Introduction and Welcome!

Welcome, it's been a busy two weeks since my last update. You may recall that two weeks ago when I issued my previous update, I was preparing to go to the fireworks display in Corby, this year funded by North Northamptonshire Council for the first time. It really was a spectacular event and it was great to see so many people and families enjoying themselves.

More recently, I was honoured to attend the Remembrance Sunday event in Corby. This followed a two-minute silence the Council held on Remembrance Day. As many of you will know, this year was especially important as it is the 100th anniversary since the nation's collective Remembrance traditions were first brought together - the Poppy, Armistice Day, the service for the Unknown Warrior, and the march-past of the Cenotaph; traditions that millions participate in every year.

On Tuesday, I was delighted to introduce North Northamptonshire's first ever Climate Change Conference. There were some inspirational speakers and I was joined by Cllr Harriet Pentland who did an excellent job compering the event. Thank you to those of you who were able to watch the event live. For those of you who missed it, you can view it on YouTube here: NNClimate21 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yavQ5oFle8&list=PLufPaHzJ5t7pCBTsbooJIT8wxyKJMY6bD)

I was also really pleased to say that North Northamptonshire planted its first trees for the Queen's Green Canopy this week. I have provided more details on this below.

The meeting of our Executive yesterday considered a wide range of items on its agenda. Amongst the items, the Executive endorsed the Council’s Corporate Plan that sets out its vision, values, key commitments and priorities for the future. This will go to Council in December for formal adoption. You can view the agenda for the November Executive here: Browse Executive Meetings (https://northnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=142&Year=0)

Please also check out the press release section further on in this Update to find out more about the Christmas events that are planned in the area in the coming weeks.
North Northamptonshire Council's plan for the future

This week, the Council’s Executive endorsed its first ever Corporate Plan, setting out its vision, values, key commitments and priorities for the Council. This follows a public consultation earlier in the year. The Corporate Plan will shape the future direction of the Council, its services and the area it serves.

The Council's Corporate Plan sets a strategy for the next four years and beyond. It sets out the Council's vision for North Northamptonshire to be ‘A place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life.’

The Corporate Plan outlines the values the Council will embrace as well as six key commitments it has made to everyone in North Northamptonshire:

- **Active, fulfilled lives** – helping people live healthier, more active, independent and fulfilled lives.
- **Better, brighter futures** – caring for young people, providing them with a high-quality education and opportunities to help them flourish.
- **Safe and thriving places** – enable a thriving and successful economy that shapes great places to live, learn, work and visit.
- **Green, sustainable environment** – taking a lead on improving the green environment, making the area more sustainable for generations to come.
- **Connected communities** – ensuring our communities are connected with one another so they are able to shape their lives and areas where they live.
- **Modern public services** – providing efficient, effective and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities.

The Corporate Plan is more than a plan for the future - it is a framework for helping the Council make difficult decisions about where it can allocate its finite resources. As a Council, we will strive to make North Northamptonshire a place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life. We now look forward to taking the plan to Council on 1 December for consideration for formal adoption.

Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council: ‘**North Northamptonshire Council is committed to making the area a better place to live, work and relax. I strongly believe, as I’m sure you all do, that by putting residents and local communities at the heart of everything we do, we will be better placed to make the right decisions for North Northamptonshire.**’
OUR VALUES: We will be:

1. Active, fulfilled lives
   - Helping people live healthier, more active, independent and fulfilled lives

2. Better, brighter futures
   - Caring for our young people, providing them with a high quality education and opportunities to help them flourish

3. Safe and thriving places
   - Enable a thriving and successful economy that shapes great places to live, learn, work and visit

4. Green, sustainable environment
   - Taking a lead on improving the green environment, making the area more sustainable for generations to come

5. Connected communities
   - Ensuring our communities are connected with one another so they are able to shape their lives and the areas where they live

6. Modern public services
   - Providing efficient, effective and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities

Key Commitments:

- Safe
- Attractive
- Green
- Thriving

OUR VISION: North Northamptonshire: A place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life
A strategy on how North Northamptonshire Council can improve bus services in the area, particularly to respond to the impact that Covid-19 has had on the sector, has been published by the local authority and approved by the Executive.

Forming part of the Government's National Bus Strategy, 'Bus Back Better' - recommendations include forming an 'Enhanced Partnership' with bus companies, towns and parishes, passengers and businesses. Such an arrangement would allow access to a £3 billion funding pot to assist with sustaining, re-introducing and developing bus routes, which otherwise could potentially be lost as they would not be deemed commercially viable.

