



Introduction and Welcome!

Welcome to my latest Update. We had the first 2022 meeting of the Council's Executive on 13 January and it was straight down to business. Executive approved funding for a community programme to support growing, cooking and eating healthy food; agreed a Domestic Abuse Strategy and set out and approved a Future Ways of Working Strategy. We also noted positive progress on the settlement of Afghan Citizens, approving the way funding will be used to support and help their integration into local communities. We considered many other important items too. You can view the [Agenda and Decisions on the website](#).

The budget consultation is well under way. We have an Executive meeting on 10 February that will be dedicated to considering this important issue, along with a Full Council meeting on 24 February where councillors will make the final decision on the budget. The Council has an annual net budget of over £290million and the services it provides are essential to the wellbeing of all who live and work in the area, not to mention the many visitors who enjoy what North Northamptonshire has to offer.

On this latter note, we are seeing encouraging signs that the rate of growth in Omicron cases is reducing. We are clearly not out of the woods yet, but with some caution and continuing to follow the guidance that remains in place, particularly around getting vaccinated and self-isolating when needed, we can hopefully continue to move in the right direction and get back to normality soon.

Draft budget: Last chance to have your say

Next Friday (28 January) is your last chance to have your say on North Northamptonshire's spending proposals for the next financial year. You can view the [full budget report](#) on the website and take part in the consultation in the following ways:

- [Completing the online survey](#).
- Alternatively, you can write to: Budget Consultation Response, North Northamptonshire Council, Sheerness House, Meadow Road, Kettering, NN16 8TL.

This consultation started on 23 December and will continue until midnight on Friday 28 January. The Executive will then meet on 10 February to consider final budget proposals for recommendation to Full Council on 24 February.



Financial help on offer for North Northamptonshire businesses

North Northamptonshire Council is asking businesses across the hospitality and leisure sector who have been seriously impacted by the pandemic, to come forward and apply for grant funding. The new Omicron hospitality and leisure grant was brought in by central Government in response to the Omicron variant and its impact on businesses.

These grants differ from those offered earlier in the pandemic, in terms of amounts available and eligibility criteria. To qualify for this one-off grant, businesses must:

- be a solvent business
- be liable to pay business rates
- have been trading on 30 December 2021
- have an eligible business rates premises that is within the hospitality or leisure sector (such as a pub, hotel, restaurant, bar, village hall or club).

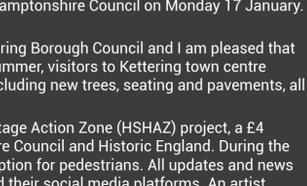
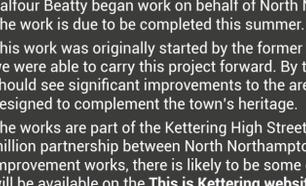
The grants will be paid per premises dependent on their rateable value on 30 December 2021 as shown below:

- **Rateable value of £15,000 or under:** £2,667 grant.
- **Rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000:** £4,000 grant.
- **Rateable value of £51,000 or over:** £6,000 grant.

As a Council, we have a duty to support everyone through these difficult times. We know that these grants make a real difference and I hope that this round of grants can continue to be a helping hand to those who need it. Please visit the [website](#) for details of eligibility and application instructions for the [Omicron hospitality and leisure grant](#). The closing date for applications is 21 February.



Kettering Town Centre improvements started this week



Street scene improvements began this week in Kettering as part of a project to revitalise and improve the look and feel of the town centre.

Balfour Beatty began work on behalf of North Northamptonshire Council on Monday 17 January. The work is due to be completed this summer.

This work was originally started by the former Kettering Borough Council and I am pleased that we were able to carry this project forward. By the summer, visitors to Kettering town centre should see significant improvements to the area, including new trees, seating and pavements, all designed to complement the town's heritage.

The works are part of the Kettering High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) project, a £4 million partnership between North Northamptonshire Council and Historic England. During the improvement works, there is likely to be some disruption for pedestrians. All updates and news will be available on the [This is Kettering website](#) and their social media platforms. An artist impression and drone footage have been created to show you what Meadow Road and High Street are intended to look like. You can view this on [YouTube](#).

