process.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Maxey (719438).

## **Interim plan for local government reorganisation in Warwickshire**

### **1) Introduction**

This interim plan has been prepared following the receipt of the formal invitation for local government reorganisation proposals received from the Minister of State for Local Government and Devolution by all six principal councils in Warwickshire on 5 February 2025. It has also been assisted in further discussion with officials from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

This interim plan has been developed by the five districts and boroughs within Warwickshire and has been constructed around the eight points included within the invitation letter.

At this stage this interim plan, following clarification from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government officials, is regarded as a "progress check". This interim plan simply identifies potential options for local government reorganisation. Given that there is significant additional engagement, evaluation and analysis to be undertaken before the formal response to the invitation no decisions have been made in relation to the preferred local government structures. To assist in consideration of all options clarification on the deliverability of certain proposals will be required from central government.

This interim plan identifies the significant additional work which will need to be completed before the formal submission in November 2025.

The five districts and boroughs are in dialogue with the County Council in relation to the preparation of the formal proposals and will work positively and collaboratively on such submission.

## **2) Warwickshire: Background and context**

Warwickshire is a mainly semi-rural county area which covers a total of 1,975 km<sup>2</sup>. The economy of Warwickshire is strong with an average GVA per head of £33,105. The population of the county area has grown significantly over the last decade, the current estimate for the county is a resident population of 617,823, this compares to 549,517 in 2013 (68,306 or 12.4%), similar or even higher growth is expected in the future.

Warwickshire as a ceremonial county council has undergone several changes over the years. Various parts of the historic county have been ceded as local government structures have developed and areas such as Birmingham and Coventry have grown.

Elected county councils were created in 1889 under the Local Government Act 1888, taking over many administrative functions which had previously been performed by unelected magistrates at the quarter sessions. The cities of Birmingham and Coventry were considered large enough to provide their own county-level services and so were made county boroughs, independent from Warwickshire County Council. The administrative county also ceded Aston Manor and Erdington to Birmingham in 1911. Solihull was made a county borough in 1964.

