

Update Cllr Jason Smithers Leader of the Council



It gives me great pleasure to introduce this special edition of my Leader's Update. Today, Friday 1 April, marks the first anniversary since the creation of North Northamptonshire Council. I wanted to say thank you to all our staff, members, parish and town councils, voluntary and community organisations and partner agencies. We have all worked with one common aim over

the last year: to improve the lives of everyone who makes North Northamptonshire their home. Today, and for the rest of April, North Northamptonshire Council will be celebrating one year of proudly serving North Northamptonshire. We now look forward to the year ahead. On the subject of serving North Northamptonshire, this week provided a great demonstration of democracy in action. Whilst attending this week's Executive meeting at The Cube in Corby, fellow councillors and I were greeted on arrival by a number of very passionate and responsible demonstrators calling for funding to be protected for the four maintained nurseries in North

Northamptonshire. There were 43 public speakers at the meeting and most used their full three minutes to address Executive members to put across their cases with passion and commitment. those who attended the meeting for putting across their views so fervently. It really was a moving meeting.

I have provided more on this important matter below. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank I also wanted to update you on what we are doing as a Council to support the UK's response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. The Council has set up an operational team who are working on a range of actions from making sure the right information is available on the Council's website, to ensuring we can properly support the demands of the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. More information will be released soon and I will keep you updated via this Update. You can also stay up-to-date either by keeping an eye on the website or Twitter newsfeed.

Proud to serve North Northamptonshire /eareo

North Northamptonshire Today marks a special day for us as we reach our very first birthday as North Northamptonshire Council – and what a year it has been! It's an honour to be the first Leader of the Council and I'm delighted for us to be celebrating this historic day. I am sure we all share a sense of pride in working to make North Northamptonshire a better place to live, work and relax. The Council is committed to driving forward the progress needed to make North Northamptonshire a place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life. Despite numerous challenges, many of which I am told are quite normal for a newly formed unitary authority, we have seen some early successes, sowing the seeds for North Northamptonshire to flourish. We have witnessed the start of some significant investment in our town centres, highways and educational facilities. We have improved the pay of our lowest paid staff and made becoming 'an employer of choice' one of our priorities. We have consulted with local residents on a wide range of issues, putting them in the driving seat on matters that will make a big difference to their local community. We have agreed a new Corporate Plan that sets out the Council's vision and priorities. We have set a balanced budget, subjecting it to both public consultation and detailed scrutiny. We led a local climate change summit and have scooped up some awards too, most

As part of our 'We are One' celebrations, we are putting together a virtual Yearbook during April to help mark the Council's first year and draw attention to some of the key events of North Northamptonshire. These can be wider than those of the Council and I would be interested to hear from others as to what your highlights have been. If you feel there are items that we should

recently, being short-listed in the forthcoming Local Government Chronicle Awards with our

partners for electric vehicle charging.

These are just a some of the highlights of the last year.

North Northamptonshire Council's Executive met publicly this week to consider the options for the distribution of supplementary funding for

addressed the meeting.

include in the North Northamptonshire virtual Yearbook, please get in touch with me. The last year has also been a year where, as a Council, we have had to deal with some difficult legacy issues. They have not been easy to deal with but we have not shied away from our responsibilities. Where we have made mistakes, we have put our hands up straight away and apologised, and focused on taking corrective action without delay. These are innate behaviours linked to our Council's values.

Moving forward, the next 12 months will see us continuing to transform services, looking at how

we can continue our evolution so that our services become more efficient and effective - and drive the delivery of the Council's key commitments. Creating a new Council within the context of a pandemic has been immensely difficult and I would like to thank everyone for their tremendous hard work and understanding at this time. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities of the next 12 months!

