



Northampton TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 11TH MARCH 2024 - 18:00

To: Members of the Policy and Finance Committee:

Councillors Marriott (Chair), Joyce (Vice Chair), Alwahabi, Birch, Connolly, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, Holland-Delamere, Kilbride, Purser, Russell, Stevens, Tarasiewicz

Cc'd to all councillors for information

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the **Policy and Finance Committee** of Northampton Town Council to be held at 18.00 hrs on Monday 11th March 2024 in the Town Council Committee Room at Northampton Guildhall.

Public participation is welcomed in accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Public Participation Policy

Stuart Carter
Town Clerk
5th March 2024

Guildhall
Northampton
NN1 1DE

A G E N D A

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY 2024 AND ASK QUESTIONS AS TO THE PROGRESS OF ANY ITEM** (p 3 – p 12)
4. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR INFORMATION:**
 - a) [Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2024](#)
 - b) Minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2024
5. **TO RECEIVE AND REVIEW THE MINUTES OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE MINUTES HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2024**
(to be tabled)
6. **BUDGET 2023/24**
To note the current spending against the budget for the present financial year (to be tabled)
7. **TO DISCUSS MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA), AND LOCALITY**
Report attached (p 13 – p 14)

- 8. CCLA DEPOSIT FUND UPDATE**
Report attached (p 15– p 18)
- 9. REVIEW OF SYSTEMS OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND AUDIT**
Report attached (p 19– p 26)
- 10. INTERNAL CONTROLS UPDATE**
RFO to give a verbal update
- 11. TWO VOLUNTEERS TO CHECK THE BANK RECONCILIATION DOCUMENTS OF THE ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE**
RFO to request two volunteers to carry out bank reconciliation check
- 12. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE**
Report attached (p 27– p 34)
- 13. REQUEST TO EARMARK UNSPENT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BUDGET**
Committee Chair's Report attached (p 35)
- 14. VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**
Update attached (p 37)
- 15. ACCOMMODATION UPDATE**
Verbal update to be given
- 16. BRANDING UPDATE**
Verbal report to be given
- 17. CHANGE OF MEETING DATE**
Notice of change of next meeting from 22nd May to 13th May
- 18. ANY ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**
 - Policy register
 - Health and Safety Audit

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 15th JANUARY 2024

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY 2024 AT 6PM IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ROOM LOCATED IN THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON

PRESENT: Councillors Marriott (Chair), Joyce (Vice Chair), Alwahabi, Birch, Connolly, Hallam, Hibbert, Holland-Delamere, Kilbride, Purser, Russell, Stevens and Tarasiewicz

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted by Councillor Haque.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hallam declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 42 as a member of West Northamptonshire Council's cabinet and therefore would have to vote on any decision relating to accommodation matters.

Councillor Hallam stated he would leave the meeting when item 42 was discussed.

21. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND ASK QUESTIONS AS TO THE PROGRESS OF ANY ITEM

RESOLVED: The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd October 2023 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

22. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR INFORMATION:

(a) Minutes of the meeting held 13 November 2023

The Chair stated the minutes of the Accounts Sub-Committee meeting held on 13th November 2023 had been received and adopted. He continued to request any questions in relation to any items.

(b) Minutes of the meeting held 13 December 2023

The Chair stated the minutes of the Accounts Sub-Committee meeting held on 13th December 2023 would be received at the next meeting scheduled for 12th January 2024. The Finance Officer (FO) explained the pay list had the incorrect date within the title however, the detail was correct.

23. TO RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION ONLY THE MINUTES OF THE STAFFING SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 6TH DECEMBER 2023

The minutes of the Staffing Sub-Committee meeting held on 6th December 2023 were tabled,

NOTED

24. DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET FOR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

The FO circulated an amended version of the budget spreadsheet as outlined in appendix A. The Chair explained the amounts had not been changed with only the narrative slightly amended.

The Chair stated there would be no increase in the Band D precept. The Town Clerk stated the events grant from WNC would cease in 24/25 however, the Town Council had expected this and had a service reserve to cover this shortfall.

In response to a question, the Chair stated it was budgeted for 8 laptops at this stage, but there would be flexibility if required, no final report was yet to be received to this Committee with the final detail.

In relation to the Environmental Services Committee's budget, it was explained by a Councillor it was agreed that the majority of budget lines be maintained however, the Bloom and Allotment budgets be increased. The Councillor continued that allotments posed a great risk to the Council as a major repair could deplete the allotted budget especially with the large number of sites within our remit.

In response to a question on what would be considered an allotment repair, a Councillor stated this could consist of new fences, padlocks or any damaged to water pipes. The Councillor continued that luckily to date there had been no major repairs required.

A Councillor requested clarification on the difference between Environmental Project and Grant budget codes. The Chair of Environmental Services explained to date the Committee had two successful grant applications and an additional two yet to be reviewed at the next committee meeting. He continued that the Environmental Projects budget was to be used for events or projects commissioned by Council or Climate Change Forum.

In relation to the Community Services Committee budget, a Councillor explained the new budget codes had been created to provide more clarity and transparency. The Councillor continued the Community Needs Analysis Reserve was to be split into thirds and designated to projects or events outside of the Town Centre in the outer wards that require no officer assistance. In response to a question, the Councillor explained that partner events had been reviewed and some would no longer be funded for example, the Town Festival.

In relation to the Planning Committee budget, a Councillor explained the committee wished to continue with a budget of £10,000 for Planning Advice and £10,000 for Neighbourhood Planning.

Reserves

The Town Clerk made the following points in relation to Earmarked Reserves for Financial year 2024-25:

- There were adequate funds to cover local election costs.
- The sum of underspent funds from the Financial Year 2023-24 Eid budget had been earmarked to be used for the event in the new financial year.
- The underspent funds from the General Community Grant scheme that had been earmarked and it would be for that Committee to decide how this would be utilised.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was earmarked for clarity and transparency and advice had been sought on which developments the fund derived from.
- Unspent funds from the equipment budget were to be earmarked for the purchase of any item equipment that was required for example, any additional laptops.

- Equipment, earmark unspent money and purchase excess laptops if required.
- Van Hire was to be earmarked as currently officers had been using their private vehicles and a larger vehicle may be required.
- Councillor Community Funding had been earmarked in relation to the Northampton International Academy's trip to America as the Grants Sub-Committee had agreed for the funds to be released once confirmation all funds for the project to go-ahead was raised.
- The Town clerk clarified the earmarked reserves included the Service Reserve to make-up the loss from the end of the West Northamptonshire Council event grant however, this amount would decrease over time.

A Councillor requested detail on the earmarked funds for the memorial in Becketts Park. A Councillor explained the funds were provided under the Shadow Council prior to the Town Council's formation and the funds were to be used for an art installation at Becketts Park. The Councillor continued the project was undergoing a local consultation and costings were being finalised. The Chair requested that a report on the project be presented to the Community Services Committee.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk explained the Democratic Services Officer (DSO) had contacted West Northamptonshire Council's CIL Team for clarification on what developments the funds derived from. The DSO stated she had requested a CIL Officer from West Northamptonshire Council to attend however, there was no capacity. The DSO continued that she would continue to work on CIL and request an Officer to attend a Planning Committee. In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated that the interest accrued by the Council's Public Sector Deposit fund would be used to offset expenditure.

RESOLVED: That the budget principles as per appendix A be presented to Full Council on 22nd January 2024 for approval and adoption.

RECOMMENDED: The reserves as outlined in the the minutes be earmarked.

25. ACCOMMODATION

Councillor Hallam left the meeting.

The Town Clerk stated that West Northamptonshire Council had informed the Council it did not intend to extend the Town Council's lease after April 2025 and that accommodation options would be reviewed.

26. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

None

At the end of the meeting Councillor Connolly and Alwahabi verified the two previous Bank Account Reconciliations.

MEETING CONCLUDED 6:52PM

Northampton Town Council

FY24/25 Budget proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Committee				Comments FY23/24	Current		Comments FY24/25	FY24/25	
2	Policy & Finance				Current Year Budget	FY23/24		Next Year Budget	Next Year	
3	Cost Centre	Ac Code	Central Administration		Policy & Finance			Policy & Finance		
4	101	4000	Salaries NI and Pension		Includes Community Engagement officer, and 5% cost of living increase.	£ 515,000		Salary uplift 5% Employment of an apprentice. Promotion of FO to RFO. Plus additional hours	£ 597,000	
5	101	4006	Recruitment		leave as £2k	£ 2,000			£ 2,000	
6	101	4010	Payroll Costs		Apply 3% uplift year on year PLUS 2%	£ 1,100			£ 1,600	
7	101	4015	Travel and Subsistence		Apply 3% uplift year on year	£ 700			£ 721	
8	101	4027	Training and Staff		Increase to £15k in FY25 then Apply 3% uplift year on year - changed back to £10k	£ 10,000			£ 10,000	
9	101	4101	Office Supplies & Photocopying		Increase by 10% in Fy27 on the basis that the current copier machine lease will expire and will need renewed and Apply 3%yoy	£ 5,000			£ 5,000	
10	101	4110	Post		Apply 3% uplift year on year	£ 2,000			£ 2,060	
11	101	4120	Subscriptions		Change description to include Licence and decrease legal and professional by £5,000 and add to Subscriptions. Then Apply a 3% increase year on year.	£ 9,000		£5k came from 4159 legal	£ 14,000	
12	101	4125	Telephone and Internet		Increase by 10% yoy	£ 6,000			£ 6,600	
13	101	4128	Information Technology		Increase by £2,000 for additional staff FY25. Also consider IT support add c £6000 then 3% uplift YOY	£ 10,000			£ 18,000	
14	101	4130	Insurance		Insurance increased to £14k Post BS for FY24 so Apply 5% uplift YOY from FY25	£ 7,770			£ 14,700	
15	101	4140	Advertising and Marketing		Apply 3% uplift year on year and move £1000 to 4140 315	£ 10,000			£ 9,300	
16	101	4155	Accounting Support		Apply 3% uplift year on year	£ 4,000			£ 4,120	
17	101	4190	Equipment		Consider Laptops/ iPads for FY24 for Cllrs £800 x25 2 x staff (1 spare) £1.6k FY24 FY25 2 x staff plus 10% uplift on FY24 final estimate yoy. Mobile phone 10x £500pp Apply in FY26 Replace existing laptops in FY26 8x£800 then Apply 10%uplift YOY	£ 10,000		10 (7 non dual Cllrs and 3 new laptops) use £10,000 in FY24 unspent and Ear Mark in FY25 for software	£ 12,000	
18				Central Administration Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 592,570		Central Administration Total Overhead Expenditure	£ 697,101	
19				Central Administration Net Income over Expenditure		(592,570)		Central Administration Net Income over Expenditure	-£ 697,101	
20	105	105	Corporate Management							

