

# ***The First Six Months***

Unitary Northamptonshire

***Cllr David Howes***

*Executive Member for Rural Communities and Localism*



# Overview

- The first six months:
  - Context - recent challenges
  - Key achievements
- Rural Communities and Localism:
  - Objectives
  - What I have heard so far
  - What areas does my role cover?
  - How am I approaching the role?
- Questions and discussion

# Context – Recent Challenges

Local Government Reform

Remote working

# COVID-19

Need for savings

# Local Elections

## Service continuity vs transformation

## New Council, New Executive

New phone system and contact details

New IT systems

## Extreme weather conditions

## Surprises!

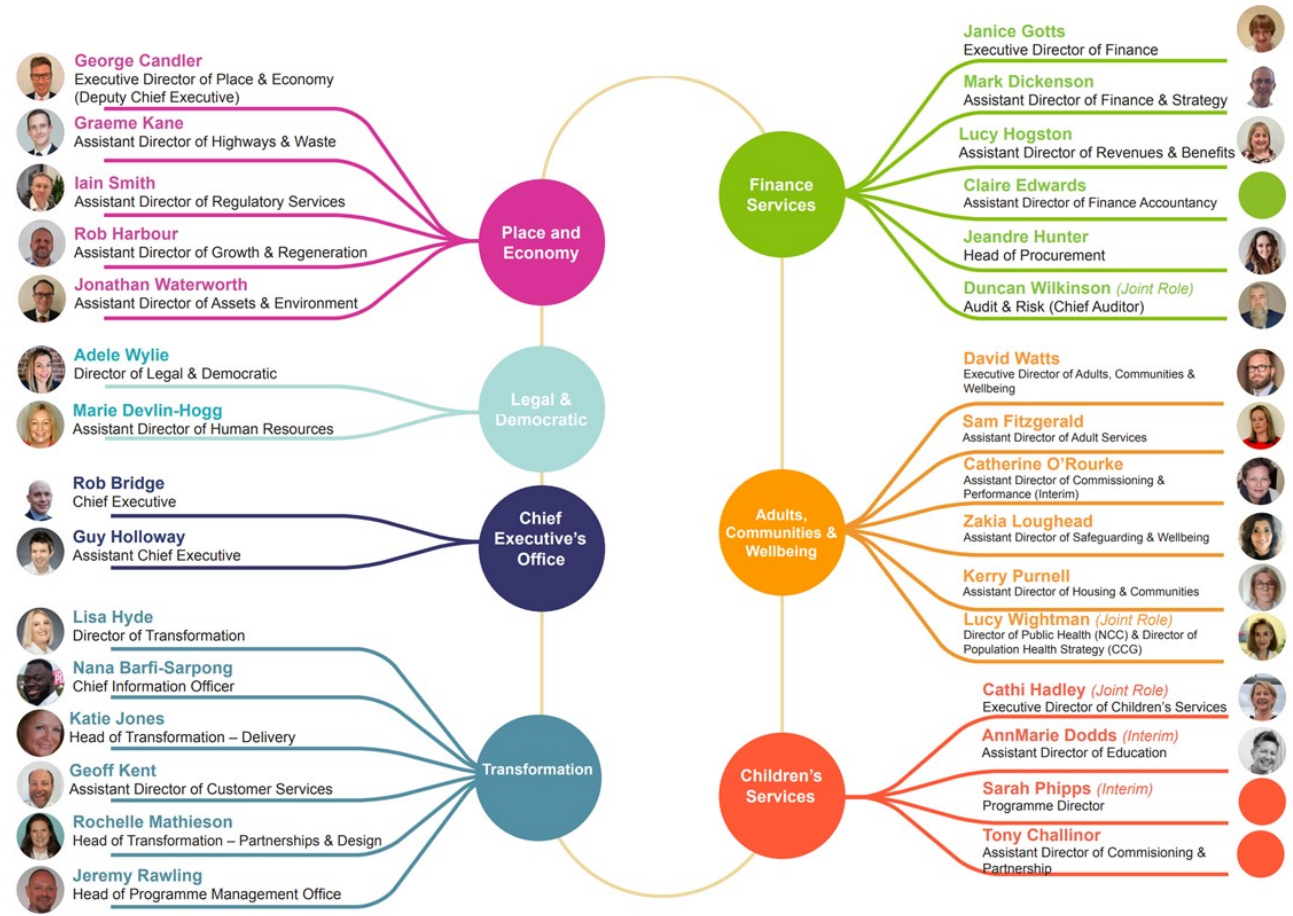
## Hybrid of cultures

Fewer senior managers

Some inherited decisions

# Launching North Northamptonshire Council

- New Leadership and management team
- Successful Transfer of around 3,000 staff!
- Tier 4 Management Interim arrangements
  - Interim arrangements done!
  - Process will take time to fully complete
- News systems went live. Major challenge!
- New logo and brand identity launched



# New Council Elected



- Election was a large and complex project!
- Took place soon after vesting day and during a pandemic
- Election well delivered but was a major challenge
- Introduced one electoral register. This is a significant achievement!