Executive sets out the future funding

arrangements for maintained nurseries

maintained nurseries for 2022/23. The options considered at the meeting were consulted on with the four maintained nurseries in North Northamptonshire: Highfield, Croyland, Ronald Tree and Pen Green. Full consideration has also been given to the options in consultation with the North Northamptonshire Schools' Forum as a statutory consultee. The meeting was very well attended by those who

represent the maintained nurseries and there were a significant number of public speakers who

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Executive recommended to Council that, for 2022/23 only, a one-off grant funding of £650,000 from the Council's Contingency Budget will be awarded to the four maintained nurseries. They also recommended that £350,000 is awarded to Pen Green Nursery and £100,000 to each of the other three maintained nurseries. The funding, if approved

The above temporary funding will allow the nurseries time to adapt whilst the Council moves towards a participation-based funding model as set out in **Option Two of the report to Executive**.

New Director of

Children's Services appointed

by Council, will be subject to specific grant agreement and conditions.

Director of Children Services at the Council. She has a wealth of experience in Children's Services and has performed the role of DCS prior to her time here

AnnMarie said: "I'm delighted and immensely proud to have been chosen as the permanent DCS in North

which is dedicated to making life better for all of our children."

Northamptonshire. I have been inspired by the

progress that has already been made.

at North Northamptonshire.

North Northamptonshire Council has appointed AnnMarie Dodds as the new Director of Children's Services. AnnMarie had been filling the role in an interim capacity since the previous director, Cathi Hadley, left the authority in January. Prior to this, AnnMarie had been the Assistant

energy and the drive from the workforce and the partners to deliver excellent services for children across North Northamptonshire. I look forward to continuing the good work which is underway to improve the whole of Children's Services. I will be part of an enthusiastic and passionate team

We are very pleased to welcome AnnMarie to North Northamptonshire Council. Keeping children

Families most in need to benefit from over

£500,000 support

Support Fund Fuel Bank, with a pre-payment meter voucher of up to £80 to assist with offsetting

While the vouchers for families can be used at most major supermarkets they must be redeemed by 30 April 2022. All eligible recipients will receive a notification together with the voucher from

The Government's Household Support Fund scheme was set up to support those most in

North Northamptonshire's allocation of this grant funding was £2.5m and the take-up within

need during the winter period, focusing on food and household heating and lighting.

North Northamptonshire has been tremendous. The DWP gave local authorities a wide discretion on how these funds should be used, primarily to support households in the most need with food, energy and water bills, as well as other essential costs related to those items.

All allocated funds will have been distributed to the most in need by 31 March when the

'Homes for Ukraine' scheme co-ordination

safe and improving life chances for young people is one of our key priorities and I welcome AnnMarie into this new role. I'm confident that she is the right choice to build on the significant

help, a payment in the form of vouchers that can be redeemed against shopping costs in a range of supermarkets. This extra support relates to families with children already on the School Holidays Meal Support Scheme who will receive a voucher to the value of £50 to offset household costs and maximise budgets. In addition, we are providing residents, who are already approved applicants of the Household

30 March, there is no requirement to apply.

the increase in utility costs.

scheme closes.

visa application process.

leave to travel to the UK.

With the cost of living on the increase, the most vulnerable in North Northamptonshire are set to be given a helping hand. North Northamptonshire Council will use a grant provided by the Department

for Work and Pensions (DWP), to make one-off

North Northamptonshire Council will be providing those eligible families, most in need of financial

payments.

in Northamptonshire North and West Northamptonshire Councils will be supporting the Government in its efforts to help resettle refugees from Ukraine. Some of the details are still being worked through but it has been confirmed that once refugees have

been matched with host families, they can begin the

The Government is carrying out the visa checks and once these are cleared, applicants will be given

Local authorities are being provided with £10,500 per person relocated to their area, from which they will be required to cover a number of things including:

and integration into UK systems and processes

Waste collection and recycling

Environmental education and enforcement.

who have worked to support the transfer of services to the Council.

