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12 May 2025

**Members of the
Finance and Resources Committee**

Chief Executive's Office

Rachel Blair
Chief Officer (Legal & Democratic)
Civic Centre, Windmillhill Street,
Motherwell ML1 1AB
www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

Notice is given that a Meeting of the **Finance and Resources Committee** is to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Windmillhill Street, Motherwell, ML1 1AB on Wednesday, 21 May 2025 at 10:00 AM which you are requested to attend.

The agenda of business is attached.

Rachel Blair
Chief Officer (Legal & Democratic)

Members :

A Duffy-Lawson, B McCulloch, A Ballinger, M Boyd, G Brennan, A Bustard, T Carragher, C Costello, S Coyle, D Crichton, G Currie, K Duffy, J Hume, D Johnston, T Johnston, P Kelly, J Keltie, K Larson, G Lennon, J Logue, H Loughran, A Masterton, P McDade, R McKendrick, J McLaren, M McPake, J McPhilemy, L Nolan, P Patton, C Quigley, L Roarty, G Robinson, W Shields, A Smith, A Stubbs, L Stubbs, R Sullivan, S Watson, C Williams, G Woods.

Agenda

- 1 **Declarations of Interest In Terms of the Ethical Standards In Public Life Etc. (Scotland) Act 2000**
- 2 **Minute of Joint Consultative Committee for Local Government Employees of 18 March 2025** 7 - 8
Submit Minute of Meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee for Local Government Employees of 18 March 2025

Operational
- 3 **Employment Policy and Conditions Update** 9 - 114
Submit report by Chief Officer (People Resources) seeking approval of a number of updated Council Policies.
- 4 **Programme of Work Progress Report - Digital North Lanarkshire, Performance Optimisation, Enhanced Security Monitoring** 115 - 146
Submit a joint report by Chief Officer (Legal and Democratic) and Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) providing an update on progress to achieve the Council's ambition to (a) develop organisational security model/standards/principles; (b) identify vulnerable products & mitigating options; and (c) develop and deploy compliance reporting along with the continual improvements to the Council's cyber security control set.
- 5 **Microsoft Enterprise Agreement 2025-2028 – Procurement Update** 147 - 154
Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) providing an update on the procurement in relation to the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement contract.
- 6 **Land Surplus to Operational Requirements at Ailsa Road, Coatbridge** 155 - 162
Submit report by Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement) seeking approval to declare land at Ailsa Road, Coatbridge surplus to Council requirements.

Performance

- | | | |
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| 7 | Strategic Performance Framework - Final Performance Results for Business and Digital
Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) providing an update on the suite of performance indicators used by Business and Digital. | 163 - 176 |
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Financial

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|----|--|-----------|
| 8 | Revenues and Benefits Update
Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) providing and update on the performance within the Revenues and Benefits functions of Finance as at 31 March 2025. | 177 - 184 |
| 9 | Revenue Monitoring Report Council Summary 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025
Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) providing an update on the overall financial position for the General Fund Account, Housing Revenue Account and Adult Health and Social Care, for the financial year to 31 March 2025; (2) consolidating the budget monitoring position of all Services, and (3) highlighting and explaining major outturn variances as per the Council's approved Financial Regulations. | 185 - 196 |
| 10 | Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Chief Executive's Service 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025 (Period 12)
Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) providing a summary of the Chief Executive's Service financial performance for the period 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025 (Period 12) and (2) illustrating the provisional outturn as at 31 March 2025, with major outturn variances highlighted and explained as per the Council's approved Financial Regulations. | 197 - 208 |

11	Capital Programme 2024-25 Monitoring Report Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) providing an update on the 2024/25 resources and expenditure for the Council's Strategic Capital Investment Programme; and (2) detailing the 2024/25 projected outturn position and the resultant vacancies.	209 - 222
12	Chief Executive Service - Capital Monitoring Report 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025 (Period 12) Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) highlighting the financial performance and projected outturn of 2024/25 Chief Executive capital programme for the period ended 28 February 2025 (Period 12).	223 - 230
13	Treasury Management Monitoring Report for Quarter ended 31 March 2025 Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) informing on the quarterly Treasury Management Activity for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2025 and compliance with the mandatory treasury and prudential indicators.	231 - 248
Contracts		
14	Contract Award for Progress Licence and Software Maintenance Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) advising of the award of a contract for the Progress Licence and Software Maintenance to Progress Software Ltd.	249 - 258
15	Contract Extension for Provision of Merchant Acquiring Services 2024-25 Submit report by Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) advising of the award of contract modification to the existing Provision of Merchant Acquiring Services provided by Lloyds Bank.	259 - 264
16	Contract with Variations Submit report by Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement) advising of contracts completed between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 where the expenditure levels exceeded the contract award levels.	265 - 272

17	Contract Awards Below Committee Approval Threshold	273 - 276
	Submit report by Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement) notifying of the Contracts Awarded since the last meeting of the Committee with a value below the financial threshold requiring approval.	

18 March 2025 at 2pm

A Meeting of the **JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
EMPLOYEES**

PRESENT

Councillor Cairns, D. Johnston and Logue.

J. Rooney (Unite), W. Shearer (Unison), V Thompson (Unite), J. Watson (Unison) and D Whelan (GMB).

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Officer (People Resources), Employment and Policy Manager, Occupational Safety and Wellbeing Manager, Talent and Leadership Development Manager and Democratic Co-Ordinator.

APOLOGIES

Councillors Boyd, Brannan-McVey, Carragher, M. Coyle, Currie, Duffy, Hume, Jarvie and Marie Quigley (Unison).

The Democratic Co-Ordinator advised that the meeting was inquorate, and the meeting was stood down.

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Ref FW/LC

Date

21/05/25

Employment Policy and Conditions Update

From Fiona Whittaker, Chief Officer (People Resources)

E-mail whittakerf@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 07973 728628

Executive Summary

This report provides a composite update on several positive People Resources policy changes and developments, including improvements to the wording of our core conditions.

These include:

- The introduction of our newly developed Disability Policy that is aimed at supporting disabled employees throughout the lifespan of their employment with the Council. Also being introduced is our Neonatal Care Leave Policy which will ensure that the Council is supporting employees whose child is receiving neonatal care.
- A review of our Dignity at Work Policy, which has been updated with the objective of providing a much more effective way of dealing with complaints from employees.
- An update of our Supporting Attendance Policy following the review of the Managing Attendance Policy for Teachers, to establish a consistent, fair and equitable approach to managing absence across all sectors of employees within the Council.

Finally, following a review of our core terms and conditions of employment, it has been determined that some minor changes are required to the application of non-core hours and higher duties.

It should be noted that all policies provided, and all changes described within this report have been agreed by the Trade Unions, following the normal consultation process.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Consider and approve the Disability Policy for implementation at the earliest point.
- (2) Consider and approve the Neonatal Care Leave Policy for immediate implementation.
- (3) Consider and approve the revised Dignity at Work Policy.
- (4) Consider and approve the changes to the Supporting Attendance Policy (Single Status employees only).

- (5) Consider and approve the changes to the Core Conditions of Service as outlined within this report.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(23) Build a workforce for the future capable of delivering on our priorities and shared ambition
Programme of Work	All Programmes of Work

1. Background

- 1.1 Employers must do all they reasonably can to support disabled employees, workers, and job applicants and to protect them from disability discrimination and while all of the Council's current employment policies take cognisance of our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, navigating around them can be difficult. Accordingly, the decision was taken to implement a Disability Policy to help disabled employees and applicants understand the supports available to them through our current policies by providing them with one source of information.
- 1.2 The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act came into effect on 6 April 2025 and is intended to support parents of babies who are admitted into neonatal care within 28 days of birth for a continuous period of 7 days or longer. Employees are able to take up to 12 weeks of leave in addition to their other family leave entitlements such as maternity and paternity leave. Neonatal Care Leave is a day one right, applicable to all employees of the Council.
- 1.3 A review of the Dignity at Work Policy has been undertaken as part of our ongoing commitment to review policies to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and are legislatively compliant. The review has resulted in new sections being added to the policy that allow for better management of complaints and encourages employees to address minor issues informally where appropriate.
- 1.4 Following a review of the Managing Attendance Policy for Teachers' it was agreed that the Supporting Attendance Policy (Single Status) would also be reviewed to ensure that there was an equitable, consistent, and fair approach to managing attendance throughout the Council. Minor changes have been made to the Supporting Attendance Policy for this purpose and are described later within the report.
- 1.5 A review of the Council's Core Conditions of Service has also resulted in changes to the way that non-core hours and higher duties are applied. An explanation of the changes is detailed later in the report.

2. Report

Disability Policy

- 2.1 The Council aims to create an inclusive and supportive working environment where all employees with a disability or long-term health condition feel valued and can reach their full potential. The Disability Policy provides for a proactive approach to supporting

employees and encouraging an accessible and inclusive environment in which they can thrive.

- 2.1.1 Whilst most areas of the policy are already known and practiced by managers and employees across the Council, there are new areas that have been introduced including the 'Employee Adjustment Passport'.
- 2.1.2 The 'Employee Adjustment Passport' will replace the reasonable adjustments protocol by providing a much more effective way of assessing a disabled employee's needs throughout their employment. The Passport has been designed to facilitate discussions that will ensure employees are empowered to ask for reasonable adjustments that are suitable and applicable and are reviewed on a regular basis. The Passport will follow employees on their career journey within the Council and will be reviewed and adapted as necessary to ensure optimum opportunities in employment and to eradicate any form of disadvantage.
- 2.1.3 The Policy also covers external supports that can be provided to employees including 'Access to Work' which is a government funded scheme that can help individuals get or stay in work if they have a physical or mental health condition or disability.
- 2.1.4 Finally, the Policy provides a general overview of all aspects of employment including recruitment, retention, and absence but other policies and procedures will supplement as necessary including Special Leave and Supporting Attendance.

Neonatal Care Leave Policy

- 2.2 Neonatal Care Leave is a new statutory right giving eligible employees up to 12 weeks of paid leave if their baby requires neonatal care within the first 28 days after birth. The leave is in addition to existing entitlements such as maternity, paternity, adoption, and shared parental leave. The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 aims to alleviate the financial burden and work-related stress for parents with newborns in specialised medical care.
 - 2.2.1 Neonatal leave is available to all employees from the first day of their employment, regardless of their length of service and applies to biological parents, adoptive parents, intended parents through surrogacy, partners of the mother and those responsible for the child's upbringing.
 - 2.2.2 Employees can take up to 12 weeks of leave in full-week blocks, in addition to their existing statutory leave rights but must be taken within 68 weeks of the date of birth.
 - 2.2.3 Employees who have at least 26 weeks of continuous service by the 15th week before the baby's due date, will also be entitled to Neonatal Statutory Pay, the payment for which mirrors other statutory entitlements such as maternity leave.
 - 2.2.4 The policy provides further details on the actual implementation of Neonatal Care Leave and Pay and advises employees how they can apply for it. The policy also refers to a number of internal and external supports that might be of benefit to employees who have a child in neonatal care.

- 2.2.5 In conclusion, the policy aims to address our statutory obligations whilst recognising and dealing with the difficult circumstances that employees face when their baby requires neonatal care. Due to employees' statutory rights to this leave if their baby is born on or after 6 April 2025, this policy is already in operation within the Council and our Special Leave and Maternity Leave policies have been updated to guide employees to the policy.

Dignity at Work Policy

- 2.3 The Council is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment that nurtures a culture in which we treat one another with courtesy and professionalism, even while robustly challenging each other's views and opinions. The Dignity at Work Policy aims to prevent bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation in the workplace and resolve incidents of such inappropriate behaviour if they occur.
- 2.3.1 A review of the Dignity at Work Policy was undertaken to ensure it remained fit for purpose and provided a robust and effective framework for addressing both informal and formal complaints of inappropriate behaviours. A number of key additions and changes have been made to the policy as outlined below.
- 2.3.2 All individuals, regardless of position or status have a responsibility to promote a healthy and positive working environment that is free from inappropriate behaviours, as such roles and responsibilities have been updated to ensure everyone understands their responsibilities in relation to Dignity at Work.
- 2.3.3 A number of sources of support is available to individuals who are involved in a Dignity at Work process, and these have been clearly detailed within the policy, with a description as to what support each source can offer. A campaign was also recently undertaken to new Dignity at Work Support Officers as the numbers had significantly reduced. Extensive training has been provided, and a peer-to-peer support network will also be provided for the support officers.
- 2.3.4 To ensure that Dignity at Work complaints are addressed fairly and effectively a number of changes have been made to both the informal and formal process including the introduction of a self-reflection tool that individuals are encouraged to use before submitting a complaint, an enhanced informal process that strongly encourages individuals to take an informal approach to resolve workplace issues, as this is shown to be the most effective way of resolving conflict and a new preliminary review process for formal complaints to ensure that the nature of the complaint falls within the scope of the Dignity at Work Policy.
- 2.3.5 Changes have also been made to which officers address formal complaints, timescales for investigations, general terminology, and related policies/legislation. The policy will be supported by a new toolkit which is currently under development and training for managers will also be made available.

Supporting Attendance Policy

- 2.4 Following the review of the Supporting Attendance Policy (Single Status), it was agreed with the trade unions that if following a review of the Managing Attendance Policy for Teachers and Associated Professionals, there were more favourable terms agreed,

then the Supporting Attendance Policy would be amended to ensure fairness, equity and consistency of application.

- 2.4.1 Accordingly, there are three main areas within the current Supporting Attendance Policy that require to be adjusted to reflect the agreed terms within the Managing Attendance for Teachers and Associated Professionals, these being Absence Triggers, Stages for Long term absence and Discretion.
- 2.4.2 Currently the triggers for a formal meeting within the Supporting Attendance Policy are 3 absences in a 12-month rolling period, 8 days cumulative in a 12-month rolling period or 2 weeks continuous. The proposal is to change the first trigger to 3 absences in a 6-month rolling period.
- 2.4.3 The timescales for holding stage meetings during long-term absences are clearly defined within both policies, however following the agreed Managing Attendance for Teachers and Associated Professionals, these timescales will be expanded for single status employees as detailed below:

Current	Proposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stage 1 - on reaching 8 weeks of a continuous absence.• Stage 2 - on reaching 13 weeks of a continuous absence.• Stage 3 – Capability Meeting - on reaching between 24 and 36 weeks of a continuous absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stage 1 - on reaching 8 to 12 weeks of a continuous absence.• Stage 2 - on reaching 17 to 25 weeks of a continuous absence.• Stage 3 – Capability Meeting - on reaching between 36 to 52 weeks of a continuous absence

- 2.4.4 In the current Supporting Attendance Policy, discretion to remain on a level can only be considered at Stage 2 onwards and can only be applied once during the employee's journey through the formal process. Discretion will now be considered at any stage and will normally only be applied once, however there is recognition that it may be appropriate in certain circumstances to apply more than once.
- 2.4.5 It is not anticipated that the above changes to the Supporting Attendance Policy will have any detrimental impact on the current management of absence but will ensure that all Council employee's absences are being managed and addressed fairly.
- 2.4.6 The alignment of these policies will also hopefully assist in reducing our absence levels across the Council and whilst the National Benchmarking Overview Report for 23/24 reports that nationally 'absence levels for all staff, excluding teachers, have continued a long-term upward trend, reaching an all-time high of 13.9 days in 2023/24, which is a 4.6% increase from 2022/23', the Council's year end absence figure for this year is anticipated to be well below this figure at around 10.55 FTE days lost per employee.

Core Conditions of Service

- 2.5 Following a review of the core conditions of service and their application, it has been determined that two areas require to be updated to better reflect the flexibility that is required within our services and to assist in the upskilling and provision of development opportunities for our employees.

- 2.5.1 At the current time, employees who work outwith the core hours of 7 am to 8 pm Monday to Friday, have to work 5 hours or more before they receive a 15% enhancement on their hourly rate for all hours worked outwith the core hours which prevents some employees working outwith core hours in our frontline services. In addition, due to nature of this payment, manual calculations have to be undertaken by the Employee Service Centre which is often time consuming and administratively onerous. To encourage more flexibility and reduce unnecessary administration, it is proposed to remove the 5 hours criteria and all hours worked outwith the core hours will attract a 15% enhancement on the hourly rate. This will not apply to those who work exclusively on a Saturday or Sunday. The proposal is estimated to cost the Council less than £500k per annum to implement.
- 2.5.2 Services often ask employees to act up to a vacant post or to undertake higher duties and at the current time the core conditions advise that employees in receipt of a salary above NLC07 have to undertake higher duties or acting up for four weeks before they can be paid, whereas those below NLC07 are paid from the commencement of the arrangement. To address this anomaly, it is proposed to remove this differential and all employees who are acting up or undertaking higher duties will receive the appropriate payment from the onset.
- 2.5.3 In addition to the above and to ensure that managers and employees understand when it is appropriate to use acting up or higher duties arrangements, the attached guidance has been developed setting out clear guidelines for use and application.

Next Steps

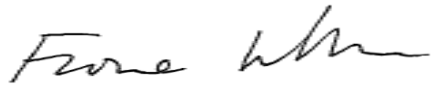
- 2.6 Following approval, the necessary steps will be taken to inform the workforce of the policies and changes as detailed within this report.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 North Lanarkshire Council is seen as an inclusive, forward-thinking organisation that understands the importance of ensuring everyone has the ability to reach their full potential and have access to the appropriate support and community networks to facilitate this.
- 3.2 The Council remains an employer of choice, demonstrating empathy towards employees who find themselves in difficult personal circumstances by offering them a level of support and reassurance at some of the toughest times of their life.
- 3.3 Employees are confident in addressing Dignity at Work complaints with each other or their managers, the number of complaints and the timescales for addressing such matters are reduced.
- 3.4 Absences are managed fairly, equitably, and consistently across all sectors of the Council ensuring that employees are both supported and provided with the help they need to expedite an early return to work or prevent a protracted period of absence.
- 3.5 As an organisation, our terms and conditions allow for the flexibility that is necessary to provide effective and efficient services whilst ensuring our employees are afforded opportunities to grow and develop to support both their personal and organisational ambitions.
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4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1 - Disability Policy
- 4.2 Appendix 2 - Neonatal Care Leave Policy
- 4.3 Appendix 3 - Dignity at Work Policy
- 4.4 Appendix 4 - Acting up and Higher Duties Guidance



Fiona Whittaker
Chief Officer (People Resources)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? There will be some costs associated with changes to non-core hours wording however these have been fully discussed and agreed with colleagues in Finance and Technology and will be provided for within the MTFP.
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? All new policies have been agreed by the trade unions as have amendments to existing policies. The new policies will add to our existing suite of supportive policies for employees whilst ensuring compliance with statutory and equality legislation. Changes to core conditions are minimal and will have little impact on employees but will provide managers with more flexibility around employment.
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.5	<p>Data protection impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Disability Policy

Version **1.0**, 14/03/2025

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Document control

Title	Disability Policy		
Governance group	Policy and Strategy Committee		
Owner	Fiona Whittaker, Chief Officer People Resources	Contact	whittakerf@northlan.gov.uk
Author	Lindsay Millar, Employment and Policy Officer	Contact	millarl@northlan.gov.uk

Revision history

Version	Originator	Review start date	Revision description and record of change
1	Lindsay Millar	March 2025	First Version

Document approvals

Version	Governance group	Date approved	Date approval to be requested (if document still in draft)
1	Finance and Resources		May 2025

Consultation record (for most recent update)

Consultation status	Stakeholders consulted		
Stakeholders consulted and dates	People Resources Team		
	Single Status Trade Unions		
	Teaching Trade Unions		

Strategic alignment

Plan for North Lanarkshire

Improving the Council's Resource Base – A Workforce Strategy that is built around the needs of the Council (as a single resource base) to deliver the priority outcomes, ensuring future workforce requirements, new skills and innovative approaches, and succession planning are recognised.

Next review date

Review Date	This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and compliant with all relevant employment legislation.
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Appendix 2	Employee Adjustment Passport
Appendix 3	Reasonable Adjustment Process (including Assisted Technology)
Appendix 4	Four Stages of Discussing a Disability with Disabled Employees
Appendix 5	List of Supports

A note about plain English

This document follows [plain English guidance](#), in line with our corporate commitment to clear communications. In particular, it uses the following terms.

- 'We', 'us' and 'our' when referring to the Council (as an organisation), our collective responsibilities (as authorised users of Council IT assets), and when discussing specific activities.
- 'You' and 'your' when referring to the individual responsibilities and actions of authorised users of Council IT assets.

1. Introduction

The Council is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture in which equality and diversity is valued and disabled employees and applicants are treated fairly as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

The Council is a Disability Confident Leader. Membership of the Disability Confident Scheme is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions and recognises our commitment to successfully employing and retaining disabled people and those with health conditions.

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of disability. The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

The legal definition and further explanation of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is provided at Appendix 1.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees and workers and job applicants to the Council. The Equality Act 2010 states that employers must also make reasonable adjustments for contractors and self-employed people hired to personally do the work.

3. Legislation and Associated Policies

The Equality Act 2010 is the principal piece of legislation that supports this policy.

This Policy and Procedure should also be read and applied in conjunction with other Council policies/frameworks such as Supporting Attendance, Managing Absence (Teachers), Dignity at Work, Grievance, Smarter Working, Special Leave, Mental Health & Wellbeing, Equality and Diversity in Employment and Workforce Change.

4. Aims

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Council recruits and retains talent, skills and experience and ensures disabled employees, can fulfil their employment potential.

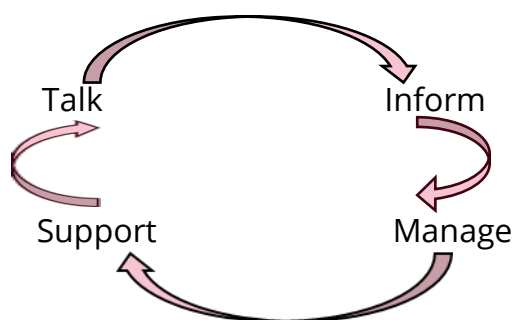
The Council aims to provide all future and current employees with equality in access to the full range of recruitment, career development, promotion, training and other employment opportunities.

The Council will ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on grounds of disability and that access to employment and promotion in the Council is based on merit.

The Council has adopted the "social model of disability" to inform our workforce to promote equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination against disabled people. This describes disability not as a medical issue, but one where disabled people face daily barriers in society such as attitudinal, environmental, institutional, information and communication barriers.

5. Supporting disabled employees

Managers should do all that they can to support disabled employees and should break down any stigma associated with discussing disability.



	Managers	Employees
Talk	Managers will have confidential discussions with their employees about their needs	Employees will have open and honest discussions with their manager about their needs
Inform	Managers will ensure that employees are aware of all the supports available to them	Employees will provide relevant information to their manager to mutually agree the best supports to remove or reduce any disadvantage at work
Manage	Managers will ensure that the correct supports are in place for their employees and will review the effectiveness	Employees will advise their manager of any changes to their condition/circumstances in order to review the effectiveness of adjustments.
Support	Managers should help create a culture where disabled employees are valued	Employees should be provided with support if needed to help aid discussion about barriers in employment for disabled people.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1. Our Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for equality and diversity, and the full implementation and monitoring of this policy rests with the Council.

Chief Officers have a specific responsibility for implementing and monitoring equal opportunities within their own service.

The Chief Officer (People Resources) will, in addition, have responsibility for:

- a) ensuring the Disability Policy is implemented and monitored
- b) co-ordinating, controlling and standardising policies, procedures and practices
- c) the provision of necessary training and guidance for employees and elected members to achieve equality of opportunity in all areas of employment throughout the Council

We make the following commitments to ensure effectiveness of the policy:

- a) to consult, where appropriate, with relevant trade unions and other appropriate employee representative groups on the content, implementation and monitoring of the policy
- b) to ensure the policy is made known to all employees and job applicants and that all employees are made aware of their responsibilities under the policy
- c) to provide training and guidance for employees as appropriate
- d) to provide training and guidance for managers as appropriate
- e) to examine and regularly review employment procedures and practices with a view to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination
- f) to regularly monitor policy effectiveness and identify possible areas for action

6.2. Employee Responsibilities

Although the primary responsibility for ensuring equality of opportunity in employment rests with the Council as an employer, the policy can only be truly effective if it has the commitment of all employees.

Individual employees at all levels have responsibility under both legislation and the policy for assisting in the promotion of equality and the prevention of discrimination. In particular, individual employees should:

- a) inform their line manager about their disability in order for the necessary support to be put in place

- b) be responsible for promoting equality, valuing diversity and contributing to an inclusive culture
- c) have open conversations with their manager about their disability and fully engage with the process including completing the Employee Adjustment Passport in conjunction with their manager, attending appointments with occupational health and considering other interventions/support measures to help
- d) take personal responsibility and appropriate measures to manage their own health and wellbeing, including seeking medical advice, and bring any health or work-related issues to the attention of their manager at the earliest opportunity
- e) apply to Access to Work for financial assistance with the costs of equipment or additional support where this is required

6.3. Managers Responsibilities

All managers have responsibility to assist in the promotion of equality and the prevention of discrimination and have responsibility for ensuring the full implementation of the policy.

In particular managers have the following responsibilities:

- a) handle personal information sensitively and with discretion
- b) create opportunities for employees to declare a disability and encourage them to do so
- c) receive concerns from employees in the event they feel they are not being treated fairly and discuss with the Employment and Policy Team
- d) consult with employees and the Employment and Policy Team if required to decide what adjustments can reasonably be made, ensuring these are put in place and completed on the Employee Adjustment Passport
- e) understand their responsibilities in line with this policy
- f) treat all employees equally and do not discriminate against disabled employees
- g) be responsible for promoting equality, valuing diversity and contributing to an inclusive culture
- h) involve occupational health as appropriate

6.4. Employment and Policy Team Responsibilities

The Employment and Policy Team have the following responsibilities

- a) facilitate dialogue between the line manager and disabled employees, if required
- b) advise the line manager about the legal obligations as an employer
- c) advise the line manager about sources of specialist advice
- d) advise the line manager about the process of agreeing changes to a current or future employee's role as a reasonable adjustment

7. Employee Adjustment Passport

The Employee Adjustment Passport is a document that facilitates discussion between managers and employees to agree reasonable adjustments. This has replaced the Reasonable Adjustment Protocol. Reasonable adjustments are supports that enable individuals to enter, and remain, in employment.

