



Securing Northampton's Future

Corporate Plan

2018-2023

Northampton is a growing town. It is growing in its attractiveness to businesses, residents, students and visitors.

This growth is leading to a transformation in the local economy and in the quality of life offered to everyone who lives in the Borough. We have some great businesses here and the positive enterprise climate that is provided in Northampton and the opportunities afforded by Northampton Alive, the Enterprise Zone, and other development in and around the Borough give cause for continued optimism about the town's economic performance.

Supporting this growth and establishing Northampton ever more as a place to come and visit stay and live, the town's cultural offer is also coming forward in leaps and bounds. The nationally and internationally renowned Royal and Derngate Theatre, with its wide cultural offer, sits at the heart of the growing and exciting cultural quarter. The development of a new and expanded Museum and Art Gallery alongside creative and cultural businesses, a new home for the National Leather Collection making it accessible to visitors, and quality hotels and food, is driving a renaissance in the attractiveness of Northampton.

Where people live is also changing in Northampton. Not only are new housing developments happening, but the Council is working hard with its partners to ensure that as much as possible of this housing is affordable whilst also working to improve its own housing stock with our housing partner Northampton Partnership Homes, and working with landlords and others to improve the private rented housing offer in the town. At the same time the health and wellbeing of residents is being promoted through a wide range of initiatives aimed at getting and keeping people healthy and feeling well across the Borough, through our excellent partner Northampton Leisure Trust.

More people are coming to live in Northampton every year. The population is also becoming older, with more diverse needs and support requirements. New development brings pressures as well as opportunities, not least in addressing the infrastructure needed to support growth. The Council will continue to advocate that growth and infrastructure need to be managed well together if growth is to be successful.

Change also brings a considerable challenge to the doors of the Council and our partners in Northampton and around the county and region. The Council will support positive enhancement of the town and the county. This corporate plan spells out the steps, many of which arise from the manifesto the public voted for nearly three years ago, that the Borough Council will take - working with partners - to deliver this vision of a brighter more attractive place for Northamptonians to live, work and play in. Northampton is alive with enterprise, innovation and opportunity.

All public services face financial constraint over the coming years. For the Borough Council this means that in 2022/23 we have a forecast gap in our net General Fund budget of 5% or about £1.5m compared to this year. We are not alone in this challenge and the Council is committed to ensuring that we plan ahead to manage this downturn whilst still making progress towards the ever better Northampton that we want and the people need.

Doing this means that in addition to looking to support Northampton as a place, support local people in their lives, and delivering key services and projects, the

Council must also look to how it can work more cheaply and efficiently to maintain our proud record of balancing the books for the public. This Corporate Plan therefore also spells out the business development priorities of the Council.

We must continue to drive to gain the benefits of growth to develop and provide public services in the future, meeting ambitious targets set out in the latest national financial settlement for local government.

We must further strengthen partnership with other organisations, building on our record of combining and sharing with other Councils. Whilst maintaining our community leadership role, we will work to combine the delivery of services wherever that makes most sense for the future. We must also look to empower and engage communities to ensure that where finance is not available now or in the future communities have sufficient resilience, ability and strength to support and develop themselves with encouragement and facilitation from the Council and our partners.

Plans continue to be developed for how the Council will use these business development priorities to meet the financial challenge ahead and continue to balance the books going forward.

We recognise the importance of good governance in driving to achieve our priorities and in order to achieve improvement in this we have adopted a Governance Action Plan with implementation overseen by the Council through its Audit Committee. Implementation and further development of the Plan will ensure high standards of governance including in decision-making, risk management, financial control and assurance, accountability and ensure compliance with these expected standards throughout the Council.

Nothing in this plan is achievable without the hard work and skills of the Council's workforce. They work constantly to deliver public services in difficult times. They need to be recognised for their efforts and it is our responsibility to work with them to develop a culture which empowers them and enables the Council to continue to improve for the benefit of the public. This culture change programme is a central part of our commitments in this corporate plan.