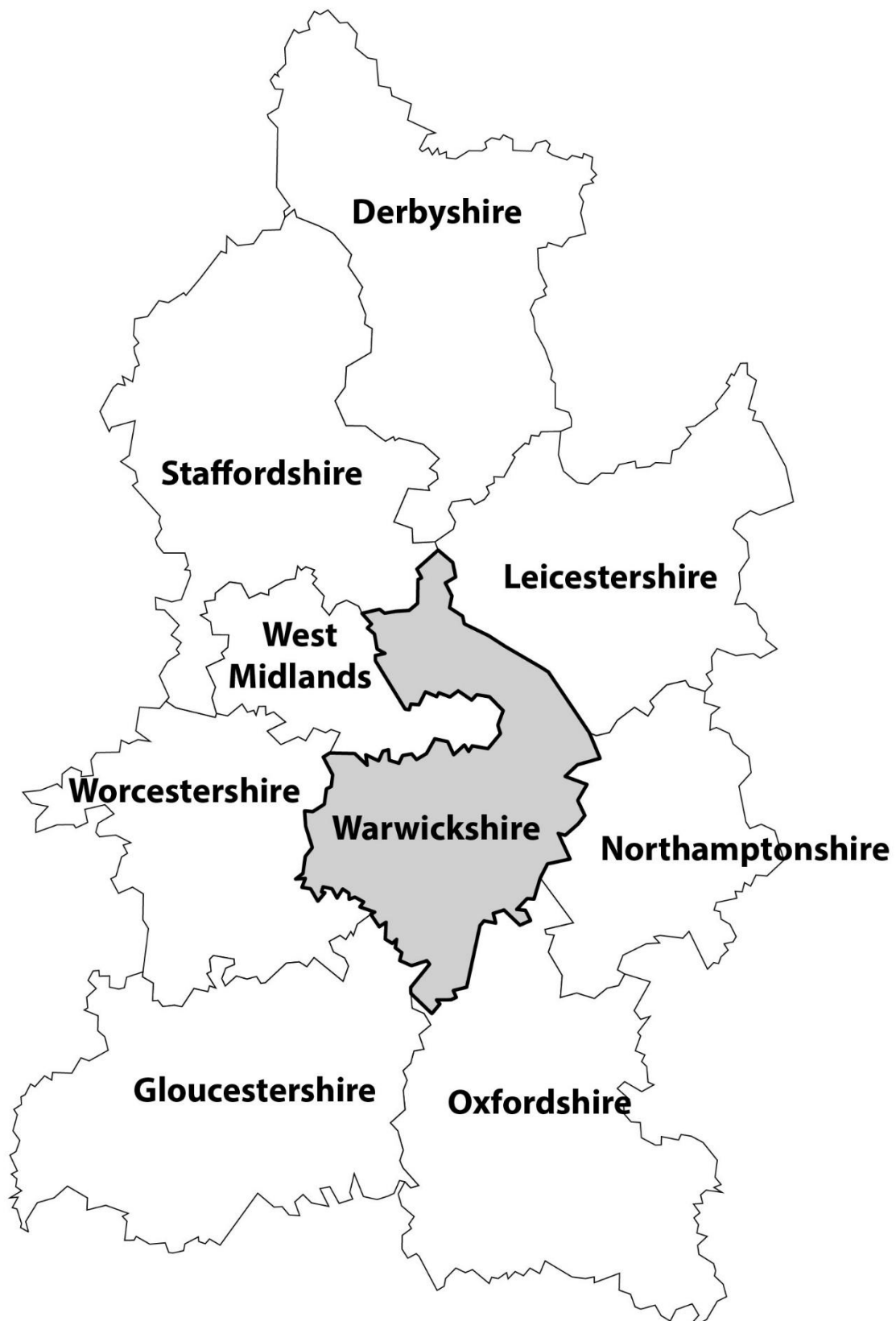
The current administrative county was reformed in 1974 to become a non-metropolitan county, at which point it also ceded Sutton Coldfield, Hockley Heath and much of the Meriden Rural District to the new West Midlands metropolitan county, which also covered the already independent county boroughs of Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull, alongside other territory from Staffordshire and Worcestershire. At the same time, Warwickshire was divided into five non-metropolitan districts/boroughs which form a lower tier of local government.

As a result of these changes Warwickshire as a County now wraps around the areas of Solihull and Coventry. Coventry has very close economic and administrative links with Warwickshire. There is significant cross border working with between areas this the includes:

- Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub
- Coventry and Warwickshire Destination Partnership; and
- Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board covers the whole of the County area as well as Coventry.

The area over which Warwickshire Police operates is fully aligned with the County Council area, as is Warwickshire Fire & Rescue (a department of the County Council).

This map shows Warwickshire and the ceremonial counties that surround it.



This map shows the five districts/boroughs in the county of Warwickshire, all of which have been on their present boundaries since 1974.



The table shows the population of the districts and county area using ONS's 2023 mid-year estimates and ONS's population projections for 2043 (ONS, 2018-based projections, 24 March 2020).

	Mid-year estimate, 2023	Projection, 2043
North Warwickshire	66,166	79,123
Nuneaton and Bedworth	137,794	148,345
Rugby	118,781	126,528
<i>Sub-total: North Warwickshire</i>	<i>322,741</i>	<i>353,996</i>
Stratford on Avon	141,929	164,750
Warwick	153,153	165,564
<i>Sub-total: South Warwickshire</i>	<i>295,082</i>	<i>330,314</i>
<b>Warwickshire</b>	<b>617,823</b>	<b>684,310</b>

It should be noted that a revised population projection is expected from the ONS in March 2025, these are expected to be higher than shown in the table and will be available for the November 2025 submission.

In addition, the new housing projections included within the National Planning Policy Framework published in December 2024 expect significant more housing to be delivered in Warwickshire. In developing the South Warwickshire Local Plan this is expected to lead to a growth in population of c129,000 from current figures between now and 2050.