New employees to the Council who have a disability may be asked to support the completion of the passport prior to commencing employment to ensure that all reasonable adjustments are in place for the start of their employment.

The Employee Adjustment Passport is mutually agreed between the employee and the manager. The Employee Adjustment Passport travels with an employee throughout the employment cycle and should be reviewed when there are any changes to their current role or if an employee transfers to another role. When an Employee Adjustment Passport is updated, the manager must record the details on ITrent, and the updated version placed in the employee's personnel file.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that the agreements remain relevant, given that symptoms of disabilities can change/evolve over time and the effectiveness of adjustments may change. Employees who have existing adjustments in place that have not been formalised using the protocol, should contact their line manager and complete the Employee Adjustment Passport. Any changes to an Employee Adjustment Passport must be agreed between the employee and line manager.

8. Recruitment and Selection

As part of the Disability Confident Leader status the Council will continually take action to improve how we recruit, retain and develop disabled employees. The Council encourages applications from disabled candidates and will make reasonable adjustments where possible at all stages of the recruitment process.

The Council has policies in place including, the Workforce Change Policy, and the Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy which detail the supports available when recruiting disabled people. The Council will continue to review and develop recruitment and promotion procedures in accordance with legislation.

All advertisements, job descriptions, person specifications etc. will comply with the terms of this policy and will be worded and displayed in ways designed to encourage applications from all suitable potential applicants. To this end, clear job descriptions and objective person specifications (using only necessary and relevant criteria to do the job) will be used.

The Council will ensure that it is as inclusive as possible by ensuring that adverts for posts detail the benefits that are available including Hybrid and Flexible Working. Selection will be based solely on the extent to which candidates possess the essential criteria for the post. We will also ensure that employees and elected members involved in the recruitment process are given adequate and appropriate training. Candidates will only be assessed against relevant, clearly identified requirements for the job.

As part of the recruitment process the Council will make reasonable adjustments as necessary for applicants applying for posts within the Council.

8.1. Guaranteed Interview Scheme

The Council operates a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled applicants. This is a commitment to interview disabled applicants when they meet the essential criteria for the post which they have applied. Applicants will identify if they consider themselves to be disabled on their application form to allow managers to identify them. If the applicant does not demonstrate that they meet the essential criteria they will not be guaranteed an interview.

8.2. Discussing Disability with Individuals

It is not acceptable to ask any job applicant about their health or any disability, as a matter of course, until the person has been selected as the successful candidate. However, recruiting managers can ask questions to find out if any applicant needs reasonable adjustments for the recruitment process. Reasonable adjustments may include working interviews, having a support worker attend the interview, extend time given for the interview, or move to an accessible location. Individual applicants should discuss their requirements with the recruiting manager.

9. New employees

All new employees are required to complete a function-based health questionnaire that is returned to the recruiting manager and depending on the information contained within the questionnaire, a pre-employment appointment may be arranged with our Occupational Health Service, and/or the employee may be required to attend a meeting with the prospective manager along with a member of the Employment & Policy Team.

If the person is required to attend Occupational Health, they will send a report to the recruiting manager following the assessment, confirming whether the appointee is fit to undertake the role they have been offered and outline any adjustments that are required to allow them to confidently and safely carry out their duties.

The Council will consider all reasonable adjustments to facilitate employment and will discuss this with the successful candidate. Managers should make these adjustments in a timely manner to allow the appointee to start work as soon as possible and should support the new employee whilst waiting for the adjustments to be put in place. The manager should complete the Employee Adjustment Passport, and this will be recorded on ITrent. The Employee Adjustment Passport should follow the employee throughout their career with the Council and should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Assistance, such as providing specialised equipment, can be provided from the Access to Work scheme if appropriate, further information on Access to Work is detailed later in the policy.

More information on the Employee Adjustment Passport and the process for implementing reasonable adjustments is available in Appendix 2 and 3.

10. Existing members of staff

If a current employee becomes disabled or experiences a change to their pre-existing disability the Council will consider and implement reasonable adjustments to enable the employee to continue in their role. This may impact on attendance levels and in these circumstances the relevant sickness absence policies should be followed.

When an employee becomes disabled, the first step should be to meet with the employee and discuss how this impacts on their ability to carry out their role and what supports they feel are required. An occupational health referral will be made for assessment and advice on what adjustments are required. Following this, a meeting will take place to discuss the information and complete the Employee Adjustment Passport which will formally record what has been agreed and put in place. This will be recorded on ITrent. The Employee Adjustment Passport should follow the employee throughout their career with the Council and should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

In some cases, it may be that an employee is no longer able to carry out their role and a suitable alternative role should be sought. This may be recommended by occupational health, and a manager would discuss this with the employee and consider what options are available. Employees would be supported through the process set out in the Workforce Change Policy under redeployment and the manager and employee would be supported by the Employment and Policy Team.

The Council operates a Smarter Working Policy and Special Leave Policy which should be utilised when an employee is experiencing symptoms. For example, flexible start and finish times.

Further information is available in Appendix 4 which details the four stages to the process when dealing with disabled employees.

11. Retention

The Council undertakes, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that employees who are disabled or become disabled are able to remain in their role, before a consideration of other alternatives.

For employees that become disabled during the course of their employment, professional advice may be sought from a range of sources and may include the provision of equipment and adaptations.

The Council has a Disability Equality Working Group which looks at actions required for the Council in order to support disabled employees, to ensure we are getting the right people for our business and making sure we are keeping and developing our people.

The Council is also introducing a Mentoring Framework to provide opportunities to support employees. Mentoring has been proven to be a powerful development tool that enables knowledge transfer; employee engagement; retention and talent management, all of which are particularly important for the Council given its aging staff profile and requirement to strengthen our career pathways. The introduction of a formal corporate mentoring programme will ensure that mentoring is promoted across all Council services, whilst ensuring quality, consistency and effectiveness in mentoring delivery.

12. Absence from Work

The Council's relevant supporting attendance policies and procedures should be used to manage all sickness absence. Where an employee's disability results in absence from work, managers should ensure that they support the employee through the procedure. Further consideration should be given to any reasonable adjustments that would aid the employee in their attendance at work.

13. Working environment

The Council will take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment enables disabled employees to take up and retain posts for which they are suitably experienced and/or qualified.

Wherever possible disabled employees will be consulted over changes to the working environment and employment practices to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, their needs are recognised and met.

Where appropriate, advice about such changes will be sought from the line manager and professional advice from the Employment and Policy Team, Occupational Health, Occupational Safety and Wellbeing Teams.

The Council must seek to establish working conditions which encourage the full participation of disabled employees where it is reasonably practicable to do so. The Council will also do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the retention of existing disabled employees through the adjustment of work and/or working arrangements, training or other appropriate measures, where necessary.

The Council, when investing in new or refurbishing buildings will make every practical effort to anticipate for the needs of disabled employees.

14. Access to Work

There is a government scheme called Access to Work which can help individuals get or stay in work if they have a physical or mental health condition or disability. The support individuals get will depend on their needs. Through Access to Work, individuals can apply for:

- a grant to help pay for practical support with their work
- support with managing their mental health at work
- money to pay for communication support at job interviews

Access to Work can help with extra costs which would not be reasonable for an employer or prospective employer to pay.

For example, [Access to Work](#) might pay towards the cost of getting to work if the disabled person cannot use public transport, or for assistance with communication at job interviews.

15. Informing of a Disability

All employees are encouraged to make their disability known to their line manager or the Employment and Policy Team and to request adjustments to the working environment as necessary. Every effort will be made to put reasonable adjustments in place.

The Council knows the importance and benefits of having a diverse workforce. Different people bring different skills and experiences to the workplace at the same time enrich our workplaces and the work we do.

The Council gathers and analyses information about the characteristics of its employees which includes disabled or non-disabled.

This information tells us about how diverse our workforce is. It helps us understand the different needs of our employees and where there are disproportionately low numbers of people with particular characteristics compared to the local population. Most importantly it can highlight where inequalities exist, and we can then take corrective action.

All employees are encouraged to complete the sensitive information tab on mySelf where the Council gather the diversity information from. Please be assured that this information is highly confidential and is only ever used anonymously.

16. Support Mechanisms

Disability Support Officers are available to offer support to disabled employees. Their role will involve:

- helping to raise the profile of issues around disability and how to address and prevent them
- actively listening and understanding people's experiences
- learning about disability discrimination and using what they learn to influence others

The Employee Equality Forum is also another form of support for disabled employees and their role will be to:

- share experiences
- support each other
- raise issues that need addressing
- host and facilitate events for disabled employees

Appendix 5 provides a full list of supports available.

17. How to make a complaint

The Equality Act says that it would be discrimination “to treat a disabled person in a particular way which, because of his or her disability, amounts to treating him or her badly and the treatment cannot be shown to be justified”.

The Council are required to make reasonable adjustments if any ‘provision, criterion or practice’ or ‘any physical feature of premises’ places a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

Employers have a duty to take reasonable steps in order to prevent the provision, criterion or practice, or feature, having that effect.

If an employee feels they are being discriminated against because of their disability or feels that the Council have failed to make a reasonable adjustment, they can raise a grievance in the first instance to resolve their complaint.

18. Review of policy

The Council is committed to ensuring that this policy and all related procedures are effective in supporting disabled employees and implementing reasonable adjustments.

Essential to achieving this aim is adequate investment, and continuous review and evaluation which will be undertaken when necessary or as determined by a change in policy, procedure or legislation.

Appendix 1

Disability Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 outlines the following definition of disability

“You’re disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.”

The act covers disabled people and people who have had a disability in the past.

Explanations of:

1. Impairment

The definition covers physical and mental impairments. These include:

- Impairments affecting senses, such as sight and hearing
- Mental impairments including learning disabilities and mental illness (if it is recognised by a respected body of medical opinion)

The government has issued guidance, under the Act, about whether an impairment has a substantial or long-term effect. This guidance does not in itself impose legal obligations on an employer or service provider, but a tribunal or court must when considering a complaint about discrimination take into account any of the guidance which appears to be relevant.

2. Substantial

For an effect to be substantial, it must be more than minor or trivial

Examples:

The following are examples that are likely to be considered substantial:

- Inability to see moving traffic clearly enough to cross a road safely
- Inability to turn taps or knobs
- Inability to remember and relay a simple message correctly

3. Long-term

These are effects that:

- Have lasted at least 12 months; or
- Are likely to last at least 12 months, or
- Are likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected

Long-term effects include those which are likely to recur. For example, an effect will be considered to be long-term if it is likely to both to recur, and to do so at least once beyond the 12-month period following the first occurrence.

4. Day to day activities

The act does not define what is considered to be day-to-day activities, however these are likely to include normal activities carried out by most people on a regular basis, for example:

- Using everyday objects such as a keyboard
- Lifting, moving or carrying everyday objects such as a chair
- Having a conversation or using a telephone
- Getting washed and dressed
- Preparing and eating food
- Carrying out household tasks
- Walking and travelling by various forms of transport
- Taking part in social activities

People who have had a disability in the past are also protected against discrimination, harassment and victimisation. This may be particularly relevant for people with fluctuating and/or recurring impairments/health conditions.

A number of conditions may be considered to be a disability as outlined below

1. An individual is treated as disabled without having to show their condition has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in the following situations:
 - a. Where the individual has cancer, HIV infection or multiple sclerosis they are considered to have a disability from the point of diagnosis
 - b. Where a consultant ophthalmologist has certified someone as blind, severely sight-impaired or partially sighted, the Act regards them as disabled
2. Where an individual has a “progressive condition”, initially the effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities may not be sufficiently serious to amount to a substantial adverse effect. However, they are treated as disabled if their condition is likely to have a substantial adverse effect on their day-to-day in the future. This means that an individual with a progressive condition may qualify for protection as a disabled person before the adverse effects of their condition become serious. Progressive conditions increase in severity over time and, for example include dementia, muscular dystrophy and motor neurone disease.

3. Impairments can include: sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing; conditions which can range from myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), diabetes and arthritis to depression, schizophrenia, phobias, personality disorders, autism, dyslexia, learning disabilities and injury to the brain; those affecting body organs such as asthma and heart disease; musculoskeletal conditions - injury, damage and disorders which affect bones, muscles, joints ligaments, tendons and nerves; and conditions/effects produced by injury to the body.

Employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to their practices and premises to accommodate disabled people, where any arrangements or physical features of premises cause a substantial disadvantage. Examples of reasonable adjustment may include:

- Giving or arranging training
- Providing more flexible working hours or arrangements
- Assigning the person to a different workplace
- Acquiring or modifying equipment
- Making adjustments to premises
- Adjustment to work or working practices (where reasonably practicable)

The Act also introduced a new public sector equality duty (PSED), which replaces the general duties in the disability equality duty. The PSED requires the Council to show due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Time off for treatment, specialist reviews and disability related sickness absence will be taken into consideration in the application of the Councils Supporting Attendance Policy.

More detail can found in the HM Government document Equality Act 2010 Guidance.

Appendix 2



Employee Adjustment Passport

Introduction

The Council is committed to supporting all employees with a disability, long or short-term condition and/or impairment. If an employee has a temporary or permanent condition, which could affect their ability to work, their needs should be assessed to identify adjustments which could be implemented to help to support the individual at work.

Scope

The Employee Adjustment Passport provides a record of the reasonable adjustments that have been agreed between an employee and their line manager. The purpose of the Passport is to provide a framework for discussions between employees and managers to agree adjustments required, record the outcome of these discussions and to provide any new manager with details of agreed adjustments.

The passport helps to:

- Ensure relevant parties are clear about the adjustments that have been agreed, and a record is held.
- Reduce the need to reassess and renegotiate adjustments each time an employee changes jobs, is relocated or is assigned a new manager.
- Provide the employee and manager with the basis for future conversations about workplace adjustments.

What are reasonable adjustments?

Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability. For example:

- making changes to the workplace
- changing someone's working arrangements.
- finding a different way to do something.
- providing equipment, services, or support

Reasonable adjustments are specific to an individual person. They can cover any area of work. It is not enough for employers to provide disabled people with exactly the same working conditions as non-disabled people. Employers must make reasonable adjustments by law. Some disabled people might not need or want adjustments, although this might change over time.

Equality Legislation

The law (Equality Act 2010) says that employers must make reasonable adjustments for:

- employees and workers
- contractors and self-employed people hired to personally do the work.

- job applicants.

Employers must make reasonable adjustments when:

- they know, or could reasonably be expected to know, someone is disabled.
- a disabled staff member or job applicant asks for adjustments.
- someone who's disabled is having difficulty with any part of their job.
- someone's absence record, sickness record or delay in returning to work is because of, or linked to, their disability.

The employer must also:

- make reasonable adjustments for anything linked to someone's disability – for example an organisation might not allow dogs at work but make a reasonable adjustment for someone with an assistance dog.
- make sure other people do what's needed for a reasonable adjustment to work – for example if someone needs information presented in a certain format, making sure other people at work do that.

An employer could be liable under the law if they do not do these things. For example, if someone does not get the reasonable adjustments, they need at work they could make a disability discrimination claim to an employment tribunal.

What is reasonable depends on each situation. The employer must consider carefully if the adjustment:

- will remove or reduce the disadvantage – the employer should talk with the person and not make assumptions.
- is practical to make.
- is affordable; and
- could harm the health and safety of others.

The employer does not have to change the basic nature of the job. For example, if someone in a call centre asks for a job that does not involve taking calls, this might not be reasonable if there is no other job to give them.

An employer does not have to make adjustments that are unreasonable. However, they should still find other ways to support the disabled person. This could include making other adjustments that are reasonable.

The majority of adjustments will be simple and inexpensive. The list below provides some examples of adjustments, but this is not exhaustive:

- providing specialist equipment such as a keyboard or mouse
- adapting building access including modifying doorways and/or installing ramps
- adjusting working hours or patterns of work
- allowing time off for rehabilitation, assessment, or treatment
- consideration of seating arrangements
- offering training and development opportunities

When the agreement should be used

The agreement should be used when:

- an employee requests adjustments because they have a disability that affects them at work or
- when a manager recognises there is a need.

The request for adjustments may be made following medical advice from a GP, Occupational Health adviser or advice from the Employment and Policy Team when an employee is about to start working for the Council. The arrangements may be short term – e.g. in the case of a phased return to work following absence or can be a longer-term arrangement. If the arrangement is short term, this will be recorded and the arrangement will come to an end on the date specified, unless otherwise reviewed and agreed.

Employees may have disclosed their disability previously or this may become known because of a recent absence, as part of a return to work or attendance review discussion. There may be an existing arrangement, not formally recorded and this agreement provides an opportunity to formally record adjustments.

Managers should also consider that new employees may require a reasonable adjustment at work, as advised by Occupational Health as part of the Council's pre-employment health screening process and should use the agreement to record this. Managers should seek advice from the Council's Employment and Policy Team as required.

The passport is used to record what has been agreed, an implementation date and is signed by both parties. An electronic signature will be accepted. If the employee's line manager changes, they do not have to explain their requirements each time and the passport should follow the employee throughout their career with the Council and should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Advice and Support

Advice and guidance to support the Employee Adjustment Passport can be sought from Occupational Health and the Employment and Policy Team. There should be an initial meeting between the employee and the manager to discuss and agree required adjustments. The attached form is used as a framework for the discussion. Primarily the discussion takes place between the employee and their current line manager. If necessary, an Employment and Policy Adviser can attend the initial meeting to provide advice and support the process. If they so wish, employees may be supported at any meetings by a friend, colleague, family member or other.

Meeting to discuss Employee Adjustment Passport

At the meeting full consideration will be given to the adjustments requested by the employee, considering the advice provided by medical professionals, Employment and Policy Advisers and the exigencies of the service. This will include exploration of all alternative options timescales: for adjustments to be put in place; length of time that tailored adjustments will be required; and for review, etc.

If a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is required for the employee advice should be sought from the Safety and Wellbeing Team.

Recording the Outcome

It may not be necessary to complete all parts of the form and therefore only the relevant sections should be completed. For example, the section on emergency contacts is only relevant to employees who know that the nature of their condition may require emergency treatment or advice. Once the adjustments have been agreed they should be recorded on the form and signed by the manager and the employee. The manager should record the details of the adjustments on ITrent. The manager should then send a copy of the completed form to the Employment and Policy Team. The employee should retain a copy for their own records and ensure it is made available to any new manager or if they change job.

What happens if there is a change in circumstances?

It is the employee's responsibility to discuss and agree with their manager any change to their personal circumstances such as a change in their condition. If the employee changes job and/or line manager they should make their new line manager aware of the adjustments in place, as detailed on the form. A formal meeting is only required if there is a need to change the adjustments in place. Any new adjustments should be recorded on a separate form and processed as stated previously.

If there is a service need to change the employee's duties/ tasks, then a review of the adjustments will be necessary before any new duties/ tasks are implemented.

A change in line management does not require the existing adjustments to be renegotiated as they have previously been agreed.

What happens if you can't come to an agreement?

If an employee and their manager cannot agree the adjustments to be put in place, then either should discuss this with the Employment and Policy Team in the first instance.

Sources of further information and support

Further information and advice relating to reasonable adjustments is available from a number of sources including:

[Employment and Policy Team](#)

[Safety and Wellbeing Team](#)

[Equality Team](#)

Funding and Procuring Adjustments

It is the employers' responsibility to fund reasonable adjustments and most adjustments for employees cost nothing or very little. However, some disabled employees will require practical support with work, for instance: specialist equipment and assistive software; support workers, like a BSL interpreter, a job coach, or a travel buddy; costs of travelling to work, if they cannot use public transport; adaptations to a vehicle so they can get to work; or physical changes to the workplace.

[Access to Work](#) can provide grants to disabled employees to help with practical support at work; mental health support; and communication support at interviews.

If it has been identified that the employee needs specific assistive technology or telephonic equipment, the manager should contact IT who will undertake an assessment and arrange for the appropriate assistive technology to be put in place.

Please see the attached step by step process for dealing with reasonable adjustments.

Training for managers on disability equality and reasonable adjustments is also available by contacting the Talent and Organisation Development Team tod@northlan.gov.uk.

Employee Adjustment Passport

Employee Name		Employee Number	
Manager Name / Position			
Date of Request		Date of Agreement	
Date adjustment implemented		Date of first Review	

With the aim of supporting you, this agreement may be reviewed and amended as necessary, but at the very least once a year or as follows;

- At any regular one-to-one meeting / supervision.
- At a return to work or attendance review meeting, following a period of sickness absence.
- At six monthly and/or annual PRD conversations.
- Before a change of job or duties or introduction of new technology or ways of working.
- Before or after any change in circumstances for either party.
- On request

This agreement may be put in place before an employee commences employment with the Council.

<p>Q1 Please tell us about your disability or condition that affects your daily life</p>
<p>When completing this section please think about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you communicate and interact with people • how you plan and organise tasks • how you deal with sensory issues such as sight or hearing loss • how you get around • how you deal with unexpected change • how you access support services

Q2 Do you need support to get to work? This could include help when using public transport, a taxi, adaptations to a vehicle or a travel buddy

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' please provide details?

Q3 Do you need support to access work premises? This could include lifts, ramps for a wheelchair, widened doors, reserved parking or clear signage

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' please provide details?

Q4 Does your condition vary depending on the day, time of day or the environment or situation you are in

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' please provide information on how often this happens and what extra help would you need when things are most difficult

Q5 Do you need support communicating and interacting with other people?

This could include:

- adjusted interview process to take into account differences in communication styles, for example additional processing time, prompting to give more or less information
- a British Sign Language interpreter or video relay support service support or lip speakers
- a notetaker.

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' please provide details?

Q6 Do you require any specialist IT programmes?

This could include programmes like: • Jaws • Dragon • ZoomText • Read and Write Gold • document reading equipment

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' what have you used?

Supplementary Questions

Would you need training to use any specialist IT programmes?

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' which ones?

Q7 Do you require any specialist equipment?

This could include: office equipment like a mouse, keyboards, chairs and desk including a fixed desk • a braille reader • a handheld magnifier • hearing aids • a wheelchair • noise cancelling headphones.

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' please provide details?

Q8 Do you need any changes to the location that you would work in?

This could include adjustable lighting or quiet spaces

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' please provide details?

Q9 Do you need someone with you at work to support you?

This could include a support worker or job coach to support you with workplace coping strategies, such as understanding expectations, following instructions, extra processing time, explaining unwritten rules or supporting your relationship with your manager.

☐ No ☐ Yes If 'Yes' please provide details?

Other Relevant Information

Please provide any other information that is relevant to your disability and your employment with the Council

In order to support me, my colleagues should be made aware of the following details about my disability

Is a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) required?
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If 'yes' the line manager must carry this out – guidance can be sought from the Safety & Wellbeing Team

What adjustments have been agreed		
The following reasonable adjustments have been agreed	Date implemented	Date ended (if appropriate)

I will let my line manager know if there are changes to my condition which have an effect on my work and/or if the agreed adjustments are not working. We will then meet to discuss any further reasonable adjustments or changes that could be made

Employee Signature		Date	
Manager Signature		Date	

A copy of the Employee Adjustment Passport will be recorded on ITrent and will follow the employee through their employment cycle

Appendix 3

Reasonable Adjustments Process (including Assisted Technology)

What are Reasonable Adjustments?

Reasonable Adjustments at work apply to all workers, including trainees, apprentices and contract workers. Under the Equality Act 2010, there is a legal duty on employers to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. As part of the act, employers are required to ensure that employees with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions are not substantially disadvantaged when applying for or doing their jobs. Disabled workers, as far as reasonable, must have the same access to everything involved from applying for a job to doing their job as a non-disabled person. The act advises that any proposed adjustment must be effective, practical and significant, however it is important to recognise that one size does not fit all, and individual circumstances must be considered when looking at adjustments.

Examples of Reasonable Adjustments:

- Acquiring or modifying equipment
- Modifying instructions or reference manuals
- Modifying the technology an employee uses to undertake their duties.
- Providing a reader or interpreter
- Adjusting working area
- Altering working hours and pattern
- Adjusting premises in which the person works

It is recognised that some adjustments can be expensive, however this is not a reason not to make adjustments for individual employees. If you are concerned about proposed/required adjustments, please talk to a member of the Employment and Policy Team for further advice and support. The email address for the Team is EmploymentPolicyTeam@northlan.gov.uk.

Who pays for Reasonable Adjustments?

The employer is responsible for paying for any reasonable adjustments and therefore the cost of equipment will come out of service budgets. Access to Work can provide grants to disabled employees to help with practical support at work; mental health support; and communication support at interviews.

Who decides what is Reasonable?

Legal precedence does exist to provide an indication of what is considered reasonable, but it varies from person to person and organisation to organisation, however most reasonable adjustments can be agreed through communication and discussion with the employee. If you are unsure of what is a reasonable adjustment contact your Employment and Policy Adviser for support.

1. Process of Reasonable Adjustments for New Employees to the Council

Step 1:

When a candidate for a post has been advised that they have been successful for the job, the manager should review the Function Based Health Questionnaire that has been completed by the candidate. If the employee has detailed any disabilities, physical or mental health conditions, they should contact the employee to ask if any adjustments are required to allow them to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the post and/or access their work location. (If the conditions listed are of concern, the manager should arrange for a pre-employment medical assessment to take place after discussing the matter with a member of the Employment and Policy Team).

Step 2:

If the new employee advises that they need any form of adjustment to their working environment, equipment or duties, the manager must complete an Employee Adjustment Passport form either over the phone, teams or in person.

Step 3:

If you can, arrange a DSE Assessment and Workstation Assessment before the employee commences but it must be completed before or after they start. The employee should be able to complete this themselves.

However, where the employee's medical condition or disabilities are complex, the manager should enlist the support of the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team to undertake the assessments.

Step 4:

If it is identified that the employee requires specific equipment such as a specific mouse, laptop riser or anything small for their workstation, the manager should arrange for these to be ordered as part of the normal stationary/office equipment ordering process. This should, where possible, be done in advance of the employee commencing employment with the Council.