Northampton is on the right track. Our plans will further develop over the coming years, but we plan with confident expectation that in difficult times both the public of Northampton and your Council can and will rise to the challenges ahead.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Leader of the Council

Our Priorities

The corporate plan priorities are cascaded through all that we do and deliver:

Northampton Alive

A vibrant successful town for now and the future

Safer Communities

Making you feel safe and secure

Housing for Everyone

Helping those that need it to have a safe and secure home

Ensuring that a buoyant market provides a wide choice of homes for all ages

Protecting Our Environment

A clean and attractive town for residents and visitors

Love Northampton

Enhancing leisure activities for local people and encouraging participation

Working Hard and Spending your Money Wisely

Delivering quality modern services

Improving Our Governance

Implementing the Governance Action Plan

Priority: Northampton Alive

A vibrant successful town for now and the future

Northampton to be an excellent place to do business with a talented workforce that meets the needs and expectations of existing and potential employers in the town and a successful Enterprise Zone

Working with our partners in local and national government, the health sector, the community and the private sector to lobby for infrastructure that is appropriate for sustainable growth including working with the County Council and other infrastructure providers.

Projecting Northampton onto a regional and national stage to promote the town as a great place to live, work, shop and do business, working with partners to promote the town, supporting improvements to the Town Centre and supporting the economic development of Northampton

Promoting economic growth

Northampton Alive commitments

Preparing for and welcoming the opening of University, as well as work with them to ensure a smooth integration of the new Campus and its students close to the town centre, in the heart of the Enterprise Zone

Further review the options to ensure that the Greyfriars development will deliver what is best for the town, through housing, leisure and complementary retail

Continue the drive towards the development of station car park and surrounding area

Continue to develop and grow the Enterprise Zone

Regenerating a key prominent site – Horizon House, in the heart of the Enterprise Zone

Promote and enable the first Phase of the Four Waterside development

Look to develop market facilities and an offer that will benefit shoppers and traders

Promote and support the Business Incentive Scheme

Support Business Improvement Districts in Town Centre and Brackmills

Promote and enhance the towns key gateways, in particular the Heritage Gateways to the Town centre

Welcome the opening of Delapre Abbey and support its' first year of full operation

Commence the delivery of the St James Mill Road link

Work towards completing the redevelopment of the St Edmund's site

Have planning policies that include for the provision infrastructure first and that oppose inappropriate development on the edge of the borough

Ensure that the emerging Local Plan reflects local priorities

Continue the free weekday parking offer in council owned car parks

Continue to support and promote the economy of the town

Work with partners and developers to deliver the North West bypass/Northern Orbital Road – much needed infrastructure - at the earliest opportunity

Priority: Safer Communities

Making you feel safe and secure

Northampton to be a great place to live, feeling safe and secure, and without fear

Seek to improve partnership working with the Police to reduce crime and make the town safer through Community Safety Partnership

Safer Communities commitments

Keep our communities safe by utilizing the benefits of our digitised CCTV system

Implement CCTV enhancements on Market Square to combat Crime and anti-social behaviour

Fully sponsor a full time police officer to deal with crime and anti-social behavior in and around the town centre area

Utilise community payback, volunteers, community and voluntary organisations and local businesses to support environmental issues in priority areas

Use licensing powers to ensure the people of Northampton are kept safe

Work with the Police and other partners to reduce begging and street drinking and take a hard line on intimidating behavior by 'chuggers' through the Public Spaces Protection Order, utilising anti-social behavior legislation, tools and powers to tackle individuals causing annoyance, nuisance and distress

Utilise anti-social behavior legislation, tools and powers to tackle individuals causing annoyance, nuisance and distress

Encourage reporting of anti-social behavior and hate crime by raising awareness

Support vulnerable people, by coordinating partnership activity to reduce incidents of sexual violence and domestic abuse, prevent child exploitation, including promotion of internet safety and undertake domestic homicide reviews

Utilise national days and weeks of celebration, action and commemoration to bring partners, including the voluntary and community sector together, to raise

awareness and support the most vulnerable people in our communities

Support the community and local priorities, through Women's, Youth, Pensioner's, Disabled, Diverse, LGBT Forums and Parish Councils with their new Forum

Celebrate the diversity of the Town, foster good relationships and promote understanding, through community events