FY24/25 Budget proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Committee				Comments FY23/24 Current Year Budget	Current FY23/24		Comments FY24/25 Next Year Budget	FY24/25 Next Year	
21	105	4150	Bank Charges		Apply 3% uplift year on year	£ 1,000			£ 1,030	
22	105	4156	Audit Fees		Apply 3% uplift year on year	£ 4,000			£ 4,120	
23	105	4159	Legal & Professional Fees		reduce by £5k and move to Subscriptions.	£ 30,000			£ 25,000	
24	105	4162	Health and Safety		Check if Ellis Whittham comes out of this?? Leave as is? Posted to 4159. LM suggested reducing to £5000	£ 8,000		No EW comes out of 4159 Legal 105	£ 5,000	
25				Corporate Management Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 43,000		Corporate Management Total Overhead Expenditure	£ 35,150	
26				Corporate Management Net Income over Expenditure		(43,000)		Corporate Management Net Income over Expenditure	-£ 35,150	
27	110	110	Civic and Democratic							
28	110	4130	Insurance		Car & Fine arts uplift 10% YOY	£ 4,460			£ 4,906	
29	110	4140	Advertising and Marketing		Apply 3% uplift year on year and move £1000 to 4140 315. removed % increase	£ 2,000			£ 1,030	
30	110	4200	Elections		Apply £40,000 every year	£ 40,000			£ 40,000	
31	110	4208	Mayoral Activity			£ 12,000		Reduced because only £2.5k spent to Dec23	£ 8,000	
32	110	4209	Deputy Mayor			£ 2,000			£ 2,000	
33	110	4210	Mayoral Allowance			£ 6,000		Increase Fy25 by 5%	£ 6,600	
34	110	4211	Mayor's Transport		Apply 5% uplift YOY	£ 24,770			£ 26,009	
35	110	4212	Councillor Allowances		Cllr allowance uplift agreed inline with officers award, FY24 +6% then 5% yoy thereafter	£ 30,000		Cllr All increased to £1335.60 (1200*6%+5%) payable in FY24 then for FY25 add x5%	£ 35,060	
36	110	4213	Councillor Training / Conference		Apply 3% uplift year on year	£ 5,000			£ 5,150	
37	110	4214	Civic Events		Rem £10k& AMD £5kmoved back to Public Events. Civic now consists of Mayor Making £9k/Freedom £2k/Mayor Civic Svs £1200/Tree Planting £1300/ Laforey £600	£ 16,000			£ 14,100	
38	110	New	Civic Oak Apple Day		create new code and move form Civic Events				£ 1,600	
39	110	New 4519	Civic Armed Forces Day		create code 4519 and move from Civic Events				£ 250	
40	110	New 4517	Civic Remembrance		create code 4517 and move from Civic Events				£ 2,000	
41	110	4215	Civic Regalia			£ 4,500			£ 4,500	
42	110	4216	Council Meetings & Room Hire		Apply 3% uplift year on year but red	£ 5,000			£ 2,000	
43	110	4217	Mayor Contingency		Vire to Payroll to cover Caroline - move any unspent to payroll?	£ 6,000			£ 6,000	
44	110	4540	Town Twinning		Reduced to £1000 due to FY24 unspent	£ 2,000			£ 1,000	

FY24/25 Budget proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Committee				Comments FY23/24 Current Year Budget	Current FY23/24		Comments FY24/25 Next Year Budget	FY24/25 Next Year	
45				Civic and Democratic Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 159,730		Civic and Democratic Total Overhead Expenditure	£ 160,204	
46				Civic and Democratic Net Income over Expenditure		(159,730)		Civic and Democratic Net Income over Expenditure	-£ 160,204	
47	115	115	Other Cost and Income							
48	115	1176	Precept Received			£ 1,807,837			£ 1,811,000	
49	115	1190	Interest Received		increase to £50k from FY25	£ 5,000		Apply 5% whilst bank holds c1m	£ 50,000	
50				Total Income		£ 1,812,837			£ 1,861,000	
51	115	4998	Service Reserve			£ 214,500		FY25 removed add £214,500 to Events?	£ -	
52	115	4999	Contingency		do not Apply for FY25	£ 71,437		Not applied to FY25	£ -	
53				Other Cost & Income Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 285,937		Other Cost & Income Total Overhead Expenditure	£ -	
54				Net Income over Expenditure		£ 1,526,900		Other Cost & Income Net Income over Expenditure	£ 1,861,000	
55	201	201	The Guildhall							
56	201	4300	Service Charge		Could potentially revalue lease therefore Apply 10% uplift FY25 then 3% annual uplift.	£ 77,000			£ 84,700	
57	201	4390	Accommodation Reserve		P&F discussion	£ 108,000			£ 108,000	
58				The Guildhall Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 185,000		The Guildhall Total Overhead Expenditure	£ 192,700	
59				The Guildhall Net Income over Expenditure		-£ 185,000		The Guildhall Net Income over Expenditure	-£ 192,700	
60	Committee: Open Spaces & Environment				Open Spaces & Environment			Open Spaces & Environment		
61	210	210	Open Spaces & Environment							
62	210	1537	Northampton in Bloom Income		Reduce to 0 for FY25 onwards	£ 23,021			£ -	
63				Total Income		£ 23,021			£ -	
64	210	4536	Northampton In Bloom		add £23,021 from income to meet budget needs then Apply 5% uplift yoy	£ 60,000			£ 87,172	
65	210	4560	Environmental Projects		leave as is	£ 25,000			£ 25,000	
66		4561	Environmental Grants		leave as is	£ 25,000			£ 25,000	
67				Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 110,000			£ 137,172	
68				Net Income over Expenditure		-£ 86,979			-£ 137,172	
69	230	230	Allotments							

FY24/25 Budget proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Committee				Comments FY23/24 Current Year Budget	Current FY23/24		Comments FY24/25 Next Year Budget	FY24/25 Next Year	
70	230	4400	Repairs and Maintenance		High Risk costs could escalate so propose to double it then Apply 3% uplift year on year	£ 30,000			£ 60,000	
71				Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 30,000			£ 60,000	
72				Net Income over Expenditure		(30,000)			-£ 60,000	
73	Committee: Community Services				Community Services			Community Services		
74	301	301	Community Grants							
75	301	4170	Community Grant Scheme		leave as is	£ 100,000			£ 100,000	
76				Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 100,000			£ 100,000	
77				Net Income over Expenditure		(100,000)			-£ 100,000	
78	310	310	Community Services							
79	310	4171	Councillor Community Funding		leave as is	£ 75,000			£ 75,000	
80	310	4221	Community Needs Analysis		leave as is	£ 50,000			£ 50,000	
81	310	4225	Community Projects		leave as is	£ 50,000			£ 50,000	
82				Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 175,000			£ 175,000	
83				Net Income over Expenditure		(175,000)			-£ 175,000	
84	315	315	Public Events							
85	315	1155	WNC Transfer		Reduce to 0 for FY25 onwards	£ 83,979			£ -	
86	315	1536	Contribution to Service		increase to £12k from FY25 and onwards	£ 5,000			£ 12,000	
87				Total Income		£ 88,979			£ 12,000	
88	315	4015	Travel and Subsistence		Leave as is.	£ 300			£ 300	
89	315	4140	Advertising and Marketing		Proposed increase to £12k from FY25 take £1000 from 4140 Civic and 4140 P&F	£ 10,000			£ 12,000	
90	315	4500	Diwali		continue as is for future years	£ 10,000			£ 10,000	
91	315	4501	Christmas Event		Apply 5% uplift year on year NB some Christmas lights are end of life as is the light switch on button	£ 200,000			£ 210,000	
92	315	4502	Fireworks		Apply 5% uplift yoy	£ 55,000			£ 57,750	
93	315	4503	Bands in the Park		Apply 5% uplift however, in FY25 add £1500 for purchase of new chairs and add further £1000 for solution to WNC park rangers not being able to assist	£ 10,000			£ 13,000	
94	315	4508	Ukraine Art Exhibition		Reduce to 0 for FY25 onwards	£ 5,000			£ -	