Street cleansing

Grounds maintenance Parks and open spaces

Facilities management Cemeteries and burials

Fleet and transport

Public toilets

Assessing the host properties.

entitlement is arranged.

including:

Partner agencies are gearing up to help support on a number of other fronts such as access to health services, social care and education. We will be providing more information on our **website**. **Update on WNorse**

WNorse services transfer to North Northamptonshire Council on Friday 1 April. We would like to welcome colleagues who have transferred to the Council and look forward to working with our new team. Since 2012, WNorse provided a range of services across the Wellingborough area,

The initiative to bring these services back 'in-house' at North Northamptonshire Council will see the colleagues transferring join the existing teams within Highways & Waste and Assets & Environment services. We look forward to continuing to provide these essential services to our local communities as part of one team. We would also like to thank those involved in the project

Northamptonshire

Adult Learning

Service

The Northamptonshire Adult Learning

learning environment enabling people to

focus on their learning goals and personal

ambitions. It is important to deliver adult

and we are delighted that adult learning

courses will continue to be delivered to

the residents of North Northamptonshire

in 2022. Courses are delivered by highly

qualified and dedication tutors who are

their job prospects or simply learn for

pleasure there is an exciting range of

For more information, please visit the

Northamptonshire Adult Learning Service

courses to meet their needs.

website.

Easter holidays

It's the Easter Holidays soon for most Northamptonshire schools (Monday 4 to Tuesday 19

Corby Leisure has plenty of free activities as well: table tennis, tennis, the Corby Heritage Trail

Planning blueprint will help shape

development over the next two decades

and Dinosaur Safari. Please see the **Easter Holiday programme** for full details.

If you are looking for something for your children to do over the holidays, we have a

passionate about their subjects. Whether

residents want to learn a new skill, improve

Service provides a friendly and safe

education in such challenging times

Providing immediate financial assistance, potentially until access to benefits and work

Carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on hosts – enhanced checks will be

Continuing to support the household over the first 12 months and help with access to services

required for homes which will be hosting children or vulnerable adults.

progress the procurement of their new highways services contract. Following a further round of evaluating the tenders from bidders, the number of bidders has been reduced from four to three. The final round of dialogue with the remaining bidders has now concluded and bidders have been invited to submit their final tenders. These will be evaluated during April and May with an award anticipated in June. The new

provider will have a mobilisation period

for North Northamptonshire from the

middle of September. Meanwhile, we

in advance of starting to deliver services

are also establishing our own highways

Northamptonshire, which will be in place

to oversee and work with the new provider

and transport services team for North

range of activities on offer across North Northamptonshire. Here are just a few of the

Crash swimming lesson courses at Corby

Football coaching at Redwell Leisure Centre,

Easter egg cup making at the Corby Heritage

Easter events are also taking place at East Carlton Countryside Park and Priors Hall Golf Course.

Residents in North Northamptonshire are being asked to have their say on what issues the blueprint for future development in the area for the next two

from September.

sessions available:

and

International Pool,

decades should cover.

April).

Highways

procurement

North Northamptonshire continues to

The consultation on the Scope and Issues for the North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan will invite people to give their views on topics including where new homes should be built, what transport links and other infrastructure is needed and how town centres should look in the future. It will also cover how existing policies can be updated and improved to address climate change and the Council's climate and environment emergency declaration. Not only is a statutory requirement to have a local plan in place, it's also essential if we want to preserve the unique character of North Northants while, at the same time, maximising opportunities to bring prosperity for all. It's important as many people as possible have their say to make sure we're in the best place possible to move forward with this. Planning law requires the Council to prepare a Local Plan to guide development and growth in its area – everything from homes and jobs to schools and infrastructure. The current Local Plan for North Northamptonshire includes the Joint Core Strategy and supporting area-based plans. The Joint Core Strategy adopted in July 2016 provides the strategic planning policies for the future development of the area over the period to 2031. The Council is reviewing the strategic planning policies through the preparation of the North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan to take account of changes since 2016 and to extend the period to which the plan relates to 2041 and beyond. Consultation on the Scope and Issues is the first stage of preparing the Strategic Plan. At this

proposed scope and contents of the new Strategic Plan.