# New Executive Appointed

## CLLR JASON SMITHERS

*Leader of the Council*



Communication and engagement  
Corporate health & safety  
Democratic and legal services  
Emergency planning  
Human resources  
Information governance  
Policy and performance  
Registration and the Coroners Service

## CLLR HELEN HOWELL

*Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism  
(Deputy Leader)*



Chester Farm  
Culture services  
Sport and Leisure  
Libraries  
Visitor economy

## CLLR SCOTT EDWARDS

*Children, Families, Education and Skills*



Commissioning & partnerships:  
Children's Trust  
  
Education services  
Skills & further education

## CLLR HELEN HARRISON

*Adults, Health and Wellbeing*



Adult learning; Assistive technology  
Care commissioning & health partnerships  
Personal budget support  
Prevention and therapy; Provider services  
Public health and wellbeing services  
Quality Assurance Social Work &  
Safeguarding

## CLLR LLOYD BUNDAY

*Finance and Transformation*



Customer services  
Financial strategy & Capital programme  
Income and debt management  
Money and debt advice  
Procurement and insurance  
Revenues and benefits service  
Risks management, pensions and audit  
Transformation and ICT

## CLLR DAVID BRACKENBURY

*Growth and Regeneration*



Bereavement services  
Building control & environmental health  
Development management  
Flood risk management  
Growth and economic development  
Licensing and trading standards  
Planning and planning policy  
Town centres and regeneration

## CLLR GRAHAM LAWMAN

*Highways, Travel and Assets*



Grounds maintenance  
Highways and transport  
Parking (on street and car parks)  
Property and estates management  
Property capital projects  
Refuse, recycling and waste  
Street cleansing  
Street lights

## CLLR ANDY MERCER

*Housing and Community*



Community safety  
Homelessness  
Housing  
Private Sector Housing

## CLLR DAVID HOWES

*Rural Communities and Localism*



Digital infrastructure  
Parish and town councils  
Travellers Unit

## CLLR HARRIET PENTLAND

*Climate and Green Environment*



Climate Change  
Country parks  
Energy management  
Green environment policy  
Parks and open spaces

# Award Winning Services and Initiatives



- Refurbishment of Swansgate car park shortlisted for industry award
- Kettering & Corby refuse and recycling service wins APSE award
- Corby's Community Alcohol Partnership wins a national award
- Shortlisted for the LGC Awards in Public Health category

# Investment in North Northamptonshire



- £19.9 million Town Fund monies for Corby town centre
- Kettering's £3.5million Heritage Action Zone project started (GLAM)
- Secured £447,000 to support local high streets and town centres
- Announced a new primary school at Stanton Cross, Wellingborough
- Refurbished six play areas in Wellingborough



# Progressed Service Delivery



- Maintained continuity of service provision (key priority was safe and legal)
- Safely reopened libraries, leisure centres and customer service centres
- Good progress with important services such as Children's Services

# Supported Business, Economy and Communities



- Secured £3m 'top-up' funding to support businesses impacted by COVID-19
- Launched a 'Go Northamptonshire' tourism campaign to promote the area this summer and autumn (Social Media campaign)
- Business support services packages provided by the Council

# Engaged Local Communities



- Delivered a range of public consultations on important local issues
- Engaged School Children to name a road sweeper 'Sweepasaurus'
- Helped organise wellbeing festivals and family fun days for local communities

# Tough on Enforcement



- Executive agreed a strategy for tackling litter and fly-tipping
- The Council has carried out a number of prosecutions
- Executive agreed a singular enforcement policy for the area

# Climate Change and the Environment



- Environmental considerations central to the Council's future plan
- Secured £240,000 Forestry Commission grant to plant over 1,000 trees!
- Confirmed seven sites for installation of electric vehicle charging points with further sites in development

# Transport, Infrastructure and planning



- Introduced four area Planning Committees
- Pledged continued support for bus operators in the area
- Progressing the Active Travel Scheme across the area and new Bus Strategy
- Helping shape the developer-funded junction improvements in the area  
(Kettering and Corby)