FY24/25 Budget proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Committee				Comments FY23/24 Current Year Budget	Current FY23/24		Comments FY24/25 Next Year Budget	FY24/25 Next Year	
95	315	4509	Virtual Heritage Tour		From FY25 change the description name to a Generic Heritage and include HOD - move 4524 Heritage Open / Projects to Virtual and change code to Heritage so we have one code for all things Heritage? Also £8500 added to FY25 following CS meeting 25/09/23 for Great Fire of Northampton 350th Anniversary	£ 7,000			£ 22,000	
96	315	4510	General Events			£ 49,800		Need to offset any event spend approved post budget also change name to Events Contingency?	£ 23,000	
97	315	4511	EID		continue as is for future years	£ 10,000		See EMR comment!	£ 10,000	
98	315	4512	NMF22 / NMF23		Increase to £15k in FY25 NB! Need to determine if budget should be moved to Grant 4170?	£ 10,000			£ 15,000	
99	315	4513	Northampton Carnival		continue as is for future years	£ 20,000			£ 20,000	
100	315	4514	Party in the Park/Balloon Fest		Budget to be increased from £5,000 to £10,000 using Town festival budget code 4518 which is £5,000, remove Town Festival from Events plan	£ 5,000			£ 10,000	
101	315	4515	Pride		continue with £4000 and apply 5% uplift	£ 4,000			£ 4,200	
102	315	4516	Queens Jubilee/Kings		Reduce to 0 for FY25 onwards	£ 15,000			£ -	
103	315	4517	Remembrance Day		Move to Remembrance in Civic - No! leave in Public and create same code 4517 in Civic	£ 10,000			£ 10,000	
104	315	4518	Town Festival		budget removed and added to 4514 Balloon Festival	£ 5,000			£ -	
105	315	4519	Armed Forces Day		Move to Remembrance in Civic - No leave in Public and create same code 4517 in Civic	£ 5,000			£ 5,000	
106	315	4520	Beer Festival		continue as is for future years	£ 5,000			£ 5,000	
107	315	4521	Van Hire (Events)		continue as is for future years	£ 2,000		Ear marked any unspent for future possible van purchase	£ 2,000	
108	315	4522	St Georges day		Propose to increase to £7500 in FY25 but then increase to £10k from FY26				£ 7,500	
109	315	Need code?	Out of Town Events (take £50k from EMR 4221 and reduce to £99,900)		Propose £10k for WFA - CSC also propose to utilise EMR 4221 and increase this £10k to £50k reducing EMR 4221 £99,900				£ 50,000	
110	315	4524	Heritage Open / Projects		Do not use for FY25 anything heritage related should go to 4509				£ -	

FY24/25 Budget proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Committee				Comments FY23/24 Current Year Budget	Current FY23/24		Comments FY24/25 Next Year Budget	FY24/25 Next Year	
111				Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 438,100			£ 486,750	
112				Net Income over Expenditure		-£ 349,121			-£ 474,750	
113	Committee: Planning				Planning			Planning		
114	400	400	Planning							
115	400	4600	Neighbourhood Planning		continue as is for future years	£ 10,000			£ 10,000	
116	400	4601	Planning Support		continue as is for future years	£ 10,000			£ 10,000	
117				Total Overhead Expenditure		£ 20,000			£ 20,000	
118				Net Income over Expenditure		(20,000)			-£ 20,000	
119										
120				Total Budget Income		£ 1,924,837		Total Budget Income	£ 1,873,000	
121				Expenditure		£ 2,139,337		Expenditure	£ 2,064,077	
122				Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve		-£ 214,500			-£ 191,077	

Policy and Finance Committee – 11th March 2024

TO CONSIDER BECOMING MEMBERS OF THE LGA AND LOCALITY

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK

Purpose of report: To inform the committee of the benefits and costs of joining the LGA and Locality

Recommended: That the committee agrees that the council become members of both organisations

The Clerk was asked to look at the option of joining both the LGA (Local Government Association) and Locality, because of the benefits that this may have for the council.

LGA

The LGA is the national membership body for local authorities. The LGA work on behalf of member councils to support, promote and improve local government.

The LGA's core membership comprises 315 of the 317 councils in England and includes district, county, metropolitan and unitary authorities along with London boroughs and the City of London Corporation. The 22 Welsh unitary councils are in membership via the Welsh Local Government Association.

The LGA also operate an Associate scheme for organisations whose purpose and objectives are aligned. Associate members include fire and rescue authorities, police, fire and crime commissioners/police and crime commissioners, national park authorities and most relevantly town and parish councils via the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)'s corporate associate membership.

Benefits of LGA Associate membership

- Access the member-only area of the LGA website
- Sign up to receive policy papers, on-the-day briefings
- Attend paid events at membership rates and free LGA events
- Access to relevant contacts (subject to data protection)
- Online employment guidance and workforce consultancy support at reduced cost
- The chance to dial in on *ad hoc* calls with NALC, the LGA and all other SCN councils who take out this membership – to discuss themed policy ideas of general interest.

Northampton Town Council is part of the NALC Super Council Network (SCN) and accordingly gets a discount on LGA membership. The cost is £530 plus VAT. This cost would be met from the subscriptions budget.

LOCALITY

Locality is the national membership network supporting local community organisations to be strong and successful.

Locality provide specialist advice, peer learning and resources, as part of their mission to create a better environment for communities to thrive.

MEMBERSHIP

Locality state that 'membership is for anyone who believes in the power of community. Whether you're just starting out or have been around for years, you'll fit right in and feel you belong'.

Members have exclusive access to a range of peer-learning opportunities, plus advice and training from sector experts.

Locality state that they have worked with over 80 local authorities through specialist paid advice. Locality also offer a consultancy service which is an additional cost if wanted. This specialises in engaging with and supporting communities.

If the committee are minded to approve joining then it is recommended to go for the essentials package which is £250 per annum. This entitles the council to

- 'Ask us anything' advice service
- Networking and learning event
- Masterclasses and training
- Peer learning grants
- Online health check
- Bespoke member to member referrals
- Crisis support

The Council's Community Engagement Officer is looking at how Locality may be able to support the council in some of his projects and a report regarding this will go to the community services committee at a later date.

Members are asked to consider membership to each organisation.

Northampton Town Council
Policy and Finance Committee – 11th March 2024

CCLA PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT FUND UPDATE

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK

Purpose of report: To inform the committee of the latest update on the CCLA Cash Deposit Fund

Recommended: That, unless the Committee wants to change the investment, that the report be noted

Members will be aware that the majority of the Council's cash deposit is invested in the CCLA [Public Sector Deposit Fund](#). The Public Sector Deposit key facts document is attached for reference.

The Council looks to retain a balance of £150,000 in its CCLA Current Account from which all transactions are paid and received. On a monthly basis at the Accounts Sub Committee meetings the RFO will indicate and get approval to transfer money from the CCLA investment to the Unity Trust Bank account to top up the amount to £150,000.

The yield amount in percentage terms has consistently been around 5.2%, at the time of writing it was reported as 5.2331%.

The yield in financial terms received from the CCLA for the past 3 months are:

November	£12,294
December	£13,418
January	£13,197

We are yet to be notified of February's.

Guidance on investments for local councils is always to prioritise security over return. This deposit fund is spread over many financial institutions that meet certain criteria, these being A credit ratings. However, there is still a risk.

The Clerk has spoken with investment advisors about further options. The general consensus is that the stock market is still relatively volatile at present therefore the current option with CCLA is still the preferential option.

The Public Sector Deposit Fund

Fund fact sheet – 31 January 2024

Investment objective

To maximise the current income consistent with the preservation of principal and liquidity.

Investment policy

The fund will be invested in a diversified portfolio of high-quality sterling denominated deposits and instruments. All investments at the time of purchase will have the highest short-term credit rating or an equivalent strong long-term rating. The fund is actively managed, which means the authorised corporate director uses their discretion to pick investments, in pursuit of the investment objective.

The weighted average maturity of the investments will not exceed 60 days. The fund will not invest in derivatives or other collective investment schemes.

Target investors

The fund is designed for investors who are looking for capital security and a competitive yield for their short-term investments.

Who can invest?

Any public sector organisation can invest in the fund, but it may be marketed to any retail or professional client. Share class 4 is reserved for public sector organisation investment only.

Responsible investment policy

The fund is managed in accordance with CCLA's values-based screening policy which can be found in the policies and reports section on our website.

We monitor our counterparties' environmental, social and governance risk management on a regular basis and take action if necessary. This process is based on the work of our in-house Sustainability team and their data providers. Additional information is available on request.

Key risks

Investors should consider the following risk factors before investing: issuer/credit risk (issuer/financial institution may not pay), market risk (investment value affected by market conditions), operational risk (general business operational risks), maturity profile (timings of investment maturity), liquidity risk (investment in non-readily realisable assets), concentration risk (need for diversification and suitability of investment) and interest rate risk (changes to interest rate affecting income). Please see the fund prospectus for more details.