### **3. Devolution arrangements**

Government is seeking to devolve powers to Strategic Authorities which have an elected Mayor. In undertaking initial analysis of options, the ultimate strategic authority solution for Warwickshire will have a significant bearing on the local government structure which underpins these arrangements.

This interim plan identifies three potential options for devolution/strategic authorities:

#### **a. West Midlands Combined Authority**

Whilst sharing a border with six other counties, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham) is the only strategic authority in the region. The WMCA is an Established Mayoral Strategic Authority.

The WMCA was formed in 2016 on the footprint of the three Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) – Birmingham and Solihull, the Black Country and Coventry & Warwickshire.

All six Warwickshire principal Councils are non-constituent members of the WMCA. Given the historic ties mentioned above all Warwickshire Councils are engaged in the work of the WMCA, and whenever possible, ensure our strategic approaches align and interface with each other. It is worth noting that the Local Plans for the districts and boroughs are based on accepting housing/employment growth from the Housing Market Areas of Birmingham and Coventry, both in the WMCA.

A single unitary Council for Warwickshire would if it joined the West Midlands Combined Authority become the second largest authority and between twice and three times the population of the other authorities, which would not comply with the sensible population ratios required by Government.

#### **b. Single County Strategic Authority (Cumbria Model)**

Warwickshire is bordered by six other county council areas. However, due to the geography of the remaining County of Warwickshire there is no one county council area which would be a strong fit for the whole of Warwickshire.

An alternative approach therefore could be to implement arrangements like that which has been selected for Cumbria. In Cumbria, a strategic authority has been formed on the previous county boundary and includes unitary authorities of Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council. This type of arrangement could continue the very close working arrangement with the West Midlands Combined Authority.

This option however would not meet the government's objective of establishing a strategic authority with a population of 1.5m, the population of Warwickshire being 618,000.

Under this option there would be the requirement for two unitary authorities, as a single council cannot make up the geography of a strategic authority.



### **c. Other County Areas (in whole or in part)**

As discussed in the previous option there is not a single county council area which borders Warwickshire which has strong economic links with the whole county area.

For instance, in the South of the County there are links with areas in Worcestershire, however, these links are not shared in the North. Likewise, there are links in the North with Staffordshire and Leicestershire which are not shared with the south.

It is therefore difficult under this scenario to identify a solution for the whole of the county area. If this option is ultimately taken forward it would only work effectively alongside a two unitary solution for the county area.

It will be necessary for clarity as soon as practicably possible as to what the position is in relation to the option of an expanded WMCA. Whilst the Mayor of the WMCA is reported to have initially rejected the concept it is unclear as to whether this is the formal position.

There are also potential different configurations of strategic authority which may be available involving specific elements of the existing West Midlands Combined Authority, e.g. Coventry and Solihull Councils joining Warwickshire to form a new strategic authority. These have not been discussed within this interim plan, guidance would be appreciated on whether such an approach would be supported from Government.

## **4. Options for a unitary structure**

The Government's policy set out in the English Devolution White Paper makes it clear that the move to unitary government across England is required to support the devolution agenda. Whilst some Councils would welcome the retention of the two-tier system which has served our communities well over the last 50 years, it is accepted that the move to a unitary system is the way forward.

Warwickshire County Council has historically been an advocate of moving to a unitary system. In September 2020, the County Council commissioned a report from PWC "The Case for Change", this report identified a single option for unitary government in Warwickshire based on the existing county boundary.

In response the districts and borough reviewed all potential options and concluded that there was a viable alternative option of a North and South Warwickshire Unitary. These proposals were not progressed at the time as there was no invitation from central government for local government reorganisation, and there was not agreement between the principal councils.

It is in that context that the six principal councils of Warwickshire expect reorganisation on 1 April 2028 as well as the county's participation in devolution. To assist in our preparations, we would welcome feedback from the Government on this interim plan.