Priority: Protecting Our Environment

A clean and attractive town for residents and visitors

Work with local communities to keep Northampton clear, tidy and well maintained

Protecting Our Environment commitments

Ensure a smooth transition to the new environmental services provider

Work with the Council's new environmental services provider to improve and ensure the best service throughout the town for the people of Northampton

Work with the new environmental services provider to raise the standard of cleanliness in the town centre

Continue to invest in the Council owned Town centre Car Parks

Address match day parking issues, taking into account the report/outcome of Match Day Parking Working Group

Maintain high standards in our parks and green spaces and increase the number of Green Flag awards

Retain and encourage both existing and new Park Management Committees, to ensure they give the representative community an active say in the running of our parks and address specific park needs and ensure they address specific park needs

Commit to holding a wide range of events in each park such as the bands in park programme in Abington Park and to view each park has a focal point for community activity and as a 'community centre without a roof'

Enhance the standard of play equipment in parks and play areas by maintaining a specific budget for play equipment and encouraging grant funding for new areas of play equipment

Support residents wanting a new allotment, and work with existing committees to help improve current allotment sites and facilities

Improve the standard of tree maintenance continuing to invest £100.000 per annum in this work

Adopt a zero tolerance to fly-tipping, littering, dog fouling and other environmental nuisances by issuing fines via our new environmental enforcement contract

Utilise all powers provided under our PSPO to protect the environment of our town

Continue to support the Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Ranger Services and to embrace technology to help them better undertake their duties

Continue with Northampton in Bloom and participation in Britain in Bloom to help promote community involvement in improving the look and feel of the town

The Council will develop the action and implementation plan for its Low Emissions Strategy

Priority: Housing for Everyone

Helping those that need it to have a safe and secure home

All neighbourhoods to be desirable places to live with homes appropriate for people at different points in their lives, attractive and well-kept buildings and open spaces, good roads and public transport and a comprehensive range of community events and facilities.

Continue to manage the impact of welfare reform and other pressures

New, affordable and decent housing, in accordance with a new Housing Needs Analysis

Manage the increasing demand for temporary accommodation by seeking new ways to meet housing need

Help people to achieve and maintain independence, including through the Disabled Facility Grant

Housing for Everyone commitments

Delivery of affordable housing in significant numbers to tackle the housing crisis that exists, through innovative means of delivery

Take a robust approach through planning process to ensure developers deliver significant affordable and appropriate homes

Take a tough stance on anti-social behavior and irresponsible tenants who adversely affect the quality of life of their neighbours

Support Northampton Partnership Homes delivering key services to housing tenants on behalf of the Council as landlord

Protect the role of mobility and older persons' housing

Transform housing services using the wellbeing model

Reducing the cost of temporary accommodation

Protect residents against inappropriate Houses of Multiple Occupancy, through multi-agency working, an online register accessible to all, the introduction of further Article 4 Directions and the expansion of the Housing Enforcement Team

Maintain the Social Lettings Agency working with private landlords

Take a tough stance on criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords, through the expansion of the Housing Enforcement Team

Continue to support and work with the Countywide Traveller Unit in taking a proactive and prompt approach to dealing with illegal encampments

Continue to implement “Together we change lives”, the Rough Sleepers Strategy

Building on the great success of the night shelter, continue to support and develop its facilities/services

Safeguard Call Care service and further extend Call Care to private users

Continue to implement the Rough Sleepers Strategy

Manage the increasing demand for temporary accommodation by seeking new ways to meet housing need, such as the social lettings agency

Priority: Love Northampton

Enhancing leisure activities for local people and encouraging participation

Northampton to have a great community spirit, with people actively participating in local democracy, taking pride in Northampton, its environment and its communities

Encourage high quality cultural and sporting events and attractions for residents and visitors to experience, with a range of places for visitors to stay

Children and young people should have access to a range of activities to enable them to make a positive contribution to their communities and to realise their potential and talent

Local people having good health and wellbeing with the Council playing a leading role in tackling the underlying root causes of poor health and the issues that affect wellbeing

Love Northampton commitments

Work with the cultural quarter partners to provide a vibrant, exciting and welcoming offer for visitors

Transform the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery by significant expansion and development of the museum service.

