

# Leader's Update

12 January 2024

Issue: 67

---

## Introduction and welcome

Welcome to my latest Update.

This issue includes:

- Tributes paid to North Northamptonshire Councillor - Cllr Mike Tebbutt
- Council takes action to continue to balance its budget
- Date of Wellingborough by-election announced
- Photo ID needed to vote
- Cllr Helen Harrison to step down from council's Executive
- Taking a step forward... Corby cycling and walking routes on Executive agenda
- New tailored toilet facilities open at Wellingborough Library for people living with disabilities
- Local residents recognised in 2024 New Year Honours
- Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) triggered this week
- Warm Spaces across North Northamptonshire
- Coats for Kids campaign continues
- Have your say on North Northamptonshire Council's spending plans
- Have your say during the local area partnership special educational needs and disability inspection in North Northamptonshire

In addition, there is information about forthcoming meetings, our consultation and engagement hub, Your Voice Matters, the latest press releases and the top stories on social media.

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

## Tributes paid to North Northamptonshire Councillor - Cllr Mike Tebbutt

North Northamptonshire Council is saddened to announce the death of one of its councillors - Cllr Mike Tebbutt - who represented Desborough ward.

Cllr Tebbutt was elected to North Northamptonshire Council on 6 May 2021 as a Conservative councillor.

He served on Kettering Borough Council from 2003 representing the St Giles ward, was a member of the North Northamptonshire Council shadow authority from June 2020 to May 2021 and sat on North Northamptonshire Council's Strategic Planning Committee from May 2021 to May 2023, alongside Full Council.

This is deeply sad news and my thoughts are with Mike's family and friends at this time. Mike will be missed by both members and council officers and was a much-loved member of the council. He was a hard-working, personable member, with an exceptional eye for detail.

His death will be felt by members and officers across the council and in the wider community. On behalf of everyone at the council, I would like to offer my sincere and heartfelt condolences to Mike's family and friends.

## **Council takes action to continue to balance its budget**

North Northamptonshire Council is a well-managed and financially responsible authority. The council has worked proactively to balance its budget since its inception nearly three years ago, which includes identifying £42m of savings since 2021.

In common with many councils across the country, we are not immune to national, unprecedented financial and service pressures, particularly in our demand-led services in both Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

As a well-run organisation it is important the council takes prudent and proactive steps to manage these challenges. These include:

- Monitoring financial and service performance, regularly and routinely.
- Holding member budget scrutiny sessions as part of the annual budget setting process.
- Delivering an ambitious programme of service transformation, focused on making services more efficient and effective.
- Investing in staff, the organisation's culture and in new technology.
- Reducing energy usage and working to reduce unnecessary waste.
- Procuring goods and services effectively.
- Continuously improving financial governance arrangements, including the implementation of spending review and control procedures aimed at ensuring the council continues to operate economically and provides value for money.

The council will continue to strengthen its approach to enable it to stay within budget, provide quality services and deliver value for money in all that it does.

Introducing measures to tighten spending controls is exactly the sort of thing a well-run, responsible council does and is common practice in the sector.

We have a healthy balance of reserves, which helps insulate us from veering towards reaching a very precarious position but rather than dip into them, we've made the sensible decision to tighten our belts.

Please be assured that we are not considering issuing a Section 114 notice as the former County Council did.

We are facing unprecedented demand for services and the money available to pay for them is under increasing pressure. Despite this, we have continued to set a balanced budget, provide vital services and identify savings too.

The challenges we face are becoming increasingly complex. I am fully committed to enhancing the council's financial management and utilizing innovative solutions to address any challenges that arise.

We remain focused in delivering efficient, economic and effective services as part of our everyday work.

The council is currently carrying out a statutory budget consultation. I have included further details on this below.

## **Date of Wellingborough by-election announced**

The by-election for the parliamentary constituency of Wellingborough will take place on Thursday 15 February following the result of the recall petition in December.