The six principal Councils in Warwickshire authorities have agreed to work positively together in the preparation of the formal submission in November 2025. The Councils will share information as required to ensure that the submissions are as informed as possible. Whilst ultimately, the six councils may not agree on the preferred option for local government reorganisation in Warwickshire, when government determines the way forward all Councils will work together to deliver this option to best serve our residents, businesses, staff and stakeholders.

Government have advised that the earliest that local government reorganisation will be implemented in Warwickshire is April 2028. The Councils believe that a unitary structure in this scenario should be implemented across from this date and with shadow elections being held in May 2027. Warwickshire Councils and the Government should provide this clarity on the timetable, as it is essential to provide certainty for staff, councillors, partners and others.

Any proposal submitted should address the full range of the Government's criteria set out in the statutory guidance issued on 5 February. As mentioned above for the interim plan, it has not been possible in the time available to undertake detailed assessment against all criteria and the borough and district Councils do not want to form any premature conclusions without having considered the options in full consideration of the facts.

The six Councils support reorganisation being within the boundaries of the county of Warwickshire only and using whole districts and boroughs as building blocks.

There are six criteria which will need to be considered when making the formal submission for local government reorganisation, population is just one of these factors. Issues surrounding our communities, culture and local identity will be crucial in the final submission.

However, as required within the interim plan, it is informally agreed between the Warwickshire principal councils, that there are two options for a unitary structure in respect of size and boundaries:

- (a) **a unitary council** for the whole county of Warwickshire, population 617k (2023 mid-year estimate). This accords with the statutory guidance that "As a guiding principle, new councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more".
- (b) **two unitary councils** in Warwickshire, these being made up as follows:
  - i. one comprising the districts of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth and Rugby (population 323k) and
  - ii. the other comprising the districts of Stratford on Avon and Warwick (population 295k).

Any proposal for this option would set out the rationale for it, relying on the statutory guidance that *"there may be certain scenarios in which this 500,000 figure does not make sense for an area, including on devolution"*.

Whilst all Councils accept that these are the only two options, they all recognise that views differ on whether both options meet the full range of the Government's criteria.

At present, there is not unanimity among the six principal Councils. More work will be done to identify which structure will feature in the proposal submitted by 28 November, with a view to reaching agreement upon it. However, all Councils recognise that ultimately there might be competing proposals.

## **5. Potential Costs and savings of a unitary structure**

Work is being done on the costs and savings associated with moving to a unitary structure. To ensure that the submission in November is as informed as possible the districts and boroughs have jointly commissioned Deloitte's to help provide robust evidence on which to base the estimates of costs and savings.

Transitioning to any new organisational structure inevitably involves costs associated with the change process itself. Whilst the support from Deloitte is at an early stage, an initial financial analysis of the estimated change costs associated with each proposed unitary model for Warwickshire indicates that costs would be similar for either a single or two unitary solution. The indicative costs at this stage are estimated to be within the range of £15-£17m for both options.

Transitioning to a unitary system for Warwickshire necessitates a careful examination of the existing Council Tax landscape and its implications for each proposed model. Currently, significant disparities in Council Tax rates across the county present challenges.

Addressing these disparities will be essential to ensure fairness and transparency in local taxation under a new unitary structure. Harmonizing rates will likely involve a multi-year approach, with some areas experiencing a freeze in Council Tax while others see gradual increases to avoid placing undue financial burden on residents.

The types of costs which would need to be fully considered relates to areas such as Redundancy, Integrated Project Management Office, Digital and ICT, Estates and Assets along with issues associated with Council Tax harmonisation as discussed above. In coming to a robust and transparent basis for estimating the costs and savings associated with each unitary model, an analysis will utilise a set of clearly defined assumptions. These assumptions will be based on industry best practices, benchmarking data, and insights from previous local government reorganisations.

By comparing the assumptions made around costs with the assumptions made around benefits, the financial assessment seeks to provide high-level financial insights necessary to evaluate the feasibility of each option against the Government's criteria.

