North Northamptonshire Council

Leader's Update

Cllr Jason Smithers
Leader of the Council

10 February 2023

Introduction and Welcome!

Welcome to my latest Update.

Yesterday the Executive met in the Council Chamber at the Corby Cube. The Council's proposal to set a balanced budget was presented. The Executive endorsed the report and the budget proposals will now be considered by Council for approval on Thursday 23 February. Given the financial and service pressures the Council has and continues to face, the budget is considered to be a real achievement. The Executive also considered a report on the Barnwell Neighbourhood Plan which was also approved. If you missed the live streaming, you can watch the recording on our YouTube channel. The agenda and papers can be found on our website.

The UK's Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) launched the Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal yesterday to help the millions of people affected by the devastating earthquakes in southern Turkey and north-west Syria. UK aid agencies - including the British Red Cross, Oxfam and ActionAid - are joining together to raise money. Funds will go towards medical aid, emergency shelter, food and clean water.

The Council has started to produce and publish a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the area. We will work with partner organisations, landowners and local communities over the coming months to create the strategy, mapping key wildlife habitats across the local area and identifying priorities to improve, increase and connect habitats.

The Bedford College Group and North Northamptonshire Council are working in partnership to deliver The Corby Sixth Form. Work has started on transforming Chisholm House into a new state of the art campus for 16 to 18-year-old students and is due to open in time for the start of the Autumn term. The Corby Sixth Form will be run by The Bedford College Group from Autumn 2023. The project is being facilitated through the Corby Towns Fund.

This week is National Apprenticeship Week, and we have been shining a light on the positive impact that apprenticeships make to individuals, businesses and the wider economy. Our apprenticeship scheme is going from strength to strength with 80 active learners having been employed.

North Northamptonshire Council is constantly working to ensure everyone has a better, brighter future. As a local authority, it's important that we set an example that is front and centre when it comes to supporting communities, so they feel safe and valued. That's why we are celebrating LGBT+ History Month. Throughout February, we are promoting and raising awareness of the support available for members of the LGBT+ community.

I was delighted to hear this week about our LIVE Team's continued achievements. Learning Independence Volunteering Employment (LIVE) is a specialist team that provides bespoke support to individuals with learning disabilities and related barriers to employment. Their projects and good work are reaching further into the local community as they support vulnerable and disadvantaged residents.

Temperatures dropped below freezing again this week, activating the Council's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) again. Our Rough Sleeping Team offered all known rough sleepers in the area emergency accommodation and a safe, warm, dry place to stay. The North Northamptonshire Warm Spaces initiative that the Council both runs and supports remains as important as ever. Please help us spread the message about local Warm Spaces to ensure that those who need them can access them.

The Council is offering residents across North Northamptonshire a new optional, chargeable, 12-month garden waste collection service. The annual subscription charge for the fortnightly service, with collections starting on Monday 3 April, is £40 per bin. There are alternative options for those not wanting or needing a bin, which are outlined below.

This Tuesday (7 February) was Safer Internet Day, which was marked with a dedicated webinar for those who work with young people and children. The webinar explored the many different ways to safeguard children online, and covered gangs, county lines, child sexual exploitation (CSE), social media, gaming and healthy online relationships.

This week was also Children's Mental Health Week is an important campaign that provides opportunities for young people to have conversations about mental health. The theme this year is 'Let's Connect' which is designed to encourage young people to connect with others in healthy, rewarding and meaningful ways.

Whatever your plans are, I hope you have a great weekend!

Executive meeting

Yesterday (Thursday 9 February) the Executive met in the Council Chamber at the Corby Cube.

If you missed the live streaming, you can **watch the recording** on our YouTube channel.

The **agenda and papers** are on our website.

Forthcoming meetings

Executive: Thursday 16 February from 10am.

Budget Council: Thursday 23 February from 10am.

The agendas will be displayed on our **website** the week before the meetings.

Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal

The UK's **Disasters Emergency Committee** (DEC) launched the **Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal** yesterday to help the millions of people affected by the devastating earthquakes in southern Turkey and north-west Syria.

UK aid agencies - including the British Red Cross, Oxfam and ActionAid - are joining together to raise money. Funds will go towards medical aid, emergency shelter, food and clean water.

Further information

Please visit the **Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal** website for updates and to make a donation.

DISASTERS
EMERGENCY
COMMITTEE

Local Nature Recovery Strategy for North Northamptonshire to be produced

Following agreement at the Executive meeting in January, work will now start on producing and publishing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the area.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map specific actions to drive nature's recovery.

The Council will now work with partner organisations, landowners and local communities over the coming months to create the strategy, mapping key wildlife habitats across the local area and identifying priorities to improve, increase and connect habitats.

Further information

The **North Northamptonshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy** that was presented to Executive can be viewed on our website.

More information about **Nature Recovery Strategies** is available on the GOV.UK website.

Construction work begins on Corby's new Sixth Form campus

Work has started on transforming Chisholm House in Corby into a new state of the art campus for 16 to 18-year-olds ahead of its opening in time for the start of the Autumn term. Once completed, the 4000 sq. ft Corby Sixth Form will offer a wide range of A Level subjects.

Features

- Impressive new entrance
- More than 25 classrooms
- State of the art science labs, resource centres and performance areas
- External roof terrace
- Modern café and common room areas.

The design will embrace the current style of the building and has been designed to run as carbon neutral.

The new campus is being delivered in partnership between The Bedford College Group and North Northamptonshire Council. The Sixth Form will be run by The Bedford College Group from Autumn 2023.

The project is being facilitated through the Corby Towns Fund, which sees the Corby area receiving £19.9m from central Government for four projects, including the new Sixth Form Centre. More details about the four projects and latest news are available via the **Corby Towns Fund website**.

The Corby Sixth Form is accepting applications ahead of the site opening its doors later in the year.

A **March Open Day** has been organised for Tuesday 7 March, from 5pm to 8pm, where tutors and the Student Services team will be on hand to answer your questions.

Further information

Please visit the **Corby Sixth Form Centre** website.

North Northamptonshire apprenticeships – earn while you learn scheme boosts career progression

Our apprenticeship scheme is going from strength to strength with 80 active learners having been employed.

This week the UK is celebrating National Apprenticeship Week, offering a chance for businesses and apprentices across the country to shine a light on the positive impact that apprenticeships make to individuals, businesses, and the wider economy.

The theme for National Apprenticeship Week 2023 is 'Skills for Life' and, as such, this week the Council will be encouraging and supporting potential and existing employees to build their careers.

Roles occupied by apprentices range from social workers, teachers and site engineers to departmental managers, finance and HR professionals and senior leaders.

With no upper age limit to becoming an apprentice, an increasing number of people aged over 16 are favouring apprenticeships as a way of studying towards a formal qualification while working.

The Council offers a range of apprenticeship support for individuals, managers, and businesses. To learn more or to contact one of our specialist advisors, please complete our **Apprenticeship Enquiry Form**.

We are committed to be an employer of choice. A position as an apprentice offers great flexibility and can build confidence in employees. It's also a way of bringing in great new ideas and bringing new, creative energy to roles.

Further information

Please visit the **Apprenticeships** section of our website.

Raising awareness in North Northamptonshire of LGBT+ History Month

LET'S MAKE HISTORY
together
LGBT+ HISTORY MONTH

February is LGBT+ History Month and North Northamptonshire Council is promoting and raising awareness of the support available for members of the LGBT+ community.

LGBT+ History Month is a national event that was set up to highlight struggles the LGBT+ community has faced over the years. It also highlights the achievements and the work that still needs to be done to ensure true equality.

The month is about education, reflection and working together to spread kindness.

The Council is committed to ensuring everyone has access to safe and thriving places, which can only happen when everyone feels safe to be themselves. With this in mind, the Council was one of the first members, and biggest supporters, of the North Northants LGBT+ Forum at its inception in December 2021.