Redevelop the Vulcan Works as part of the Cultural Quarter

Support the town's sports clubs with partners

Promote tourism for Northampton by celebrating the town's history, heritage and culture

Invest in enhancing assets relative to visitor attractions

Develop and implement a Cultural Strategy and Action Plan

Ensure Armed Forces Community Covenant continues as a key Council policy

Provide a range of quality events to support the economic vibrancy of the town

Retain Councillor Community Fund to support local groups

Work with Voluntary Impact Northampton and others to strengthen the local voluntary community sector

Support and encourage volunteering

Continue to deliver the outcome of the street lighting scrutiny report

Priority: Working Hard and Spending Your Money Wisely

Delivering quality modern services

The Council at all times aims to:

ensure the Council is economic, efficient and effective

get the best from the resources available and develop an agile workforce culture

recognise, support and empower Council employees better through changing the Council's culture to do so

Working Hard and Spending Your Money Wisely commitments

Implement the culture change mission, vision and values to empower staff to perform in their roles

Under the new Chief Executive review the Council's officer structure

Reduce the number of interim staff

Develop the Asset management and investment strategy

Retain Living Wage commitment to directly employed staff and consider its application in future contracts

Support apprenticeship schemes across the Borough Council

Retain transparent approach on consultants and limit their use

Support local businesses who want to work with the council

Manage, monitor and review the implementation of the Governance Action Plan

Working with other districts and boroughs to seek the best possible Unitary Governance solution for Northampton, in accordance with established policy

Monitor closely and deliver the commitments outlined in the council's Efficiency Plan.

Our priorities are financially supported by the Councils budget process. Each of the key programmes of work are planned and costed to ensure delivery, value for money and sustainability. The Corporate Plan, Service Plans and projects are monitored and reported regularly to management, to Cabinet and to relevant Committees.

Business Development Priorities

Facing the financial challenge ahead

In accordance with the introduction to this plan, it is outlined that there are three business development priorities that support the corporate plan and contribute to managing the Council's future financial challenge. The Council aims to be able to continue to deliver for the public of Northampton but must do so at a substantially lower net cost.

Empowering Communities

Delivering a better Northampton relies upon the engagement of communities in shaping their own futures with support and community leadership from the Council, its councillors and partners. As resources decline it is essential that communities are empowered to be part of delivering change and services.

We will aim to do this by establishing actively involved communities that have a strong sense of ownership, responsibility and local pride and who are fully empowered, equipped and supported to improve the neighbourhoods where they live to help make everywhere in Northampton a great place to live, visit, work, study and invest.

This priority will build on existing positive work between councillors and Parish Councils, residents groups, interest groups and community organisation. Empowering communities will enhance wellbeing as well as enable future challenges to be addressed.

Economic Growth

Economic growth in Northampton is essential to meet the financial targets set in the national financial settlement for local government and to develop new income to support local public services both in the Borough and the County. Northampton's track record on delivering growth is excellent and needs to continue to be driven forward.

Building on the success of Northampton Alive to date, the Borough Council will continue to:

- lead on the development and delivery of the Northampton Alive programme, which includes key physical projects as part of the overall regeneration programme for the Borough.

- provide a comprehensive business support and growth service for both new and existing enterprises investing into the Borough. This includes available land and property advice, together with other support services such as the Business Incentive scheme

- work with other key stakeholders to meet the towns strategic regeneration aims including the delivery of the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone

- provide a corporate asset function which oversees both existing stock whilst advising on strategic opportunities

Partnership Working

The Council has a record of working in partnership with other local authorities, community organisation and partners to deliver a wide range of services. To meet the financial challenge ahead whilst still delivering a better Northampton, the Council will also:

- drive to release the benefits of working and combining together in partnership in order to strive towards increased efficiency, reduce duplication and maximise benefits and opportunities

- work proactively and collaboratively with partners to improve the housing, health and wellbeing of people living and working in the Borough and ensure that Northampton is a great place to live, visit, work, study and invest

- build strong and effective relationships with partners , based on a coherent, consistent and clearly defined approach to partnership working, in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness and provide better outcomes