Step 5:

Where it has been identified that the employee requires a specific desk or chair or other piece of large office equipment, specialist support should be sought by the manager from one of the following organisations:

- Hetley's Ltd, 5 Mid Road,
Blairlinn Industrial Estate, Cumbernauld G67 2TT
Contact David Devoy, 07725 846451, [01236 729524](tel:01236729524)
www.hetleys.com
- Posturite Ltd
Contact Scott Bottomer, 07584 488899,
ScottBottomer@posturite.co.uk

The manager should contact the company who will arrange an individual assessment of the employee's needs and advise of the equipment required. It should be noted that these organisations tend to offer the most expensive option first and therefore managers are encouraged to question if cheaper alternatives are available. Equipment should be ordered from the organisation as necessary, where possible, in time for the employee commencing in their post.

Step 6:

If it has been identified that the employee needs specific assistive technology or telephonic equipment, the manager should contact IT who will undertake an assessment and arrange for the appropriate assistive technology to be put in place.

Step 7:

Where it is identified that the employee requires support to travel to and from work, and/or a significant number of adjustments are required, the manager should ask the employee to contact Access to Work. An Access to Work grant is money for practical support to help someone do their job. It is for people with a disability, health or mental health condition. The money provided can support things such as:

- an expert assessment
- specialist equipment
- travel when public transport cannot be used.
- a support worker (only if assessed by Access to Work as being required)

How much an individual gets will depend on their circumstances, their allowances and the size of the employer. More information can be accessed [here](#).

Step 8:

The Employee Adjustment Passport should be fully completed by the manager and recorded on ITrent. The Employee Adjustment Passport should follow the employee throughout their career with the Council and should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Step 9:

If the employee leaves the employment of the Council the manager must ensure that all equipment is returned to the Council.

2. Process of Reasonable Adjustments for Existing Employees of the Council**Step 1:**

Where an existing employee of the Council advises their manager that they need reasonable adjustments applied to their work or working environment, they should be sent to Occupational Health for assessment and advice on what adjustments are required. (An occupational health assessment may not be necessary for cases of short-term injury/incapacity such as a broken wrist or leg as adjustments will be easily identified and put in place without the requirement for medical advice.)

Step 2:

If occupational health/employee advises that they need any form of adjustment to their working environment, equipment or duties, the manager must complete the Employee Adjustment Passport form either over the phone, on teams or in person with the employee.

Step 3:

It is advisable to request that a further DSE Assessment and Workstation Assessment is undertaken with the support of the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team to ensure that any existing equipment remains suitable or to identify alternatives.

Step 4:

If it is identified that the employee requires specific equipment such as a specific mouse, laptop riser or anything small for their workstation, the manager should arrange for these to be ordered as part of the normal stationary/office equipment ordering process.

Step 5:

Where it has been identified that the employee requires a specific desk or chair or other piece of large office equipment, specialist support should be sought by the manager from one of the following organisations:

- Hetley's Ltd, 5 Mid Road,
Blairlinn Industrial Estate, Cumbernauld G67 2TT
Contact David Devoy, 07725 846451, [01236 729524](tel:01236729524)
www.hetleys.com
- Posturite Ltd
Contact Scott Bottomer, 07584 488899,
ScottBottomer@posturite.co.uk

The manager should contact the company who will arrange an individual assessment of the employee's needs and advise of the equipment required. It should be noted that these organisations tend to offer the most expensive option first and therefore managers are encouraged to question if cheaper alternatives are available. Equipment should be ordered from the organisation as necessary, where possible, in time for the employee commencing in their post.

Step 6:

If it has been identified that the employee needs specific assistive technology or telephonic equipment, the manager should contact IT who will undertake an assessment and arrange for the appropriate assistive technology to be put in place.

Step 7:

Where it is identified that the employee requires support to travel to and from work, and/or a significant number of adjustments are required, the manager should ask the employee to contact Access to Work. An Access to Work grant is money for practical support to help someone do their job. It is for people with a disability, health or mental health condition. The money provided can support things such as:

- an expert assessment
- specialist equipment
- travel when public transport cannot be used.
- a support worker (only if assessed by Access to Work as being required)

How much an individual gets will depend on their circumstances, their allowances and the size of the employer. More information can be accessed [here](#).

Step 8:

The Employee Adjustment Passport should be fully completed by the manager and recorded on ITrent. The Employee Adjustment Passport should follow the employee throughout their career with the Council and should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Step 9:

If the employee leaves the employment of the Council the manager must ensure that all equipment is returned to the Council.

Appendix 4

Four stages of the process of Discussing a Disability with Disabled Employees

Stage 1 – initial dialogue

The initial step is for the employee to talk to their line manager about their disability and to record the nature of their disability on Myself. (Employees should note that changing their disability status on Myself is confidential and will not alert your manager that this has been changed). If the line manager is aware of the disability and/or is seeing signs that a disability has an impact upon the employee's ability to carry out their duties, they should initiate discussion with them. Direct communication is required with the line manager to start the process of identifying support needs.

The line manager should consult with the Employment and Policy Team if they require assistance during this process. If for any reason the employee does not feel able to have the initial conversation with their line manager they should speak to the Employment and Policy Adviser who will seek to facilitate a three-way dialogue involving themselves, the employee and line manager.

Following this it may be necessary to make a referral to occupational health for advice on the reasonable adjustments.

If any potential or actual health and safety issues, for example, fire safety and the need for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) are identified these need to be brought to attention of the Occupational Safety and Wellbeing Team.

Stage 2 – assessment of disability

It is important that the aspects of the disability are assessed before seeking to identify the most appropriate course of action:

- The nature and current level of severity of the disability
- The impact of the disability upon the employee's work
- The impact of work upon the health of the employee

In order to obtain an assessment, in most cases a referral should be made to occupational health who will make the assessment. They will often obtain information from those providing medical care to the employee.

Stage 3 – assessment of impact and needs

Once the nature and an understanding of the current impact on work of the disability is established in discussion with the employee, reasonable adjustments may then be considered to enable the employee to undertake their role.

Employees should also be made aware of the [Access to Work](#) scheme who can assist in supporting the reasonable adjustments.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to decide what adjustments can reasonably be made in the specific context in which the employee is working.

Stage 4 – action

Following assessment one or more of a number of courses of action may be required

- Changes to the job role to role
- Provision of equipment and auxiliary aids
- Making changes to the workplace
- Redeployment options
- Ill health retirement only where appropriate and necessary to consider

Reasonable Adjustments To Role

In some cases, it may be that the employee is unable to undertake a limited number of duties associated with their role. Where the changes are minor and do not substantially affect the role, it may be possible to redistribute work within the section so that they can continue in their role. However, where adjustments to the role are significant, discussion regarding the impact of these adjustments needs to take place.

The Employment and Policy Team should be involved in discussions with the line manager prior to any role adjustment(s) being agreed. This is to ensure that what is agreed is appropriate for the employee and any colleagues whose duties may be affected by any proposed changes. The employee and their line manager should discuss on an on-going basis that the adjustments continue to be effective.

Provision Of Equipment and Auxiliary Aids Identified Through Assessment

This might range from a specialist chair for someone experiencing back, neck or shoulder pain, to voice activated software for someone diagnosed as dyslexic through to a suite of equipment for someone with a serious visual impairment.

Provision Of Physical Adjustments To Council buildings

In consultation with the Health and Wellbeing Team physical adjustments to Council buildings as a reasonable adjustment will be given due consideration.

Redeployment Options

Where it is concluded that the nature and impact of the disability means it is not possible to make adjustments for the employee to safely continue in their current role the Council has an obligation to explore whether there are vacancies in roles that the employee could undertake. The redeployment procedure should be followed.

Appendix 5

List of Supports

Name	Contact Details	Service Provided
Employment and Policy Team	employmentpolicyTeam@northlan.gov.uk	Advice and guidance on Council's policies and procedures
Employee Assistance Programme	https://workwellnl.co.uk/think-well/employee-assistance-programme/ Free 24-hour phone number 0800 111 6387.	The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which is provided by Vita Health Group, is available to help make life easier, whether the issue is personal or work-related.
Employee Equality Forum	employeeequalityforum@northlan.gov.uk	Employee Equality Forum will support disabled employees via sharing experiences, a support for each other and raise issues that need addressing
Disability Support Officer	Contact Employment and Policy Team for further information	The role of the Disability Support Officers will involve helping to raise the profile of issues around disability, listen and try to understand people's experiences, learn about disability discrimination and use what they learn to influence others.
Occupational Health online	The web address is www.my-eap.com organisation access code is NLCWELL .	The online wellbeing hub my-EAP has self-

wellbeing hub my-EAP		help support, articles, videos, podcasts and health assessments on a range of issues such as health and wellbeing, emotional/personal, homelife, work/career, legal and money worries.
Tackling poverty Team	TPTeam@northlan.gov.uk 01698 332551	Financial support
Access to work	https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work	Access to Work can help you get or stay in work if you have a physical or mental health condition or disability

Neonatal Care Leave Policy

Version **1.0**, 7/03/2025

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Document control

Title	Neonatal Care Leave Policy		
Governance group	Policy and Strategy Committee		
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Revision history

Version	Originator	Review start date	Revision description and record of change
1	Lindsay Millar		

Document approvals

Version	Governance group	Date approved	Date approval to be requested (if document still in draft)
1	Finance and Resources		May 2025

Consultation record (for most recent update)

Consultation status	Stakeholders consulted		
Stakeholders consulted and dates	People Resources Team		
	Single Status Trade Unions		
	Teaching Trade Unions		

Strategic alignment

Plan for North Lanarkshire

Improving the Council's Resource Base – A Workforce Strategy that is built around the needs of the Council (as a single resource base) to deliver the priority outcomes, ensuring future workforce requirements, new skills and innovative approaches, and succession planning are recognised.

Next review date

Review Date	This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it remains compliant with all relevant legislation.
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Appendix A: Internal Support

Appendix B: External Support

Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix D: Standard Letters

A note about plain English

This document follows [plain English guidance](#), in line with our corporate commitment to clear communications. In particular, it uses the following terms.

- 'We', 'us' and 'our' when referring to the Council (as an organisation), our collective responsibilities (as authorised users of Council IT assets), and when discussing specific activities.
- 'You' and 'your' when referring to the individual responsibilities and actions of authorised users of Council IT assets.

1. Introduction

Legislation introduced on 6 April 2025 allows employees to take up to 12 weeks leave so they can spend more time with their baby, if they are admitted into hospital within the first 28 days of birth and who have a continuous stay in hospital of 7 full days or more.

This leave can be taken in addition to other leave entitlements such as maternity and paternity leave. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Maternity Leave, Adoption, Parental Leave and Special Leave policies.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees who meet the eligibility criteria.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform employees of their right to request a period of Neonatal Care Leave (NCL) when their baby requires neonatal care. This leave is in addition to existing parental leave entitlements namely: maternity, adoption, paternity, shared parental leave, parental bereavement leave.

4. Eligibility

Employees who have a child on or after 6 April 2025 and meets the definition of neonatal care as outlined in Section 5 of this policy will be eligible to request Neonatal Care Leave. Employees must have a qualifying relationship:

- Child's parent, intended parent, or partner of child's mother at date of birth; or
- Child's adopter, prospective adopter, or partner of either at date of placement

Statutory Neonatal Care Leave is a day one employment right.

Statutory neonatal care pay requires:

- 26 weeks' service from the end of "relevant week", and
- Normal weekly earnings over eight-week period ending with end of "relevant week" of not less than lower earnings limit per week for national insurance contributions

The relevant week is as follows:

- If employee is entitled to SMP or SPP (birth), relevant week is 15th week before expected week of childbirth.
- If employee is entitled to SAP or SPP (adoption) adoption, relevant week is week in which they are notified of being matched with child for adoption.
- Otherwise, relevant week is the week immediately before week in which the neonatal care begins.

5. Neonatal care definition

Neonatal care means care of a medical or palliative nature which lasts for at least 7 full consecutive days within the first 28 days of birth.

Neonatal care is:

- Medical care received in hospital
- Medical care received in any other place providing:
 - Child was an inpatient in hospital and needs continuing care after leaving the hospital;
 - The care is under the direction of a consultant; and
 - The care involves ongoing monitoring and visits from healthcare professionals arranged by the hospital where child was an inpatient
- Palliative or end of life care

6. Key principles of neonatal care leave

6.1 Two tier system

Neonatal Care Leave is split into two tiers:

- **Tier 1** period begins when the child starts receiving neonatal care which continues without interruption for a period of at least seven days beginning the day after the day on which the care starts. It ends on the seventh day after child stops receiving neonatal care. During the tier one period the leave can be taken in non-consecutive blocks of at least one week at a time.
- **Tier 2** period is any other time after tier one periods ends during which the employee is entitled to neonatal care leave up until 68 weeks after the child's birth. During tier two period the leave must be taken in one continuous block.

Parents can take up to 12 weeks over both tiers, not 12 weeks in each tier.

6.2 Key principles

The following key principles apply to neonatal care:

- Eligible employees are entitled to one week's neonatal care leave for every uninterrupted week the child receives neonatal care.
- The minimum period is one week's neonatal care leave.
- The maximum period is 12 weeks' neonatal care leave.
- Both parents are entitled to take neonatal care leave.
- The earliest neonatal care leave can be taken is after the child has received 7 full days of uninterrupted care which is counted from the day after neonatal care started.
- Neonatal care leave must be taken no later than 68 weeks from the child's date of birth.
- For any week in which the employee has more than one child in neonatal care, the employee only accrues one week neonatal care leave. (e.g. there is no double entitlement for twins who both receive neonatal care).
- In the unfortunate event that a baby is admitted to neonatal care (for a period of at least 7 consecutive days), discharged, and then readmitted to neonatal care (for a period of at least 7 consecutive days), providing that the second admittance occurs within 28 days of the birth, both instances will count towards neonatal care leave.

6.3 Neonatal care pay

Employees who meet the criteria for neonatal care pay will receive the following:

- payment will be at the same rate as other family-related statutory payments: or
- 90% of average weekly earnings where average weekly earnings are less than other family related statutory payments

The maximum entitlement to neonatal care pay is also 12 weeks. The weekly rate increases annually every April in line with other family-related statutory payments.

7. Procedures

7.1 Notifying the Council

Employees should notify their line manager if their baby has been admitted into neonatal care (for at least 7 full consecutive days). The line manager should record the date that the baby was admitted into neonatal care on Itrent and discuss with the employee their leave options.

The employee should notify their line manager once the baby has been discharged from neonatal care. The line manager should record the date that the baby was discharged on Itrent. Once the leave options have been agreed and the neonatal dates have been confirmed, this should be recorded on Itrent.

7.1.1 Notice Periods

Employees requiring neonatal care leave during the Tier 1 period must notify their line manager on the first day of their absence before they are due to start work (unless it is not reasonably practicable to do so, however they should notify their line manager at the first available opportunity).

For a single week of neonatal care leave during Tier 2, employees should provide 15 calendar days' notice in writing before the first day of neonatal care leave. (see Appendix D).

For two or more consecutive weeks' neonatal care leave during the Tier 2 period, the employee should provide 28 calendar days' notice in writing before the first day of neonatal care leave (see Appendix D).

The Council can mutually agree to waive notice requirements.

Employees can contact the Employment and Policy Team for support and advice to discuss their options at any time.

7.2 Taking Neonatal Care Leave

If the employee is the primary carer (and taking a period of maternity or adoption leave), the leave can be taken after their maternity or adoption leave has ended or curtailed if moving onto Shared Parental Leave. They can choose to take this leave immediately after maternity/adoption leave (before they return to work) or at a different time (no later than 68 weeks after the baby's date of birth).

The employee should provide notice to their line manager, as outlined above in line with Tier 2 notice period, when they intend to take the leave.

7.3 Interaction with other statutory leave

If the employee is taking a period of paternity leave, shared parental leave, parental leave or parental bereavement leave, more flexibility can be provided as to when the leave can be taken. The table below outlines the eligibility entitlement and timings for each leave type.

Neonatal Care Leave ends if interrupted by other statutory leave, however unused Neonatal Care Leave can be resumed, as long as they are still within the Tier 1 or Tier 2 period.

- Tier 1- the remaining leave must be taken immediately after completing the other period of statutory leave.
- Tier 2- the remaining leave must be taken consecutively with other Neonatal Care Leave.

Employees cannot begin Neonatal Care Leave in the Tier 2 period if it will be interrupted by other statutory leave. Employees do not need to provide new notice to resume leave after an interruption.

Leave Type	Leave Entitlement	Neonatal leave entitlement
Paternity	<p>Eligible employees can take up to 4 weeks paternity leave. This is broken as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-week ordinary paternity leave • 1-week maternity support leave • 2 weeks occupational paternity leave <p>All weeks are paid at full pay</p> <p>All paternity leave must be taken within 12 months from the date of the child's birth</p>	<p>Eligible employees must have taken their neonatal leave no later than 68 weeks from the child's date of birth</p> <p>Eligible employees would be able to use some periods of paternity leave then neonatal care leave then use the remainder of the paternity leave.</p>
Maternity	<p>All employees are entitled to 52 weeks maternity leave regardless of their length of service.</p> <p>Maternity cannot be broken up and must be taken as one continuous block</p>	<p>Eligible employees must have taken their neonatal care leave no later than 68 weeks from the child's date of birth which will tend to be at the end of maternity leave</p>
Shared Parental	<p>Eligible employees can take up to 50 weeks Shared Parental Leave (SPL) between them.</p> <p>The mother/primary adopter must curtail their maternity/adoption leave.</p> <p>The mother/primary adopter's partner must have taken their paternity leave before SPL can commence.</p>	<p>Eligible employees must have taken their neonatal care leave no later than 68 weeks from the child's date of birth</p> <p>In the case of SPL, neonatal leave can be taken during this period as employees can pause and restart their leave providing leave is taken</p>

	SPL must be taken within one year of the birth/placement of the child.	within 1 year of the child's birth
Parental Leave (unpaid)	<p>Employees are entitled to 18 weeks leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday. This leave is unpaid.</p> <p>Up to a maximum of 4 weeks can be requested each year for each child.</p>	Eligible employees must have taken their neonatal care leave no later than 68 weeks from the child's date of birth
Parental bereavement	<p>Eligible employees can take 2 weeks paid leave for each child who has died or was stillborn.</p> <p>Employees can take this leave in one block or in two blocks. Employees who suffer a stillbirth or neonatal death after 24 weeks of pregnancy will retain their entitlement to maternity/adoption/paternity leave in addition to Parental Bereavement Leave.</p> <p>This leave must finish within 56 weeks of the date of the death or stillbirth</p>	Eligible employees must have taken their neonatal care leave no later than 68 weeks from the child's date of birth

8. Terms and Conditions During Neonatal Care leave

All terms and conditions remain the same during a period of neonatal care leave (except salary which will either be paid at statutory neonatal care pay or unpaid dependant on the eligibility criteria set out in section 4 being met).

9. Returning to work

Employees should refer to the relevant parental leave policy for details on planning for their return to work.

The Council understands that returning to work can be a difficult time for parents, particularly those who have experienced a traumatic and upsetting time seeing their baby in a neonatal ward. Babies can have ongoing medical needs requiring regular hospital appointments and check-ups when parent returns to work. The Council will support time off with pay to allow parents to attend these appointments in line with the Council's Special Leave Policy.

10. Support

Any questions employees have about matters relating to this policy should be raised with the Employment and Policy Team. Any work-related issues should be addressed with their line manager. Further internal and external supports can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Employees may be able to claim for funds via the Scottish Government Young Patients Family Fund which is designed to provide a financial contribution towards the cost of having a child (under 18) in hospital which includes neonatal care. Expenses can be claimed for transport, meals, parking and accommodation.

Appendix A: Internal Support

Name	Contact Details	Service Provided
Employment and policy team	Employmentpolicyteam@northlan.gov.uk	Advice and guidance on Council's policies and procedures
Employee assistance programme	https://workwellnl.co.uk/think-well/employee-assistance-programme/ Free 24-hour phone number 0800 111 6387.	The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), is provided by Vita Health Group, is available to help make life easier, whether the issue is personal or work-related.
Tackling poverty team	TPteam@northlan.gov.uk 01698 332551	Financial support
Occupational Health online wellbeing hub my-EAP	The web address is www.my-eap.com organisation access code is NLCWELL.	The online wellbeing hub my-EAP has self-help support, articles, videos, podcasts and health assessments on a range of issues such as health and wellbeing, emotional/personal, homelife, work/career, legal and money worries.

Appendix B: External Support

Name	Contact Details	Service Provided
Tommys – pregnancy and baby charity	https://www.tommys.org/baby-loss-support	Sadly, some babies are lost during pregnancy, birth, or shortly afterwards. This organisation has information and support for anyone who has experienced the loss of a baby, whether through miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal death, or termination for medical reasons.
Bliss	https://www.bliss.org.uk Do you need emotional support, information or have a question about neonatal journey? Our team is here to help you whatever stage you are at. You are not alone. Email us at hello@bliss.org.uk Tel: 020 7378 1122	To support parents and families of premature or sick babies

Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions

My baby is born before 6 April 2025 and requires neonatal care. Am I entitled to the leave?

Under the new statutory scheme, there is no entitlement to Neonatal Care Leave (and pay). The baby must be born on or after 6 April 2025.

My baby has been admitted into neonatal care at birth. What do I need to do?

As soon as is reasonably practicable, you should contact your line manager to notify them of the situation. In the event that your baby spends 7 consecutive days in neonatal care, you will be eligible to request neonatal care leave "NCL". You should ensure that your line manager is made aware of the admission and discharge date in order to process the leave. NCL must be taken no later than 68 weeks from the child's date of birth.

- For employees taking maternity or adoption leave: NCL can be used after your family leave has ended.
- For employees taking Shared Parental Leave: NCL can be taken before, during or after your leave.
- For all other family leave types (e.g. paternity): NCL can be taken before or after your leave.

Is Neonatal Care Leave paid?

If you meet the eligibility Neonatal Care Leave will be paid at the statutory rate. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, you can still take this leave however this will be unpaid. Note: The leave is pro-rated to your contracted weekly hours of work.

Do I need to take neonatal care leave immediately after other family leave?

No. NCL can be taken at any time up until 68 weeks from the child's date of birth. If you are not taking the leave immediately or directly after a period of family leave, you will need to provide notice to your line manager as stated within the policy.

Do I need to take the neonatal care leave (NCL) all at once?

During the Tier 1 period you do not need to take the NCL all at once. You can take NCL in non-consecutive blocks however the minimum leave you can take in a block is one-week. However, when in Tier 2 period the NCL must be taken in one continuous block. Employees must ensure that advanced notice is provided to the line manager in order to take this leave if the leave is not being taken immediately or directly after a period of family leave.

What is the mother's entitlement if the baby is born early?

For mother's early birth will automatically trigger maternity leave, which starts on the day after the baby's date of birth therefore the Neonatal Care Leave can be taken after maternity leave.

What is the father's/partner's entitlement if the baby is born early?

During the Tier 1 period, it is possible for paternity leave to interrupt neonatal care leave, in which case the remaining period of Neonatal Care Leave must be taken immediately after paternity leave (if still in Tier 1 period), or consecutively with any neonatal care leave in Tier 2 (if Tier 1 period has ended).

What if my baby is discharged from neonatal care but developed complications and is readmitted. Am I entitled to further leave?

You can accrue Neonatal Care Leave for a new period if the neonatal care stops and starts, however the second admission still has to be within the first 28 days of birth.

My baby develops complications and is admitted for the first time more than 28 days after the birth. Am I entitled to the leave?

No. Entitlement to Neonatal Care Leave (and pay) state that the baby must start receiving neonatal care within 28 days of the date of birth.

What if my baby sadly dies. Am I entitled to the leave?

Yes, you are still entitled to any accrued Neonatal Care Leave.

What if I have more than one baby and more than one baby requires neonatal care. Am I entitled to further leave?

No. For any week in which you have more than one child in neonatal care, you only accrue one week's Neonatal Care Leave. E.g. when twins are both in neonatal care, there is no double entitlement.

I wish to curtail my maternity leave to take Neonatal Care Leave. Is this possible?

Yes, you can stop your maternity leave to take Neonatal Care Leave however you cannot then resume maternity leave. For financial reasons, it is possible that you could ask to switch to receive neonatal care pay at the end of 39-week period of maternity pay to receive a further period of pay.

Appendix D

Letter 1

Dear {Managers Name}

Request – Tier 2 Statutory Neonatal Care Leave

I am writing to request Tier 2 Statutory Neonatal Care Leave in accordance with the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 as detailed below :

1. Employee Name	
2. Employee Number	
3. Child's Date of Birth/or date of placement /Entry to UK if adopting :	
4. Start date or dates of neonatal care	
5. The date neonatal care ended	
6. The date on which I would like to take the leave (and pay)	
7. The number of weeks of Neonatal Care Leave (and pay) the notice is being given for	
8. I confirm that the leave is being taken to care for my child	
9. I confirm I am eligible to take the leave due to the relationship with the child.	

Yours sincerely

Employee Name

Letter 2

Dear

Approval of Tier 2 Statutory Neonatal Care Leave

I acknowledge receipt of your application for Tier 2 Statutory Neonatal Care Leave and confirm that your application has been approved.

Should you require any additional support at this time, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Managers Name
Job Title

Dignity at Work Policy

Version 2.0, May 2025

Document control

Title	Dignity at Work Policy		
Governance group	Finance and Resources Committee		
Owner	Fiona Whittaker, Chief Officer – People Resources	Contact	whittakerf@northlan.gov.uk
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Revision history

Version	Originator	Review start date	Revision description and record of change
2.0	Tracy Simpson	July 2024	The addition of new sections that allow for more effective handling of complaints and encourages employees to address minor issues informally where appropriate.

Document approvals

Version	Governance group	Date approved	Date approval to be requested (if document still in draft)
1.0	Policy and Resources (Human Resources)	18/12/2014	
2.0	Finance and Resources Committee		21/05/2025

Consultation record

Consultation status	Stakeholders consulted		
Stakeholders consulted and dates	CMT Joint Trade Unions representatives JNCT representatives People Resources Employee Equality Forum		

Strategic alignment

Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority - Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base.