Residents living in the Wellingborough constituency, who are registered to vote, will start to receive their poll cards around Friday 19 January.

The poll cards include information on how to arrange a postal or proxy vote for those who cannot make it to their polling station on Thursday 15 February.

The deadline for eligible residents who are not registered to vote but wish to vote in the Wellingborough constituency by-election is Tuesday 30 January. Information about how to [register to vote](#) is on our website.

## Photo ID needed to vote

Following new legislation introduced in May 2023, all residents voting in person must remember to bring a form of photo ID with them.

Accepted forms of ID include a current or expired UK passport or photo card driving licence, including a provisional one. Expired IDs are acceptable, as long as the photo still bears a true resemblance. Only original documents are accepted; photos of your ID, copies of digital versions or digital versions saved on phones and smart devices will not be accepted.

The list of all forms of approved photo ID is shown on the poll cards. Further details are also available on the [Elections and voting](#) pages of our website.

If you don't have any form of photo ID from the accepted list, or your ID no longer looks like you, you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. Applicants must already be registered to vote. The deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate for the upcoming by-election is 5pm on Wednesday 7 February.

You can apply online for a [Voter Authority Certificate](#) on the government website.

More information about the by-election, including deadlines for applying for postal and proxy votes, can be found on the dedicated [Wellingborough Parliamentary by-election](#) web page.

The writ for the parliamentary by-election for the Wellingborough constituency has been moved and the anticipated date of the by-election is Thursday 15 February.

## Cllr Helen Harrison to step down from council's Executive

Cllr Helen Harrison is to step down from her position on North Northamptonshire Council's Executive with immediate effect.

Cllr Harrison, who is the authority's Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, will continue to work as a ward councillor for the Oundle area.

An announcement on who will replace Cllr Harrison on the Executive will be made soon.

I would like to thank Helen for her hard work and commitment as a member of our Executive - she has been with us since the authority came into being in April 2021.

The position as lead member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing is an important component of the Executive and we will move swiftly to fill the vacancy.

## Taking a step forward... Corby cycling and walking routes on Executive agenda

The council will be asked to approve plans to adopt a series of walking and cycling routes across Corby at next week's meeting of the council's Executive.

A draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Corby was consulted on in 2023 for six cycle and 13 walking routes and now councillors will review the findings before discussing whether the plan should be adopted.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) provide a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements at local level. The 10-year walking and cycling plan outlines proposals for a network of safe routes across the area including dedicated cycle infrastructure, new footways, safer crossing, traffic calming and locations for cycle parking. The work on LCWIPs across North Northamptonshire has also been developed considering the North Northamptonshire Greenway strategy.

If the report is approved by Executive, a final version of the Corby LCWIP will be published on our website. Subject to funding being available, preliminary designs for the priority route/improvements will be

developed to form the basis of future bids for capital funding from the government's Active Travel Fund or other suitable funding sources.

The Corby LCWIP is the second in a series of LCWIPs to go through formal approval, following on from approval of the Kettering LCWIP in 2023. The final LCWIP for the Wellingborough and Rushden area is currently under development.

Having good cycling and walking infrastructure in place has numerous benefits for residents, as well as environmental benefits, including helping to reduce car journeys.

## **New tailored toilet facilities open at Wellingborough Library for people living with disabilities**

This week, the council opened brand-new, fully accessible 'Changing Place Toilet' facilities at Wellingborough Library.

Accessible on the first floor via the lift, everyone, regardless of their access needs or disability, or reliance on the assistance of carers or specialist equipment, can use this facility hygienically and with dignity.

The new network of 'Changing Place Toilets' is part of a government-led initiative that is designed to provide widespread accessibility and inclusivity. They are different to standard accessible toilets with additional equipment and more space.

Each one provides:

### **The right equipment:**

- A powered height adjustable adult-sized changing bench.
- A movable tracking ceiling hoist system.

