



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Planning Transformation Programme Update

October 2026



agenda

- Local plan - update and timeline
- Planning Transformation – timelines, outcomes and progress to date.

- Second Regulation 18 plan was consulted on from 29th January to 27th March
- 6,184 respondents – some making more than one comment.
- Representations were reported to and discussed by Planning Policy Committee on 4th August.
- Plan has been revised to take into account comments received
- Changes are identified in the report to PPC on 14th September -
- Examples of changes:
 - Collingtree Golf Course – a proposal for 300 homes has been removed
 - AL5 Furtho pit - a proposal for employment uses has been removed
 - Housing requirement in rural areas has been reduced by approx 15%

Planning policy Committee decision

- Planning policy is a executive committee
- Only the 3 Cabinet Members can vote
- Members voted to not progress with the current plan but to start a new plan

Reasons included....

- Felt the new local plan and new legislation could provide more opportunities for the area
- Concerned that the existing plan would be out of date immediately as new NPPF takes hold
- Would have liked more time to look at options following consultation
- Raised concerns of the impacts of limited energy infrastructure in delivering the current plan
- Wanted to review the development opportunities to respond to objections raised.

Local Plan

- Regulation 19 Plan to be published on Monday 5th October for six weeks
- Ministerial Direction requires the Council to publish the plan (unchanged) no later than 5th October and then submit (unchanged) for examination no later than 31st December.
- Period for representations - relates to soundness of the plan
- We will add lots of advice to our website to explain what is meant by soundness and how to respond to the plan.
- **Briefing for Parishes (via Ncalc) on 21st October (10.00 a.m.)**
- Closes at 23.59 Monday 16th November – late representations cannot be accepted

Next Steps after 16th November

- Council will summarise representations and send summary together with plan and supporting documents to Planning Inspectorate (by 31st December)
- The Planning Inspectorate will set up examination hearings.
- The Council's website will be kept up to date with information about the examination, dates for hearings, topics to be discussed etc.
- The Inspector will determine who can appear at the hearings
- Inspector will hold the hearings and identify any modifications that are required for the plan.
- Modifications will be consulted upon
- Inspector will produce a report
- Plan is submitted to Full Council seeking adoption.

Programme – progress to date

Programme set up

- ❖ Programme plan has been established; the high-level timeline has been established (attached)
- ❖ The Outputs and Outcomes are drafted for each workstream (attached)

Workstreams – The following workstreams are underway:

- Building Safety Levy – went live on 1st October 2026
- Section 106 Reconciliation – all SUE's for Daventry are reconciled, Northampton & Towcester progressing well – *est Nov 26 completion*
- Section 106 Transformation – New procedures drafted, new finance codes agreed
- Technical Support – End to end process reviews for digital opportunities and efficiencies
- Communications plan refreshed
- Investing in our people plan refreshed
- Complaints process review and identification of challenges / opportunities / efficiencies

Workstreams starting

Looking at implementing findings and reviewing service delivery in all key teams.

- Major Projects and Development management
- Enforcement
- Committee
- Specialist services
- Spatial Planning

Digital Workstream – The following digital opportunities are being investigated

- Options appraisal for mobile working complete, this should improve efficiencies in:
 - Enforcement
 - Building Control
 - Development Management / Major Projects
- Valon AI free 8 weeks pilot scoped this should improve efficiencies in:
 - Technical Support – Validation
 - Development Management – Report Compilation and Research
- Chatbot in place to increase response times for customers and help reduce traffic via Inboxes
- Digital solution for reporting of S106 & CIL being investigated

[illegible]

[illegible]

Engagement with Town & Parishes

Monthly surgeries:

If you would like to meet the Service Director for a discussion about our service or about a specific application, there are x3 30-minute slots held via Teams each month dedicated to Town and Parish Council engagement.

Surgeries are typically well attended and can be booked via email to:

Linda.Aphale@WestNorthants.gov.uk

17 December	11-1	Spaces still available
26 January	2-4	Spaces still available
22 February	11-1	Spaces still available
23 March	11-1	Spaces still available
27 April	2-4	Spaces still available
25 May	2-4	Spaces still available
22 June	3-5	Spaces still available

In addition, the Service Director meets with Danny on a quarterly basis to discuss and update on matters.