Ambition statement - Build a workforce for the future capable of delivering on our priorities and shared ambition

Programme of Work

Statutory / corporate / service requirement

Next review date

Review Date	This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose and compliant with all relevant legislation.
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1. Introduction

The Council is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment that nurtures a culture in which we treat one another with courtesy and professionalism, even while robustly challenging each other's views and opinions. The Employee Code of Conduct sets out the key principles that all staff should follow in order to demonstrate exacting standards of acceptable behaviour.

There is no place for bullying, harassment*, discrimination, or victimisation in the Council and each of us is responsible for the way we interact with and treat others, which should always be with dignity and respect regardless of any protected characteristics, or level, function, seniority, or status.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation are referenced collectively throughout this Policy as "inappropriate behaviour" and wherever this term is used, it refers to the definitions of these behaviours in Section 7 - What Constitutes Inappropriate Behaviour?

* This policy does not apply to concerns or complaints in regard to sexual harassment or misconduct. Inappropriate behaviour of this nature should be addressed under the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy.

2. Purpose

This Policy aims to prevent inappropriate behaviour in the workplace and resolve incidents of such behaviour if they occur. In support of this aim, this Policy:

- **sets out the roles and responsibilities** of all staff (employees and workers) and behaviours expected to ensure a collective understanding of how everyone should behave towards one another to foster a healthy and positive working environment
- **ensures that staff are able to disclose inappropriate behaviour** if it does occur and are supported in the process of resolving it
- **promotes the early resolution of inappropriate behaviour** wherever possible and appropriate, to prevent the psychological, health, and work-related problems such behaviour can cause
- **sets out a clear framework for addressing complaints** and refers to what actions can be taken through the informal and formal resolution processes

Complaints of inappropriate behaviour, whether by a council employee or worker, a third party such as a supplier, volunteer, service user, or a member of the public or visitor to the council, should always be taken seriously. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that allows action to be taken to stop any inappropriate behaviour identified as quickly as possible, including the use of disciplinary processes where necessary and where such behaviour is found to have taken place.

This policy provides a mechanism for council staff (employees and workers) to be able to informally disclose or formally report inappropriate behaviour without fear of repercussions and trust the processes that are in place to address their concerns.

This policy also supports the council in its duty to provide a safe environment in which to work under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Experiencing inappropriate behaviour often impacts an individual's physical and mental health and can also affect those who witness it. The council will not tolerate any act of misconduct towards an individual for raising concerns in good faith or supporting someone to raise such concerns.

3. Scope and exclusions

This policy applies to all staff (employees and workers) of the council and will not discriminate in respect of, but not restricted to; any protected characteristics, employment status and position held, political affiliation or trade union membership.

Any council visitors, volunteers, contractors etc that are engaged in activities related to the council and/or on council premises are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the Council's Employee Code of Conduct.

Any staff that wish to raise a complaint about a *third party should speak to their line manager in the first instance. In order to address the complaint, it may be necessary to notify third parties and use their local complaints procedure or notify the police when complaints involve members of the public.

Exclusions: This policy does not apply to *third parties, such as elected officials' contractors, suppliers, service users, volunteers, or other members of the public. Any individual who has a complaint about a council employee or worker will be advised to raise this through the appropriate complaint's procedure.

4. Associated Policies and Legislation

There are a number of policies, codes and legislative frameworks that are relevant to the Dignity at Work Policy including but not limited to the following:

Council Policies

- Equality & Diversity in Employment Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Gender Based Violence Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Grievance Framework for Teachers and Associated Professionals
- Discipline Policy
- Discipline Framework for Teachers & Associated Professionals
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Disability Policy (this is under development at the moment)
- Occupational Safety & Wellbeing Policy
- Data Protection Policy

Legislation

- Equality Act 2010 (where linked to a protected characteristic)
- Employment Rights Act 2008
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Health and Safety at work etc Act 1974.
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to promote a healthy, positive working environment, which promotes the council's key principles of the exacting standards of behaviour expected from everyone and creates a culture of mutual dignity and respect for all.

Everyone must behave in a way that will not cause offence to others, and to acknowledge that views and opinions held by others may differ from their own.

Everyone has a responsibility to bring any concerns about inappropriate behaviours that are directly or indirectly affecting them to the attention of management.

Everyone should familiarise themselves with this policy and any associated guidance in order to increase their understanding and awareness of Dignity at Work and the impact inappropriate behaviours can have on a person either directly or indirectly in their working environment.

Staff

- Contribute to a dignified and respectful working environment where bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation is not acceptable whilst ensuring their personal behaviours do not cause offence to colleagues
- Support colleagues who may be subjected to inappropriate behaviour
- Take appropriate action if they become aware of any act of inappropriate behaviour by bringing any concerns to the attention of their line manager. If an employee feels unable to speak to their line manager, they can also speak to a Dignity at Work Support Officer, Trade Union representative, the Employment and Policy Team, a representative of an employee forum e.g. employee equality forum or a colleague where appropriate.
- Try and resolve any concerns informally and work with their line manager to consider and discuss solutions to help improve the situation, especially if they feel their performance is being impacted.

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect at all times, adhering to the principles of the Employee Code of Conduct.
- Make sure any complaints against another employee, are specific and not general accusations or feelings. Any complaints that are found to be malicious, vexatious (in law) and/or unreasonably persistent may be considered a disciplinary matter.
- **Encouraged to** participate in informal and/or formal meetings to ensure a fair and robust process for all concerned.
- To not act unprofessionally or inappropriately towards another staff member for bringing a complaint of inappropriate behaviour as doing so may be considered a disciplinary offence and may be investigated as such.

Managers and Line Managers

- Ensure all staff are made aware of this policy, through internal communications and training, to increase their understanding and awareness of Dignity at Work and the impact inappropriate behaviours can have on a person either directly or indirectly in their working environment.
- Promote a healthy and positive working environment by behaving in a professional manner at all times and to be aware of how your own behaviour can adversely impact on staff and potentially be perceived as harassment or bullying depending on the circumstances.
- Ensure staff are aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them.
- Respond quickly and effectively to any complaint of alleged inappropriate behaviour.
- Offer staff appropriate support when issues relating to Dignity at Work are raised and try to ensure lines of communication remain open.
- Approach conversations respectfully and supportively with positive commitment to understanding people's concerns.
- Managers have a responsibility to address attendance, performance or conduct issues, however any issues must be dealt with in a fair, impartial, and consistent manner.
- Where a member of staff reports on-going difficulties, or concerns, about their wellbeing at work a line manager must consider a referral to Occupational Health for further advice and support.

Chief Officers

- Ensure the development, implementation and communication of the policy and supporting frameworks and promote a healthy positive working environment.

- Ensure that this policy is shared with all Managers within their service areas and that they are supported in creating a healthy and positive working environment.
- Create and facilitate an environment that encourages Managers and Line Managers to approach conversations with staff in a supportive and positive manner, treating everyone with dignity and respect.

People Resources

- Provide advice and support to staff, Line Manager and Managers on the content and application of this policy.
- Promote awareness including training and education for staff and Managers and Line Managers regarding Dignity at Work and other associated topics.
- Signpost staff to appropriate support mechanisms that may help them throughout the process
- Support the informal and formal process where appropriate including ensuring any actions required following the outcome of a Dignity at Work investigation are followed through.
- Provide information to line managers on when it may appropriate to refer staff to Occupational Health.
- Monitor and Report on Dignity at Work cases, as required.

Trade Unions

- The council recognises the vital role the Trade Unions play in addressing inappropriate workplace behaviours and members are encouraged to seek support from their representative regarding their concerns.
- Support the purpose, aims of this policy, and help create and maintain a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for everyone.
- Support the implementation of the policy and work with management, HR, and any other professionals as required.
- Work with the council in addressing unacceptable and inappropriate behaviours and ensure that their members are appropriately advised on whether their concerns should be raised under this policy or not.
- Support and advise members through the processes related to Dignity at Work recognising that a positive approach to these matters can help improve the outcomes for individuals.

- Participate in and contribute to Dignity at Work training and other related training to increase knowledge and understanding and work in partnership with management and HR to undertake reviews of the policy and associated processes to ensure inappropriate workplace behaviour are appropriately addressed and a supportive and positive workplace environment is fostered.

6. Sources of Support

The council recognises that whether you are the complainant, the person who the complaint is against or a witness, the Dignity at Work process can be a difficult and stressful time. A number of sources of support are available to both the complainant and the person whom the complaint is about, as well as anyone else that may be involved in the process.

Dignity at Work Support Officers

A Dignity at Work Support Officer supports the council in achieving the aims of the policy by providing confidential support and advice at both the informal and formal stage of a Dignity at Work complaint, to those who feel that they are experiencing difficult working relationships including bullying or harassment, have witnessed bullying or harassment or who have been accused of it.

There are Dignity at Work Support Officers available across all services and further information on how to contact a support officer and the support they can and cannot provide can be found within the Dignity at Work Toolkit.

Employee Assistance Programme

The Employee Assistance Programme is available to all staff. This is a confidential self-referral service (Line Managers can refer an employee with their consent). Further information on the EAP service can be obtained from the myNL portal, Management or People Resources.

Education Support Officer (Health & Wellbeing)

The Education Support Officer for Staff Health & Wellbeing can provide confidential support, and advice in relation to any workplace issues Teachers may be experiencing.

Gender Based Violence Support Officers

Any member of staff that is experiencing or have experienced physical, emotional, or sexual abuse at any time in their life, which is having an impact on them, can request support from a Gender Based Violence Support Officer, who are specially trained colleagues within the council who can provide support. Anyone wishing to seek support can send an email in confidence to GBVSupportofficers@northlan.gov.uk and one of the support officers will be in touch.

Employee Equality Forum (EEF)

The Council's Employee Equality Forum can provide information and guidance to staff on a broad range of issues related to diversity and equality in the workplace including disability and other forms of discrimination. The EEF can be contacted by emailing employeeequalityforum@northlan.gov.uk

Trade Union Representatives

Staff are welcome to seek the advice and support of their relevant Trade Union representative at both the informal and formal stages of a Dignity at Work matter. At any informal meetings, the role of a Trade Union representative is there to provide support only. At formal meetings, the Trade Union Representative can make representations on a staff members behalf but cannot answer questions for them.

There is lots of additional information and resources to support your mental wellbeing during and after this process which you can access on WorkwellNL or obtain from your line manager, support person or People Resources.

7. What Constitutes Inappropriate Behaviour?

All staff are expected to behave professionally and appropriately and have the right to expect professional and appropriate behaviour from others.

"Inappropriate behaviour" for the purposes of this policy means bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation as defined below.

It is important to recognise that inappropriate behaviours can be intentional or unintentional, however such conduct by any individual is unacceptable and all complaints that may fall under the definition of inappropriate behaviours as detailed below will be treated seriously.

When determining whether a matter may constitute a breach of Dignity at Work, a key factor to be considered is the perception held by the individual who believes they have been subjected to inappropriate behaviour, and whether it is reasonable for them to hold that perception.

Any claims of inappropriate behaviour will be considered to be a genuine belief of that individual unless the Dignity at Work process finds that the claims are unsubstantiated, malicious, or vexatious in nature.

This policy will not apply where a manager has exercised their responsibilities in directing staffs work and managing attendance, performance, and/or misconduct in a fair, impartial, constructive, and consistent manner and in line with relevant council policies.

As part of the everyday management process managers are required to apply various council policies, direct the work of their staff, and provide staff with feedback concerning their performance, e.g. conduct, punctuality, attendance etc. If any of these areas have been unsatisfactory the feedback may be critical of the person concerned. If criticism is delivered

in a constructive way it can be beneficial to the member of staff providing them with the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and make any necessary improvements. Destructive criticism, on the other hand, can have a detrimental effect.

Constructive criticism will focus on:

- actions and behaviour; focusing on what the staff member has done or not done
- facts: with specific examples of behaviour that has been inappropriate and an explanation of why it was not appropriate
- future improvement: for example, requiring the staff member to do something differently or make changes.

Destructive criticism may involve:

- aggressive behaviour, such as shouting/yelling
- personal insults or put downs
- allocating blame rather than responsibility

Examples of the distinctions between constructive and destructive behaviours are contained within the toolkit.

Bullying (as defined by ACAS)

There is no legal definition of bullying, however it can be described as “unwanted” behaviour from a person or group that is:

‘Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting or, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.’

Bullying can happen by a manager or supervisor bullying a team member; team members bullying each other, or an individual or group of staff bullying a supervisor or manager. The behaviour may relate to one incident or be persistent.

Harassment (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) is:

“Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that individual.”

It may be an isolated incident or persistent behaviour, deliberate or unintentional, and/or explicit or implicit but as it is considered offensive / unwelcome / uninvited by the recipient, it acts in such a way as to humiliate, ridicule, or cause embarrassment.

Legislation prohibits three types of harassment:-

- harassment related to a relevant protected characteristic (see definition of discrimination for list of protected characteristics). Pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership are not protected directly under harassment provisions but are protected indirectly under other characteristics.
- sexual harassment (see the sexual harassment policy for more information)

- less favourable treatment of an individual because they submit to, or reject, sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment

Harassment by association means that individuals are protected if they are subjected to unwanted conduct because of their association with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Harassment by perception means that individuals are protected if they are subjected to unwanted conduct by others who wrongly perceive that individual has a protected characteristic.

For the purposes of this Policy, harassment will also include conduct of a similar nature which is not related to a protected characteristic.

Discrimination

Discrimination law (Equality Act 2010) protects people against discrimination at work. Discrimination means treating someone 'less favourably' than someone else, because of their protected characteristic. These are as follows:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Less favourable treatment can be anything that puts someone with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage, compared to someone who does not have that characteristic.

It can still be discrimination even if the less favourable treatment was not intended.

Discrimination includes:

- direct discrimination – less favourable treatment directly because of a protected characteristic
- indirect discrimination – when everyone is treated the same but people with a protected characteristic are put at a disadvantage
- harassment – unwanted or offensive behaviour related to a protected characteristic
- victimisation – negative treatment as a result of being involved with a discrimination or harassment complaint

Victimisation

Victimisation is where an individual perceives they receive less favourable treatment than other individuals. However to be unlawful, victimisation must be linked to a protected act. Examples of a protected act are:-

- bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010
- giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings brought under the Act
- doing anything which is related to the provisions of the Act
- making an allegation (whether or not express) that another person has done something in breach of the Act.

An employee need not have a particular protected characteristic in order to be protected against victimisation. For the purposes of this policy, victimisation will also apply where an individual is subject to less favourable treatment because they have made a complaint or intend to make a complaint about being bullied or harassed or act as a witness in this regard.

It should be noted that the above forms of inappropriate behaviour do not just apply to those working in an office but also apply to virtual platforms, sites, or other locations where staff are conducting council business, including those working from home.

Examples of Inappropriate Behaviour

Whether intentional or not, any form of inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated, and all complaints will be treated seriously. Examples of what may constitute inappropriate behaviour are:

- Spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone (particularly on the grounds of age, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, and maternity).
- Copying emails that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know.
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone i.e. picking on them or setting them up to fail.
- Unfair treatment.
- Overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position.
- Unwelcome sexual advances – touching, standing too close, display of offensive materials: including signs, pin ups and calendars.
- Making threats or comments about job security without foundation.
- Deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism
- Preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.
- Jokes, banter, emails, or deliberate abuse directed at a person or group.
- Deliberately imposing grossly excessive or unachievable workloads or impossible deadlines in order to make life difficult for a particular employee.
- Repeated unfair criticism or destructive and negative criticism that focuses on blame rather than future improvement.
- Criticising individuals in front of colleagues.

- Excessive or overbearing monitoring of a particular employee's work without good reason.
- Ordering a particular employee to work below his or her level of ability, or to perform mundane demeaning tasks, with no proper reason.
- Removing an employee's responsibility without consultation and for no proper reason.
- Threatening an employee with dismissal.

Whilst the list of above examples is not exhaustive, it is representative of many types of behaviour that others may object to and find offensive which could create an intimidating working environment.

As noted above fair, impartial, and consistent management of employees is not bullying or harassment. Managers are expected to lead and manage employees which involves setting and making sure employees understand performance standards. Legitimate, constructive, and fair criticism of an employee's work performance or behaviour either informally or formally is not bullying.

8. Procedures

8.1 What to do when you have experienced inappropriate behaviour?

An individual who believes they have not been treated with dignity and respect, taking Section 7 of this policy into account, can take action by using the informal and/or formal procedures outlined below.

Before entering into the Dignity at Work process the individual should take some *time to consider, using the self-reflection tool, and taking Section 7 of this policy into account, whether the behaviours they have experienced meet the definition of "inappropriate behaviour" and if so, think about what outcome they would seek to achieve in respect of their complaint. Individuals must be realistic about their desired outcomes and not withstanding or acknowledging how an individual feels they may not achieve the outcome they wish for

*unless the behaviour they have been subjected to is so obvious or serious in nature that there is doubt it meets the definition of "inappropriate behaviour."

Staff are encouraged to take responsibility for addressing their own concerns in relation to inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. The best way to resolve the issue at the earliest opportunity is by ensuring the other party is aware of the impact of their behaviour. Early resolution in regard to Dignity at Work concerns helps to prevent possible issues escalating. It is essential to stop any inappropriate behaviour occurring or being repeated to minimise anxiety for the staff concerned.

Therefore, if you have concerns relating to your dignity at work, you have a responsibility to work towards an early resolution of your concerns. Where possible, staff who are subjected to a breach of their dignity at work should make every reasonable effort to resolve this informally using the procedures outlined below.

Staff should keep notes and diary records of any incidents which they perceive contribute to the situation and note the presence of any witnesses. This will assist any subsequent investigations should an informal resolution not be achieved.

Staff are encouraged to seek support from one of the sources noted at Section 6 above to ensure that they are appropriately supported throughout the process, both at the informal and formal stages.

There are two stages of the process (informal and formal) available to staff, as outlined below. The informal stage has three different approaches that can be considered. Whilst encouraged to do so, staff do not have to take an informal approach before proceeding to the formal stage, nor do they have to use every step of the informal process.

8.2 Stage 1 - Informal

The use of the informal process can achieve more positive outcomes particularly where the behaviour relates to a one-off incident or more minor incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Informal approaches have been found to be the most effective way of resolving conflict, tackling inappropriate behaviour, and minimising any negative impact on the individuals involved.

There will obviously be circumstances where the informal approach is not appropriate, and it may be determined by management that either a formal Dignity at Work process or a Disciplinary investigation will be instigated, regardless of whether the complainant wishes to pursue this or not.

Step 1 – Direct Individual action (without support)

The individual raising the complaint should try to approach the individual causing them concern directly or write to them, and let that person know in a constructive way what inappropriate behaviours they believe that they have demonstrated towards them (providing specific examples), explain how these behaviours have made them feel, and what the individual feels would resolve the issue in order to achieve a resolution.

It should be acknowledged that the individual whose behaviour has caused the distress may be unaware that they have acted in such a way that another individual finds it unacceptable, and the matters being raised may be difficult to hear. None the less the individual who is the subject of the complaint must respond appropriately and professionally to any concerns raised with them.

Step 2 – Direct Individual Action (with Support)

An individual may wish to pursue an informal resolution but, understandably, feel unable or reluctant to directly meet with the other individual on their own. Step 2 of the informal process allows the individual to seek support in order to try and achieve an informal resolution.

Support can be requested from:

- Line manager (or equivalent if the complaint is against the line manager)
- Dignity at Work Support Officer

As part of this process, the supporting person can attend a meeting between all parties to help them discuss what has happened and support a constructive discussion that will hopefully allow the individuals to achieve a positive resolution. However the individual raising the concerns would be the one to initiate contact with the other party/parties in the first instance.

Any discussion should again let that person know in a constructive way what inappropriate behaviours they believe that they have demonstrated towards them (providing specific examples), explain how these behaviours have made them feel, and what the individual feels would resolve the issue in order to achieve a resolution. The discussion should focus on the working relationship and trying to ensure that this is not negatively impacted on moving forward.

Whilst the individual whom the complaint is against is under no obligation to attend such a meeting, the council would expect staff to take all reasonable steps to try and resolve any workplace issues that may impact on maintaining a professional and positive working relationship with colleagues.

Step 3 –Facilitated Discussion and Mediation

Before an individual decides to proceed with a formal complaint and depending on the nature of the concerns, or where the other informal approaches have failed a more structured discussion involving all parties may be the appropriate way to deal with the matter.

Facilitated Discussion

This discussion will be facilitated by an impartial manager, who will initially meet with all parties individually and then together, where they can discuss the concerns and hopefully find a way forward.

The facilitator will not take sides, impose solutions, or make judgements. They will set ground rules, ensure all parties are heard, listen, ask questions, summarise the discussion and the desired resolution, and try to help all parties achieve a positive outcome.

Mediation

Depending on the nature of the complaint and what parties are involved it may be appropriate to consider an external mediation service. This process is for resolving issues between individuals and will involve one or two third party mediators helping those involved find and agree their own solutions.

As with the facilitated discussion the mediator/s would meet separately with all parties and then together, if they considered it appropriate in the circumstances ,and if they in their experience believed an informal resolution could be achieved.

Right to be Accompanied

Whilst there is no legal right to be accompanied at a facilitated discussion or mediation, individuals may bring an appropriate companion i.e trade union representative, dignity at work support officer, colleague, as long as all parties agree to this.

Requests for Facilitated Discussion or Mediation

If an individual wishes to engage in either a facilitated discussion or mediation they must request this through their line manager (or other manager) or the Employment & Policy Team to ensure this is the most appropriate step to take in the circumstances.

It should be noted that participation in both facilitated discussions and mediation are voluntary, confidential and either party can withdraw from the process at any time. No member of staff is required to use mediation or facilitated discussions before pursuing a formal complaint.

8.3 Stage 2 – Formal

There will be times where an informal resolution has not been successful or is simply not appropriate due to the nature of the complaint. In these situations the individual experiencing the inappropriate behaviours should raise a formal complaint.

In such circumstances the complaint must be submitted in writing (Appendix A – Dignity at Work Complaints Form can be used) specifying the basis of the complaint, to the appropriate Chief Officer (normally the Chief Officer from the same Service as the complainant).

The Chief Officer will appoint a Nominated Officer (depending on the level of seniority of the parties involved, the Chief Officer may consider the complaint) to consider the complaint.

Preliminary Review

As previously referenced a Dignity at Work complaint must contain specific incidents/events, that the individual feels have demonstrated inappropriate behaviour/s towards them, in accordance with the definitions of “inappropriate behaviour” as detailed at Section 7, above.

Before the commencement of any formal investigation the complaint will be reviewed by the Employment & Policy Team to ascertain whether each aspect of the complaint falls within the scope of the Dignity at Work Policy and whether any specific matters require to be raised under a different policy e.g. grievance, sexual harassment.

This preliminary review is not intended to establish whether the behaviour actually occurred, but to ensure that all aspects of the complaint fall within the definition of inappropriate behaviour. This will be a paper-based review and there are no meetings with any parties to the complaint or witnesses.

Following the preliminary review of the complaint the Nominated Officer or Chief Officer will write to the individual that raised the complaint to advise them of the outcome of the initial review and confirm whether any (or all) aspects of the complaint will be excluded from the scope of the investigation and why and advise on any alternative mechanisms available to the individual to address some or all aspects of the complaint.

Investigation Procedure

The main purpose of the formal investigation is to determine whether, on the balance of probabilities, the behaviour complained of has taken place and whether this amounts to “inappropriate behaviour” as defined by this policy. Where the investigation and subsequent review by the relevant Chief Officer determines that there has been conduct in breach of this policy appropriate action will be taken e.g. disciplinary investigation.

Once the preliminary review has determined that an investigation is required the Nominated Officer will then appoint appropriate officers (normally a minimum of two) to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation. In appointing the investigating officer consideration will be given to the composition of the officers in light of the circumstances of the investigation, i.e. considering the parties involved and relevant equality strands. The investigating officers will normally be drawn from out with the immediate section of the person(s) involved but if required from out with the service.

The Employment & Policy Team will provide advice and guidance to the investigating officers on the application of the policy and depending on the circumstances of the complaint a representative of the Employment & Policy Team may assume the role of investigating officer, however, will never be the Lead Officer.

Notice of Investigation

All parties to the complaint will be advised in writing of the commencement of the formal investigation, and at an appropriate point in the process be asked to attend an investigation meeting to discuss the complaint.

In all cases, the individuals concerned will be treated sensitively, with confidentiality being maintained at all times. This is subject to the right of the individual who is the subject of the complaint being able to access information relevant to the complaint and having the opportunity to respond to the claims.

The individual raising the complaint must also be aware that if, after investigation, the complaint is found to be malicious, vexatious, or unreasonably persistent then they may be subject to disciplinary action.

If the complaint made is serious, a manager may choose to initiate an investigation and take the matter through the Council’s Discipline Policy, even if the employee has chosen not to use the formal procedure in the Dignity at Work Policy.

Timescale of Investigation

An investigation into a formal complaint through the Dignity at Work Policy should be completed as quickly as possible, without any unnecessary or unreasonable delays. The timescale for completion will be dependent on the extent and complexity of the investigation, the sensitivity of the matter being investigated and the number and availability of witnesses involved. Annual Leave and other leave also need to be factored into the timescale.

At the start of the investigation, both parties will be advised how long the investigation is likely to take and the name of the Lead Investigating Officer undertaking the investigation. The Lead Investigating Officer will keep both parties informed if the indicative timescale will not be met, advising both parties of an anticipated revised completion date, and giving reasons for the revised timescale. These updates should be provided throughout the duration of the process.

Investigation Meetings

The investigating officers will write to the individual under investigation, the complainant, and any relevant witnesses to invite them to attend an investigation meeting to obtain statements in support of the complaint.

It will be for the investigating officers to determine who to interview and in what order. Depending on the information that is provided by each individual follow up investigation meetings may be required.

The individual that is the subject of the formal investigation will be provided with an outline of the complaint before the meeting to ensure they have sufficient information as to why the investigation is taking place before the meeting is held.

Witnesses

Witnesses should be advised of their right to representation prior to being asked for information, and informed that any statement or information gathered may be used in formal meetings and may be given to the employee against whom the complaint has been made.

If a witness is asked to provide evidence as a part of the investigatory process they must comply with this request. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action being taken against them.