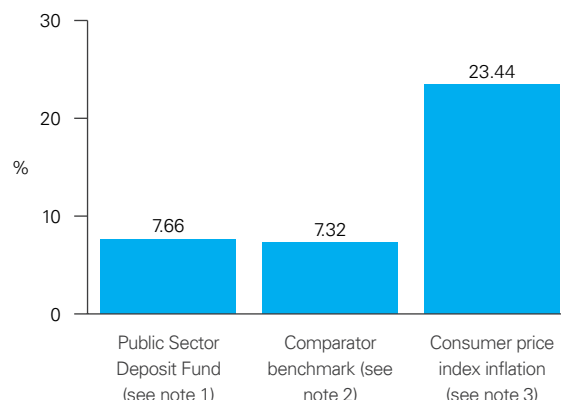
Top 10 counterparty exposures (%)

9.86%	DBS Bank Limited
9.86%	HM Treasury
9.86%	Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg
9.86%	National Bank of Canada
9.86%	Yorkshire Building Society
3.71%	Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets plc
3.70%	Nordea Bank AB
3.69%	BNP Paribas
3.43%	Credit Agricole Corporate and Investment Bank
3.43%	MUFG Bank

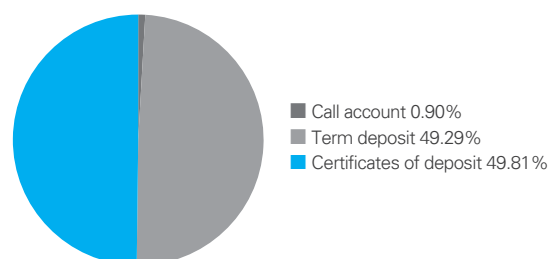
Share class 4 yield as at 31 January 2024

5.27%

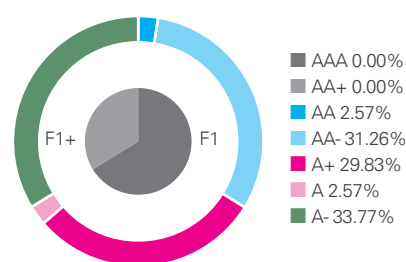
5 years performance



Asset type (%)



Credit rating (%) see note 4



Top 10 country exposures (%)

30.17%	UK
13.29%	Japan
13.29%	Singapore
12.17%	Canada
10.72%	Germany
7.89%	France
3.70%	Finland
2.66%	Netherlands
2.57%	Sweden
1.71%	Belgium

Note 1: Source: CCLA - Performance shown after management fees and other expenses, with the income reinvested. The daily yield on the fund will fluctuate, and past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results. Note 2: From 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark is the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Before 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark was the 7-Day Sterling London Interbank Bid Rate. Note 3: consumer price index inflation is lagged one month. Note 4: Using Fitch Ratings methodology.

Income

Average yield over the month	5.27%
Yield at the month-end shown	5.27%

Total return performance by year

12 months to 31 January	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
The Public Sector Deposit Fund	+0.74%	+0.25%	+0.05%	+1.60%	+4.87%
Comparator benchmark	+0.57%	-0.00%	+0.07%	+1.68%	+4.87%
Relative (difference)	+0.17%	+0.25%	-0.02%	-0.08%	+0.00%

Annualised total return performance

Performance to 31 January	1 year	3 years	5 years
The Public Sector Deposit Fund	+4.87%	+2.15%	+1.49%
Comparator benchmark	+4.87%	+2.19%	+1.42%
Relative (difference)	+0.00%	-0.04%	+0.07%

Performance shown after management fees and other expenses, with the income reinvested. From 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark is the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Before 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark was 7-Day Sterling London Interbank Bid Rate. **Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results.** Source: CCLA

Market update

Official statistics indicated that growth in the US economy had accelerated slightly in the final quarter of 2023, to an annualised rate of 3.3%. Over the year as a whole activity expanded by 3.1%, making it the fastest-growing of the world's advanced economies.

Other major western economies have been faring less well. The eurozone flatlined in the fourth quarter of last year. Some countries including Spain and Italy enjoyed modest expansion but Germany's output, which dominates the European economy, shrank by 0.3% as investment declined in areas such as construction and industrial equipment. The UK has yet to publish official data for the end of 2023 but the latest release from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) indicated that in November, output had been 0.2% higher than a year earlier. Contraction in sectors such as education and construction was offset by growth in travel, leisure and retail among others. The decline in headline consumer price inflation (CPI) in the major western economies took a pause while 'core' CPI, which strips out energy, food and other volatile elements, remains stickier than central banks would like. The UK December's annual headline CPI rate was 4.0% compared with 3.9% in November, while core inflation stuck at 5.1%.

The Bank of England once again held interest rates steady at the highs reached a few months ago of 5.25%. Rate setters have given increasingly strong indications that interest rates would begin to move downwards in the coming months but were keen to impress on markets that they would take a cautious approach to this easing of monetary policy.

Key facts

Authorised corporate director	CCLA Investment Management Limited
Fund size	£1,166m
Fitch money-market fund rating	AAAmmf
Weighted average maturity	41.83 days
Launch date	May 2011
Dealing day	Each business day (see note 5)
Withdrawals	On demand
Fund domicile	United Kingdom
ISIN (share class 4)	GB00B3LDFH01
Interest payment frequency	Monthly
Ongoing charges figure	0.08% (see note 6)

Note 5: Dealing instructions (including cleared funds for purchases) must be received by 11:30am.

Note 6: The ongoing charges figure is based on the annual management charge (including portfolio transaction costs).

Please Contact

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Risk warning and disclosures

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Northampton Town Council
Policy and Finance Committee – 11th March 2024

REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS AND NTC STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK

Purpose of report: To present to the committee the Risk Management and Internal Controls Risk Register which are required to be approved annually as part of the AGAR process.

Recommended: That the committee confirms that the review and assessment has taken place.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require Councils to have a sound system of internal control. The Council is obliged to carry out a review of the effectiveness both of its internal controls and its system of internal audit. The Annual Governance Statement contained within the AGAR which is completed annually after the end of the Financial Year also requires Members to agree that they have 'carried out an assessment of the risks facing the authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required'.

Northampton Town Council has adopted a robust process of internal control with a standing item at the Accounts Sub Committee whereby different elements are reviewed based on their priority and/or level of risk. In addition, the finance officer goes through on a one to one basis elements of the financial processes with councillors, an additional and highly productive action that ensures both councillors and officers have an open dialogue and understanding on these important processes. The results of these are then reported back to the Accounts Sub-Committee meeting. Therefore, the Council is undertaking reviews of these risks not just on an annual basis but on a monthly basis.

In addition to these documents, the Council has appointed an independent internal auditor. The role of the internal auditor is to assist the Council in fulfilling its responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption, errors and mistakes. Currently, the internal auditor is scheduled to carry out two reviews, to review the internal controls and to carry out testing on the transactions undertaken and to ensure compliance with financial regulations. A further review, particularly regarding the year end annual accounts is carried out when the annual accounts have been prepared. At this time the internal auditor seeks to ensure that the documents to be sent to the external auditor are in order. The internal auditor produces a written report for the Council after both stages of the internal audit and highlights any deficiencies.

The external auditor is appointed as part of a contract with central government. Once a year they send out the AGAR as well as a request for supporting information. These are then assessed by the external auditor and a report sent back. These reports are then published and reported to the Council.

In conclusion the Council has robust processes in place to ensure compliance, transparency and to ensure that the risks are reviewed on a monthly basis.

Northampton Town Council Strategic Risk Register		Jan-24	S Carter	Key: TC =Town Clerk, ATC = Assistant Town Clerk, FO = Finance Officer, CO = Civic Officer								
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Ref No.	Name of Risk	Cause of Risk	Impact	Risk Owner	Original Risk Category (Likelihood /Impact)	Current Control Measures	Actions to be undertaken as additional measures in 2022/23	Were these actions completed in 2022/23	Actions to be undertaken in 2023/24	Owner of Action	Current Risk Category (Likelihood /Impact)	Insurance cover held
1	Injury or death to person, including staff and councillors	accidents due to: poorly maintained building or equipment, trips and falls, hot surfaces and other scalds & burns, poorly planned events, terrorism	death or injury to person	TC WNC (TC landlord)	Medium L3 x I3 9	Regular meetings with WNC facilities, training and procedures, use of risk assessments for events and high risk activity when required. Health and Safety activity including consultant support. H&S input and management by members and senior offices	Continued training and ongoing identification of risk, continued use of risk assessments. Appointment of H&S consultant	Yes	Continued training and ongoing identification of risk, continued use of risk assessments. Continued increase in H&S input and management from senior officers and all staff. Continued meetings with WNC officers Advice to be sought on events H&S from Stage Right who produce events risk assessments for council events	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6	public liability,
2	Staff wellbeing	failure to recruit and maintain staff morale, failure to maintain staff health, significant workloads	loss of staff, loss of staff dedication, performance & good will	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6	Staff meetings, 1:1 meetings, staff appraisals, staffing plan, training budget	Look at social events, staff questionnaire, internal communications, Employee Assistance Programme, staff training programme, supporting charity days, staff counselling service	Partially	Investigate further options	TC & ATC	Medium L2 x I3 6	employer's liability
3	Reputation	poor information provided to public, poor service & events provided to public, poor decision making by officers and councillors	loss of council reputation, loss of income, loss of public support	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	website up to date and accurate, well trained officers, careful management of services, staff training, continued development of communications, training of councillors, appropriate use of social media accounts	undertake public consultation where appropriate, continue liaison with the media, develop a strategic plan for Town Council Implement staffing plan	Ongoing	Regular management meetings. Strategy Branding exercise	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	slander
4	Financial systems	limited number of staff fully trained on all aspects of the financial system	inaccurate or unlawful budget management, inability to pay suppliers, lack of internal checks and controls	TC	Medium L2 x L2 6	additional staff trained in some aspects of budget/finance systems, continued development of Finance Team skills and competencies Processes and ways of working and filed for all to access	New staff given training where appropriate for their job role	N/A	As established mitigation	TC & FO	Low L2 x I2 4	fraud
5	Compliance with legislation	lack of awareness of or failure to comply with legislation	NTC liable to enforcement activity or legal action	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6	Staff encouraged to be aware and understand legislation, staff training, careful service planning, use of internal audit and other checks and controls to ensure continued compliance, consideration of legislation when designing new services, membership of professional bodies by managers, use of professional / consultant support where appropriate, CPD training by managers	use of internal audit and other checks and controls to ensure continued compliance, consideration of legislation when designing new services where applicable, membership of professional bodies by managers, H&S audit, CPD training by managers. Some staff commenced CiLCA, and FILCA	Partially	Completion of CiLCA/iLCA/ FILCA by relevant staff	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	public liability
6	Poor service to customers	lack of equipment, lack of staff training, lack of service planning	Loss of reputation	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	staff training, equipment maintenance and purchase budgets in place, staff assigned cover roles,	Continual review as we take on more services Extra staff to ensure office cover	Partially	Continue with established mitigation and continue to review staff training Training for cover staff	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	public liability
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7	Poor communications	lack of good communication: internal and external	poor decision, poor staff morale, mis- informed public, missed publicity opportunities	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	website up to date and accurate, well trained administration team, careful management of services Frequent comms meetings Targets set	Development of newsletter	No	Town Council branding exercise to be undertaken to lead to newsletter Comms training for appropriate staff Review of website Comms meetings	TC & ATC	Low L1 x I2 2	public liability
8	Partnership working	working with partnerships with different priorities, processes and resources - also failure to maintain partnerships	loss of reputation, nugatory effort by NTC officers	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	detailed exploration before any partnerships, formal and informal , entered into regular assessment of value of project / partnership	ongoing	N/A	To build on relationship with WNC Liaise with other town councils specifically those of a similar size and/or relatively new councils Build relationships with parishes in form NBC area	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	public liability
9	NTC profile / public perception	poor public understanding of the role of the council and our services	Lack of public engagement	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	website up to date and accurate, deliberate and positive publicity concerning services and issues, use of social media including sharing of partners information Attendance at prominent events to promote the council	Development of newsletter	Partially	Development of branding, introduction of a newsletter Attendance at events	TC & ATC	Low L2 x I2 4	slander