### **Enough space:**

- Adequate space in the changing area for the disabled person and up to two carers.
- A centrally placed toilet with space either side for wheelchairs.
- A screen to allow for privacy.

### **A safe and clean environment:**

- A paper couch roll to cover the bench.
- A large waste bin for disposable pads.
- A non-slip floor.

They also have modern features including a height adjustable sink, grab rails and alarms.

Unlike standard accessible toilets, 'Changing Place Toilets' also meet the requirements of people with a range of needs such as spinal injuries, muscle-wasting conditions, and multiple sclerosis.

Once installed, each one is registered and added onto the national [Changing Places](#) website to help people locate them and plan their visits.

Our vision is one where North Northamptonshire is a place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life.

Everyone has the right to access facilities that meet their needs, and this means that more people have greater access to the things that enable them to live better lives.

The facilities across North Northamptonshire have been funded from £497,000 from the council's Capital Programme. This includes a £330,000 contribution from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

## Local residents recognised in 2024 New Year Honours

The New Year Honours list for 2024 recognises the achievements and service of extraordinary people across the UK. The list was announced in the official newspaper of the Crown, [The London Gazette](#), on Friday 30 December 2023.

Congratulations to the 14 local residents who received honours. Here is the full list of recipients from Northamptonshire and details of their awards and accreditations:

### Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

- Christian Edward Johnston Horner, Team Principal and Chief Executive Officer, Red Bull Racing. For services to Motor Sport. (Northampton)
- Jonathon Jason Kingsley, Co-Founder, Chief Executive Officer and Creative Director, Rebellion. For services to the Creative Industries. (Northampton)
- David Eric Laing. For services to Charity and to Philanthropy. (Kettering)

### Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

- Paul Michael Heygate, Joint Managing Director, Heygate Group. For services to the Food Industry and to Charity. (Towcester)
- Julian Richmond-Watson, Chair, Thoroughbred Breeders Association. For services to the British Horseracing Industry. (Towcester)

### Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

- James David Boyes, Team UK Gold Medal Winner, WorldSkills UK. For services to Further Education. (Northampton)
- Glennis Edith Hooper. For charitable services to People with Breast Cancer. (Wellingborough)
- Janis Lindy James MBE, Founder, Good Egg Child Safety Campaign. For services to Children's Road Safety. (Northampton)
- Eric Malcolmson, Founder and Chair, Tove Valley Broadband. For services to the community in the Tove Valley, Northamptonshire. (Towcester)
- Laura-Jane Rawlings, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Employment UK. For services to Young People. (Corby)

### Medal of the Order of the British Empire (BEM)

- Derek John Bland. For services to the community in Northamptonshire. (Northampton)
- Roberta Vivian Lindsay Blyth. For services to the community in Roade, Northamptonshire. (Northampton)
- Paul Mark Brackley, Community First Responder, Oundle Community First Responders. For services to the community in Oundle and North Northamptonshire. (Oundle)
- Rachel Frances Davis. For services to the community in Cranford, Northamptonshire. (Kettering)

## Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) triggered this week

The council helps rough sleepers to access accommodation and support as quickly as possible, regardless of weather conditions.

Due to the weather forecast predicting sub-zero temperatures across North Northamptonshire, the council triggered its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) on Monday 8 January.

SWEP is an extra layer of assistance to ensure anyone not engaging with the support available or any new rough sleepers have access to shelter during periods of extreme weather.

SWEP was operational for two nights. The Rough Sleeping and Housing Options Teams worked closely to ensure that all known and verified rough sleepers were offered accommodation.

Please report the whereabouts and identity of any person sleeping rough to the Rough Sleeping Team so we can help them.

- **Rough Sleeping Team Hotline:** 01536 464630
- **Rough Sleeping Team Email:** [roughsleepingteam@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:roughsleepingteam@northnorthants.gov.uk)
- **Out of Hours Service:** 0300 126 3000.