Right to be Accompanied

Whilst there is no legal right to be accompanied at an investigation meeting individuals (including witnesses) may bring an appropriate companion i.e trade union representative, dignity at work support officer, or colleague.

Investigation Report

Following the investigation a report will be submitted to the Nominated Officer by the Lead Investigating Officer. The report will contain the details of the complaint, the findings of the investigation meetings, and conclusions/recommendations for the Nominated Officer to consider.

Investigation Outcome

Following receipt of the investigation report the Nominated Officer will decide whether the complaint is upheld, not upheld, or upheld in part and write to all parties, informing them of the outcome. Whilst the outcome should be issued within 14 days, there may be occasions where the Nominated Officer requires clarification or further information in order to make an informed decision. Individuals to the complaint will be notified of any delays to this timescale.

Where the outcome of the investigation results in specific action, including disciplinary action, requiring to be taken against the individual who is the subject of the complaint the Employment & Policy Team will assist the service/managers in ensuring this is instigated/applied, as appropriate

Complaints which are upheld/upheld in part

The appropriate action taken in any case will be dependent on all of the circumstances of the case and the individuals involved. An objective decision should be made on whether inappropriate behaviour has likely taken place having considered the findings of the investigating officers. It is not possible to provide the definitive course of action to be adopted in each case. As a general guide, the Nominated Officer should consider one or more of the following potential outcomes:

- On the balance of probabilities there is a case to answer and therefore disciplinary action is appropriate regarding the person whom the complaint was against.
- Both parties partially responsible therefore recommend support through training, and/or mediation.
- Complainant raised a malicious/vexatious/unreasonably persistent claim and therefore should be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
- Redeployment is required on the grounds of breakdown in the working relationship.

In situations where relocation or transfer of the employee who is the subject of the complaint, takes place after a complaint is upheld, consideration may also be given to relocation of the complainant if circumstances determine that relocation may be in their best interests, and if agreed by the complainant. This may be progressed if appropriate and practicable.

Complaints which are not upheld

Where, having considered the findings of the investigation panel, the Nominated Officer decides that there is no case to answer and no further action is required, they will advise

both parties in writing of this and provide a right of appeal to the individual that made the complaint.

Malicious, Vexatious or Unreasonably Persistent Complaints

A malicious complaint is one that is made with the intention to intimidate, to lower the reputation of, or otherwise injure or harm a colleague or manager, through knowingly providing false, misleading information, or withholding information about an incident or issue.

A vexatious complaint is one made without sufficient grounds, especially so as to cause annoyance or embarrassment to the subject, and/or one that is unreasonable, frivolous, repetitive, deliberately burdensome or unwarranted.

An unreasonably persistent complaint in relation to Dignity to Work would be one where an individual continues to submit complaints which appear to have no substance, or which have already been investigated and an outcome determined.

If it is found that an individual has made a complaint that is considered to be malicious or vexatious (in law), or unreasonably persistent, the council may instigate a disciplinary process against them.

Disciplinary action will not be taken, however, where it is considered that a complaint is unsubstantiated or out with the scope of what is considered to be inappropriate behaviour as defined in this policy.

Further guidance on the investigation procedure is contained in the Dignity at Work Toolkit.

Right of Appeal

If, following the investigation, the complainant is unhappy with the decision not to uphold a formal complaint, or uphold it only in part, they will have the opportunity to exercise their one right of appeal against the decision, which will be considered at Service level.

In such circumstances the employee should write to their Chief Officer (or Deputy Chief Executive where the initial complaint has been considered by the Chief Officer) within 14 days of receiving the decision of the Nominated Officer, detailing the reasons why they are dissatisfied. In general an appeal may be submitted where:

The complainant has not received enough information about the findings of the investigation.

- The complainant disagrees with the findings of the investigation.
- The complainant feels that procedural errors occurred in the investigation.

The Chief Officer will acknowledge receipt of the appeal letter, in writing, within 14 days of receiving it.

The appeal process will not re-investigate the original complaint. The appeal will consider whether the outcome of the original investigation was conducted in a comprehensive and

thorough manner, and the conclusions reached were logical and based on all available evidence. The appeal will consider:

- Were the findings appropriate and based on evidence? Was any evidence missed?
- Was the information supplied to the employee sufficient to allow them to understand the outcome and the reasons why?

When an appeal letter has been received, the Chief Officer will nominate a Senior Officer to conduct an independent, paper-based review of the findings, with a representative from the Employment & Policy Team. The review will be undertaken as quickly as possible, without any unnecessary or unreasonable delays. Any unexpected delays will be communicated in writing to the individual concerned.

The Nominated Senior Officer will make recommendations following their review and pass these back to the Chief Officer for consideration. The Chief Officer will then confirm in writing to the complainant the outcome of the appeal. Whilst the outcome of the appeal should be issued within 14 days, there may be occasions where the Chief Officer requires clarification or further information in order to make an informed decision. Individuals to the complaint will be notified of any delays to this timescale.

There is no further right of appeal under this policy.

8.4 What to do when you are the subject of concerns being raised?

It can be a disconcerting and upsetting experience for an individual to be approached and told that their behaviour could be construed as inappropriate. If this is done through an informal process, they should be prepared to listen patiently and calmly and allow the member of staff (or the person supporting them in the process) to express their concerns. If it is possible, they should also try to remedy the situation and allow a positive working relationship to be resumed. The individual should keep a note of what was discussed and, if appropriate, agreed.

The individual who is the subject of the complaint should also be able to give an account of what happened as part of any informal and formal resolution processes. They can speak with any of the following for general guidance or to discuss any specific questions about the resolution process:

- their line manager (or equivalent)
- a member of the employment & policy team
- a Dignity at Work Support Officer
- a trade union representative.

The support services set out in Section 6 are also available to provide support for individuals who are the subject of a complaint.

8.5 What happens if you have behaved inappropriately?

While this policy emphasises the value of an early, informal resolution process, there will be situations that can only be resolved through a formal process. Where a formal complaint, complaints or concerns is brought and upheld against an individual and the nature of the inappropriate behaviour warrants it, a separate procedure under the relevant disciplinary policy will be undertaken. This may result in a formal warning being issued to the individual demonstrating the inappropriate behaviour and training or other interventions may also be recommended. In the case of serious or sustained misconduct, the procedure may result in the termination of employment.

Additionally, where a manager has become aware of multiple concerns or complaints of inappropriate behaviour in their area, which may not have been formally reported but give rise to sufficient cause for concern, they may choose to conduct a fact-finding investigation to understand the alleged behaviours in more detail and to determine if support and interventions are needed or whether a formal investigation is required under the relevant Disciplinary process.

9. Toolkits and Further Sources of Information

This policy will be supported by guidance and information toolkits for Managers and Staff which are available on the myNL portal. The council will ensure that staff that do not have ready access to online resources will still be able to access the toolkits by other means.

10. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Confidentiality

To protect the integrity of the process and those individuals who are either the complainant, the subject of the complaint or a witness, it is vital that confidentiality is maintained by everyone involved in the process at all times. The Employee Code of Conduct sets out the standards required in respect of privacy and confidentiality.

However in terms of Dignity at Work it has to be recognised, that in some cases it may not always be possible to preserve total confidentiality, for instance,

- An individual is at serious and urgent risk of harm, abuse, or neglect.
- An individual actions may have caused or are likely to cause harm to someone else.
- An individual actions may have an adverse effect on the work or reputation of North Lanarkshire Council.
- A serious crime may have been committed or reporting your concern could prevent a crime and such the police would need to be informed.
- The matters raised or actions of an individual require to be reported to a third-party e.g. SSSC, GTC, Health & Safety Executive.

If, in such a situation, the council can no longer preserve total confidentiality, the individuals concerned will be advised of that fact and the reason why. Further advice can be sought from the Employment & Policy Team.

Data Protection

Dignity at Work complaints will most often contain sensitive and personal information and therefore it is imperative that all those involved in the process adhere to the requirements of the Council's Data Protection Policy.

Anyone involved in the Dignity at Work process that will be handling sensitive and personal information must ensure this is collected, processed, and stored securely and responsibly. This includes destroying information safely when it is no longer required in accordance with the Council's retention schedule.

Advise on what information should be retained by those involved, and for how long, following the formal Dignity at Work process, can be obtained from the Employment & Policy Team.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Employment and Policy Team as key stakeholders oversee the review and consider the contents before referring it on for approval. The Chief Officer of People Resources – is accountable for its governance.

The Employment and Policy Team is responsible for the following activities.

1. Produce, publish, and promote this policy.
 - a. Write it in a way that is easy to read and understand.
 - b. Consult with relevant stakeholders on its content and implications.
 - c. Make sure all users can access it.
2. Give guidance on how to apply and comply with this policy through standards, toolkits and guidance, legislation and regulations and other related policies and procedures.
3. Review and report on this policy.
 - a. Review as a minimum every 3 years or with other reviews when needed. For example, following new legislation, new external or internal strategies/plans, to align with best practice.
 - b. Report to management teams, governance and working groups, committees, and scrutiny panels.

DIGNITY AT WORK - FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name		Section	
Email		Grade	
Designation		Tel No.	
Work Location		Employee No.	
Home Address:			

Informal Action Taken - Yes/No

Please advise in detail what informal action has been taken so far and the outcome of these (if no informal action has been taken, please complete the rest of this form with and discuss with your line manager or other appropriate person):

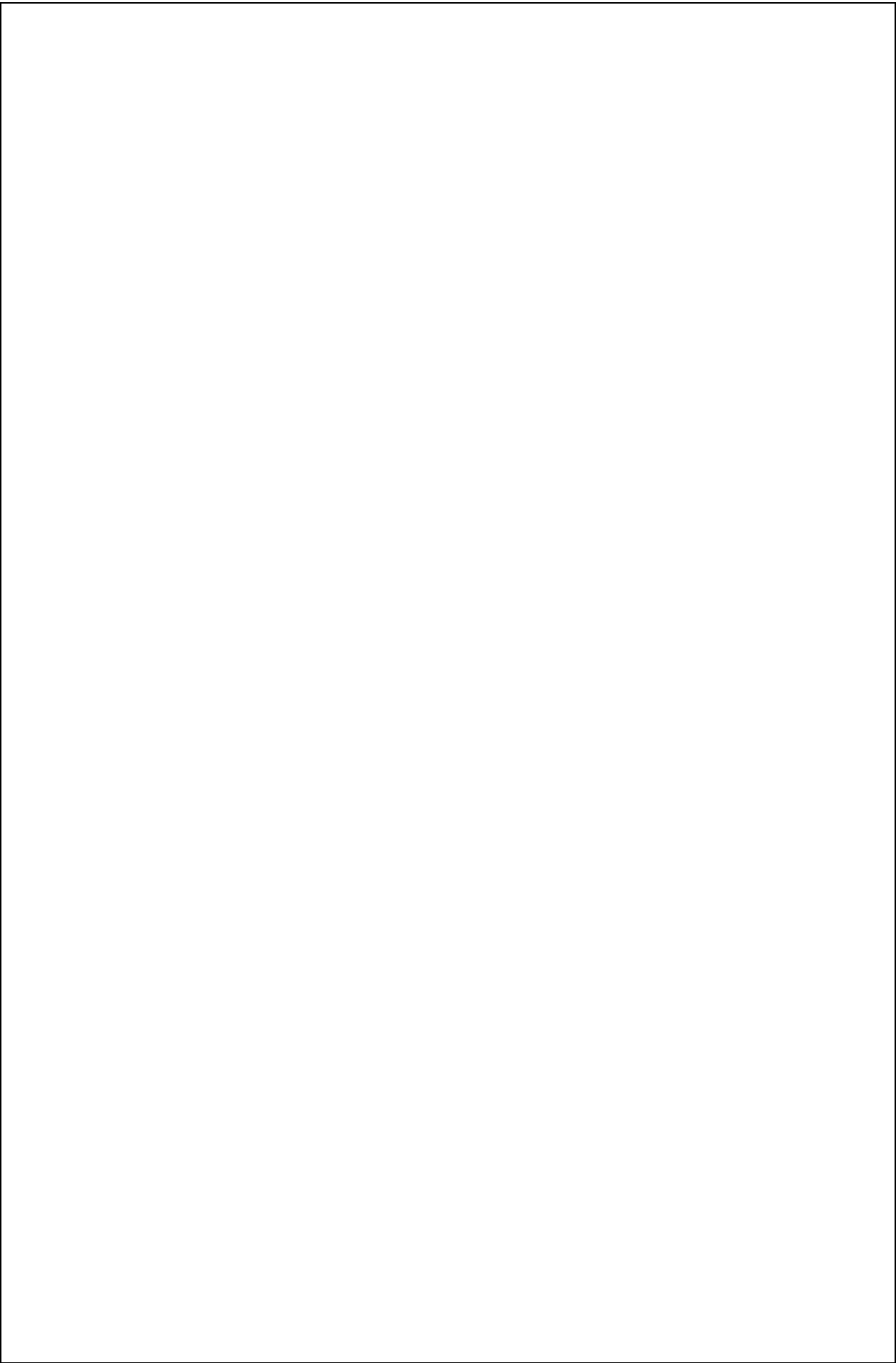
Examples of action taken

- Informal discussion with person involved
- Supported Discussion
- Mediation
- Advice from Dignity at Work Support Officers

--

DETAILS OF WHO YOUR COMPLAINT IS AGAINST			
Name		Section	
Designation		Work Location	

NATURE OF COMPLAINT (please include specific details of incidents, including dates, times, and any witnesses)



Please indicate how, in your opinion, this could be resolved:

Signed _____ Date _____

For Employment & Policy Team only

Preliminary Review

Proceed/Proceed in Part/Do not proceed with Formal Investigation (delete as appropriate)

REASON/S

Signed **Date**

The individual who has raised the complaint must be notified in writing of the outcome of the preliminary review.

Acting Up and Higher Duties for Single Status Employees

Version 1

April 2025



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1. Introduction

As part of our commitment to developing a workforce for the future, North Lanarkshire Council recognises the significance of providing opportunities for employees to temporarily act up to a higher graded post or to undertake additional higher duties. Whilst the business needs of the Council will always be the primary focus of any resourcing decisions, we recognise that promoting the development and capabilities of the workforce by giving them experience beyond their substantive job role can be beneficial in building our capacity.

The provisions around acting up and undertaking higher duties are currently detailed within the Council's Core Conditions of Service and these will continue to apply.

2. Scope

This guidance applies to all employees of the Council who hold a permanent or temporary contract with the Council (except those employed under SNCT (Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teacher) Terms and Conditions for whom separate arrangements apply. Casual Workers and Trainees are not eligible for acting up or higher duties payments, however there may be occasions when it is appropriate for Modern Apprentices to be given an opportunity to act up or undertake higher duties for a limited period of time.

Managers who ask an individual to act on their behalf during short periods of absence such as sickness, annual leave or attending a conference, by giving them the authority to authorise annual leave, invoices, manage sickness absence etc, do not qualify for acting up or higher duties payments. This is classed as delegated authority which is distinct from acting up or higher duties and does not attract any allowance.

Acting Up and higher duties payments are not intended to be applied on a permanent basis. Where changes to an employee's duties are required on a permanent basis, discussion should take place with the relevant HR Business Partner team and the provisions of the Job Re-evaluation Procedure considered.

3. Definitions

Acting Up (Applies for Vacant Posts only)

Acting up is when an employee temporarily takes on the full or majority of the duties of a vacant post that is graded higher than their substantive post. On most occasions, employees will assume 100% of the duties of the vacant post, however there may be situations where a lesser percentage will be required (ie the person is not qualified to do the full remit of the post). If the requirement for cover is less than 80% of the duties of the post, higher duties arrangements as outlined below should be applied.

Acting up should only be used when it has been established that a post will be vacant for a significant period of time. Managers must ensure that all acting up arrangements are discussed and agreed with the Service HR Business Partner before proceeding.

Higher Duties

Higher duties apply to employees who are required to undertake higher level duties in addition to those of their substantive post for a temporary period of time for business requirements. These duties will be at a demonstratively higher level of complexity than those of the employee's substantive grade duties and will be assigned to a job role evaluated at a higher grade. Higher duties are normally not paid at 100% however there may be circumstances where this is necessary, such as short notice cover that is only required for a limited period of time.

Higher duties can also be approved if there is a need for a specific function of work and/or task to be undertaken, the nature of which is determined as being at a higher level of complexity than the employee's substantive duties. Any decision to apply a higher duties payment in such circumstances must be discussed and agreed with the Service HR Business Partner in the first instance.

4. When is it appropriate to use Acting Up or Higher Duties?

The opportunity to act up or undertake higher duties may be the result of one of the following:

- the permanent employee is on long term secondment.
- awaiting a vacant post being advertised and filled.
- cover of a long-term sickness absence or maternity leave
- awaiting the conclusion of a structural review
- requirement to ensure continuity of service delivery (mainly front line)
- undertaking a project or planned employee development exercise not related to an established position but associated with a short-term business need.

In determining requirements for acting up or higher duties payment, the manager should consider in conjunction with their Service Business Partner, the following:

- the length of time that the post will be vacant
- how long higher duties will be required
- the nature of the duties requiring to be undertaken
- can the duties be assumed by peers or supervisors
- impact on team members
- employee management responsibilities of the role
- impact on budget and/or Council reputation
- specialised knowledge requirements

Acting up and higher duties payments should not be applied if the impact of any absence will be minimal.

5. Duration of Cover Required

In the normal course of events acting up or higher duties should not continue beyond twelve months, and if it becomes apparent that the requirement will continue longer than this, full consideration should be given to appointing the employee covering the post on a temporary basis.

However, there will be circumstances when it is appropriate for an employee to act up or undertake higher duties beyond twelve months, and this must be fully discussed and agreed by the relevant Chief Officer and Service HR Business Partner.

Agreement for extension of Acting up/Higher Duties beyond 12 months is required from the Workforce Change Steering Group.

There may also be specific business arrangements in place to ensure the continuity of front-line services which do not have a time limit. These arrangements will normally be agreed and applied through a local collective agreement.

6. Determining the Percentage of Duties

To establish the percentage of duties an employee is undertaking of a higher graded post, the job description of the higher graded post should be used, as far as possible, to identify the actual duties that the employee will be undertaking, taking into consideration any duties that the employee will continue to undertake in their own substantive role. Further guidance relating to this is attached at Appendix 1.

Where there are any concerns over the percentage of duties that an employee will be undertaking, this should be discussed with the Service HR Business Partner in advance.

7. Payment and Salary Placing

Acting Up

Employees who are acting up, will be paid the difference between their current salary and the placing on the scale for the higher graded post at the percentage that has been agreed by the manager and Service HR Business Partner (in most cases this should be 100%). The placing on the higher salary scale, will be determined using the promotional rule i.e. they require to be placed on the first point of the salary scale of the higher graded post, which ensures an increase in remuneration of at least an amount equal to the smallest incremental difference on the salary scale of the higher graded post.

Payment will be made from the commencement date of the acting up, however employees will not be paid the higher-grade during periods of leave.

Overtime when Acting Up

Overtime should be avoided where possible during periods of acting up. However, if an employee is required to work overtime whilst undertaking the duties of the post to which they are acting up and they have worked the qualifying hours of 37 hrs per week, a calculation should be undertaken that allows for the difference between the enhanced rate in the higher graded post, minus the enhanced hourly rate that would have been received in the substantive post based on the percentage of acting up that the employee is doing.

Returning to Acting Up after a Short Period of Time

Where an employee has been asked to return to an acting up position with a 12-week period to a post that has the same job title, grade and responsibilities, they should be placed on the same point on the higher salary grade that they were on before the arrangement came to an end.

Higher Duties

Employees who are undertaking higher duties, will be paid the difference between their current salary and the placing on the scale for the higher graded post at the percentage that has been agreed by the manager and Service HR Business Partner (in most cases this should be 80% or less).

The placing on the higher salary scale, will be determined using the promotion rule i.e. placed on the first point of the scale of the higher grade which ensures an increase in remuneration of at least an amount equal to the smallest incremental difference on the salary scale of the higher graded post.

Payment for undertaking higher duties will be paid from the commencement of the arrangement, however employees will not be paid for undertaking higher duties during periods of leave.

Overtime when Undertaking Higher Duties

Employees who are undertaking higher duties should not be required to work overtime to undertake the duties and responsibilities of a higher grade unless there are exceptional circumstances that have been fully agreed with the relevant Service HR Business Partner.

If an employee is required to work overtime whilst undertaking higher duties, as long as they have worked the qualifying hours of 37 per week, a calculation should be undertaken

that allows for the difference between the enhanced rate in the higher graded post, minus the enhanced hourly rate that would have been received in the substantive post, both calculated at the percentage of higher duties the employee is undertaking.

Incremental Progression

Where 'cost of living' pay awards and/or incremental progression occurs during the period of Acting Up/Higher Duties, amounts will be re-calculated reflecting the relevant formula as outlined above.

These will be implemented in line with the existing Council Core Conditions of 1 April or after 6 months if Acting Up /Higher Duties commences between October and March.

Processing of Payment

Acting up and higher duties payments will be processed by the Employee Service Centre via the Service HR Business Partner teams and therefore it is the responsibility of the line manager to liaise with the relevant member of the HR Business Partner team in a timely manner concerning any proposed changes to ensure accurate payment. The Employee Service Centre will arrange for the employee to be advised on a regular basis of the payment that has been processed within their pay.

Pension

Acting up and higher duties payments are counted towards pensionable service but do not count towards payments associated with redundancy, sickness, or maternity leave.

8. Stand-In Arrangements (Hourly difference)

When a situation occurs where full cover is required for a higher graded post at short notice, managers will be able to select an appropriate employee to undertake the duties and responsibilities of that post for a maximum period of 2 weeks, after which the normal acting up or higher duties process should be followed. Employees who are undertaking stand-in will be paid from the commencement of the arrangement, however, they will not be paid for any periods of leave during that time.

Employees doing Stand-in duties will be paid the difference between their own hourly rate and that of their placing on the higher graded post. Again, the promotional rule as described earlier in this document should be used to determine their placing on the higher graded salary scale.

Employees who are on stand-in arrangements and undertake overtime in the higher graded post during that period, should receive the difference between the overtime paid at the higher and lower rate.

9. Selection Process

Higher Duties

The line manager should identify the gap in duties required to be undertaken using the job description of the higher graded post. Where a specific task is the reason, discussion should take place with the line manager and Service HR Business Partner to identify the duties required to be undertaken along with the grade and percentage to be paid.

The manager must determine the duties to be covered and produce a written statement of these duties. (**Please refer to Appendix 1**). Thereafter, approval must be sought from the relevant Chief Officer and Service HR Business Partner to proceed.

When approved, the line manager, should email/contact those employees who are in surrounding or directly associated roles to advise of the opportunity to undertake higher duties. The email/contact should clearly advise of the duties involved, the percentage of duties to be undertaken and an indication of the time that the cover will be required. Employees who are interested will be asked to express an interest by completing the form attached at **Appendix 2**.

If more than one employee expresses an interest, a fair and reasonable selection process must be applied which must include a formal discussion in the form of a professional dialogue meeting held by a panel of 2 Senior Officers.

Once the individual(s) have been selected, the line manager will confirm to the employee that they have been successful, detailing the duties they will undertake and the percentage of payment they will receive and the likely commencement and end dates of the arrangement.

The line manager will ensure that the workload is reasonable and will discuss and agree the prioritisation of work.

Acting Up

Following approval from the Service HR Business Partner, the manager should confirm what percentage of acting up is required for the vacant post (this should in most cases be 100%).

Once approved, the line manager, should email/contact those employees who are in surrounding or directly associated roles to advise of the opportunity to act up. The email/contact should clearly advise of the duties involved, the percentage of duties to be undertaken and an indication of the time that the cover will be required. Employees who are interested will be asked to express an interest by completing the form attached at **Appendix 2**.

When selecting an employee to act up, a fair and reasonable selection process must be applied that includes an interview process if there is more than one suitable applicant or

a formal discussion where there is only one applicant. Service HR Business Partner teams will provide support and assistance where needed.

In the case of acting up/higher duties (100%), the line manager will require to ensure the employee's substantive role is also suitably covered.

Backfill of Posts

When it is deemed necessary and following discussion with the Service HR Business Partner, if the substantive post of those employees who are acting up or undertaking higher duties, require to also be covered, agreement must be sought via the Council's Workforce Change Steering Group to allow this to be facilitated.

10. Appointment to Permanent Post

Where an employee has been acting up to a higher graded post for less than a year, and the employee is appointed to the post on a permanent basis, the employee will be placed on the first point of the higher grade which will ensure an increase in remuneration of at least an amount equal to the smallest increment on the higher grade scale. Where an employee has been acting up to a higher graded post for one year or more and is appointed to the higher graded post on a permanent basis, the salary placing will be the same point on the scale they are currently on when under the acting up arrangement.

Where an employee has been undertaking higher duties (less than 100%) for less than a year and is appointed to the post on a permanent basis, the employee will be placed on the first point on the higher grade which will ensure an increase in remuneration of at least an amount equal to the smallest increment on the higher grade. Where an employee has been undertaking the higher duties for a year or more (less than 100%), their current earnings including the value of the percentage of duties being undertaken at the higher grade will be added together with their current basic salary to provide a gross salary and they will be placed on the first point of the scale that is nearest to this value.

Where an employee has been undertaking 100% higher duties for one year or more and is appointed to the higher graded post on a permanent basis, the salary placing will be the same point on the scale they are currently on when under the acting up arrangement.

11. Equal Opportunities and Review

This guidance note will be regularly reviewed by the Chief Officer, People Resources and monitored by the People Resources team in respect of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, age, and all factors pertaining to equality of opportunity regulations.

Calculation for Acting Up or Undertaking Higher Duties

Acting Up

In order to establish the percentage of duties that an employee is required to undertake through acting up, (if not the full 100% of the role) the line manager should review the job description for the higher graded post and identify the actual tasks that will be undertaken.

If the job description of the higher graded post has 16 points and the employee acting up is required to undertake 8 of those points, the percentage to be paid would be 50% (8 divided by 16 x 100%). If they are required to undertake 13 of those points, the percentage to be paid would be 80 % (13 divided by 16 x 100%).

When determining what tasks on the higher graded post the employee will undertake, consideration has to be given to their current job role responsibilities and whether or not someone is required to act up into their post.