Northampton Town Council Strategic Risk Register		Jan-24	S Carter	Key: TC =Town Clerk, ATC = Assistant Town Clerk, FO = Finance Officer, CO = Civic Officer								
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10	Loss of equipment, funds or income	theft, fraud, poor control	loss of funds / resources, loss of reputation	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	internal audit, financial accounting system, consideration of security of equipment,	Detailed asset register to be completed from existing separate sources, accurate values to be provided to insurance company. Guidance issued to staff who are home working	Yes	Continued review of the Councils Assets.	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	fraud, vehicular, public liability, all risks
11	IT	loss of service, loss through loss of building / ability to do business, loss of IT	loss of service, loss of customers, loss of reputation	TC	High L3 x I4 12	maintenance of building and IT systems, use of external support, use of cloud based storage through Microshade	Consideration of Business Continuity Plan. Some staff working from home	Partially	Business Continuity Plan needs to be drafted, majority of staff now based in office, WFH rarely though ability is there	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6	Business interruption
12	Leadership	The vision of the Council as an ambitious, innovative and politically led Council is not realised	loss of reputation, lack of public engagement	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	website up to date and accurate, development of communications, use of social media accounts.	Ongoing development of the Councils vision/strategy document, setting of goals for TC	Partially	Development and Implementation of the Council's vision, objectives and NTC Plan	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	n/a
13	Leadership & Management from councillors	Lack of Strategic direction and leadership	Ability of Council to set objectives aligned to service delivery	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	Regular Management Team meetings with Cllrs	Member and officer training, member workshops.	Partially	Ongoing development of the Councils vision, objectives and Corporate/Strategic Plan	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	n/a
14	Overall Management	Lack of effective management of Services	Poor performance loss of reputation not achieving best value	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	Regular Team meetings, experienced qualified staff One to ones Appraisal process	Continue to implement a regular officer budget monitoring review process	Yes	Establish and report key performance indicators. Establishment of scrutiny process. Create individual training plans Delivery of procurement training to ensure best practise	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	Official Indemnity
15	Financial	Failure of WNC to pay precept	Risk to service delivery, Increase pressure on other budgets	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	Dialogue with WNC, establishment of reserves	Continued establishment of reserves	Yes	5 year financial plan	TC & FO	Low L1 x I3 3	Public Liability, Property
16	Financial	Failure to adequately manage finances leads to an overspend which is unsustainable in the medium term	Reduction in usable reserves, qualified audit opinion, Unacceptable increase in precept	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	Financial controls set out in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Clarity of budgetary responsibilities Regular reporting at monthly Account Sub Committee	Regular review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Enhance budget monitoring.	Partially	Development 5 year financial plan Review SO and FR	TC & FO	Low L1 x I2 2	n/a
17	Procurement	Failure to procure supplies and services correctly resulting in legal challenge or poor value for money	Risk of legal challenge, loss of reputation	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6	Financial controls set out in Standing Orders and Financial Regulation. Procurement procedure drafted	Use of procurement adviser when tendering for new contracts	N/A	Review of F/R and S/O to ensure specific controls are in place Procurement training for all officers Procurement presentation by FO and TC	TC & FO	Low L1 x I3 3	Official Indemnity
18	Policies	Failure to introduce and implement appropriate policies	Council work streams not managed in line with legal requirements or best practise	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6	Policies as drafted are reviewed and adopted by Full Council	Annual review of current policies adopted policies to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose. Continue to keep up to date with legislation and amend and implement new policies as required.	Yes	Continue to keep up to date with legislation and amend and implement new policies as required. Ensure communication of new policies to officers	TC & ATC	Medium L2 x I3 6	Official Indemnity, Employers Liability, Public Liability
19	ICT / Data	Loss of ICT or data through cyber attack	Confidentiality compromised, loss of sensitive information	TC	High L3 x I4 12	Firewall and security on IT managed through Microshade, use of cloud based storage, The Council use Microshade VSM to secure all their files online. They have securely held servers with measures in place to prevent this. Council pays extra for VIPRE Email security that scans URLs in emails for threats etc	Continued use of Microshade	Yes	Drafting of Data Retention Policy	TC	Low L2 x I2 4	fraud
20	General Data Protection Regulations	Failure to safeguard personal information or the misuse of information leads to a breach of the regulations	Confidentiality compromised, loss of sensitive information	TC	Medium L2 x I4 8	Firewall and security on IT managed through Microshade, use of cloud based storage,	Continued review of policies and procedures Purchase of shredder	Yes	Implementation of Data Retention Policy. Cleansing of data files.	TC	Medium L2 x I4	Official Indemnity, Public Liability
21	Climate Emergency Response	Failure to reduce to implement climate change resolution, failure to account for environmental impact in services and procurement	loss of council reputation, loss of public support	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	Establishment of Climate Change Forum	Progress with Climate Change Forum	Yes	ongoing with established mitigation	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	n/a

Northampton Town Council Strategic Risk Register		Jan-24	S Carter	Key: TC =Town Clerk, ATC = Assistant Town Clerk, FO = Finance Officer, CO = Civic Officer								
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22	Health & Safety	Failure to protect the Health, safety & Wellbeing of staff and/or contractors and Public	Significant financial and /or reputational damage Physical and/or mental impact	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6	Appointment of Ellis Whitham as H&S Consultant and nominated person	Formulate all required documents and RA with Ellis Whitham	Yes	Appropriate staff to receive regular H&S training, staff attend formal H&S training where needed, re- establish hub with EW	TC	Low L2 x I2 4 2	Employer Liability, Public Liability
23	Safeguarding	Failure to safeguard children or vulnerable adult e.g. Lost Children services	Significant financial and /or reputational damage, legal challenge	TC	Low L1 x I4 4	None at present as not dealing directly with young people or vulnerable adults	None	N/A	To be reviewed as council takes on services and begins to work with partnership organisations	TC	Low L1 x I4 4	Official Indemnity
24	Asset Management	Failure to manage, invest and maintain Councils Assets	Gradual deterioration and long term costs higher than necessary, Reputational Risk, Unexpected expenses occurring	TC	High L3 x I4 12	None at present as Council has no physical assets	N/A	N/A	As and when assets are adopted, a plan will need to be formulated to develop a management plan	TC	Medium L2 x I4 8 2	Property
25	Pension Provision	Level of commitments	Reduction in funds available to front line services, Risk to reputation, loss of public support	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	Robust financial planning, Accounts Sub-Committee monitors expenditure	N/A	N/A	ongoing with established mitigation	TC & FO	Low L1 x I3 3	n/a
26	Pension input	Incorrect amount paid	Loss of funds, incorrect pension attributed to wrong person	TC	Low L1 x I2 2	Data taken from information provided by payroll provider. Tolerance check in place if difference is more than 10% compared to previous figure requiring further check by TC	N/A	N/A	Ongoing with established mitigation	TC & FO	Low L1 x I1 2	
27	Continuity Planning	Failure to undertake continuity planning including business continuity, community emergency plan. Operational risk register	Delivery of services is compromised	TC	Medium L3 x I3 9	Business continuity insurance, Officers have the ability to work from home, use of cloud based storage, mobile phones for staff, procurement of an external IT support service	Development of a Business Continuity plan	No	Final Business Continuity plan in place	TC	Medium L2 x I3 6 2	Business Continuity
28	Governance	Failure to make robust informed decisions in compliance with legislation, consultation, openness, scrutiny, high quality data etc.	Failure to achieve these high standards can lead to both reputational and financial loss.	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	Internal Audit carried out by recognised auditor, Financial regulations regularly updated. Processes and procedures followed. Key Staff trained. Annual Review	Town Council review undertaken by the Council's Internal Audit	Yes	ongoing with established mitigation	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	Official Indemnity
29	Financial	Incorrect payment entry, paying the wrong person	Loss of funds, reputational damage	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	Monthly accounts sub committee meetings. All payments presented for approval before paying, 3 stage process	Continue to review process	Yes	Ongoing with established mitigation	TC & FO	Low L1 x I3 3	N/A
30	Events	Failure to get information from WNC before transfer of events, H&S	Not able to deliver successful events as agreed H&S not in place	TC	Medium L3 x I3 9	Continual meetings with WNC staff, note taking and processes recorded, meetings with Stage Right who event manage and responsible for H&S advice	Recruitment of event officer	Yes	Development of events team, look at events apprentice Tendering of events support contract	TC & ATC	Medium L3 x I3 9 2	Public liability
31	COVID	Outbreak of Covid in office	Danger to office staff, lack of office cover, inability to facilitate meetings, loss of reputation	TC	Medium L3 x I3 9	Follow government guidance, sanitiser readily available, staff have own offices. Mask encouraged when walking, working from home an option if there is cover in the office	N/A	Yes	Ongoing with established mitigation	TC	Medium L3 x I3 9 2	Employers liability
32	NTC profile / public perception	Members fail to adhere to code of conduct	Loss of reputation and confidence in members and the council	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	Members asked to review register of interests regularly, training provided, standing item of declaration of interests at every formal meeting	Gifts and hospitality registry to be created	Yes	Additional training where appropriate Adoption of civility and respect pledge	TC	Low L1 x I3 3	N/A
33	Allotments	Failure of WNC contractor to manage allotments Failure to pay associated costs i.e. water bills	Loss of Council reputation, request for significant financial contribution at short notice	TC	Medium L3 x I2 6	Establishing a licence agreement with WNC Establish water provider accounts	Look to meet regularly with contractor	Partially	Formal working arrangement with WNC and contractor Continue to update online water account and monitor expenditure	TC	Medium L3 x I2 6	N/A