The forum is made up of community groups, private and statutory organisation, charities and members of the public including allies of the LGBTQ+ community. It is designed to discuss where the gaps are in services for the LGBT+ community within North Northamptonshire and work out how these can be resolved.

Anyone wishing to be part of the forum can sign up to the **North Northants LGBT+ Forum mailing list** online. By doing this, you'll be made aware of what is being worked on and can offer your own advice and support.

Current areas being looked at by the forum include a lack of support for LGBT+ people over the age of 20, gaps in support within the care market and across GP surgeries.

The forum is still relatively new, and most members take on the work in a voluntary capacity outside of their day-to-day occupation. Members welcome any new ideas and support.

Further information

Please visit the **North Northants LGBT+ Forum** website.

Helping our communities LIVE

Learning Independence Volunteering Employment (LIVE) is a specialist team that provides bespoke support to individuals with learning disabilities and related barriers to employment. The LIVE Team sits within our Adult Social Care service.

Community projects

- **Free Coats for Kids** - over 100 coats given to children this Winter.
- **The Changing Room** - free interview and work clothing for job seekers.
- **The Cornerstone** - free clothing and essentials to people in need.

COATS FOR
KIDS
HELPING KEEP CHILDREN IN NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE DRY AND WARM
North Northamptonshire Council
L I V E
LEARNING INDEPENDENCE VOLUNTEERING EMPLOYMENT

All donated clothes are sourced, steam cleaned, repaired and displayed. So far, the team has supported over 300 people with clothing. This reduces the amount of clothing that is sent to landfill centres.

The team works alongside local organisations including job centres, Employment and Disability Services (EADS), domestic abuse centres, the Rough Sleeping Team, NHS Social Prescribers, local refugees groups, The Shack Food Project and the Soup Kitchen.

The team has also worked closely with local libraries and providers of Warm Spaces across North Northamptonshire this Winter.

I am immensely proud of the LIVE Team's achievements and commitment during challenging times. I look forward to hearing more news as their projects and good work reach further into the community.

Further information

Please call:

- Kettering: 01604 362820
- Corby: 01536 261066
- Wellingborough: 01604 362197.

North Northamptonshire Warm Spaces: Please help us spread the word

In a week where temperatures dropped below freezing again, the North Northamptonshire Warm Spaces initiative that the Council both runs and supports remains as important as ever.

Warm spaces provide somewhere a person who needs to get warm can go to, for free, to enjoy warmth and have a hot drink.

We have a **map of warm spaces** on our website, listed by area. If you know someone who you think might benefit, but doesn't have access to the internet, please let them know about their nearby warm spaces.

This Winter, North Northamptonshire Libraries and Community Libraries are being supported to signpost residents to Public Health's free health and wellbeing services. Health and wellbeing advisors will also be on hand at many of the warm space sessions held in libraries.

Please help us spread the message to others, to ensure that those who need them can access them.

Thank you to all the kind organisations across North Northamptonshire who have signed up to North Northamptonshire Warm Spaces already. If your organisation is opening its doors as a warm space in North Northamptonshire, and you haven't yet filled in the **Warm Spaces survey**, please do so. We can promote your warm space and support you.

Further information

Please visit the **cost of living** section of our website.

Garden waste collection service: Your options

The Council is offering residents across North Northamptonshire a new optional, chargeable, 12-month garden waste collection service. The annual subscription charge for the fortnightly service, with collections starting on Monday 3 April, is £40 per bin. There are alternative options for those not wanting or needing a bin, which are outlined below.

If you want to subscribe and renew

You will need to pay an annual subscription of £40 by debit or credit card. You can **sign up online,** ready for collections starting in the first two weeks of April, at any time. You will receive registration and renewal date stickers for your bin (in February if subscribing in advance). If you need a garden bin, this will be delivered by March. Your subscription will last 12 months from the point of purchase. If you sign up early ready for the change, it will run from April to April.