Higher Duties

The same process as detailed above applies to higher duties, except where there is no vacancy, and the employee has been asked to undertake a specific task or project that merits a higher duties payment. Where this is the case, the task or project at hand should either be in an existing job description within the service or comparable with another one. Where this is the case discussion should take place between the Senior Business Partner for the Service and the Job Evaluation team to identify the appropriate higher grade and percentage of payment.

Agreement

When the decision has been taken as to what duties are required to be undertaken, the manager should discuss this with the employee and provide details of the duties to be undertaken in writing using the template below:

Dear (Employee)

You have agreed to undertake the following duties on an acting up/ higher duties on a temporary basis with effect from (Date):

- 1. list the duties as detailed within the relevant job description.*
- 2.*
- 3.*

As advised, during the period that you are undertaking these duties, you will be paid a percentage of the difference between your current grade and that of the higher graded post or duties. This currently equates to X%.

As explained you will not be paid higher duties during periods of sickness absence, maternity leave or annual leave.

You will be contacted in advance of any changes to this arrangement.

Regards

Manager

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
ACTING UP/HIGHER DUTIES**

The following form should be completed when one or more persons have been identified as being suitable for consideration for acting up or undertaking higher duties on a temporary basis and for a period of 12 months or less.

SECTION 1: PERSONAL DETAILS

Surname:

First Name(s):

Employee Number:

Job Title:

Grade & Salary/Wage:

Service:

Location:

Email:

SECTION 2: EDUCATION & TRAINING
--

Please provide details of the qualifications you hold that are relevant to the post for which you will be acting up or undertaking higher duties.

Empty space for providing details of qualifications

SECTION 3: SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES

Using bullet points, please detail the skills, knowledge and competencies that you have that are relevant to the post for which you will be acting up or undertaking higher duties.

SECTION 4: PERSONAL SKILLS/QUALITIES

Please use this section to discuss what personal qualities/life skills/life experiences you have which are relevant to the post for which you will acting up or undertaking higher duties.

SECTION 5: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Use this section to detail any other information that you wish to be considered

SECTION 6: DECLARATION

Please sign below to confirm that the information provided within this form is correct and accurate.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
(Print)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
(Signature)

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref

Date

21/05/25

Programme of Work Progress Report: Digital North Lanarkshire, Performance Optimisation, Enhanced Security Monitoring

From	Rachel Blair, Chief Officer (Legal and Democratic) Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)		
E-mail	BlairR@northlan.gov.uk	Telephone	07958 166105
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Executive Summary

A target of the council's Digital and IT Strategy 2024 – 2027, approved by the Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2024, is to:

- Enhance security monitoring to maintain effective access and control over council data as the council delivers the anticipated increase in its digital footprint.

This ambition is managed through the council's programme of work. More specifically, it is coordinated through the Performance Optimisation programme, which in turn forms part of the Digital North Lanarkshire suite of deliverables. Three themes consisting of nine outcomes sit under this programme. This paper looks at activities undertaken to date in delivering three of these outcomes:

1. Develop organisational security model/standards/principles.
2. Identify vulnerable products and mitigating options.
3. Develop and deploy compliance reporting.

All three are in progress with implementation on 1 and 3 well under way and due to complete within schedule. With the security standards model in place and standards now being produced in line with that – and that latter activity being viewed as something that will continue indefinitely – 1 can be considered as almost complete, albeit with the Performance Optimisation Subgroup requiring to sign off to that effect. Deliverable 2 – identify vulnerable products and mitigating actions – is currently on target to deliver a vulnerability management performance monitoring system and supporting processes by the intended end Q4 2025/2026 deadline. The Digital North Lanarkshire Performance Optimisation Subgroup will be asked to consider extending this project by one further year, however, to include an assessment of the success or otherwise of any newly deployed systems and processes.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the progress made to date in achieving the council's ambition to deliver the three deliverables that fall within the scope of this report.

- (2) The 'Business-as-usual' activities have continued to be delivered by all the stakeholders involved whilst progressing these themes.
- (3) It should be observed that whilst implementation deadlines have been set for the delivery of each outcome, the overall theme will continue to develop as part of continual improvements to the council's cyber security control set.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	All ambition statements
Programme of Work	Digital North Lanarkshire

1. Background

- 1.1 The council has previously undertaken evaluation exercises to identify areas of relative weakness that may nevertheless be of importance in managing its information and cyber security risk. Such exercises have identified the priority activities that are now being addressed through what is essentially an information risk management and cyber security improvement strategy. These activities are documented and have their progress tracked through the council's Programme of Work (PoW).
- 1.2 Nine deliverables have been separately identified within the PoW as leading to enhanced security monitoring. Through these, the council aims to maintain effective access and control over council data as it delivers the anticipated increase in its digital footprint.
- 1.3 This report looks at the work undertaken to date in progressing three deliverables:
 - Develop organisational security model/standards/principles.
 - Identify vulnerable products and mitigating options.
 - Develop and deploy compliance reporting.
- 1.4 All three commenced during the 2024/2025 financial year and are scheduled to complete by the end of the 2025/2026 financial year. The reality is that none will stop being developed through the adoption of continual improvement processes. As such it is intended that the processes for each will continue to become better defined and lead to the creation of an adaptable and flexible cyber security assurance reporting and monitoring framework. For example, in the context of security standards, these will continue to be developed, managed, maintained and deprovisioned as appropriate over an indefinite and continuous timeframe.
- 1.5 There may be merit in extending the timeline for delivering one outcome – identify vulnerable products and mitigating options – by up to one calendar year. This is to give time to assess the use of acquired vulnerability management tooling and supporting processes as part of a proof-of-concept programme. It is nevertheless still an aim to have such tooling and processes in place by the scheduled completion date.
- 1.6 None of the activities within the scope of this report will stop being developed through the adoption of continual improvement processes. As such it is intended that the processes for each will continue to become better defined and lead to the creation of

an adaptable and flexible cyber security assurance reporting and monitoring framework. For example, in the context of security standards, these will continue to be developed, managed, maintained and deprovisioned as appropriate over an indefinite and continuous time.

2. Report

2.1 This report looks at progress across each of the following three areas:

- Standards
- Vulnerability management
- Compliance reporting

Standards

2.2 The council has adopted a suite of controls deemed to give appropriate protection to its digital systems and processes. From a governance perspective, and to move further along the maturity curve for how information security assurance is managed, a defining set of key principles next need to be clearly adopted. Such principles are usually documented in the form of a library of 'standards', which can in turn become one of the pillars supporting the development of an information security management system (ISMS). These set out the high-level controls to be adopted or outcomes that are desired.

2.3 Security standards support the higher-level security and information governance policies that the council has introduced. The council has an information governance framework in place that consists of:

- Information and Cyber Security Policy
- Records and Information Management Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Payment Card Data Security Policy

2.4 There are many existing frameworks available to organisations that can be used to define the structure of an information security standards library. For reasons that will become clear, the council has settled on the United States' National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and their outcomes-based set of controls called the Cyber Security Framework (CSF) as the framework of choice.

2.5 The Council has a requirement to conform with the Department for Work and Pensions' Memorandum of Understanding (DWP MoU). This is a cyber security-oriented contract that all organisations which process HMG data must sign up to. This covers data shared with local authorities by HMRC and DWP for the purposes of supporting the processing of benefit claims by members of the public. The terms and conditions of the DWP MoU include adhering with many of their own security standards.

2.6 In line with the requirements of the council's Enterprise Architecture Business Principle 2 – Reuse before buy, before build – the standards in development contain public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. To support compliance with the DWP MoU, these mostly reuse content from DWP's own security standards – with prior agreement. Some standards reuse content from other sources. Each standard attributes the relevant public agencies.

- 2.7 The DWP has chosen the NIST CSF as their framework of choice, and through adopting the DWP's set of standards the council is choosing to align with NIST CSF.
- 2.8 A [Security Standards Framework](#) (ergo the security model that is the target of this deliverable) was approved by the Data Governance Board on 26th March 2025. With a standards roadmap in place, and the development of standards essentially now a business-as-usual activity based on that roadmap, a case can be made for saying that this deliverable is now in place. Discussion will take place at a forthcoming Digital North Lanarkshire Performance Optimisation Subgroup meeting to seek views on whether this objective can now be determined as having been met, with future activities transitioning to business-as-usual.
- 2.9 The Gantt chart below shows the high-level tasks requiring to be completed through to the expected completion schedule concluding at end Q4 financial year 2025/2026 (with the development and rollout of standards continuing beyond this as business-as-usual activity).

Task	2024/25				2025/26				2026/27			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Investigate Frameworks												
Determine Framework												
Draft 'Test' Standard(s)												
Seek Stakeholder Feedback												
Develop Standards Roadmap												
Seek TDA Approval for Framework												
Develop Governance Framework												
Seek DGB Approval for Framework, Roadmap, and Standards Governance Process												
Switch on Standards Production Pipeline												

Timeline of activities for developing organisational model/standards/principles

- 2.10 Appendix 1 shows an extract from the security standards roadmap, highlighting the first twelve standards being developed.
- 2.11 Appendix 2 of this report includes one of the standards covering cryptographic controls that has recently undergone internal review. This has been taken through the Council's Technology Design Authority and approved subject to further internal scrutiny before being submitted to the Data Governance Board for final approval.

Vulnerability management

- 2.12 Successfully identifying and managing technical vulnerabilities within IT environments can significantly reduce exposure to successful cyber attacks. The council operates 'patching' programmes which enable core IT systems and software to be updated with fixes to address discovered security flaws.
- 2.13 Processes – and the tools required to support them – that deliver assurance that IT vulnerabilities are remediated in accordance with the risk they present are not yet fully adopted. The council undertakes point in time assessments of endpoints through limited external scanning of its externally exposed services – a requirement of the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard – and annual IT health checks of a sample of endpoints across its technology stack.

- 2.14 A Gartner (the council's chosen IT strategic management professional services partner) self-assessment exercise was undertaken in Q1 of 2023 to help inform the council's cyber security, and thus digital and IT, strategy. This showed that whilst good practices could be evidenced across the entirety of a vulnerability management (VM) maturity model, some practices are missing.
- 2.15 The chief callouts for improvement were:
- Provide vulnerability assessments to IT operations
 - Prioritise remediation based on common vulnerabilities and exposures (CVE) severity
- 2.16 Whilst vulnerability assessments are provided to IT operations, as per 2.13 these are based on findings from one-off annual IT health checks or external scanning of public-facing infrastructure. Continual assessment of the technical estate from a VM perspective is not currently in place.
- 2.17 Microsoft Defender provides intelligence in the VM space. However, Defender is not a dedicated VM tool and Microsoft does not specialise solely in this area. In addition, the council uses many technologies beyond those provided by Microsoft. VM tooling provided by vendors of specialist VM solutions may be expected to give more effective results for an organisation of the size and complexity of the council.
- 2.18 To mature VM practices, a programme of improvements has been spun up that will look to evaluate tools and processes to address the issues observed. To date:
- 2.18.1 Capital monies have been obtained to procure dedicated VM tooling that will provide intelligence about exposure to vulnerabilities across the council's corporate estate. This money has been assigned to be spent during the 2025/2026 financial year and used to test the hypothesis that specialist tooling will provide better results across the entirety of the council's technology stack than Microsoft is able to.
- 2.18.2 Capital monies were bid for and obtained to employ a fixed-term officer to lead on a vulnerability management improvement programme.
- 2.18.3 From the capital bid described in 2.14.2, a Senior ICT Security Officer has been recruited to provide focus on this deliverable. This two-year temporary post was filled as of 24th March 2025.
- 2.18.4 Off the back of 2.14.3, engagement with potential vendors of continuous vulnerability management solutions has commenced as part of an evaluation of the marketplace.
- 2.19 With regards to their focus on vulnerability management, it is proposed to utilise the temporary post of Senior ICT Security Officer by procuring suitable tooling to operate a proof of concept, lasting up to one year, of a suitable VM tooling. Over the course of the trial year, it is proposed to operate the procured tooling and compare usability and performance against the capability available in Microsoft Defender.
- 2.20 The timeline for progressing this deliverable and meeting the expected conclusion of having solutions in place to meet this objective by end Q4 2025/2026 is shown below:

Task	Financial Yr 2024/25				Financial Yr 2025/26				Financial Yr 2026/27			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Submit Capital Funding Bid for Tooling												
Submit Capital Funding Bid for Staff Resource												
Recruit and Onboard Staff Resource												
Undertake Marketplace Evaluation of VM Tooling												
Procure and Implement VM Tooling												
Operate Tooling as a One Year POC												
Report Back to Executive Oversight Body with Recommendations for Long Term Solution												

Timeline of activities for identifying vulnerable products and mitigating options

- 2.21 There is merit in considering an extension of the timeline for delivery of this objective by up to one calendar year, as highlighted by the yellow shaded actions in the Gantt chart above. This is to build in an opportunity to trial any newly deployed processes and technologies and provide feedback to executive management in determining a long term VM solution.

Compliance reporting

- 2.22 In a global context, the council outperforms the Gartner benchmark average within the Government industry sector in terms of cyber security compliance management. Cyber security compliance is nevertheless an area of significant importance to many organisations and North Lanarkshire Council is no different in that regard, given the potential contractual, regulatory and legislative compliance conditions that it may be subject to.
- 2.23 The main cyber security-focused compliance conditions that the council must meet are obligated through contract. In the context of this deliverable, three contracts stand out that could pose a significant risk to the Council should their conditions not be met:
- Public Services Network – Code of Connection
 - Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards
 - DWP Memorandum of Understanding
- 2.24 The cyber security compliance framework that affects local government can change quickly. Just as is happening in England and Wales with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government phasing in the Cyber Assessment Framework for local government across that sector, the same could happen in Scotland. If mandated for the council, that would be a further suite of compliance conditions to be met.
- 2.25 With 2.23 in mind, managing cyber security compliance in an organised and systematic manner, with a focus on efficiency, can deliver significant benefits to the council.
- 2.26 This deliverable is tied to the development of standards earlier described in this report. Each compliance requirement should be evidenced as being met through one or more outcomes in one or more standards. In turn, it should be possible to then demonstrate how each outcome is met across relevant parts of the council's technology estate. The development of a standards therefore suite goes hand in hand with this objective.

2.27 To date, compliance requirements have been extracted from the Public Services Network – Code of Connection (PSN CoCo) and the DWP MoU. The remaining time to conclusion of this exercise (end Q4 2025/2026) will be used to:

- Rationalise the compliance requirements between the PSN CoCo and the DWP MoU.
- Roll the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS) into this rationalisation process.
- Create the framework that will be used to show which standards and conditions demonstrate adherence to each cyber security compliance condition that the council must meet.

2.28 Mapping all cyber security compliance requirements to a single framework – linking each condition back to parent regulations, contracts, or legislative requirements and forward to the standard that demonstrates it as being a mandatory objective for the council – will initially be a time-consuming process. However, as new compliance conditions are levied on the council, so the likelihood will increase that they are, in fact, already being picked up and met through the existing single, overarching compliance framework.

2.29 The Gantt chart below shows the timeline of activities that make up this project, and the aim to conclude successfully at the end of the 2025/2026 financial year:

Task	Financial Yr 2024/25				Financial Yr 2025/26				Financial Yr 2026/27			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Enumerate Cyber Security Requirements in PSN CoCo												
Enumerate Cyber Security Requirements in DWP MoU												
Create Initial Standards Framework to be Leveraged												
Enumerate PCI DSS Requirements												
Rationalise PSN, DWP and PCI DSS Compliance Requirements												
Create Compliance Framework												

Timeline of activities for developing and deploying compliance reporting

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 For the development of standards, success is deemed as having a formally approved framework in place, a managed roadmap of standards in operation, and standards being produced at a cadence that supports business objectives.
- 3.2 For vulnerability management, success will be to have a working VM tool and supporting process in operation as a proof of concept by start of 2026/2027 financial year. Findings from that proof of concept will inform the ultimate direction of the council in terms of vulnerability management.
- 3.3 For cyber security compliance management, success will be to have a compliance framework developed incorporating PSN CoCo, PCI DSS and DWP MoU requirements by the start of the 2026/2027 financial year.

4. Supporting documentation

Appendix 1 – Extract from the council's security standards roadmap

Appendix 2 – Information Security and Risk – Use of Cryptography Security Standard



Rachel Blair
Chief Officer (Legal and Democratic)



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? i) Capital funding has been obtained to create a fixed-term post of Senior ICT Security Officer to support the selection, onboarding and operation of a suitable VM product and develop processes to support management of IT vulnerabilities. ii) Capital funding has been obtained to procure a VM product as a one-year proof of concept.
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk

	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.6 Technology / Digital impact	<p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>The three outcomes discussed in this report all have an impact to some degree on the IT practices within the Council. In creating standards defining minimum security practices or configurations some technical impact may be felt if systems are required to be changed or updated as a result. Vulnerability management, to be well assured, requires the procurement, onboarding and operation of specialist product and development of supporting processes. And in creating a single cyber security compliance framework there is the opportunity for missed/overlooked requirements to be identified requiring a technical change to be met.</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact	<p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
5.8 Communications impact	<p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
5.9 Risk impact	<p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p> <p>The delivery of the three outcomes discussed will enable cyber security risk to be better managed across the organisation, issues to be identified, and remedial activities to be undertaken as considered necessary.</p>	
5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty	<p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>	

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Appendix 1 – Extract from the council's security standards roadmap

DWP	NLC	Sensitivity	Public	Production order	Status	Review
dwp-ss007-security-standard-use-of-cryptography	SS-007 Use of Cryptography Security Standard	Official	Yes	1	Consultation	
dwp-ss008-security-standard-server-operating-system	SS-008 Server Operating System Security Standard	Official	Yes	2	Consultation	
dwp-ss009-security-standard-hypervisor	SS-009 Hypervisor Security Standard	Official	Yes	3	Consultation	
dwp-ss025-security-standard-virtualisation	SS-025 Virtualisation Security Standard	Official	Yes	4	Consultation	
dwp-ss029-security-standard-securely-serving-web-content	SS-029 Securely Serving Web Content Security Standard	Official	Yes	5	Consultation	
dwp-ss004	SS-004 Information Classification and Handling Security Standard	Official	Yes	6	Published	April 2027
dwp-ss012-security-standard-protective-monitoring-standard	SS-012 Protective Monitoring Security Standard	Official	Yes	7	In development	
dwp-ss001-part-1-security-standard-access-and-authentication-controls	SS-001 (part 1) Access and Authentication Controls Security Standard	Official	Yes	8	In development	
dwp-ss033-security-standard-security-patching	SS-033 Security Patching Security Standard	Official	Yes	9	Not started	
dwp-ss021	SS-021 IT Systems Resiliency and Disaster Recovery Standard	Official	Yes	10	Published	June 2025
dwp-ss020	SS-020 Supply Chain Security Standard	Official	No	11	Not started	



Information Security and Risk

SS-007: Use of Cryptography Security Standard

Version 0.4, [Publish Date]

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Document control

Control details

Title:	SS-007: Use of Cryptography Security Standard
Author:	Information Compliance Officer
Owner:	Information Risk Manager
Subject:	<p>Use of cryptography security standard for council information, in line with the Information and Cyber Security Policy.</p> <p>This standard defines good practice in terms of using cryptographic controls to protect the confidentiality and integrity of our electronic information – in transit or at rest.</p>
Classification:	OFFICIAL
Control location:	<p>InsideNL > Documents > Information governance > Information security and risk > Information security</p> <p>Save this link to your browser favourites for quick and easy access.</p>
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Amendment record

Version	Amendment details	Date amended
0.4	Amendments based on feedback from Technology Strategy Manager.	10 September 2024
0.3	<p>11.1.1 – removed: 'Encryption products certified via NCSC certification for example, Commercial Product Assurance (CPA) meets the standard.'</p> <p>11.1.3 – removed: 'as do products certified by the NCSC Commercial Product Assurance (CPA) scheme.'</p> <p>11.3.1.a – removed: 'NCSC CPA or'</p> <p>Appendix B – changed one instance of 'DWP' to 'Authority', removed items 'DDA – DWP Design Authority', and 'PDU – Produce Delivery Units'.</p> <p>Appendix B – removed 'v0.9.6' from end of item B.</p> <p>Appendix C – replaced 'Commercial Product Assurance (CPA)' with 'Cryptographic Module Validation Program (CMVP)'. Added link to NIST FIPS-140.</p>	28 August 2024

Version	Amendment details	Date amended
	Appendix E – removed 'CPA, Commercial Product Assurance, NCSC'.	
0.2	Amendments based on first round of comments.	26 July 2024
0.1	New document	23 July 2024

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A note about plain English

This document follows [plain English guidance](#), in line with our corporate commitment to clear communications. In particular, it uses the following terms.

- 'We', 'us' and 'our' when referring to the council (as an organisation), our collective responsibilities (as authorised users of council IT assets), and when discussing specific activities.
- 'You' and 'your' when referring to the individual responsibilities and actions of authorised users of council IT assets.

We reuse text from the Department of Works and Pensions in this document.

- We can't guarantee that text will follow plain English guidance.
- It uses the term 'the Authority' when referring to the council.
- It uses technical language, but this is audience appropriate.

1. Introduction

This standard defines a set of mandatory security measures for implementing cryptographic controls to mitigate risks, and or comply with legal and regulatory requirements, in line with our information governance policies.

- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Payment Card Data Security Policy](#)
- [Information and Cyber Security Policy](#)
- [Records and Information Management Policy](#)

We **must** implement cryptographic controls whenever it is necessary to protect the confidentiality and integrity of electronic information – in transit or at rest – from threats facing the council and its suppliers. Threats can be physical or logical in nature such as media containing sensitive data being stolen, or hackers sniffing data packets across the network. We can also use cryptographic controls to authenticate the identities of both the sender and recipient to one another and protect against repudiation.

This standard only provides **minimum** security measures. As such, we should exceed them as appropriate, depending on:

- the threats and risks we need to address,
- the sensitivity of the data, and
- the latest security enhancements.

We derive these security measures from industry best practice. This includes guidance published by the following organisations. These form the basis of the mandatory UK compliance frameworks we operate within.

- NIST – National Institute of Standards and Technology
- CIS – Center for Internet Security
- OWASP – Open Worldwide Application Security Project

Implementing cryptographic controls – user responsibilities

Information asset owners and anyone authorised to manage, administer, process or otherwise use our information on our behalf **must** do the following.

1. Comply with our information governance policies.
2. Decide if it's appropriate to encrypt the information. Examples of when we **must** use cryptographic controls are as follow.
 - Sending sensitive data over a network.
 - Storing sensitive data in a multi-tenanted cloud hosted environment – for example, passwords, personal citizen information.
 - Connecting remote workers from home to access the council network.
 - Protecting citizen data at rest – for example, in databases or object stores.
 - To comply with legal or regulatory requirements.
3. Implement cryptographic controls – where needed – in line with security measures set out in this standard, and related documents.

We support using appropriate security controls, as selected by our technical experts or our third-party providers. For example, the CIS Critical Security Controls v8 controls set. See Appendix C for full list external references.

As far as is possible, our security measures are vendor and technology agnostic. This makes it easier to apply the standard regardless of the technologies we use. We may implement security measures in different ways, depending on technology choices and business requirements.

2. Open Government License for public sector information: Attribution statement

This document contains public sector information licensed under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#). Specifically, it reuses the contents of the [Department of Work and Pensions \(DWP\) security standard SS-007: Use of Cryptography](#). We update this document in line with that DWP standard. See Appendix G for detailed revision history.

3. Security outcomes

Security standards ultimately support the security outcomes we want to achieve. They do the following.

1. Set the expectations for what needs to be done to achieve them and why,
2. Provide an objective, measurable statement of our existing security posture.

To make sure we closely align with the NIST Cyber Security Framework (CSF), we base the outcomes – detailed in Appendix A – on the official NIST sub-categories, where possible, using the appropriate controls from the CIS Critical Security Controls v8 controls set. See Appendix C: External references.

4. Purpose

This document sets out security standards for systems and services that use cryptography to encrypt our data. It does the following.

- Makes sure we design, configure, deploy and manage systems and services consistently, to protect against typical threats at the OFFICIAL tier.
- Provides a baseline for assurance and compliance activities to make sure our security obligations are being met or exceeded.

The aim of this standard is to make sure we do the following.

1. Allow technical teams to work towards a set of minimum-security measures, based on industry best practice.
2. Make sure we implement security controls consistently. This applies to the following.
 - a. Designing, developing and deploying cryptographic controls.

- b. Configuring cryptographic controls to only use council approved cryptographic algorithms as defined in our Approved Cryptographic Algorithm document [Reference B].
 - c. Enforcing the use of independently assured cryptographic products, where needed.
3. Mitigate risks from common threats and vulnerabilities to an acceptable level for operation.
4. Support the achievement of security outcomes described in Appendix A.

5. List of terms

This security standard contains both mandatory and advisory elements, using the following terms.

Term	Intention
must	Denotes a requirement: a mandatory element.
should	Denotes a recommendation: an advisory element.
may	Denotes approval.
might	Denotes a possibility.
can	Denotes both capability and possibility.
is/are	Denotes a description.

6. Scope

All IT assets – business systems, networks, and end user devices including portable storage devices – that we use to manage, process and store our electronic information are in scope of this standard. It applies whenever we **must** use cryptographic controls.

Everyone working for us or on our behalf, involved in the design, development, implementation and operation of systems, services and applications **must** adhere to this standard. That is, employees, contractors, consultants, third party service providers, and anyone else we identify as within its scope.

7. Exclusions

The following exclusions apply.

1. There are certain measures regarding the use of cryptography in the cloud deliberately excluded from this standard, as this is covered in SS-023 – Cloud Computing Security Standard [Reference C]. As such, you **must** read this standard in conjunction with SS-023.

2. Cryptographic key management is a fundamental aspect of ensuring the security of information protected by cryptography, however this area is outside of the scope of this standard and is covered elsewhere in SS-002 PKI and Key Management Security Standard [Reference D].

8. Governance

The **Data Governance Board** has **approval** authority for, and oversight of, this standard, including any exceptions to it. The **Senior Information Risk Owner** is **accountable** for its governance.