The strategy also lays out how it will work towards improving the reliability of journeys, boosting the number of passengers and ensuring people are happier with the service provided. The plans also include proposals for multi-operator ticketing for journeys within, and in and out of, North Northamptonshire, as well as working with bus operators to resume their investment in new, more environmentally friendly vehicles.

With COP26 having recently taken place, I'm delighted that we're seeing the start of our good work to improve the bus network in North Northamptonshire as the environmental benefits of us all making more journeys on public transport are well known. A better bus network also enhances links between communities.

Our investment in rural routes will help tackle the issue of social isolation, which many face in these areas and which has been particularly acute during the pandemic.

This first Bus Service Improvement Plan represents initial proposals over a medium-term timeframe of about three to five years but will be regularly reviewed before then. It has been informed by the results of a public consultation during September and October 2021 with more planned in the near future. We will of course, keep you informed of its progress.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have recommended that Toby Sanders is the new Designate Chief Executive of Northamptonshire's Integrated Care Board (ICB), ready to take up the post in April 2022 as part of our transition to full Integrated Care System (ICS) status, subject to government legislation.

For more information, please see the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership website. (https://northamptonshirehcp.co.uk/icb-ceo-appointment)
Olympic and Paralympic heroes celebrated in Corby

I thoroughly enjoyed being part of the celebration of our local Olympic and Paralympic stars, following their achievements at the Tokyo 2020 Games held earlier this year.

The event was held in Willow Place, Corby town centre, where athletes who are local to North Northamptonshire or train in the area, were invited to answer questions from Corby Radio. This was followed by an event in the Core Theatre, Corby Cube, where BMX Olympic medallists, Declan Brookes and Charlotte Worthington, along with Paralympic swimmers, Maisie Summers-Newton and William Perry, spoke about their time training and competing in the Olympics. This was also the time that we got to ask the athletes questions ourselves and I was very pleased to find out a lot more about them.

I have to admit, finding out what calorie filled meals and treats they enjoy when not training, was particularly intriguing. For those who attended, I'm sure you would join me in saying what a truly inspiring afternoon it was listening to these sporting heroes.

Steel Road, Corby – junction improvements

Work started this week to open up the highway network to the north east of Corby Town centre in order to accommodate much needed new housing by improving the capacity issues on the A43 Steel Road Roundabout. The scheme to improve the roundabout is to:

1. Increase the entry lanes to three and the length of these lanes on the eastern arm.
2. Improve the width of the exit lane on the eastern arm to allow better merging of traffic and improve the sight distance.
3. Close Arnsley Road to through-traffic but maintain a one-way bus lane heading north. Public access to businesses on Arnsley Road will be maintained, in from the A43 Steel Road Roundabout and out.
4. Extend Priors Haw Road to provide a left in and left out access to Steel Road.

The project is a key component in the infrastructure improvements needed to ensure that the area is able to accommodate the housing and employment land growth set out within the adopted Development Plan for North Northamptonshire. Specifically linked to the Priors Hall Park development site, these junction improvements will enable a capacity increase to ensure the road network can meet the demand.

Northamptonshire Highways will be communicating about these works and progress on Twitter @nnhighways and information will also be available at kierwsp.co.uk/news.
Funding of £237,504 to plant over 1,000 trees in North Northamptonshire

Linking in very nicely with the previous item, I am delighted to announce that North Northamptonshire Council will receive funding via the Local Authority Treescape Fund for the planting and upkeep of 1,040 new trees across the local area up until 2025.

We have been successful in securing a total of £237,504 of capital funding to be received between financial years 2021/22 through to 2024/25, which will be used to cover the purchase of 1,040 trees, associated stakes and cages, plus funds for three years of aftercare to ensure that those planted have the best chance of survival.

Since the Council declared a climate and environment emergency in July, we have been working tirelessly to ensure we are doing all we can, whilst also looking to the future. This funding, and the extra trees that we can now plant in North Northamptonshire, will go some way in helping us all in the long term.

The Local Authority Treescape Fund is aimed at establishing trees in non-woodland settings such as in riverbanks, hedgerows, parklands, urban areas, beside roads and footpaths. Sites in Corby, Kettering, Broughton, Rothwell and Raunds have all been identified as suitable for tree planting, with further sites across the authority being sought for the following years.

The fund is administered by the Forestry Commission, with grants worth between £50,000 and £300,000 available. The Council has been successful in securing funding from the 2021/22 application round that opened earlier this year.