Again, further detailed analysis will be required in order to properly estimate the level of savings which could be achieved. An initial high-level estimate at this stage undertaken by Deloitte's on behalf of all 5 districts and borough councils identifies savings of c£21m could be delivered through a single unitary Warwickshire (this estimate accords to the initial estimate from Warwickshire County Council), and the potential savings from a 2 unitary model of c£18m.

Further detailed analysis will be undertaken ahead of to help provide a high-level understanding of the financial implications associated with each model, enabling informed and responsible decision-making, ahead of the submission in November 2025.

## 6. Electoral arrangements

The current number of elected members for each principal council in Warwickshire is as follows:

<b>Council</b>	<b>Number of Councillors</b>
North Warwickshire	35
Nuneaton and Bedworth	38
Rugby	42
Stratford on Avon	41
Warwick	44
Warwickshire County	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>

There are currently 57 electoral divisions for Warwickshire County Council. In a recent review, by officers, these now meet all three criteria for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to undertake a review. This is mainly due to population growth which is not consistently spread across all areas of the County leading to voter imbalance. Whilst the May 2025 elections will be based on the existing electoral divisions, it would be preferable to review these to correct such imbalance, especially if these electoral divisions are used as the building blocks for elections for any shadow authorities.

As a working assumption one option for future temporary electoral arrangements could be simply to double the number of councillors in each division (this approach has been used in a number of areas), a simple solution would provide councils of the following sizes:

Option (a) – a unitary council of 114 members;

Option (b) – a unitary council for northern Warwickshire of 60 members and a unitary council for southern Warwickshire of 54 members.

This would represent a reduction of 143 councillors (-55%) compared to the current structure of 257 councillors. The reduction in Councillors whilst providing savings would result in additional electors per councillor. Across Warwickshire currently at district and borough level on average there are 2,244 electors per councillor and on average 7,875 electors per councillor at Warwickshire County Council. Such a reduction in councillor as identified above would result in an average of 3,937 per councillor, almost twice that at the current district and borough level.

The current schedule for elections in each of the district and boroughs is as follows:

- North Warwickshire Borough Council, Stratford on Avon District Council and Warwick District Council have whole council elections scheduled for May 2027.
- Rugby Borough Council have elections in thirds, the next scheduled elections are in May 2026.
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council have elections in halves, the next scheduled elections are in May 2026.

The district council elections in May 2027 would need to be cancelled and the term of office of district councillors that was due to end then should be extended to 31 March 2028. Consideration would need to be given to those elections which are scheduled for 2026. In line with arrangements for unitary councils elsewhere, elections to the new structure should be held every four years from 2027 i.e. 2031, 2035 etc.

Adopting the proposed arrangements for the first elections to the unitary structure would not preclude a subsequent review by the LGBCE, for example to reduce councillor numbers further or to create single member divisions.

If mayoral elections were held in May 2027 (for example in the case where Warwickshire, as one or two Councils does not join the WMCA), at the same time as elections to the unitary structure, we advocate a different timetable for subsequent mayoral elections.

Holding elections in different years is preferable as it ensures that there is a clear, separate mandate for a mayor and for unitary councillors. If the first mayoral elections were held in 2027 at the same time as elections to the unitary structure, this could be achieved by the first term of office for a mayor being either three or five years, so that subsequent mayoral elections would be in 2030 or 2032. We will address this issue as appropriate in discussions with neighbouring areas about devolution.

## **7. Engagement**

We are committed to working closely and collaboratively with all Councils in Warwickshire to develop future proposals. In preparing this initial response to the Government, we have held meetings between County, District and Borough Council Leaders and Chief Executives to discuss both local government re-organisation and options for future Strategic Authority arrangements. We have also entered early discussions with public sector partners.

We have begun to raise public awareness of the process and provide updates to our residents on the approach we are taking and our commitment to involve local people in developing any proposals through independent public consultation.

In the four Districts where there are Town and Parish Councils, we have begun early engagement and there has already been a mixed reaction from this sector.