Northampton Town Council Strategic Risk Register	Jan-24	S Carter	Key: TC =Town Clerk, ATC = Assistant Town Clerk, FO = Finance Officer, CO = Civic Officer
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Ref No.	Name of Risk	Cause of Risk	Impact	Risk Owner	Original Risk Category (Likelihood /Impact)	Current Control Measures	Actions to be undertaken as additional measures in 2022/23	Were these actions completed in 2022/23	Actions to be undertaken in 2023/24	Owner of Action	Current Risk Category (Likelihood /Impact)	Insurance cover held
34	Financial - Failure of banks	Financial instability of bank	Loss of Council's money	TC	Medium L4 x L2 8	Monitoring of reports, press articles etc. regarding Councils current banking provider	Splitting money between other banks	Yes	Development of investment policy Development of long term investment plan	TC & FO	Low L4 x L1 4	N/A
35	General Power of Competence	Loss of qualified Clerk, less than two thirds of Cllrs are elected as opposed to co-opted	Loss of General Power of Competence meaning specific powers have to be identified to carry out duties, possible difficulties in taking on services	TC	Low L2 x L2 4	Clerk required to be qualified	N/A	Yes	Current mitigation, Assistant Town Clerk to do CILCA	TC	Low L2 x L2 4	N/A
36	Car	Loss of car, accident, car caught speeding	Damage to reputation, financial impact, injury or loss of life	TC	Medium L3 x L2 6	Only named insured drivers permitted to drive, Classic Carriages now provide all drivers. Town Clerk is a named driver. Car always kept at St John Car park in secure location	N/A	N/A	Monitor arrangement with Classic Carriages, new drivers given an induction	TC and CO	Medium L3xL2	Yes
37	Loss in tax base	Loss in tax base caused by economic climate, change in boundary	Loss of finance	TC	Medium L3 x	Chance of loss of tax base in Moulton Leys. Council has reserves both earmarked and unearmarked	N/A	N/A	Survey taking place in Moulton Leys, the results of which will be fed back to WNC as part of the Community Governance Review	TC	Medium L3 x L3 9	no
38	Muniments	Loss or damage of muniments, fire, theft	Loss of civic history, damage to reputation, financial	TC	Low L4 x L1 4	All regalia is stored in secure cabinets, alarmed, specialist insurance held, recent valuation undertaken WNC to monitor alarms, new signing out process introduced, not permitted to be signed out without TC consent	N/A	N/A	Current mitigation	TC and CO	Low L4 x L1 4	Yes
39	Cash from Mayoral functions	Handling of cash, loss, robbery	Potential harm to cash handler, disciplinary	TC	Low L2 x L2 4	Informal process that requires all cash to be counted and witnessed and signed for	N/A	N/A	Development of cash handling policy. People to go in pairs when taking cash to bank		Low L2 x L2 4	Yes
40	Accommodation	Loss of Guildhall as Town Council's Office	Reputation, loss of civic home, loss of functioning office	TC	High L4 x L4 16	Trying to develop a dialogue with WNC on intentions for Guildhall. Looking at other accommodation options. Accommodation reserve established to meet costs of move	Dialogue with WNC. Look at accommodation options. Formation of a working group	N/A	Current mitigation, publicity campaign, contacted FG Solicitors and King West	TC	High L4 x L3 12	No
41	Parish Poll	Requirement to hold a parish poll which can be called by 10	Big financial cost, statutory requirement to hold one	TC	Medium L3 x	Annual Parish Meeting	Communicating with public, SLCC and NALC lobbying the government to change the legislation		Offer support to NALC and SLCC on their lobbying		Medium L3xL2 6	No
42	Loss of staff with little notice	Long-term loss of staff due to illness, handing in notice, maternity etc	Loss of capacity, extra burden on existing staff, struggle to recruit	TC	Medium L3 x L3 9	Use of company for HR support return to work interviews, staff meetings, use of accounts support for financial matters that could be used if necessary. LGRC offer locum services for Town Council staff if required https://lgrc.uk/our-services/locum-and-temporary-staffing-services	Delegation to staffing committee on recruitment	N/A	Reserves to cover potential maternity. Insurance investigated but not available Ensure JDs and PS reviewed regularly and ready to go Develop staffing contingency plan, clerk delegated to recruit temporary staff if deemed necessary	TC	Medium L2 x L3 6	No

RISK SCORES

IMPACT	SCORE	DESCRIPTION (THREATS)	POSSIBLE INDICATORS
Major	4	Major loss of service,	disruption over 5 days,

Northampton Town Council Strategic Risk Register	Jan-24	S Carter	Key: TC =Town Clerk, ATC = Assistant Town Clerk, FO = Finance Officer, CO = Civic Officer
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Ref No.	Name of Risk	Cause of Risk	Impact	Risk Owner	Original Risk Category (Likelihood /Impact)	Current Control Measures	Actions to be undertaken as additional measures in 2022/23	Were these actions completed in 2022/23	Actions to be undertaken in 2023/24	Owner of Action	Current Risk Category (Likelihood /Impact)	Insurance cover held
			More than 75% chance of occurrence			Regular occurrence, Circumstances frequently encountered – daily/weekly/monthly						
Likely		3	40%-75% chance of occurrence			Likely to happen at some point in the next 1-3 years, Circumstances occasionally encountered (few times a year)						
Unlikely		2	10%- 40% chance of occurrence			Only likely to happen once every 3 or more years						
Very unlikely		1	Less than 10% chance of occurrence			Has happened rarely/never before						

RISK SCORES MATRIX

Very likely	4	8	12	16
Likely	3	6	9	12
Unlikely	2	4	6	8
Very unlikely	1	2	3	4

Northampton Town Council
Policy and Finance Committee – 11th March 2024

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK

Purpose of report: To update the Committee on the CGR

Recommended: That, subject to any further actions, the committee notes the report

Committee members will be aware that [WNC are conducting a CGR](#), with the deadline for the first round of consultation responses being required by the end of January.

Members will be aware that Moulton Parish Council (MPC) have asked that Moulton Leys parish boundary be moved so that it becomes part of MPC and not with the town council. Upon speaking with WNC officer who are running the CGR they advised that we as a Town Council should consider running a consultation of our own asking the residents of Moulton Leys if they wanted to remain part of the town council area or move to Moulton PC area.

The results of the survey indicated strongly that the residents did want to remain within NTC area. This formed the majority part of the council's response to the first stage of the consultation which was submitted at the end of January.

A separate petition was also handed in to WNC signed by residents of Moulton Leys who did not want their parish boundary moved.

It is understood that as part of the next stage of the CGR WNC will write to each property in Moulton Leys to seek their views on the proposal to move the boundary so they are incorporated into Moulton Parish Council. This will be part of stage 2.

It is understood that the prospect of a Parish Council for Weston Favell Village has been mooted and this may also be part of the stage 2 consultation. At the time of writing the Clerk is not aware of the full implications of this but will continue to advise as when further information comes about.

The response to the stage 1 consultation is attached for information.

Northampton Town Council CGR Phase 1 Consultation Response

Introduction

Northampton Town Council was created in 2021, following the decision to parish the unparished areas of Northampton. Within the former NBC area, three new Parish Councils were created, Kingsthorpe, Far Cotton and Delapre, and Northampton Town.

The ward boundaries for Northampton Town Council area followed those of the former Brough Council. When the Boundary Commission conducted their consultation as part of the WNC review, The Town Council stated that they wanted to retain the existing parish boundaries and wards citing the fact that the council was only 2 years old as a major factor. Another factor was the desire to see community areas that were recognised both by residents and as having historic importance was also cited. Unfortunately, the Boundary Commission did not agree with this and as legislation required that Parish Wards had to sit with principal council wards, all the parish ward boundaries were changed.

Moulton Leys

Part of the Boundary Commission review is a proposal that an area to the north of Northampton parish known as Moulton Leys, be moved into the Moulton Parish Council area.

The proposal to move Moulton Leys into Moulton Parish came as a surprise to many including the town council as there was no consultation either with the residents (as far as we can tell), or with the town council. The recommendation to change the boundary and the evidence behind this is not transparent, and we have been unable to find the evidence used to put forward this proposal.

This put the town council in a position where it seemed it had to contradict something that we had been informed was wanted, though who wanted it and the amount of support this had was unknown.

This led the Town Council to conduct its own consultation of residents of Moulton Leys in an attempt to get an understanding of what they thought and ultimately to find out if they did in fact want to move into Moulton parish area. The initial reaction to the survey was one of surprise as the general feedback intimated that residents did not know that this proposal had been put forward.