The **Technical Design Authority (TDA)** is **responsible** for the following.

1. Oversee the review of this standard and consider its contents before referring it on for approval.
2. Assess any [exception](#) requests.
3. Collectively and individually promote compliance with this standard.

The **Information Security and Risk team** is **responsible** for the following activities.

1. Produce, publish and promote this standard.
 - a. Write it in an audience appropriate way that's easy to read and understand.
 - b. Consult with relevant stakeholders on its content and implications.
 - c. Make sure all intended users can access it.
2. Give guidance on how to apply and comply with this standard – including managing exceptions – through policies, procedures, guidance notes, and direct advice.
→ Email any questions to the [Information Security and Risk team](#).
3. Review and report on this standard.
 - a. Review every two years, with other reviews when needed. For example, a change to the source DWP standard, a change to the law, the government updates its guidance, an audit action.
 - b. Report to management teams, governance and working groups, committees and scrutiny panels.

9. Compliance

Users of this standard **must** do the following to comply with it.

1. Apply this standard in the design, assurance, and audit of relevant technical solutions deployed across the council and supplier base, where applicable.
2. Apply the security measures to new and existing installations.
3. Include adherence to the security measures in all contracts for outsourced services where applicable.
4. Consider accessibility design requirements. See Appendix F for more information on accessibility standards.

We will verify compliance with this standard through various methods, including but not limited to the following.

- Controls tests performed by first-line teams and by second line activities such as security testing.
- Security assurance activities to make sure architectural design and delivery are appropriate and align to applicable Authority security standards. [See Security Assurance Strategy – Ref O].
- Independent external audit.

We will feedback results to the appropriate risk and system owners.

10. Exceptions process

In this document we use the term '**must**' is used in bold letters to indicate a mandatory security measure. If you identify any exceptions in applying this standard, or can't adhere to specific security measures, you **must** explain – in detail – the reasons why and define the resulting risks. In doing so, you **must** do the following follow before proceeding.

1. Consult with the Information Security and Risk team to:
 - a. confirm any design caveats or exceptions, and
 - b. clarify the potential impact of any deviation to the security measures detailed in this standard.
2. Refer to the Technical Design Authority further assessment and to agree a recommended course of action.
3. Present the recommendations to the to the Data Governance Board for consideration.

The Information Security and Risk team will:

1. maintain a register of exceptions to the standard for accountability, traceability, and security governance; and
2. report on exceptions as per 3a. above.

11. Minimum technical security measures

The following section defines the minimum technical security measures that we **must** meet to achieve the outcomes described in Appendix A. For ease of reference, this includes the relevant NIST subcategory identifier for each security measure – for example, PR.DS-5 – to indicate which outcome(s) it contributes towards. Refer to Appendix A for full descriptions of security outcomes.

Note: Where FIPS 140 – that is, Federal Information Processing Standard – is referenced, the dash numbers are not included – for example, FIPS 140-3. The reason for this is that these represent versions of the standard that are valid for a limited time for certification to be issued against. These certificates have a defined lifespan, so that older versions of the FIPS 140 standard expire over time. Hence newer versions of the FIPS standard are automatically covered.

11.1. Software and hardware requirements

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.1.1	The Cryptographic software deployed must be selected having an active validation to FIPS 140 and FIPS 197. [See External references].	PR.DS-5 PR.DS-1 PR.DS-2 ID.BE-4
11.1.2	Cryptographic software must be maintained in accordance with SS-033 Security Patching Standard [Reference E].	PR.IP-12
11.1.3	Cryptographic hardware deployed must have an active validation against a recognised scheme. FIPS 140 and FIPS 197 meet this standard [See NIST CMVP in External references].	PR.DS-5 PR.AC-5
11.1.4	Cryptographic software / hardware must be deployed, configured, and operated in accordance with the security procedures and cryptographic manual supporting the products' validation.	PR.IP-1 PR.IP-3 PR.DS-1 PR.DS-2 PR.AC-5
11.1.5	Cryptographic software / hardware must only be used when still under active vendor support or still inside its validation period.	PR.MA-1 PR.IP-3
11.1.6	Where applicable cryptographic operations must be performed on hardware, this requires appropriate validations to be in place; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. For HSMs, FIPS 140 at level 3 or higher b. For TPMs, v2.0 or higher Where applicable, cryptographic operations must be used in software, this requires appropriate validations to be in place; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. For software packages, FIPS 140 at level 2 or higher; b. For software libraries, FIPS 140 at level 1 or higher 	PR.DS-5

11.2. Cryptographic algorithm requirements

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.2.1	<p>Cryptographic algorithms and modes of operation must be selected from the Authority's Approved Cryptographic Algorithms document [Reference B].</p> <p>Note. Approval by the Authority is indicated by inclusion in the above document. Where multiple algorithms are deployed, the order of preference given by this document must also be technically enforced.</p>	PR.IP-1

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.2.2	Approved asymmetric cryptography must be used where the use of symmetric cryptography is inappropriate, for example, weaknesses in implementation, unable to handle certificate exchange or physical key exchange, or for authentication purposes.	PR.DS-1, PR.DS-2
11.2.3	The list of approved cryptographic algorithms must be reviewed at least annually.	PR.IP-1 PR.IP-3
11.2.4	Approved hashing algorithms must be used as the basis for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Creating message digests; b. Generating digital signatures; c. Message Authentication Codes (MACs / HMACs); d. Pseudorandom Functions (PRFs); e. Key Derivation Functions (KDFs). See the Authority's Approved Cryptographic Algorithms document [Reference B] for approved algorithms.	PR.AC-1, PR.AC-6
11.2.5	Where information is to be encrypted and authenticated, the Message Authentication Code (MAC) must be computed after encryption (i.e. encrypt-then-MAC).	PR.DS-6
11.2.6	Use of Elliptic Curve Cryptography (ECC) curves and key parameters must be selected from those recommended in the latest version of FIPS 186.	PR.DS-6
11.2.7	Use of Diffie Hellman key exchange algorithm must be used in conjunction with the following parameters as appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DH Group 19 2. DH Group 20 3. DH Group 21 	PR.DS-2, PR.PT-4

11.3. Generation of cryptographic key material

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.3.1	Where pseudorandom number generation is required, but not provided as part of vendor software, (including initialisation vectors), this must use cryptographically secure sources of entropy. Acceptable sources are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. External modules which have received FIPS 140 certification. b. Operating system certified sources (for example, Microsoft CryptoAPI:NG, /dev/random). 	PR.DS-5 PR.IP-1 PR.IP-3

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.3.2	Virtual Machines (VMs) and operating systems running on Solid State Drives (SSDs) will require an assured feed of pseudorandom data from an external entropy feed (as per the section above), as they cannot be relied upon to produce their own, except in the case where an external module described in section 11.3.1 above is deployed.	PR.DS-1 PR.DS-2 ID.BE-4

11.4. Compression

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.4.1	Compression of data must be a separate process to the encryption and decryption operations themselves. Compression routines that execute alongside encryption and decryption functions (for example, TLS compression) must not be used.	PR.IP-1 PR.DS-6

11.5. Message padding

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.5.1	Messages to be encrypted by an approved asymmetric algorithm must use PKCS#1 v2.2 minimum. Fallback to earlier version is not allowed.	PR.DS-1, PR.DS-2, PR.IP - 1

11.6. Encryption in transit

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.6.1	Encrypted communication transiting Authority owned and / or supplier managed infrastructure must be designed to support content inspection capabilities as per SS-006 Security Boundaries Security Standard [Reference A].	PR.PT-4 PR.PT-1
11.6.2	Encrypted communications channels must be protected using protocols, protocol suites and techniques in accordance with the relevant cryptographic manual, the Authority's Approved Cryptographic Algorithms document [Reference B] and require Authority approval of the solution.	PR.DS-2, PR.DS-5, PR.PT-4

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.6.3	<p>Encrypted sessions must re-negotiate new symmetric keys after one of the following criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The data volume specified in the validation has exceeded its maximum limit b. The time limit specific in the validation has exceeded its maximum limit. 	PR.DS-1, PR.DS-2

11.7. Encryption at rest

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.7.1	All user-writeable partitions on portable devices (laptops, mobile phones, portable storage devices etc.) must be encrypted at the media-level (i.e. Full Disk Encryption (FDE)).	PR.DS-1
11.7.2	Where applicable, the master encryption key must reside within assured cryptographic hardware and must not leave the assured cryptographic hardware for the master keys' service life.	PR.DS-5 PR.DS-1 PR.AC-1
11.7.3	Information held encrypted at rest must also be integrity protected.	PR.DS-6 PR.DS-8
11.7.4	Where multiple layers of encryption are available (for example, media-level and database field-level), each layer must be applied proportionally to mitigate risks identified during a risk assessment process.	PR.DS-1 PR.DS-5
11.7.5	The encryption software deployed on devices as described in 11.7.1 must require sufficient entropy as part of the authentication mechanism. In a scheme that uses a password as the authentication mechanism, this equates to a password that is of sufficient length and complexity to match the requirements in the password policy defined for the system.	PR.AC-1 PR.AC-7 PR.DS-1 PR.DS-2
11.7.6	Encryption software deployed on devices (i.e. laptops, portable storage devices) must restrict the number of authentication attempts within any given time interval. Where the number of attempts and time interval are not specified as part of the product's certification, these values must be configured in line with the password policy for the system/device in question.	PR.AC-1 PR.AC-7 PR.DS-1 PR.DS-2

11.8. Passwords

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.8.1	<p>Authentication information which grants authorised access to asset(s) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. not be stored in plain text or in any reversible format; b. be salted with at least 128 bits of pseudorandom data; c. be hashed using a method described in the Authority's Approved Cryptographic Algorithms Document [Reference B]. 	<p>PR.DS-1 PR.AC-1 PR.AC-4</p>

11.9. Cryptographic key management

Reference	Minimum technical security measures	NIST ID
11.9.1	<p>Cryptographic keys must be managed and protected in accordance with the controls present in SS-002 PKI and Key Management Security Standard [Reference D].</p>	<p>PR.DS-1, PR.DS-2 ID.RA-1 ID.RA-3 ID.RA-5</p>

12. Appendices

Appendix A: Security outcomes

The minimum security measures in this standard help us achieve the security outcomes in the table below. For consistency, the official NIST sub-category IDs carry through to the standards.

Reference	Security outcome (sub-category)	Related security measures
ID.BE-4	Dependencies and critical functions for delivery of critical services are established.	11.1.1, 11.3.2
PR.AC-1	Identities and credentials are issued, managed, verified, revoked, and audited for authorized devices, users and processes.	11.2.4, 11.7.5, 11.7.6
PR.AC-5	Network integrity is protected (for example, network segregation, network segmentation).	11.1.3
PR.AC-6	Identities are proofed and bound to credentials and asserted in interactions.	11.2.4
PR.DS-1	Data-at-rest is protected.	11.1.1, 11.2.2, 11.3.2, 11.5.1, 11.6.3, 11.7.1, 11.7.4, 11.8.1, 11.9.1
PR.DS-2	Data-in-transit is protected.	11.1.1, 11.2.1, 11.2.7, 11.3.2, 11.5.1, 11.6.2, 11.6.3, 11.9.1
PR.DS-5	Protections against data leaks are implemented.	11.1.1, 11.1.4, 11.1.6, 11.3.1, 11.6.2, 11.7.2
PR.DS-6	Integrity checking mechanisms are used to verify software, firmware, and information integrity.	11.2.5, 11.2.6, 11.7.3
PR.IP-1	A baseline configuration of information technology/industrial control systems is created and maintained incorporating security principles (for example, concept of least functionality).	11.1.4, 11.2.1, 11.2.3, 11.3.1
PR.IP-3	Configuration change control processes are in place.	11.1.4, 11.1.5, 11.2.1, 11.3.1
PR.IP-12	A vulnerability management plan is developed and implemented.	11.1.2, 11.4.1

Reference	Security outcome (sub-category)	Related security measures
PR.MA-1	Maintenance and repair of organisational assets are performed and logged, with approved and controlled tools.	11.1.5
PR.PT-1	Audit/log records are determined, documented, implemented and reviewed in accordance with policy,	11.6.1
PR.PT-4	Communications and control networks are protected.	11.2.7, 11.6.1, 11.6.2

Appendix B: Internal references

Below is a list of internal documents you should read along with this standard.

Reference	Document	Publicly available
A	SS-006 Security Boundaries security standard	Yes
B	Authority Approved Cryptographic Algorithms	No
C	SS-023 Cloud Computing Security Standard	Yes
D	SS-002 PKI and Key Management Security Standard	Yes
E	SS-033 Security Patching Standard	Yes

Note: Email the [Information Security and Risk team](#) to request access to non-publicly available documents.

Appendix C: External references

Refer to the following publications for further guidance.

Document
Cryptographic Module Validation Program (CMVP)
NIST SP 800-57 Part 1 Revision 5 – Recommendation for Key Management: Part 1 - General
NIST Special Publication 800-107 Revision 1, Recommendation for Applications Using Approved Hash Algorithms
Transitioning the Use of Cryptographic Algorithms and Key Lengths (nist.gov)
NIST SP 800-132, Recommendation for Password-Based Key Derivation Part 1: Storage Applications

Document

[FIPS 140-3, Security Requirements for Cryptographic Modules | CSRC \(nist.gov\)](#)

Appendix D: Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
CTR	Counter
DH	Diffie Hellman
FDE	Full Disk Encryption
FIPS	Federal Information Processing Standard
GCM	Galois/Counter Mode
HMAC	Keyed-hash Message Authentication Code
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization
KDF	Key Derivation Functions
MAC	Message Authentication Code
NCSC	National Cyber Security Centre
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
NIST CSF	NIST Cyber Security Framework
PRF	Pseudorandom Functions
PKCS	Public Key Cryptography Standard
PKI	Public Key infrastructure
RBG	Random Bit Generator
RDP	Remote Desktop Protocol
SHA	Secure Hash Algorithm
SSD	Solid State Drives
SSH	Secure Shell
TLS	Transport Layer Security
TPM	Trusted Platform Module

Abbreviation	Definition
USB	Universal Serial Bus
VM	Virtual Machine

Appendix E: Glossary

Term	Definition
Initialization Vector (IV)	A binary vector used as the input to initialize the algorithm for the encryption of a plaintext block sequence to increase security by introducing additional cryptographic variance and to synchronize cryptographic equipment.
Public Key Infrastructure (PKI)	The architecture, organisation, techniques, practices, and procedures that collectively support the implementation and operation of a certificate-based public key cryptographic system. Framework established to issue, maintain, and revoke public key certificates.
Message Authentication Code (MAC)	A cryptographic checksum on data that uses a symmetric key to detect both accidental and intentional modifications of the data.
Trusted Platform Module (TPM)	A tamper-resistant integrated circuit built into some computer motherboards that can perform cryptographic operations (including key generation) and protect small amounts of sensitive information, such as passwords and cryptographic keys.

Appendix F. Accessibility artefacts

See the [UK Government's Digital Accessibility guidance](#), including the following.

- [Guidance and tools for digital accessibility - GOV.UK](#)
- [Understanding accessibility requirements for public sector bodies - GOV.UK](#)

Appendix G: DWP source document revision history

Version	Description	Date
1.0	First published version	04/2017

Version	Description	Date
2.0	<p>Full update in line with current best practices and standards, recorded NIST references and made changes to grammar.</p> <p>Introduction and Scope updated for Mandatory 'must' statements and introduced Crypto manual.</p> <p>FIPS 140 and CPA assurance requirements updated throughout.</p> <p>11.1 Reworded</p> <p>11.1.4 - refined requirement to implement in accordance with Crypto manual that supports assurance TOE</p> <p>11.2.1 and 11.4.1 - grammar refresh</p> <p>11.5.1 - PKCS minimum version updated</p> <p>11.6.3 subsumed into 11.6.2</p> <p>11.7.2 Introduced TPM</p> <p>11.8.1 updated Salt value</p>	07/12/2022

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref GT/MB

Date 21/05/25

Microsoft Enterprise Agreement 2025-2028 – Procurement Update

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 07583 010692

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to update the Finance and Resources Committee on procurement activity relating to the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) contract and to highlight the finally agreed contract value as outlined in the report.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledges the award of contract procured via a collaborative procurement procedure through the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) and Digital Office NFC180 Provision of Microsoft Licenses and related services to the value of £10,883,000.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	(18) Ensure our digital transformation is responsive to all people's needs and enable access to the services they need
Programme of Work	Digital North Lanarkshire

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's digital ambitions have seen a significant change in how employees communicate and collaborate using Microsoft 365 Enterprise Edition Licenses introduced by Business and Digital through a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA). Microsoft Licenses support and enable digital transformation, service redesign and business change processes.
- 1.2 The current Enterprise Agreement (EA) facilitates council-wide provision of Microsoft Licenses and support. It includes Server Cloud Enrolment (SCE), Enrolment for Education (EES), Dynamics and Centre of Excellence licenses and Azure consumption. This contract is presently with Phoenix Software Ltd and is due to expire on 31 March 2025.

- 1.3 Licences contained within the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) enable users across the Council, including the school estate to securely access desktop/laptop software, and on premise and cloud-hosted servers.

2. Report

- 2.1 Members will recall from the Finance and Resources Committee on 20 November 2024 the procurement activity undertaken within Business and Digital to renew its portfolio of Microsoft Licences and associated support across all agreements detailed in section 1.2 above for a period of three years from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.
- 2.2 In order to maximise efficiencies within procurement and following the Finance and Resources Committee on the 20 November 2024 which approved the recommendation to award a contract for the agreements mentioned in section 2.1, the council participated in a collaboration procurement exercise led by the Scottish Government's Digital Office which provides councils the opportunity to take part in an aggregated procurement for Microsoft licences.
- 2.3 CCS undertook the procurement in October 2024 through their framework 'Technology Products & Associated Services 2 (TPAS2) Lot 3 Software' with only those on the Commercial Agreement able to submit a bid. The procurement had a response from 7 suppliers who were all scored against a 90% commercial and 10% technical envelope with the successful bidder being Phoenix Software Solutions ranked in 1st place as detailed in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Discounts available on Microsoft Licences are negotiated every three years between CCS and Microsoft as part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) where CCS use national buying power to agree preferential pricing and discounts on products and services across the technology landscape. In November 2024 CCS announced a new Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA24) which took effect from 1 November 2024. SPA24 is aligned with a strategic approach to access enhanced value across public sector organisations when procuring digital products and services which are used daily in the delivery of public services.
- 2.5 Members will recall that due to the timing and release of SPA24 a benchmarking exercise was undertaken and reported to Finance and Resources Committee in November 2024 with a final report intended to follow and be published in cycle two of 2025 offering Committee Members final contract values and to report any potential increases in Microsoft License prices affected by SPA24.
- 2.6 Since the release of SPA24 pricing, the discounts across Modern Workplace licenses and Business Application licenses have continued to be in line with the previous discounts available through the earlier iteration of SPA24, DTA21 which was used as part of the benchmarking exercise noted in section 2.5 therefore the final contract value can now be noted as £10,883,000. Note the previous statement reported to Finance and Resources Committee on 20 November at 5.2 referenced scope for revenue costs to increase, however the final contract price is a fixed price therefore no increase is expected.
- 2.7 The pricing mechanism is a fixed priced contract for individual licences offering a good level of cost certainty; any fluctuation in overall contract value will be related to volume changes throughout course of contract.
- 2.8 The council is committed to maximising the delivery of community benefits and fair working practices. The aggregation exercise being undertaken by CCS includes social

value at tender stage using the social value priority theme of tackling economic inequality.

- 2.9 Officers from Finance and Technology will be responsible for managing the contract which will be undertaken in accordance with the council's agreed approach to contract and supplier management.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 The proposed contract award detailed within this report will deliver the following outcomes:
- a) The successful and optimum provision of Microsoft Licenses across a subscription model for Microsoft 365 services. This includes the Microsoft Office product lines in the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA), including Server and Cloud Environment (SCE) and Enrolment for Education Solutions (EES), Dynamics & Centre of Excellence licenses and Azure consumption.
 - b) That best value will be both demonstrable and achieved.
 - c) That the performance of contracts awarded are proactively managed against the council's agreed approach to contract and supplier management.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 **Appendix 1** - Supplier NFC180 Aggregation Tender Response Matrix



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts have been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts have been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts have been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	Technology / Digital impact
<p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p>	
<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
<p>Microsoft Licenses whether modern workplace, digital platform or cloud services are required to enable council employees to undertake their work. These licenses help support and enable digital transformation, service redesign and business change processes.</p>	
<p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
5.7	Environmental / Carbon impact
<p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
5.8	Communications impact
<p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
5.9	Risk impact
<p>Is there a risk impact?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p>	
5.10	Armed Forces Covenant Duty
<p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>	

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Appendix 1

NFC180 Results

Supplier NFC180 Aggregation Tender Response Matrix

Lot 2

<u>Supplier Name</u>	<u>Total Bid Price (Capped Cost)</u>	<u>Weighted Commercial Score (90%)</u>	<u>Weighted Technical Total (10%)</u>	<u>Total Score</u>	<u>Ranking</u>
Bytes	£40,474,514.88	88.00	10.00	98.00	4
CDW	£40,470,098.45	88.01	6.60	94.61	6
Insight	£40,490,674.88	87.97	6.60	94.57	7
Phoenix	£39,576,603.19	90.00	10.00	100.00	1
Softcat	£40,259,713.66	88.47	10.00	98.47	2
Trustmarque	£40,286,978.55	88.41	10.00	98.41	3
Ultima	£40,065,697.11	88.90	6.60	95.50	5

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Ref 3081

Date

21/05/25

Land Surplus to Operational Requirements at Ailsa Road, Coatbridge

From James McKinstry, Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

E-mail SullivanC@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone

Chris Sullivan
07939 280579

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek council consent to declare an area of land extending to 37 square metres or thereby surplus to council requirements. The area of land is located at Ailsa Road, Coatbridge and is shown on Cartographic Drawing 48215 at Appendix 1 to this report. Scottish Power Energy Networks have enquired about the possibility of the land being declared surplus to council requirements with a view to leasing the land to them for a new electricity substation. The requirement for a new substation is to ensure the continuity of a reliable electricity supply in this locality in future.

In keeping with council procedure, as there has been an objection from a local councillor to the proposed future use of this land, this paper is presented to committee for determination.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Consider the contents of this report and the local member's objections,
- (2) Agree the proposal to declare the land surplus to council requirements. Thereafter the council's Estates Team can consider future use in keeping with council policy.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities
Ambition statement	(3) Maximise the use of our marketable land and assets through improved development in business and industrial infrastructure
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) have indicated that they wish to explore the possibility of the council owned land (37 square metres or thereby) shown on Cartographic Drawing 48215 at Appendix 1 to this report being leased to them for the purpose of installing a new electricity substation.
- 1.2 They have advised that due to the electrical network in the Ailsa Road area being at the end of a long section, it will suffer most from volt drop in future if there is no action taken. The connection of a new substation will also allow for increased capacity for local residents to connect new green technologies in future such as electric car charging and heat pumps. In addition, a new substation will provide additional network security to the area.

2. Report

- 2.1 The land consists of a section of maintained amenity grass within a larger area of maintained amenity grass and is situated within an established area of primarily privately owned housing in Coatbridge.
- 2.2 In keeping with the council's surplus property procedure for areas of ground that amount to fewer than 50 square metres, the council Holding Service (Housing) have been consulted on the proposal to declare the land surplus to requirements. There have been no objections in principle to the land being declared surplus to their requirements as the land is not considered to be of current or future operational use to Housing.
- 2.3 Owing to the proposed size of the substation being under 29 cubic metres planning permission would not be required as the installation would come under permitted development rights. SPEN have advised that they would seek to engage with the local community throughout the course of the project. As part of the works they would undertake a letter drop in the local area to notify affected customers and explain the purpose of the works to them. Doorstep conversations will take place with customers whose properties will be directly affected by any digging works. Any publicity material used will have a contact from SPEN listed on them, who will be available for customers to contact during working hours. A modern glass reinforced plastic enclosure will be used to ensure that there is minimal visual impact to the area.
- 2.4 Local councillors within the applicable ward have been consulted on the proposal to declare the land surplus to requirements. A meeting was convened between the Council, SPEN and two local members to discuss some concerns. However, the objection from one local member to the proposed substations remains. It should be noted that declaring land/property surplus and the potential future use are two distinct matters. In the ordinary course of things, local councillors are consulted with a view to discovering any objections in principle to council land or property being declared surplus. In the case of Ailsa Road, the proposal to declare the land surplus has been entirely prompted by the interest of Scottish Power in siting a new electricity substation there to ensure continuity of supply in the immediate area. It is therefore difficult to separate the surplus declaration from the proposed future use. The points of objection are outlined below with responses provided by SPEN undernoted.

1. This piece of land is very close to an end of terrace house and the driveway used for access round the back of the property. It would make very little sense to place anything so close to such a property - especially considering the noise and safety aspect.

Response: The boundary of the substation will sit 3-4 metres to the east of the driveway and will therefore not cause disruption to their access. All of the transformers that SPEN install fall well within the industry standard for noise regulation and are quieter compared to older transformers on the network.

2. Concern about fires

Response: A standard package substation contains an oil filled transformer, which is protected from fault energy by fuses and circuit breakers. In the event of a fault, the protective equipment on SPEN networks operates to de-energise equipment before disruptive failure occurs. The substation proposed for this site is the same as every other substation up and down the country, in every housing scheme in Britain, and this site is considered no more high risk of fire than any others. SPEN can look at installing a midel filled transformer. Midel is an alternative insulating liquid used in transformers instead of oil in high- risk locations such as substations enclosed within buildings or within basements.

SPEN substations are housed within a glass reinforced plastic housing. To prevent against vandalism, SPEN substation enclosures have a fireproof rating compliant with BS 467-7. According to SPEN Specification for Prefabricated Glass Reinforced Plastic Enclosures: "The Enclosure shall be treated to reduce flammability. Sources of ignition include internal equipment failure, careless handling of propane gas torches and deliberate acts of vandalism. The resin shall comply with BS 476-7 Class 2 for external and internal fire rating, regarding surface spread of flame."