How to have

General Hospitals.

to accessing healthcare.

programme.

Both Kettering General Hospital (KGH) and Northampton General Hospital (NGH) proudly support the NHS Rainbow Badge initiative.

This programme emphasised that wearing a badge is a responsibility; and provides staff with basic education and access to resources that outline the challenges that LGBTQ+ people can face in relation

KGH and NGH have been successfully selected by NHS England as two of 40 NHS trusts across the country to take park in the second phase of this

steps your say The feedback from the consultation will To view all the consultation documents in the year. public consultation is set out below. Publication Plan Consultation -November 2023 Examination - September 2024 Adoption – September 2025.

Next

and answer the consultation questionnaire inform the development of spatial options which will be subject to consultation later please visit the Council's website. Responses can also be made to: The timetable for each stage of future planningpolicy@northnorthants.gov.uk Strategic Planning Policy Team, North Options Consultation – November 2022 Northamptonshire Council, Cedar Drive, Thrapston, Northamptonshire, NN14 Draft Plan Consultation - June 2023 Hard copies of the relevant documents are available for public inspection at the main council offices and libraries. Opening times may vary, please visit the Library Plus Countywide Services website for details.

Feedback for the Rainbow Badge programme

The University Hospitals of Northamptonshire (UHoN) are looking for feedback around Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT+) inclusion activity within both Kettering and Northampton

stage the council is inviting comments on the key planning issues facing the area, and the

The consultation runs from Monday 28th March 2022 until 5pm on Monday 23rd May 2022.

Explore North Northamptonshire from the palm of your hand with our new local app, DiscoverNN which is launching on Monday 4 April, ideal timing for the Easter holidays, longer days and Spring and Summer months. This fantastic new mobile app is funded by Government's Welcome Back Fund which was

Celebrate Mother's Day in a Hop into Easter in North **Northants** directors urge

Homes for Ukraine scheme co-

ordination in Northamptonshire

Director of Children's Services

post announced in North

Northamptonshire

Follow our social media accounts on Facebook and/or Twitter. Top Facebook posts so far this week (28-30 March 2022) Our consultation on the future of garden waste kerbside collection is now open and we want your views. Should the gardenwaste service operate all year, or just in the growing season? Your views count. Have your say via our online survey athttp://ow.ly/ cH7P50ItWfB Comments on this post will not be included in the consultation, please

We are fortunate to have some beautiful countryside in North Northants. Why not put on your walking boots and join us forthe International Waendel Walk and enjoy the landscape we have around us: www.northnorthants.gov.uk/WaendelWalk (Reach 1,612, Post Clicks 32) Top Tweets so far this week (28-30 March 2022) The Executive are meeting now to consider a report on the Distribution of Maintained Nursery Supplementary Fund 2022/23. There are 55 public speakers addressing the meeting today. You can view the agenda and report for today's meeting here https://t. co/Ur5FqT4Idq (Impressions 821, Engagements 30) Want to start spring with a new job? We are looking for the best of the best to join our

use the survey to have yoursay. (Reach 4,190, Post Clicks 341)

(Reach 1,912, Post Clicks 107)

teams, and you could be the one we are looking for. Check out our latest vacancies https://t.co/D5GKdXlVnW (Impressions 719, Engagements 18) (Impressions 510, Engagements 19) Thank you! Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. If you have ideas of items to include in

Northamptonshire

Council

Follow me on Twitter

@SmithersJason

NN2NZ

North Northamptonshire to Net

Zero (NN2NZ) call for projects

Covid-19 memorial service

staff

honours dedicated social care

over to http://ow.ly/tYKL50IfYuO to find out if they're eligible.#staywarm&save

There's not much time left to apply for a home energy-efficiency grant with all works carried out by TrustMark installers. Homeowners, tenants, and landlords should head