Highway works on Church St / High St junction, Wellingborough

Northamptonshire Highways are installing new traffic signals, cables, control panel and repairing the road and kerbs. They will be doing this between Monday 24 January and Thursday 17 February, from 8am to 4pm. For information and transport and highway updates, follow the [Northants Highways Twitter page](#).



Executive approves Domestic Abuse Strategy

At the meeting on 13 January, the Executive approved a Domestic Abuse Strategy for North Northamptonshire Council up to 2025.

The Domestic Abuse Act was given Royal Assent on 29 April 2021 and for the first time places a statutory duty on Tier One Local Authorities like North Northamptonshire Council to provide support. The Act aims to transform the response to domestic abuse to better protect and support victims and their children, as well as pursuing abusers.

A multi-agency Partnership Board for North Northamptonshire Council has been established and has been instrumental in the development of the strategy, along with the Council's key partners and service providers.

The Domestic Abuse Strategy approved by Executive will support a co-ordinated response to Domestic Abuse, improving services and outcomes for all those affected in North Northamptonshire.

You can find and read the [full report online](#) (item 9).



Executive sets out the Council's Future Ways of Working Strategy

I presented a report to Executive Members at our meeting on 13 January on a 'Future Ways of Working' strategy. This was one of the many actions set out in the Corporate Plan recently adopted by Council.

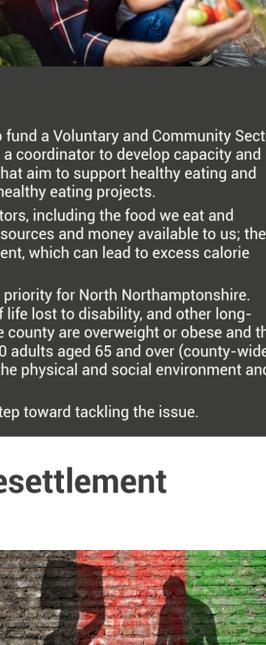
The Covid-19 pandemic has had a worldwide impact on the way that organisations deliver services and on how employees work. The Future Ways of Working Strategy aims to build on some of the changes in practices adopted so that the Council can learn from what has worked well.

The strategy aims to promote a culture of working in the most appropriate way to deliver the best outcomes to service users, rather than being constrained by how services have traditionally been delivered in the past.

The introduction of the strategy will support the Council's ambition to deliver excellent services, have a positive impact on climate change, support financial resilience and promote staff health and wellbeing. North Northamptonshire Council wants to become an 'employer of choice'. The Future Ways of Working strategy helps turn this aspiration into a reality.

The core commitments promoted within the strategy are grouped into three key themes: "Our People", "Our Building and Workspaces" and "Our Technology". Each theme identifies commitments which will be supported by detailed action plans to measure success of the strategy.

The Council will now work on developing a set of action plans that help the Council deliver its Future Ways of Working Strategy. I will provide more updates on this in future editions of my update.



Community Programme to support growing, cooking and eating healthy foods

Executive approved a recommendation, at its meeting on 13 January, to use the Public Health grant to fund a community programme of growing, cooking and healthy eating food projects. The aim is to improve health and wellbeing of local communities across North Northamptonshire.

We are keen to develop a community-based programme to support communities to improve their knowledge, confidence and ability to grow, cook and eat healthy food. This is a key part of the whole systems approach to tackling obesity.

Community-based approaches are effective ways to work with communities to better target and co-produce interventions and reduce health inequalities.

To achieve this, Public Health colleagues are looking to fund a Voluntary and Community Sector organisation £125,000 per year for four years to recruit a coordinator to develop capacity and skills within communities. The aim is to fund projects that aim to support healthy eating and access to healthy food through growing, cooking, and healthy eating projects.

Obesity is a complex issue, with many contributing factors, including the food we eat and how active we are; our culture and communities; the resources and money available to us; the nature of our built environment; and the food environment, which can lead to excess calorie consumption and physical inactivity.

Reducing obesity levels in the adult population is a key priority for North Northamptonshire. Overweight and obesity is the leading cause of years of life lost to disability, and other long-term conditions. Around 2 in every 3 adults (68%) in the county are overweight or obese and this equates to 309,425 adults aged 16-64 years and 89,240 adults aged 65 and over (county-wide). Tackling this level of obesity also requires influencing the physical and social environment and focusing on obesity prevention as well as treatment.