If you are currently subscribed in the East Northamptonshire area, you will need to apply when your current subscription expires. If you're an existing East Northamptonshire customer, your first bin subscription will be discounted to £20 (if you sign up before the end of December 2023). If you're already paying by direct debit, this will continue at the lower cost and will be automatically discounted.

If you don't want or need a bin

You can **order 10 compostable NNC Garden Waste Sacks** at £16.50 for one-off collections.

You can **order a discounted 220L home composter** from the Get Composting website for £5 plus delivery.

You can also take green waste to your nearest **Household Waste Recycling Centre** in the North Northamptonshire area for free disposal.

Further information

Please visit the **garden waste** section of our website.

Residents unable to go online can subscribe to the service by calling Customer Services on 0300 126 3000. Our lines are open from Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm.

Open activities on the Consultation and Engagement Hub

Have your say

Please find below details of our open consultation and engagement activities. I would welcome your feedback on the following:

- **Local Government Boundary Commission for England - North Northamptonshire Electoral Review**. North Northamptonshire Council has been asked to promote the next round of consultation activities. A new pattern of wards is being developed, with a change to councillor numbers. Views on which communities should be part of the same ward, which facilities are shared and common issues for neighbouring communities are also being sought. Closes 6 March 2023 (extended from 6 February 2023).
- **Hanwood Park Secondary School Consultation.** In February 2021, as part of the Wave 14 free school application process, Orbis Education Trust (OET) had a bid approved to open a new secondary free school for boys on the Hanwood Park Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE), by the Department for Education (DfE). The Council and OET are seeking views as to whether the new school should be a boys school (as initially planned) or be a mixed sex provision. Closes 5 March 2023.

Further information

Details of all open and closed consultation and engagement activities are available on the **North Northamptonshire Consultation and Engagement Hub**.

If you have any questions, please email the Consultation and Engagement Team at CET@northnorthants.gov.uk.

Keeping our children safe online: Your questions answered on Safer Internet Day 2023

With the likes of TikTok, Discord and VR chat more popular than ever, keeping children protected while online is seen as increasingly important.

Tuesday 7 February was Safer Internet Day, which was marked with a webinar for those who work with young people and children. The webinar explored the many different ways to safeguard children online.

Expert speakers and lead professionals from Guiding Young Minds, North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council took part to discuss gangs, county lines, child sexual exploitation (CSE), social media, gaming and healthy online relationships.

Further information

Please visit the **UK Safer Internet Centre** website.

Children's Mental Health Week

Children's Mental Health Week (6-12 February) has been making a difference to the lives of children and young people across North Northamptonshire by shining a spotlight on mental health.

Schools across North Northamptonshire have been getting involved in this national campaign, helped by resources from the **Northamptonshire Talk Out Loud** programme (part of Northamptonshire Healthy Schools Service).

Children's Mental Health Week is an important campaign that provides opportunities for young people to have conversations about mental health. The theme this year is 'Let's Connect' which is designed to encourage young people to connect with others in healthy, rewarding and meaningful ways.

'Let's Connect' includes additional connections - the support services young people can turn to should they feel that they need more help – such as the **ASK NORMEN** website, the Northamptonshire Mental Health Gateway that promotes positive mental health for children and young people.

Talk Out Loud has further expanded the 'Let's Connect' theme to include connections with nature and has teamed-up with Northamptonshire-based willow-weaving artist **Deb Jones** to bring young people the exciting opportunity to create a design which reflects good mental health. Winning entries from the competition from both North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council areas will be used as inspiration by the artist, and then displayed at country parks later in the year.

Further information

Please visit the **ASK NORMEN** website.

Time to Talk Day

Time to Talk Day is the nation's biggest mental health conversation. Happening every year, it's a day for friends, families, communities and workplaces to come together to talk, listen and change lives.