There's not much time left to apply for a home energy-efficiency grant with all works carried out by @TrustMarkUK installers. Homeowners, tenants, and landlords should head over to https://t.co/9HSvgBxfcq to find out if they're eligible.#staywarm&save

awarded to local authorities across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic to support the reopening of the High Street. DiscoverNN is powered by technology provider Bubltown, and designed to support local businesses, as well as help residents and visitors see everything the area has to offer. From culture, green spaces, theatres, theme parks and water activities to shopping, local eateries, health, beauty and business services, DiscoverNN will helps people plan days out, find the perfect gift and take advantage of rewards and discounts from a variety of local businesses. See what's on, chat online with businesses, make reservations, find your way around, book appointments and even buy products through DiscoverNN. There's something for everyone! DiscoverNN is free and simple to use, and is available to download from Monday 4 April on iPhone and Android app stores, simply search 'DiscoverNN'. Spread the word with your friends and family, and if you know any local businesses who would like to feature on DiscoverNN, they can sign up at https://join.discovernn.co.uk 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): lorthamptonshire Proud to serve North Removal of temporary public Notice of Poll - Weston-Bytoilets in Kettering town centre Northamptonshire Welland Parish Council **Northamptonshire** Northamptonshire Northamptonshire North Northamptonshire Council Families most in need to benefit Executive sets out future funding is changing the way they deliver from over £500,000 support from arrangements for maintained housing options service North Northamptonshire Council nurseries **Northamptonshire** Planning blueprint will help shape Covid-safe way, public health development over the next two decades

complemented by an additional questionnaire aimed at staff at both Trusts and service leads. Once the surveys are completed, both trusts will be awarded a bronze, silver or gold accreditation in line with phase two of the Rainbow Badge programme The surveys close on Wednesday, 20 April 2022. Take part in the International Waendel Walk After a two year break, the International Waendel Walk is back and will take place from Friday 13 If you are part of a community group and want to raise funds for your group or a chosen charity,

to Sunday 15 May 2022. or maybe you want to meet up with colleagues from across NNC, then the walks could be for you. All routes cover fields, footpaths and roads, whilst visiting places of interest in Wellingborough and the surrounding North Northamptonshire countryside for walkers of all ages and abilities. Walkers have a choice of 5k, 10k, 15k, 25k, and 42-kilometre routes on Saturday and Sunday. The 5km routes are suitable for children, buggies, wheelchair users and those not used to walking. There is also the Friday Friendship walk, with two routes - a 5k and 10k route and participants pay only a £1 to take part. All routes are different on each day and start and finish from the Castle Theatre, Wellingborough. Further details and how to register can be found on our **public website**.

DiscoverNN -

Your new local shopping and tourism app

The short survey will ask questions about LGBT+ information you might have seen around the hospitals, such as posters and leaflets. Also, the kind of language used by hospital staff when talking to you and your gender identity. You do not have to identify as LGBT+ to respond, they are seeking responses from all patients and service users. KGH Survey: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/80CW1A/ NGH Survey: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IRRBJK/ UHoN are encouraging everyone to be honest when completing these surveys as this helps to drive their Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy to make KGH and NGH inclusive workplaces. All responses are anonymous which means they do not take any information in the survey that could identify you. Along with submitting Policies impacting LGBTQ+ individuals, this survey will also be

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 🕜 @NNorthantsCand/or Facebook 🕧 @NorthNorthants

Route map sets out North

climate commitment

Northamptonshire Council's

Residents to have their say on the

Social media: Top stories

Barnwell neighbourhood plan

Northamptonshire Council

www.northnorthants.gov.uk

Contacting North

© 0300 126 3000

future updates please let me know at: executive@northnorthants.gov.uk With Best Wishes, North