Approval of the funding for this initiative is a positive step toward tackling the issue.



Afghan Refugee Resettlement

I gave a commitment last year that North Northamptonshire Council would support those citizens that we owe a debt of gratitude to in helping them relocate from Afghanistan. The Executive approved recommendations that set out a clear approach as to how the North Northamptonshire Council will use funding provided by something known as the 'Local Authority Tariff' to support and help the integration of Afghan refugees into their local communities.

I am delighted to say that we are helping the first family settle in North Northamptonshire, but we are keen to respect their privacy and support them as they settle into their new home and local community.

You can find out more by viewing the [reports](#) (item 6) that went to Executive on 13 January.



Notice of Election and Referendum



A notice of election for North Northamptonshire Council (Oundle Ward) and a notice of referendum for Cottingham are now available:

- [Notice of election - North Northamptonshire Council - Oundle ward](#)
- [Notice of referendum - Neighbourhood planning referendum for the Cottingham neighbourhood area](#)

The Council is currently in what is known as the 'election purdah' period which does restrict some of the Council's publicity activities, particularly those that relate to the Oundle Ward.

Corby Leisure – January Leisure Membership Offer – 'Be Extraordinary in 2022'



There is still time to take up the offer to 'Join for £10 and Pay Nothing Until March'. Visit the [Corby Leisure website](#) for more information. The offer is only available on the Leisure Membership and not Student or Junior Leisure Membership.

Press releases

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):

<p>Court case: additional press statement</p>	<p>Public health director clarifies isolation rules and assures LFT availability</p>	
<p>Notice of election and referendum</p>	<p>Financial help on offer for North Northants businesses</p>	<p>Restaurant owner fined £5,000 for breaching Covid rules</p>
<p>Kettering town centre improvements to start on 17 January</p>	<p>If you have symptoms or you are a household contact, get a PCR test</p>	<p>Notice of Vacancy for Oundle ward of North Northamptonshire Council</p>

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](https://twitter.com/NNorthantsC) and/or Facebook [f @NorthNorthants](https://www.facebook.com/NorthNorthants)

Social media: Top stories

To follow our social media accounts you can find us on [Facebook North Northamptonshire Council - Home](#) and on Twitter by following [@NorthNorthantsC](https://twitter.com/NNorthantsC)

Top Tweets and posts from 17 - 19 January:

- Facebook:** (measured by reach and post clicks)
 - The mobile vaccination unit will be at Newlands Shopping Centre car park in Kettering, from 9am - 6pm on Tuesday 18 & Wednesday 19 Jan. Drop in, no need to book. Not in the Kettering area? There are more drop in clinics available across North Northants: <http://ow.ly/e2lV50Hpirn> (reach 6,334, post clicks 154).
 - Warning after spike in aggravated burglaries in North Northants <https://www.northants.police.uk/news/northants/news/news/2022/january-22/warning-after-spike-in-aggravated-burglaries-innorth-northants/> (reach 3,279, post clicks 378).
 - Public Health Northamptonshire work with a range of support services to help you make changes in your life, to improve your mental health and wellbeing and help you cope with stress, anxiety and depression. Reach out to <http://ow.ly/6u0M50HvLlr> today. #BrewMonday (reach 1,438, post clicks 16).
- Twitter:** (measured by impressions and engagements)
 - We're holding two Carers Engagement events on 19 and 21 January 2022. Carers views are welcomed and will help shape services for carers in 2022-2024. To find out more and to register, visit <https://t.co/KHADsJICBP> (impressions 887, engagements 11).
 - The mobile vaccination unit will be at Newlands Shopping Centre car park in Kettering, from 9am - 6pm today (Wednesday 19 Jan). Drop in, no need to book. Not in the Kettering area? There are more drop in clinics available across North Northants: <https://t.co/5qUyS3SLx> (impressions 731, engagements 6).
 - Been together a while? Make it official! Register products bought in the sales, along with any appliances in use and not registered at <https://t.co/GFmMe5Ajw0> (which is easy and FREE)! (impressions 720, engagements 8).

Thank you!

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

With Best Wishes,
Jason