Plans for A509 Isham bypass given a boost

Plans for the A509 Isham bypass have taken a step in the right direction after the Government’s Department for Transport (DfT) has written to North Northamptonshire Council to say that the project has been progressed under the Major Road Network (MRN) programme.

To help the scheme move forward to the next stage, the DfT will make a contribution of £1,859,000 in the current financial year towards the costs of developing an outline business case, having considered the strategic case submitted in December 2020, which we will now progress.

The proposed dual carriageway would provide a primary north / south link between the A14 and A45 trunk roads, serving Kettering and Wellingborough and destinations towards the south west.
Native apple tree planted in North Northamptonshire as part of the Queen's Green Canopy

A ‘Lord Burghley’ tree has been planted at Fermyn Woods as part of our celebration of the national Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

This species of apple tree first originated in Northamptonshire in 1834 in the garden of the Marquis of Exeter and it is hoped that further native species of trees with a connection to the county will be planted by North Northamptonshire Council, alongside larger planting schemes, as part of the Queens Green Canopy and Platinum Jubilee celebration.

Further trees will be planted throughout the 2021/22 planting season, with community planting events being planned for early 2022, before additional trees are planted towards the end of 2022 to coincide with the next planting season. In total, North Northamptonshire Council will be planting several thousand trees.

North Northamptonshire Council is working closely with the Northamptonshire Lord Lieutenant's office to help encourage tree-planting activities across the area, as well as planting trees on Council land, in the lead-up to Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June 2022.

For more information and to find out how to get involved visit Queen's Green Canopy (https://queensgreencanopy.org). You can also find out more details about tree-planting and permissions on the Council website (https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/queens-green-canopy).

National Consumer Week 2021 update

National Consumer Week 2021 will launch on 6 December. In response, North Northamptonshire Council will be raising awareness of how people can protect themselves from misleading energy efficiency and environmental claims, such as ‘green scams' and rogue traders.

I think this will be particularly important as some scammers might try and take advantage of the uncertainty in the current energy markets.

You can find out more on the campaign webpage in the coming weeks, https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/ncw21/
Media 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):

- North Northamptonshire Council’s blueprint for the future
- Millions to be made available to most vulnerable in North Northants this winter
- Funds to be released to get Corby town investment plan rolling
- Funding of £237,504 to plant over 1000 trees in North Northamptonshire
- Native apple tree planted in North Northants for Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee
- Corby highways work will help with future economic and housing growth
- Public Health Officials advise residents to ‘Let fresh air in and viruses out’
- Confirmation of Designate Chief Executive appointment to Northamptonshire’s Integrated Care Board
- Resurfacing works in Main Road Wilby
- Have your say on better travel in the Kettering area
- Consultation on admission arrangements for North Northamptonshire schools for the 2023-2024 academic year
- Get ready for Christmas in North Northants
- Public Health Officials urge residents to get the maximum vaccine protection possible to protect against COVID-19
- Cash boost for North Northants to help commitments to prosperity and net zero
- Consultation launches on electric vehicle charging points across North Northamptonshire

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Have your say on better travel in the Kettering area.

Consultation on admission arrangements for North Northamptonshire schools for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Get ready for Christmas in North Northants.

Public Health Officials urge residents to get the maximum vaccine protection possible to protect against COVID-19.

Cash boost for North Northants to help commitments to prosperity and net zero.

Consultation launches on electric vehicle charging points across North Northamptonshire.

 Millions to be made available to most vulnerable in North Northants this winter.
Social media: Top stories

To follow our social media account you can find us on Facebook North Northamptonshire Council - Home and on Twitter by following @NorthNorthantsC

Top Tweets and posts from 8-10 November:

Facebook: (measured by reach and post clicks)
- Check out our latest vacancies - Latest Vacancies (Impressions 737, engagements 79)
- School admission public consultation - School Admissions Consultation (impressions 620, engagements 11)
- Get ready for Christmas in Kettering... Find out more at: Christmas in Kettering (impressions 596, engagements 35)

Twitter: (measured by impressions and engagements)
- Registrations Service System Support Assistant job advert - View Vacancy (reach 3,941, post clicks 293)
- Check out our latest vacancies - View Job Vacancies (reach 2,835, post clicks 726)
- School admission public consultation - School Admission Publication (reach 2,141, post clicks 32)

Thank you!

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

With Best Wishes,

Jason

North Northamptonshire Council

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