The survey looked to find out from residents ultimately if they supported this proposals or not, the reasons for this, whether they used facilities in Northampton or Moulton, whether they regarded themselves as Northampton citizens or Moulton citizens. The questions as detailed in the questionnaire are detailed below. As part of the consultation it was highlighted that the Band D average for Moulton Parish Council residents was considerably more than for those that lived within the NTC area.

Survey

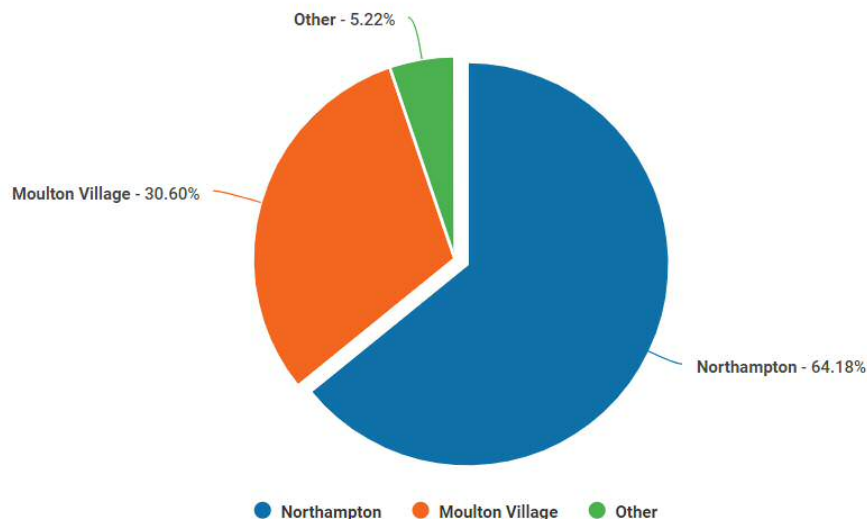
The Town Council made live a survey from 11th January 2024 to the 25th January 2025. The survey was available online and was promoted through the various social media channels. The aim of the survey was to establish whether there was in fact the support from Moulton Leys residents to join the Moulton Parish Council area. The financial implications of the proposal were highlighted, but the survey also wanted to find out where the residents of Moulton Leys identified themselves with. We asked that only residents of Moulton Leys complete the survey and asked them to detail the road on which they lived to add a level of verification that respondents were in fact those who lived on Moulton Leys.

At the time of the survey ending the survey had had : 137 completed responses.

The survey was widely shared on social media including Moulton village and Moulton Leys Facebook pages. Local councillors were also encouraged to share the page in their networks.

Q1.

As a resident of Moulton Leys do you identify yourself with



This question was asked to get a sense of identity from those responding to the survey. Anecdotally, some feedback had been received that both supported and contradicted the view as to whether Moulton Leys residents saw themselves as residents of Moulton or Northampton. Again, anecdotally some stated that there was a sense from Moulton village residents that Moulton Leys residents were not part of the village and were in fact Northampton residents. The former Borough Council boundary supported this as the NBC boundary to the north ended at Moulton with Moulton village being part of Daventry DC whilst Moulton Leys was in the former NBC area.

The data suggests that just under two thirds of residents of Moulton Leys identified themselves with Northampton. Just under one third with Moulton.

The survey asked for a basic explanation as to why the respondent had answered the way they did. A few of the responses are detailed below:

- *The village is the area around the one way system. Moulton Leys is part of Northampton based on location and infrastructure. Just as Overstone Leys would not be part of Overstone village.*
- *Moulton Villagers do not consider Moulton Leys residents to be part of their community*
- *Moulton Leys was always classed at not being part of Moulton. When we moved here over 30 years ago there was not guarantee we would get our children in Moulton School as Boothville School was closer and residents were classed as 'outsiders'*

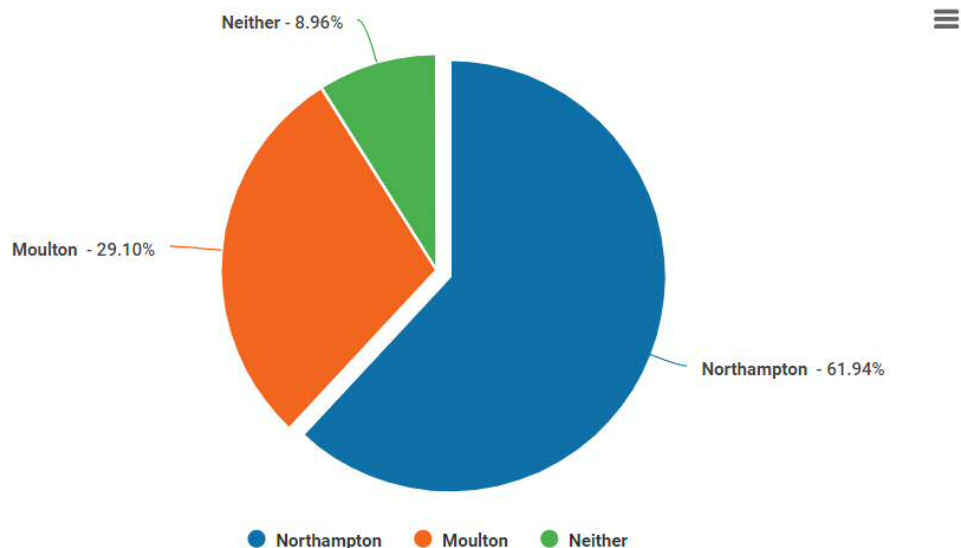
- *Having lived here for 31 years, Moulton Parish Council has made it clear that Moulton Leys is Northampton.*
- *We are more Northampton than Moulton*
- *Moulton village is very secular. They don't think of "us" as being part of Moulton - or at least Moulton village. I will tell people I live in Moulton, then immediately clarify that I mean Moulton Leys, not Moulton village.*

The perception that Moulton Village seems to not regard Moulton Leys as part of Moulton was a common theme, cited in many responses in different guises.

This leads us to conclude that from those who responded, the vast majority of Moulton Leys residents identify with Northampton.

Q2.

As a resident of Moulton Leys, where would you primarily go to access services? For example; shops, doctors, parks, leisure activities...



One of the main arguments highlighted for changing the boundary was that residents of Moulton Leys predominantly used the facilities in Moulton village. Whilst this is true to some of the respondents as you can see in the chart, this not the majority. Some of those who responded did say they accessed shops, doctors, pubs etc within Moulton Village, but almost double that number stated that they primarily went to Northampton town for these services. This seems to contradict the assertion that Moulton Leys residents are predominantly using services within the village.

Again, the survey asked for a brief explanation for the respondents answer. Some of the highlights are detailed below:

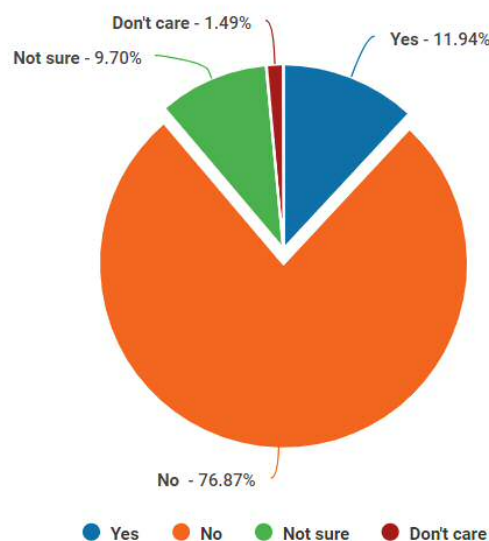
- *As I live on Cottingham Drive and work on the Headlands all of the facilities I access are in Northampton ie doctors, dentist, hairdressers, shops etc. I very rarely go into Moulton village and use none of the services.*

- *My doctor is at Thorplands Northampton. My grocery shopping is from Weston Favell. Abington Park is our choice of a decent park to visit*
- *Morrisons, tescos express, Thorpeville, weston favell and Riverside.*
- *Lumbertubs pub, bradlaugh fields*
- *Have never used the village doctors. The parking is not good for use of shops and it's a little too far to walk as we are not really within the village at all*
- *Other than the doctor's most things are in Northampton. The village just doesn't have enough*

Another point raised more broadly was that the town council did not provide any direct services to Moulton Leys residents. The point of this question was to highlight that whilst Moulton Leys itself had no direct Town Council services the residents predominantly accessed areas of the town that did. For example, the nearby Bradlaugh Fields has been a grant recipient from the town council to support their work as has Sport for Fitness based at Fernie Fields which also received a significant town council grant to support their work. Many Moulton Leys residents commented that the Northampton Parks were a major draw, whilst these again are not town council owned, the town council provides and supports a significant number of enhancements and events in the parks from Bands in the Park, to Diwali and the Balloon Festival. The Town Council also enhances the parks offering with wellbeing walks.

Q3.

As a resident of Moulton Leys, do you support the proposal to move this area from the Northampton Town Council area to Moulton Parish Council area?



The aim of this question was ultimately to gauge support for the proposal to move Moulton Leys into Moulton Parish Council. We were informed that there was a want from Moulton Leys residents to move from Northampton Town to Moulton Parish.

Our findings illustrate that there is massive support to retain the current boundary and keep Moulton Leys within Northampton Town Council area. Over 75% of respondents do not support the proposal, just under 12% do support it.

The reasoning for this is encapsulated in many of the responses detailed previously. Also, the material consideration that moving boundaries may cost the council tax payer a considerable amount of money, something that we would speculate was not explained until now, has been highlighted as a major factor.