For further information, please visit the [Homelessness and rough sleeping](#) section of our website.

## Warm Spaces across North Northamptonshire

The council is running and supporting the Warm Spaces initiative.

Warm Spaces are safe places where people can go to for free, to get warm, have a hot drink.

Community organisations, volunteer groups and public bodies have opened their doors to offer a Warm Space to local residents in need.

A [map of Warm Spaces](#) across North Northamptonshire can be found on our website.

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.

Residents can attend for activities at these locations without any need to discuss their personal circumstances, which will help reduce the stigma that often exists around poverty and asking for support.

All attendees will be treated with respect and dignity, without judgement and in confidence.

## Coats for Kids campaign continues

Our LIVE Team's Coats for Kids campaign is continuing.

If you have any pre-owned children's Winter coats to donate, please give the team a call:

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

Alternatively, please bring them along to:

- Wellingborough: 6 Harrowden Road
- Kettering: 40 London Road.

The offices will be open from Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm.

Both the Wellingborough and Kettering offices have a North Northamptonshire Council logo on display.

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

## Have your say on North Northamptonshire Council's spending plans

The draft revenue budget for North Northamptonshire Council was approved for consultation by the Executive on Thursday 21 December and the council is now seeking views on its proposals for the next financial year.

You can take part in the consultation in a number of ways including:

- Completing the online survey: [North Northamptonshire Council Draft Budget 2024/25 Consultation](#).
- Writing to: Budget Consultation Response, North Northamptonshire Council, Sheerness House, Meadow Road, Kettering NN16 8TL.



Please see our [Your Voice Matters](#) web page for more ways on how to have your say on this consultation.

The council's draft budget proposals set out a detailed spending strategy for the authority for the financial year 2024/2025 as well as outlining the medium-term financial forecast for the following three years.

Protecting and investing in local frontline services against a backdrop of continued national financial uncertainty is the focus of the council's budget proposals.

A commitment to maintain vital service provision has seen the council invest an additional £53.4million into services, including adult social care and children's services, to protect the most vulnerable in our communities and address a growing need for services.

These pressures are, in part, offset by savings, efficiencies and further income of £18.5m. Taken together with an improvement in funding expected from business rates, Council Tax and government grants the council has been able to set a balanced budget for 2024/2025.

The proposed net revenue budget for 2024/2025 is £371.5 million. This money provides a range of services to residents and businesses across the area including care to vulnerable adults and children; education, leisure and cultural opportunities; the collection, recycling and disposal of waste; highways maintenance; economic development; and housing and support for those who are homeless.

The government has permitted local authorities to increase the Council Tax rate by 4.99% in recognition of the increasing demand and cost pressures faced by councils.

As such, the council is proposing an increase in council tax of 4.99%, which includes the 2% adult social care precept. There is no change to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme which will continue at 25%.

### **Next steps**

The consultation on the proposals will run until midnight on Friday 26 January. The Executive will meet on Thursday 8 February to consider final budget proposals for recommendation to Full Council on Thursday 22 February.

## **Have your say during the local area partnership special educational needs and disability inspection in North Northamptonshire**

On Monday 8 January, North Northants Council received notification from OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) announcing a three-week inspection of our local area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) partnership arrangements.

The inspection provides an independent, external evaluation of the effectiveness of the local area partnership's arrangements for children and young people with SEND, and, where appropriate, will make recommendations as to how the local area partnership could further improve the arrangements.

During the inspection process, OFSTED, CQC, and our partnership strongly encourage the completion of surveys by individuals and organisations with first-hand experience of our partnership arrangements. This includes input from young people, parents, carers, and professionals.

Online surveys are the easiest way to submit your views, these are being promoted across our partnership's social media channels. However, should you need a physical copy of the survey these can be obtained by calling 0300 126 3000. There is a short period of time for the surveys being completed, with online submissions closing at 9am on Tuesday 16 January.