This week, Sara Petty from the Healthy Schools Service (Public Health Northamptonshire) met North Northamptonshire Council's Leader and Executive to discuss Time to Talk Day, here pictured wearing campaign wristbands to show their support for the campaign.

Further information

Please visit the **Time to Talk Day** website.

Press releases

North
Northamptonshire
Council
LATEST NEWS

To help you stay abreast of the key things the Council has been doing, I have included some links to the Council's press releases below (starting with the most recent):

- **Local Nature Recovery Strategy for North Northants to be produced**
- **NNC works with partners to raise awareness of the impact of sexual assault during national Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness week**
- **Children's Mental Health Week**
- **How do we keep our children safe online? Your questions answered on Safer Internet Day 2023**
- **North Northamptonshire apprenticeships – earn while you learn scheme boosts career progression**
- **Election results - Northall Ward**
- **Grants for community centres**
- **Make a splash at our free under 18s swim sessions this February half term**
- **Construction work begins on Corby's new 6th Form college**
- **Raising awareness in North Northants of LGBT+ History month**

If you would like stay up to date with the Council's media releases, you can visit the news section of the Council's website: **www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news**

Or follow Twitter **@NNorthantsC** and/or Facebook **@NorthNorthants**

Social media: Top stories

Follow our social media accounts on **Facebook** and/or **Twitter**.

Top Facebook posts so far this week (6 to 8 February)

- If you are more of an occasional gardener, you can order 'ad-hoc collection sacks'. 10 sacks cost £16.50 and can be ordered online: http://ow.ly/Z73W50Mspye Once you have filled a minimum of 3 sacks, contact us to book a collection: http://ow.ly/KqXq50Mspyg
  (Reach 31,095, Post Clicks 4,675)
- North Northamptonshire apprenticeships – earn while you learn scheme boosts career progression http://ow.ly/T4S050MKjK3
  (Reach 4,188, Post Clicks 261)
- Due to the weather forecast predicting sub-zero temperatures across North Northamptonshire, the Council is triggering its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP). SWEP is likely to remain operational for 2 nights, but this will be kept under daily review. The Rough Sleeping and Housing Options Teams are working closely to ensure that all known and verified rough sleepers have been offered accommodation from this evening. The whereabouts and identity of any person sleeping rough should be reported to the Rough Sleeping Team during office hours, and to the Council's Out of Hours Service at all other times as follows: Rough Sleeping Team Hotline: 01536 464630 Rough Sleeping Team Email: roughsleepingteam@northnorthants.gov.uk Out of Hours Service: 0300 126 3000 North Northamptonshire Council is still operating the "Everyone In" initiative, and commit to offer suitable accommodation to verified and genuine rough sleepers, regardless of the weather, as quickly as possible. If you have any intelligence or know of anyone rough sleeping then please always notify our Rough Sleeping Team using the details above.
  (Reach 2,291, Post Clicks 96)

Top Tweets so far this week (6 to 8 February)

- Due to the weather forecast predicting sub-zero temperatures across North Northamptonshire, the Council is triggering its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP). SWEP is likely to remain operational for 2 nights, but this will be kept under daily review.
  (Impressions 1,082, Engagements 19)
- If you are more of an occasional gardener, you can order 'ad-hoc' collection sacks. 10 sacks cost £16.50 and can be ordered online: https://t.co/Q5vjcCwFn3 Once you have filled a minimum of 3 sacks, contact us to book a collection: https://t.co/gMsBvsWakR
  (Impressions 666, Engagements 12)
- The North Northamptonshire community continues to open their doors and offer warm spaces for those in need. Find a warm space near you at: https://t.co/UVvFvz72jj. Please spread the word.
  (Impressions 622, Engagements 17)

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. If you have any ideas for items to include in future updates, please let me know at: **executive@northnorthants.gov.uk**

With Best Wishes,

Jason

North
Northamptonshire
Council

Follow me on Twitter

@SmithersJason

Contacting North Northamptonshire Council

☎ **0300 126 3000**

www.northnorthants.gov.uk