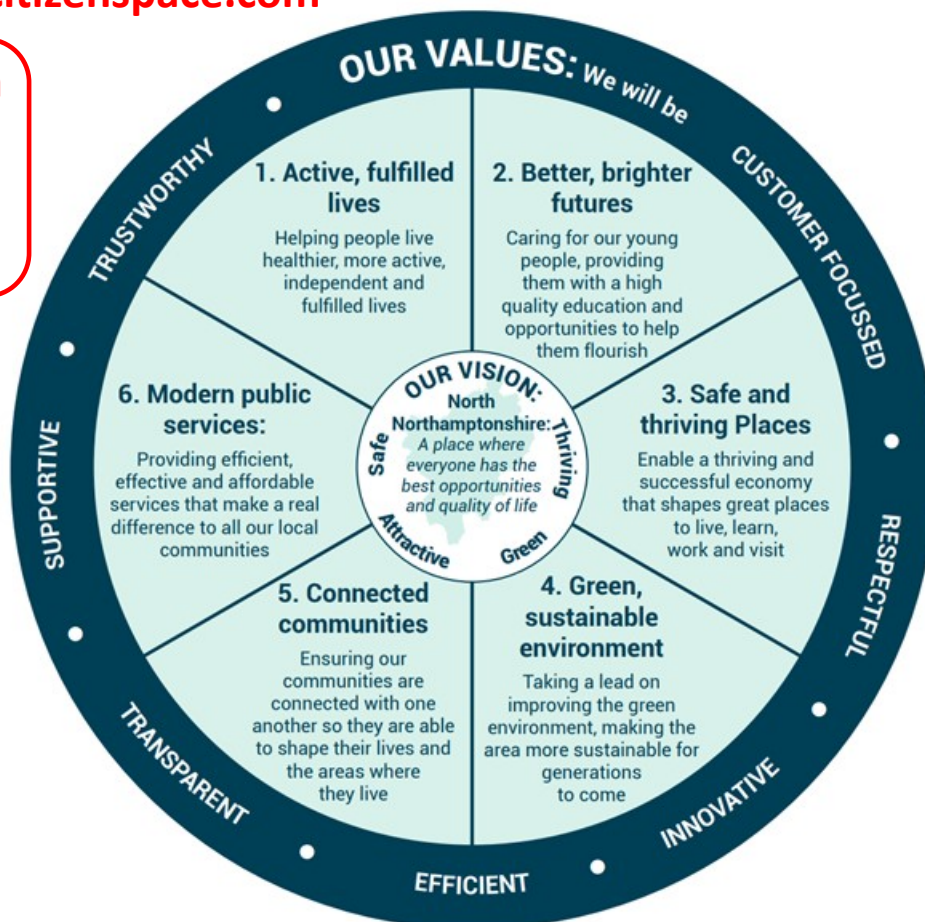
# Setting out our future aspirations

Our vision, values and key commitments

## Our priorities for North Northamptonshire:

<https://northnorthants.citizenspace.com>

The Public Consultation ends this Sunday at midnight. There is still time to take part!



### 1. Active, fulfilled lives

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

### 2. Better, brighter futures:

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

### 3. Safe and thriving places:

- Strengthen the cultural identity of towns, villages and rural communities
- Help town centres and villages respond to changing trends
- Attract tourism, visitors and inward investment
- Support the creation of high-quality, better-skilled jobs
- Improve the standard of new and existing homes and ensure housing supply meets demand
- Tackle the causes of difficult issues leading to nuisance, crime and anti-social behaviour
- Promote sustainable, active travel
- Maintain our highways infrastructure to keep people moving safely around North Northamptonshire
- Enable people to travel across North Northamptonshire, and beyond
- Ensure everyone has access to high-speed internet connectivity

### 4. Greener, sustainable environment:

- Work with communities and businesses to tackle climate change and improve air quality
- As an exemplar to other organisations, demonstrate clear leadership on tackling sustainability
- Embed low carbon technology, sustained and improved green infrastructure, and sustainable forms of transport fit for the future
- Protect and further enhance the natural environment and ecology
- Ensure we all throw away less, reuse more, and recycle as much as we can
- Protect the countryside and ensure it is accessible for everyone to enjoy

### 5. Connected communities:

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

### 6. Modern public services:

- Provide good quality and efficient services valued by our customers
- Enhance the services provided at our community hubs
- Value our staff and become an employer of choice
- Use our assets, skills, knowledge and technology to make a real difference
- Robust financial and performance management

# Provision of better Information & Comms



## Leader's Update

Cllr Jason Smithers  
Leader of the Council

24th September 2021



### Introduction and Welcome!


It really doesn't seem long ago since I sat down to write my last update. Time feels like it is going so fast. Before I know it, I will be promoting Christmas events across the area!