To complete the survey, please visit [SEND Ofsted inspection Northamptonshire 2024](#).

Findings of the inspection, including any strengths, areas for improvement and any plans we are putting in place following the feedback will be shared at the earliest opportunity after conclusion of the inspection.

## Your Voice Matters

Please find below details of our other current consultations and engagement activities. Please use the links below to provide your feedback and inform council decisions and share with family and friends who may be interested in shaping future plans.

Details of all open and closed consultation and engagement activities are available on the North Northamptonshire Consultation and Engagement Hub, [Your Voice Matters](#).

- [North Northamptonshire Hackney Carriage de-zoning and byelaw review](#). On 14 September 2023, the council's Executive agreed to carry out a consultation process to inform the decision making in relation to the matter of the potential removal of hackney carriage administration and enforcement zones within the North Northamptonshire area. Closes 21 January 2024.
- [Application for Permit Variation under the Environmental Permitting \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2016 - Scotts of Thrapston Limited](#). The company known as Scotts of Thrapston Limited, 4 Bridge Street, Thrapston, Northamptonshire, NN14 4LR has applied to the council to vary their existing permit for the working of timber and manufacture of wood-based products, EPR/EN/9b, to include a biomass boiler as a directly associated activity. Closes 24 January 2024.
- [Are you Eastern/Central European and live in Northamptonshire?](#) If you were born in or originate from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, or Ukraine, please help us by completing this survey about you and your community. Closes 31 January 2024.

## Forthcoming meetings

- **Executive:** Thursday 18 January from 10am.
- **Full (Budget) Council:** Thursday 22 February from 10am.

The agenda and papers will be published on the [Council meetings](#) section of our website in the week before the meeting.

These meetings will be live streamed on our [YouTube](#) channel.

## Press releases

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

- [Date of Wellingborough by-election announced](#)
- [Cllr Helen Harrison to step down from Council's Executive](#)
- [Taking a step forward... Corby cycling and walking routes on Executive agenda](#)
- [New tailored toilet facilities open at Wellingborough Library for people living with disabilities](#)
- [Tributes paid to North Northamptonshire Councillor - Cllr Mike Tebbutt](#)

## Social media: Top stories

Follow our social media accounts and share our [Facebook](#) and/or [Twitter](#) posts when you can.

### Top Facebook posts so far this week (8 to 10 January)

- Parents and carers - if your child will be 4 years of age on or before 31 August 2024 it's time to apply for a school place. The deadline for applications for places in Reception is Monday 15 January at midnight. Apply online: <https://ow.ly/Fsy450PXJTN> (Reach 7,362, Link Clicks 20, Engagement 271)



- Due to the weather forecast predicting sub-zero temperatures across North Northamptonshire, we are triggering our 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 7,147, Link Clicks 0, Engagement 266)
- Did you know that our LIVE team are at Corby Library every Tuesday from 1pm-3pm with their Coats for Kids rail? Come along to take a look or to donate.  
(Reach 3,712, Link Clicks 0, Engagement 110)

### Top Tweets so far this week (8 to 10 January)

- Did you know photo ID is now needed when voting? There are lots of options to take with you. Don't lose your right to vote, remember your photo ID. Find out more <https://t.co/A0REEc0wz2> How will you remember yours?  
(Impressions 1,462, URL Clicks 8, Engagements 33)
- 1/4 Due to the weather forecast predicting sub-zero temperatures across North Northamptonshire, we are triggering our Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP). SWEP is likely to remain operational for 2 nights, but this will be kept under daily review.  
(Impressions 962, URL Clicks 0, Engagements 36)
- We would like local people to get involved with our Residents Panel - and have your input on various local issues and public services. Find out more and sign up <https://t.co/YWshxanXGs>.  
(Impressions 472, URL Clicks 12, Engagements 24)

### 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 email me at [executive@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:executive@northnorthants.gov.uk).

With Best Wishes,  
Jason