In those areas which are not fully parished, under both options for unitary government within Warwickshire, there will need to be consideration of whether new town or parish Councils will need to be formed where they currently do not exist.

The current numbers of town and parish councils within Warwickshire are as follows:

<b>Council</b>	<b>Number of Parishes</b>
North Warwickshire	33
Nuneaton and Bedworth	0
Rugby	41
Stratford on Avon	110
Warwick	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>

In the next stage of the process, we will undertake further and more formal stakeholder engagement with:

- public sector partners in the NHS, education and policing, through strategic involvement in the development of proposals
- Members of Parliament, through one-to-one meetings to seek views and feedback as proposals develop
- Town and parish councils, with further meetings to discuss community governance in the context of future local authority arrangements
- residents, through consultation events in communities and running a formal independent public consultation to gather views.
- community groups and voluntary organisations through consultation events
- business, through groups such as Chambers of Commerce, along with meetings with individual businesses

The insights gathered through this engagement process will be instrumental in shaping the final submission to the Government, ensuring that any reorganisation of local government is developed collaboratively with our partners and communities and is supported by them.

## **8. Preparatory costs**

This interim plan has identified options that will be further considered ahead of the determination and submission of the formal response to Local government reorganisation for Warwickshire. As highlighted in the letter from the Minister it is vital that when respective councils are required to make their decisions on which option is supported this is made on *"robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes it is expected to achieve"*.

In the time allowed from the publication of the letter inviting responses there will be the need for significant additional investigations before such decisions can be made.



Further detailed review will be required in each of the six criteria areas by which Government will assess responses. The Councils will need to commission external support to ensure that responses are based on the latest information available from experiences from unitarization across the Country, small District and Borough Councils do not have large teams to prepare such analysis.

It is likely that costs of between £150k to £250k may need to be incurred in preparing the full review of options ahead of submission. Such work is a new burden on already stretched local authority budgets and as such should be reimbursed by government. In addition to these external costs there will need to be significant officer time required to ensure that the reports that elected members consider provide all relevant information.

## **9. Joint working on reorganisation and devolution**

The six principal Councils in Warwickshire have a strong record of working together positively.

Whilst it is possible that ultimately all principal Councils will not agree on a single submission for Warwickshire, as previously mentioned, all Councils will cooperate fully with each other and share information in a positive way.

The leaders have met on two occasions following the publication of the English Devolution Deal White paper, there would be regular ongoing discussions which initially will concentrate on the preparation of the November 2025 submission.

When the Government has determined the structure for local authorities within Warwickshire all councils will commit to ensuring that the transition to these structures is conducted professionally.

## **10. Barriers or challenges requiring Government action**

This interim plan has been prepared following the receipt of the letter on 5 February 2025, therefore, seeks to identify the key principles and options, without at this stage discounting one or other options.

Early feedback and views from Government following submission of the interim plan is welcomed and will ensure that no abortive work will be undertaken.

A significant issue for Warwickshire and the shape of future local government arrangements relates to questions surrounding which strategic authority options will be available. An early clarification surrounding the potential strategic authority options is therefore vital to assist our future considerations.

## **Agenda Item No 12**

### **Executive Board**

**17 March 2025**

**Report of the  
Chief Executive**

**Exclusion of the Public and Press**

#### **Recommendation to the Board**

**To consider, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, whether it is in the public interest that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.**

## **Agenda Item No 13**

**Performance Management** – Report of the Head of Corporate Services

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## **Agenda Item No 14**

**Housing Development** – Report of the Management Team and the Director of Housing

Paragraph 1 – Information relating to an individual.

## **Agenda Item No 15**

**Amendment to Agreement** – Report of the Interim Corporate Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer.

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## **Agenda Item No 16**

**Confidential Extract of the minutes of the Executive Board held on 10 February 2025**

Paragraph 1 – Information relating to an individual.

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

In relation to the item listed above members should only exclude the public if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, giving their reasons as to why that is the case.

The Contact Officer for this report is Amanda Tonks (719221)