Earlier today I have been working on listing some of the achievements of North Northamptonshire Council over the last six months since the Council's inception. It dawned on me just how much has been achieved and very soon my fellow Executive Members and I will provide an overview of some of the highlights of the last six months which I will include in a future edition of this update.

This coming week the Council will hold both a meeting of the Council on Wednesday 29th September and also the Executive on Thursday 30th September. We have carried out a risk assessment and are strongly advising that all attendees to our Council meeting at The Cube in Corby undertake a Lateral Flow Test before attending. I have provided more information below. You can view the meeting agendas here: [Browse Council Meetings](#). We will be providing live coverage of both meetings via the Council's Twitter feed [@NNorthantsC](#)


Since my last update the Council has launched a consultation on the improvement to bus services in the area. I have provided some further information below as well as a link to the online consultation.

On the subject of consultations, the Corporate Plan consultation which I highlighted in the last update is entering its last week of the public consultation. The deadline for responses is midnight on Sunday 3rd October. If you have not yet responded please can I ask you to take the time to participate? I would also really appreciate it if you could share the link to the consultation with family, friends and work associates. Everyone living and working in the North Northamptonshire area is welcome to take part. You can view the Corporate Plan consultation along with the other consultations in progress on the Council's consultation webpage here: [North Northamptonshire Council - Citizen Space](#)



## Key Contact Information

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Services include:

- Chester House Estate
- Community & Leisure Centres
- Community Safety
- Cultural Services (i.e. Museums)
- Housing
- Homelessness
- Libraries
- Private Sector Housing
- Voluntary Sector




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Services include:

- Transport – Home to School
- Highways Contract Management
- Strategic Transport
- Highways Development Management
- Refuse and Recycling Collection
- Street Cleansing
- Waste Disposal & Closed Landfills
- Waste HWRC
- Street Lights




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Services include:

- Capital Projects (Property)
- Car Parks
- Country Parks
- Energy Management (Property)
- Facilities Management
- Fleet Vehicles
- Grounds Maintenance
- On Street Parking
- Outdoor Learning
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Property Estates Management
- Town Centre Management




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Services include:

- Climate
- Development Management
- Digital Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Flood Risk Management
- Growth and Investment
- Growth and Regeneration
- Mineral and Waste Planning
- Planning Enforcement
- Planning Policy
- Street Naming and Numbering
- Visitor Economy



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We are closed on bank holidays

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Services include:

- Bereavement Services
- Building Control
- Emergency Planning
- Environmental Health
- Licensing
- Local Land Charges
- Trading Standards
- Travellers Unit

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM

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# In summary - It's been a busy six months!



# Rural and Communities

- Objectives
- What I've heard so far?
- What areas does my role cover?
- How I am approaching the role?



# Objectives (Slide 1)

- Improve relations and dialogue with parishes and towns
  - Do things better than what went before
  - Dispel some myths on what this new council will do to Parishes & Town Councils
- Understand unique issues and concerns
  - No two areas are the same
  - Geographical, economic and social diversity
  - Issues may be very different but there also common themes

# Objectives (Slide 2)

- Ensure local issues are considered when making policy
  - One size does not always fit all
  - Parish and town councils need to be listened to
  - We see parish and town council as part of the solution
- Build lasting relations and make it easier to contact us
- Mutually beneficial opportunities for service devolution
- We will be open and transparent and explain decisions

# What I've heard so far

- We need new Rural Forums type arrangement
- We want a single point of contact for Parish / Town Councils
- We want better working relationships where we are considered partners
- Communicate & Listen

# What areas does my role cover?

- Digital Infrastructure
- Gypsy & Travellers
- Town & Parish Councils
- Rural Transport
- Rural Diversification

# How am I approaching the role?

- Listen and better understand your issues
- Be visible and contactable
- Be an advocate for the cause
  - Publicly and privately
  - At Council and in Executive
  - When meeting with officers and partner agencies
- Help resolve issues – Mediator
- Provide better information for parish and town councils

# Strategic Town and Parish Forum

- 2 forums are being set up, one for Kettering & Corby, one for East Northants & Wellingborough
- Will meet at least twice per year
- Will enable NNC to share key strategic updates and for us to collectively discuss cross cutting themes & issues as equal partners



# Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

- Full contact list for key officers has been circulated to Clerks
- A SPOC will be provided for both 'Housing & Communities' and 'Place & Economy'. Each T&P will have a named officer to help with day-to-day communication
- The SPOCs will be in regular dialogue with Clerks - based on arrangements that suit each Local Council

# How can you help?

- Share community intelligence with us through SPOC
- Be a conduit for a dialogue with local communities
- Work collaboratively with one another
- Share, where possible, the information we issue
- Mutual understanding that there will be challenges

# Questions and Discussion