The survey asked for a brief explanation as to their response. Some of them are detailed below:

- *I would not consider Moulton Leys to be part of the Parish. This just sounds like a land-grab on their part. Do they want Moulton Park too...?!*
- *As I use none of the services and rarely go into Moulton itself I fail to see how this would benefit me. I live on my own and on a low income so the additional charges would have a major impact on me.*
- *Additional cost but no incentives*
- *I do not use the services so will not benefit from the change. I am happy to stay with Northampton Town Council.*
- *Why should we pay more council tax for no benefit. Cannot understand why boundaries need to be changed.*
- *The cost. I can't see anything that tells me we would be served better by the change or gives any good reason for it.*
- *absolutely not, I bought a house in Northampton, because I wanted to live there.*
- *There doesnt seem to be any good reason to change this. What benefits would the residents of moulton leys have for this change?? The extortionate change in council fees certainly doesnt seem a positive reason for me to agree to it.*
- *Moulton Leys is not Moulton Village. It never has been. Moulton village is the historic area with its architecture, village culture and village traditions. Moulton Leys is a town expansion from the 1970s. Don't change things now, just because you want to get more money out of people!*
- *I live in Northampton not Daventry or Moulton*
- *As previous, the people from the village tend to look down their noses at people who are "outside". I wouldn't want them and their small minded opinions having more impact on the decisions made in my local area.*

A significant theme across all the answers to all the questions is that of Northampton and having civic pride in coming from Northampton. Northampton is rich in civic tradition and heritage and many of the comments stated that they regarded themselves as being from Northampton. The Town Council prides itself on the civic history of the town and maintaining this for another 800 years. In addition, one of the Town Council's priorities is to celebrate the heritage of the town which it does through heritage trails and events like Oak Apple Day.

Q4:

As part of the verification we asked respondents to detail on which road they lived.

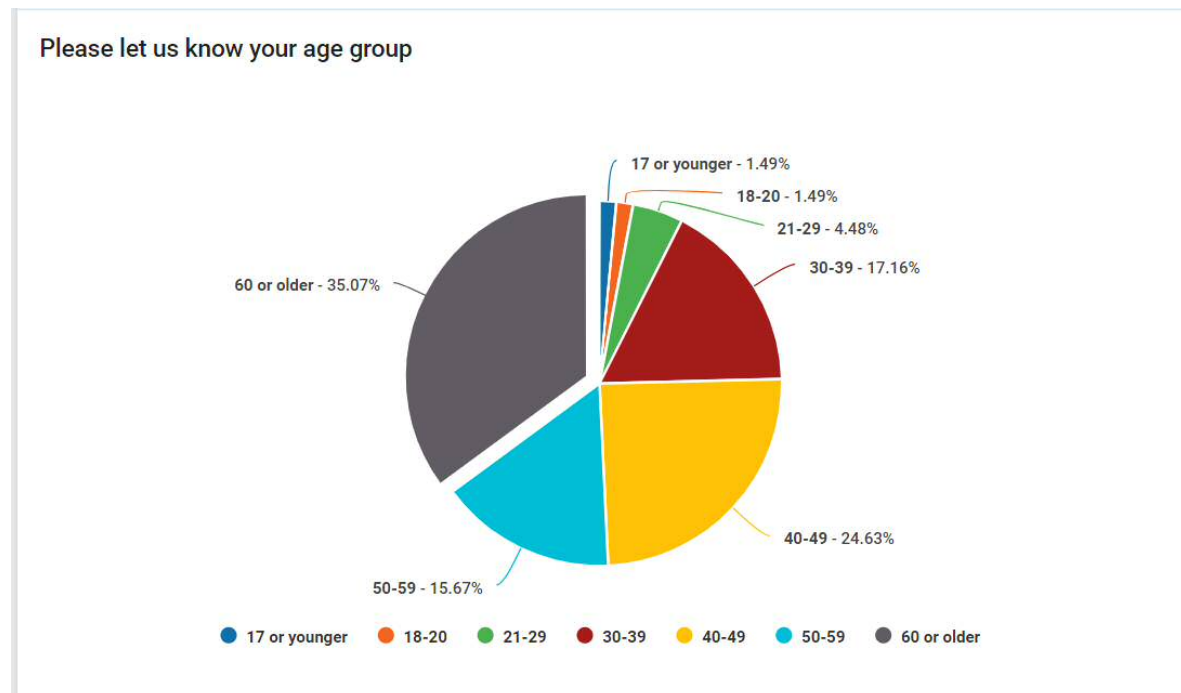
A summary of the roads listed is as follows:

West Leys Court

East Leys Court

Greenfinch Drive
Gayhurst Close
Northampton Lane South
Cottingham Drive
Underbank Lane
Lowick Court
White Doe Drive

Q5.



Whilst this question does not impact on the overall response, the age demographics of who responded was interesting. The Town Council did not want to collect personal data (names, DOB etc), for data protection requirements and it was felt that this kind of information was not required.

Conclusion

The survey illustrates that this proposal does not appear to have the support of Moulton Leys residents. The overwhelming majority of Moulton Leys residents want to remain in the boundary of Northampton Town for reasons that are detailed previously. Perhaps the major reason is financial, however, beyond the financial implications, there is a clear view that the majority of residents of Moulton Leys do not regard themselves as Moulton Village citizens. As highlighted previously, in order to retain the boundary, the Town Council have had to conduct its own consultation, when it is not clear if a consultation was held in order to propose the change, or if there was a want to change the boundary what this looked like. The process and/or threshold for making these proposals should be clear and transparent from the start as there are significant consequences for residents and councils alike.

Accordingly, we would ask that officers recommend that Moulton Leys does not transfer to Moulton parish council. There is clear evidence to show that this is not wanted by residents of Moulton Leys.

Our understanding is that this will result in Moulton Leys becoming a ward on its own. The Town Council is keen to consider more cllrs given the size and population that we cover so this would be supported. The creation of a ward for Moulton Leys would help us address the needs of this area in a greater way and consider how we can invest or expand existing projects such as Northampton in Bloom.

Tollgate Close

The Town Council would ask that the CGR considers moving the boundary of Semilong Ward to incorporate the road known as Tollgate Close which currently sits within the Kingsthorpe Parish area. This would ensure a cleaner boundary that incorporated the area up to Mill Lane. However, it is understood that we have not undertaken a consultation on this and therefore could be dismissed.

Number of Cllrs

The Town Council would ask that the CGR considers the number of councillors that NTC has with the consideration of adding more members.

The Town Council currently has 25 councillors and is keen to further add to this. The size of Northampton town council (approximately 130,000 electorate) is by the far the biggest in the country. The burden that this places on cllrs is significant and we would ask that the review considered further councillors in the most densely populated wards.

It is understood that a conversation may need to begin on this and we would appreciate the CGR's feedback on how we can go about doing this.

Weston Favell village

It is understood that a movement to consider making Weston Favell a separate parish has been put forward, though again the evidence for this is not clear. It is understood that Weston Favell Residents Association dismissed this idea during the initial CGR. The Town Council provides allotments in Weston Favell as well as grants, bloom and we are looking at the provision of a VAS sign. The Town Council would like to retain Weston Favel within its boundary.

Northampton Town Council
Policy and Finance Committee – 11th March 2024

CHAIR'S REQUEST TO EARMARK UNSPENT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BUDGET

REPORT OF: Chair of Committee

Purpose of report: To ask that the Committee recommend to Council that the unspent budgets be earmarked as per the report

Recommended: That, subject to any further actions, the committee notes the Please can the Policy and Finance Committee on the 11th of March consider this item that I'm requesting on behalf of the Environmental Service Committee who agreed to it at our February 12th meeting:

That any underspend at the end of this financial year be allocated to earmarked reserves for the purposes as indicated below.

4560 Environmental Projects (c. £20,000 in budget currently) - Tree Planting

4561 Environmental Grants (c. £5,000 in budget currently) - Bikes for Refugees Grant

The rationales behind this request are:

4560 - whilst some of this budget may still be spent before the end of March, some will most probably not be spent, and the planting of trees in our wards is generally very favourably viewed by NTC Cllrs. However, opportunities to plant trees are often serendipitous, and happen when a good location is identified and adequate planning support is obtained from a West Northants officer, as was the case recently with the planting facilitated by Cllrs Birch and Hallam in their wards. Tree planting is also seasonal and the optimal period is October to March.

4561 - The Bikes for Refugees Grant application is going to the Grants Subcommittee on 6th March. If agreed to there, the usual process is to go to the next Environmental Services Committee but this is not until 8th of April. The ESC of 12th February agreed that a subgroup of Cllr Kilbride (Vice-Chair), Stuart and myself be delegated to decide on any outstanding environmental projects before the next full committee. However, just in case those who know about protocol more than I do, advise that a grant application has to go to the full committee, then holding the money in earmarked reserves would mean that it could still be allocated from this year's budget.

Clerk's note: Financial Regulations allow the council to earmark reserves throughout the financial year. However, it requires council approval therefore a recommendation either way will have to go from this committee to the Council.

Northampton Town Council
Policy and Finance Committee – 11th March 2024

Volunteer Handbook Update

REPORT OF: Assistant Town Clerk

Purpose of report: To update the Committee on the Volunteer Handbook

Recommended: That, the committee notes the report

1. Amendments to the draft Volunteer Handbook (previously presented to the P&F Committee) are in progress. The process of signing up volunteers is a little more complex than was first thought.
2. A one-day training course - **Support Staff and Volunteers** (provided by Volunteer Impact Northamptonshire) was attended by for Connor, Jo and Louise
3. A draft Safeguarding Policy has been written and will be presented to the P&F Committee with the final volunteer handbook in due course.
4. Julie and Louise are working with the local Community Connector from (Higham Ferrers Town Council) to build a workable volunteer scheme and an easy to follow handbook.
5. Investigations are ongoing with General Practice Alliance to introduce/work with some sort of Hub Volunteer Passport scheme