To prevent unauthorised access to equipment, the enclosure doors are fitted with padlocks that can only be opened by staff authorised by Scottish Power. If it is deemed necessary SPEN can install a fence around the substation to increase security.

3. Concern about access for work to maintain the substation.

Response: Equipment installed in a modern substation is considered to be maintenance free. Access to this substation would generally only be required to carry out restoration of power in the event of a power cut, or to carry out switching operations to reconfigure the network for routine work. Switching operations only require one person to gain access for 10-15 minutes at a time. As this is a brand new substation, it will be fitted with tele-control facilities which will allow SPEN's control room to carry out switching operations remotely, thereby reducing the frequency for staff to gain access. The SPEN maintenance department carries out annual inspections of all substations to ensure that they remain safe, tidy and to catch any potential problems before they arise. Any issues flagged up during an inspection are dealt with as soon as possible.

4. Concern about local children playing near the substation.

Response: The substation would sit within a glass reinforced plastic enclosure, which is securely locked and can only be accessed by trained SPEN operatives. Further to this, within the enclosure there is no exposed live electrical equipment. All electrical

equipment inside the enclosure is locked inside cabinets, which can only be opened by authorised SPEN staff. Because of this, the danger to children playing near the substation is considered to be minimal.

5. I also believe this is something the local community would wholly object to.

Response: As part of any future works, SPEN will carry out a letter drop to inform residents of the benefits of the new substation and to inform them of work before this takes place.

6. The land would also require preparation due to the hill on the middle of it and I fear this would cause further disruption in the locale where traffic is already at high volume.

Response: This piece of land does not require any extra preparation compared to standard ground works for a package substation. Local residents will be informed of works before they take place and doorstep conversations will take place to ensure work will have minimal disruption for residents in the area.

7. I do not believe this piece of land to be appropriate to build on for any purpose.

Response: This piece of land is considered the most appropriate location for SPEN to install the new substation. The area around Ailsa Road has been identified as an area of high predicted load growth and this patch of land provides SPEN with a central location to distribute the required power to the area. The new substation is required to keep up with the predicted load growth and will benefit the residents of the area by providing a greater security of supply, greater capacity to keep up with the increasing uptake in low carbon technologies and ensure that electrical supplies remain within their statutory limits in future.

2.5 The land at this location has been identified by SPEN as the best location to ensure security of the supply in this area and provide for anticipated future needs. The Council owns limited amounts of land with the immediate locality and therefore this site is considered the most suitable to meet SPEN's requirements.

3. Measures of success

3.1 If the land is declared surplus to council requirements, then future development of the ground for the proposed substation will help ensure resilience and continuity of supply within the local electricity network. The Council will also obtain a capital receipt for the lease of the ground.

4. Supporting documentation

Appendix 1 – Cartographic Drawing 48215



James McKinstry
Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	Technology / Digital impact Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.7	Environmental / Carbon impact Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.8	Communications impact Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.9	Risk impact Is there a risk impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?
5.10	Armed Forces Covenant Duty Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.
5.11	Children's rights and wellbeing impact Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 1 – Cartographic Drawing 48215

48215

JQ

LOCATION PLAN - For Information Only

Title: Ailsa Road

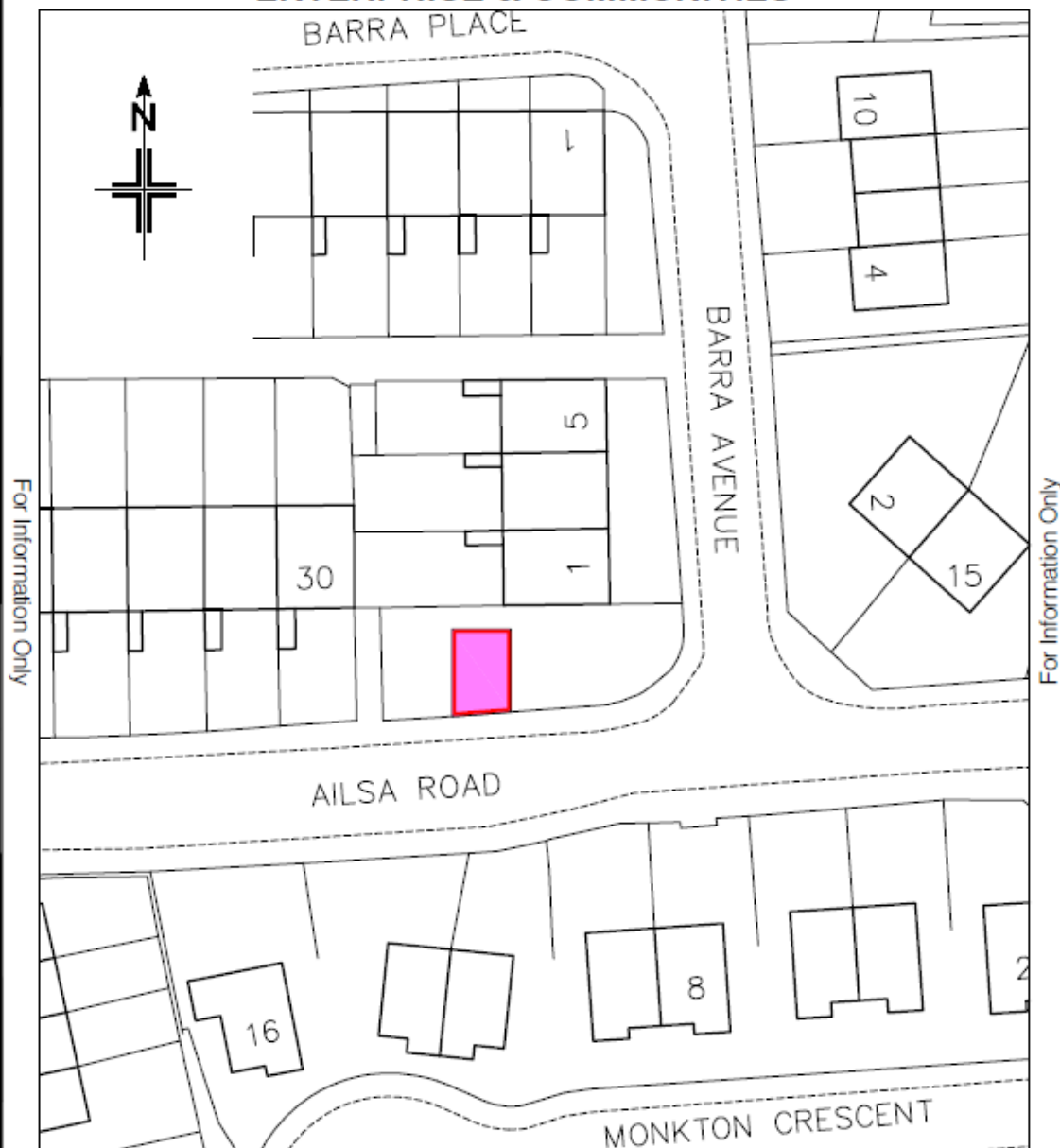
Scale 1:NTS



Town: Coatbridge

Date: 23/01/24

ENTERPRISE & COMMUNITIES



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Head of Asset & Procurement Solutions
North Lanarkshire Council
Fleming House
2 Tryst Road, Cumbernauld
G67 1JW

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Ref GT

Date

21/05/25

Strategic Performance Framework - latest performance results for Business and Digital

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone

Executive Summary

Following consideration of the One Place, One Plan - Governance Update report at Policy and Strategy Committee in September 2024, responsibilities within Business and Digital transferred across the remits of three Chief Officers (i.e. Finance and Technology, Legal and Democratic, and Strategy and Engagement) with effect from 2025/26 onwards.

The purpose of this performance report to Finance and Resources Committee specifically covering Business and Digital performance is to formally close out performance reporting for Business and Digital as at the 2024/25 year end.

For strategic overview and scrutiny purposes, this report provides Members of the Finance and Resources Committee with an update of the latest results for the suite of performance indicators used by Business and Digital to inform service delivery and underpin operational decisions. This report is presented in line with the Finance and Resources Committee's role to monitor the performance of all services within the remit of the Committee (as per the terms of reference in the Scheme of Administration).

Moving forward, performance measures within Business and Digital will be realigned to the respective Chief Officers reporting responsibilities accordingly and this will be reflected in future reports to the respective committee.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Review the high-level performance overview presented in Appendix 1, and the supporting data contained within the linked Excel spreadsheet, and identify where further information is required to understand or investigate performance further.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority All priorities

Ambition statement All ambition statements

1. Background

- 1.1 There are six inter-related strategic frameworks which are key to evaluating the success of The Plan for North Lanarkshire and assessing delivery towards achieving the overall vision by ensuring each stage is appropriately aligned, planned, guided, implemented, monitored, and governed.
- 1.2 The six frameworks focus on ensuring a corporate one council approach in respect of Policy, Governance, Performance, Self-Evaluation, Project Management, and Demonstrating Improved Outcomes for Communities.
- 1.3 The Strategic Performance Framework comprises performance measurement at three levels (as per the diagram on the right). This aims to collectively provide an overview of performance to help understand the impact of council activities on improving services and outcomes for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire. The measures in this Framework allow for day to day activities, and progress towards achieving the long-term vision set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire, to be regularly monitored, reported, assessed, and scrutinised.
- 1.4 The Strategic Performance Framework is aligned to the Accounts Commission's *Statutory Direction* which places a requirement on councils to report a range of information in terms of (1) improving local services and outcomes, and (2) demonstrating Best Value. Key points of note in this respect are that the Accounts Commission also expect to see:
- (a) A balance in terms of reporting that captures highlights of good performance as well as areas of performance requiring improvement.
 - (b) Reporting that is undertaken in a timely manner.
 - (c) Easy access to performance information for all citizens and communities.
 - (d) Comparisons of performance (i) over time (e.g. compared to previous years), and (ii) with others (e.g. other local authorities or the national average (where available and appropriate)).
- The council's comparative performance in Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators can be viewed through the Improvement Service's online dashboard: <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data>
- 1.5 A Performance Reporting Schedule supports the timely submission of a range of performance information to ensure fully informed review, reporting, scrutiny, and decision making processes by Elected Members and senior management. This Schedule, endorsed by the Audit and Scrutiny Panel, includes Chief Officer's individual Performance Reviews at Service Committees in line with the Strategic Performance Framework.
- 1.6 This report therefore presents the Finance and Resources Committee with the latest performance results for Business and Digital for Members' further review and scrutiny.



2. Strategic Performance Framework

Finance and Resources Committee responsibilities

- 2.1 In line with the terms of reference outlined in the Scheme of Administration, the Finance and Resources Committee is responsible for monitoring and reviewing performance information for the following Ambition Statements from The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

- | |
|---|
| 18. Ensure our digital transformation is responsive to all people's needs and enables access to the services they need. |
| 24. Review and design services around people, communities, and shared resources. |
| 25. Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning. |

- 2.2 The high-level performance overview in Appendix 1 presents Members with a summary of the latest results for each performance indicator within the remit of the Chief Officer (Business and Digital).

- 2.3 The information in Appendix 1 comprises the undernoted. Appendix 2 provides additional context in respect of the council's approach to the measurement of indicators and setting of targets.

- An *ideal direction* arrow - this indicates whether a higher or lower figure is the preferred direction of travel.

↑	A higher figure is better
↓	A lower figure is better

- *Measurement unit* - for example whether the result is a %, a number, a unit cost (in £), or a ratio.
- *Performance results* for the most recent financial years (depending on availability of data) along with the latest year's target and corresponding RAG status (for indicators where it is appropriate to set targets).

Key to RAG status	
Green	Performance is on target and/or within acceptable thresholds
Red	Performance does not meet target and is outwith acceptable thresholds
Blue	Performance surpasses the target and exceeds expectations

- The most *recent monthly or quarterly results*, along with the corresponding target and RAG status. Note the inclusion of this information is dependent on the measurement frequency of the indicator and availability of data as at the time of reporting.
- A *trend graph* - this captures the direction of travel achieved over the years and includes the most recent monthly or quarterly results where available.
- *Comments* - narrative summarising the current position and providing an explanation for any significant variations in performance. Where applicable, this narrative also highlights any internal or external factors impacting on service delivery.

- 2.4 A large volume of data supports the high-level performance overview in Appendix 1. This is outlined in the **latest performance results for Business and Digital** Excel spreadsheet which is available through the following link for Members to carry out a deep dive and review and scrutinise each performance indicator further. The *Menu* on the second tab of the spreadsheet contains built in hyperlinks that automatically take the user to a tab for each performance indicator and therefore provides a useful navigation aid to review the contents of the file.
- [Latest performance results for Business and Digital.xlsx](#)

Current context

2.5 The service's operating environment has changed significantly in recent years and, as such, the performance information presented in Appendix 1 should be considered within the context of the following:

- Service specific advancements in terms of the procurement of the Connectivity project in December 2021.
- The end of the contract with Agilisys in April 2022 and the ensuing significantly reduced resource available from 2022/23 onwards.
- Development of an Integrated Programme Plan from 2022/23 to capture all areas of activity across the service to support resource planning and operational delivery, as well as the relevant programme / project management and governance.
- Continuous delivery of activities that mitigate against potential cyber security threats, while transitioning all critical products to more secure and modern cloud hosted solutions.
- A rapidly changing and evolving service structure following:
 - Approval to insource those services previously outsourced to Wipro (supplier of the ICT service delivery contract).
 - The alignment of service provision following the insourcing of culture, sport, and leisure services (previously delivered through Culture and Leisure NL Limited).
 - Integration of the schools' technician's service.
 - Significant recruitment challenges across many service areas, reflecting national shortages in all IT disciplines (software developers, cyber / security specialists, and network engineers).
- The extent to which the service has supported the council in terms of responding to and recovering from the pandemic, while resuming business as usual activities at pace and delivering on the digital vision set out in the new Digital and IT Strategy for 2024 to 2027 (approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2024) via the Digital North Lanarkshire Programme of Work.

2.6 Members are aware that Digital North Lanarkshire was maintained as one of the seven priorities for delivery in the Programme of Work to 2028. Members are also aware that such includes residual activity from the original DigitalNL programme. With the Chief Officer (Business and Digital) departing the council in April 2025, the Chief Officer (Finance and Technology) is confirmed as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for this Programme of Work priority moving forward.

2.7 Through the delivery of the Digital North Lanarkshire priority, activities are focusing on developing a skilled digital workforce, promoting an innovative sustainable culture, and providing digital leadership for an evolving North Lanarkshire. This means building on existing achievements and embedding digital thinking into everyday delivery, embracing digital technology to do business significantly differently, and always considering a digital-first approach. Digital North Lanarkshire has strong links to the One Service Programme of Work as both are enablers to facilitate the delivery of all other linked Programme of Work priorities.

Recent performance highlights

2.8 The council's connectivity programme seeks to introduce fibre-based service provision across North Lanarkshire, improving access and choice for local residents and businesses. According to the Ofcom Connected Nations update, 98.6% of properties in North Lanarkshire receive superfast broadband - the 5th highest of all 32 local authority areas in Scotland.

- Superfast broadband, also called Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC), is a combination of

fibre and cable technology. Fibres go to the cabinet on the street, and from there, copper cables (as used in cable broadband) go to a house. This makes superfast broadband vastly more accessible, as the copper cables are mostly already installed to provide landlines. Ofcom define superfast broadband as supporting download speeds of at least 30Mbit/s. To put this in context, it has around the same megabits per second as 4G on a mobile phone. For streaming, only around 1.5 or 2.8 mbps is needed for HD quality, while most everyday tasks only need a maximum of about 20mbps.

- Fibre connectivity requires fibre optic cabling which supports higher speeds than the copper cables used in traditional networks. Latest statistics illustrate fibre availability within the council area has increased from less than 3% in 2021 to 31.8% in 2023, and increasing further to 43.4% in 2024, thus demonstrating the successful delivery of a key aim of the connectivity programme. This also means that the council is now well placed to facilitate the fibre-enabled innovation highlighted within the Digital North Lanarkshire programme of work.
- To illustrate the benefits available, members are advised that fibre connectivity is also called Fibre to the Premises (FTTP), meaning that with fibre coming directly into a house, connection to services and products is much quicker than with the comparable FTTC outlined above. Typically, ultrafast broadband has download speeds of more than 300mbps with 5G reaching up to 1 gbps of service. This also means that if a house doesn't have a phone line, or if it stops working for some reason, then internet access will not be affected. If a business or a household is accessing the internet a lot, and several people are trying to do many things at once, then ultrafast broadband is much quicker as it can handle more simultaneous uploads and downloads.
- Business and Digital presented the following reports to committee during 2024/25 to illustrate how and where the council has used the options available to it within the approved Connectivity Framework to support delivery of the Digital and IT Strategy and the digital vision therein.
 - A report to the Communities Committee in February 2024 provided an update on the [delivery of the added value and community benefits](#) experienced as at that date within the connectivity contract.
 - A report to the Finance and Resources Committee in February 2024 provided an [update on the implementation and operational status](#) of the Connectivity Framework approved by committee in December 2021, and the performance of the approved provider Commsworld Ltd.
 - An [in-depth review of digital broadband](#) was also considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Panel in May 2024. This provided an up to date position in respect of a range of questions regarding the delivery of the connectivity contract, including the number of kilometres of fibre which have been rolled out, number of properties covered by the fibre roll out, and number of properties able to take up / access services from Commsworld aligned providers.
 - A six monthly report on delivery of the [Digital and IT Strategy 2024-27](#) to Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2025 provided an update on various aspects around the wider programme of work. This advised that the connectivity contract had been used to deliver free public wi-fi to staff, pupils, businesses, and communities through deployments in corporate buildings, leisure centres, libraries, high schools, integrated day service centres, homeless shelters, and retirement housing complexes.
 - A report to Finance and Resources Committee in February 2025 [summarised the delivery and successful completion](#) of the connectivity programme.

Areas of performance requiring improvement

2.9 The Business and Digital senior management team review of performance results in

Appendix 1 highlighted two areas with a Red RAG status which required further examination and for which further work is underway to improve performance. There is also one area (data breaches) which continues to remain under review.

- **Data breaches** - While reporting on data breaches has improved across the council and the volume in this respect has decreased during 2024/25 - reflecting improved understanding of process and responsibility, as well as monitoring and the implementation of improvements - the council's performance in this area continues to be kept under review.
- The [annual Senior Information Risk Owner \(SIRO\) report](#) for 2024 submitted to the Finance and Resources Committee in February 2025 comprises a section which specifically details improvements in the council's performance in this respect.
- A proportion of data breaches can be attributed to e-mail misuse which are frequently due to simple mistakes, e.g. selecting the wrong address using auto complete, sending an e-mail with an expanded distribution list instead of using the BCC option, e-mailing the wrong address with unrelated information, or e-mailing a personal address rather than a business address.
- This was identified by the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) as an area of focus for 2025, with Business and Digital committing to deploying a technology solution during the year to enhance e-mail security and reduce the risk of users sending potentially sensitive e-mails to unintended recipients, while also providing an enhanced level of protection overall in respect of incoming malicious e-mails. As at end of March 2025, the service has established a proof of concept that uses rules and evolving pattern recognition to mitigate this risk. Through this Egress Prevent proof of concept, officers are monitoring outbound and internal e-mail traffic to alert users to potential data breaches, ideally stopping them before they happen.
- Performance in this area continues to undergo ongoing scrutiny in various forums across the council (including the Data Governance Board, Business Management Team, and Service Senior Management Teams) and Chief Officers continue to monitor employee uptake of the mandatory e-learning modules (including that for information security awareness) on a monthly basis with remedial action being undertaken for non-completion.
- **Requests for the IT service desk being logged through the self-serve portal** - Performance in 2024/25 shows this indicator has improved but remains below the target (of 70%) at 62%. When broken down further this reflects a year to date position of 71% corporate and 40% schools.

The use of the service desk portal remains strong within the council's corporate environment, and as more self-help functionality is developed this will become increasingly useful for staff. The chat functionality is in the process of being removed for a number of months to allow modernisation of the user interface and improve alignment with the HR Service Desk portal, with the intention to merge into a single employee portal in the future. Schools use of portal is less successful, partly due to culture and partly due to availability, however with all school areas now utilising dedicated individual accounts, this is anticipated to increase.

- **Service desk - % of all severity level 3 incidents resolved within target** - Previous reports to Finance and Resources Committee advised that this was an area of activity under ongoing review since the insourcing of Wipro when this indicator was changed to capture all severity level 3 tickets in order to provide a more complete picture of all incidents that require to be resourced by the service. This has increased the volume of incidents recorded within this indicator and required ongoing and closer analysis of demand in order to fully understand the

asks of the service and manage these in a way that takes into consideration all the related component parts of the service to be delivered as well as improvements required in the longer term.

While the rise of agile working, increased adoption of third party services, and vacancies in resolver groups are recognised as increasing the overall complexity of incident types and the time taken (as frequently these involve interaction with both third parties and staff moving from differing environments), trends continue to show a long-term decline in performance (which reflects upon the increased stability of the estate and the device build in particular) and performance continues to remain below the stated target (i.e. performance in 2024/25 remains below the revised target (of 85%) at 73.6% with 7,135 out of 9,692 incidents resolved within target to date.

While there is an understanding that aspects of this are due to how the system is being used rather than a true indication of performance, it is recognised that the metrics that are measured and the service levels applied are in general those determined over 10 years ago and hence are planned for review. As such, research is underway via industry bodies and peers in terms of what metrics are being measured and their purpose and usefulness, with the intention to report back with recommendations that demonstrably align to organisational need and ambition.

Next steps

- 2.10 As noted in paragraph 1.5, the Strategic Performance Framework is supported by a Performance Reporting Schedule. This sets out the arrangements for service, statutory, and Strategic Performance Framework reporting to committee. As noted in the Executive Summary of this report, moving forward the performance indicators within the former Business and Digital service will be realigned to respective Chief Officers reporting responsibilities accordingly and this will be reflected in future reports to the respective committee.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Measures of success include:
- Regular oversight and monitoring of performance across the organisation to gain assurances in terms of governance and accountability.
 - Regular review and challenge processes to scrutinise the performance of the council to ensure effective use of resources and that resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities, while ensuring sound decision making and clear accountability for the use of resources in achieving improved outcomes for service users and the local community.
 - Performance monitoring, management, and reporting arrangements that support the demonstration of improved performance in local services and outcomes, and the delivery of Best Value.

4. Supporting documentation

Appendix 1 - High-level performance overview.

Appendix 2 - Note for information in respect of performance indicators and targets.



5. Impacts

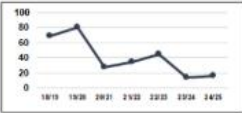
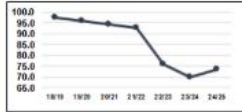
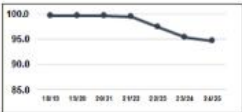
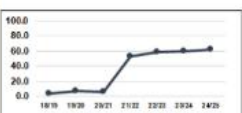
5.1	Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.3	HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4	Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5	Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.6	Technology / Digital impact Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

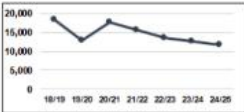
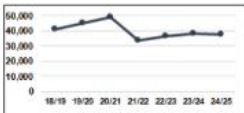
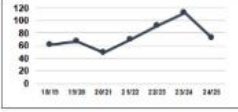
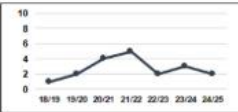
	<p>Paragraph 2.8 of the report includes an update regarding the delivery of the council's world class digital infrastructure.</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p> <p>The implementation of the Strategic Performance Framework, and Member's scrutiny of individual services therein, contributes towards the mitigation of the risks on the Corporate Risk Register for <i>Governance, Leadership, and Decision Making</i>.</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>
5.11	<p>Children's rights and wellbeing impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).</p> <p>If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

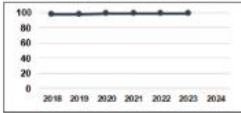
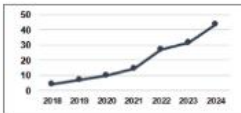
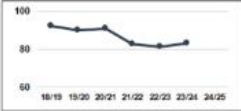
Appendix 1

Business and Digital

High-level performance overview - as at April 2025

Indicator	id	ideal direction	unit of measurement	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25 target	2024/25 RAG status	trend	comments as at 29/04/25	Moving forward, this indicator will be transferred to the following Chief Officer portfolios.
Technology - efficient operation of day to day activities and volume of business															
IT systems - number of priority 1 outages	i082	lower figure is better	number	69	80	27	34	45	14	16	48	blue		Performance as at the 2023/24 year end remained low (14 priority one outages) and below the target for the year (48) and was the lowest level achieved across the recorded dataset. Following a review of the target (which was set in 2019) and considering the increasing age of the technology assets, the management team agreed to reduce the annual target from 60 each year in previous years to 48 in 2023/24 and 2024/25 (a decrease from 5 outages per month to 4). Priority one outages in 2024/25 continues to remain low at 16 for the year, compared to the target for the year of 48.	Finance and Technology
Service desk - % of all Severity Level 3 incidents resolved within target	i083	higher figure is better	%	97.4	96.0	94.4	92.7	76.0	69.9	73.6	85.0	red		Performance in 2024/25 (73.6%) remains below the revised target of 85% with 7,135 out of 9,692 incidents resolved within target. Prior to April 2022 this measure related to the performance of the service delivery partner Wipro before insourcing. From April 2022, performance monitoring was expanded to capture all Severity Level 3 tickets in order to provide a more accurate picture of all incidents that require to be resourced across the whole of Business and Digital. This is reflected in the increase in the volume of incidents to be resolved which was 6,933 in 2020/21 to 7,941 in 2021/22 to 11,802 in 2022/23 and 10,539 in 2023/24. The volume in 2024/25 (i.e. 9,692) has since dropped compared to the previous two years. Performance against the target of 95% has been monitored since the insourcing as it related to the previous indicator measurement, the target has since been revised to 85% for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to be more reflective of the current trends and resourcing requirements.	Finance and Technology
Service desk calls - % respondents who replied to say they were satisfied with the service	i084	higher figure is better	%	99.6	99.6	99.6	99.4	97.3	95.3	94.7	95.0	green		Customer satisfaction levels over the years have remained on a steady trend and above target. Performance for 2024/25 remains around target at 94.7% for 3,694 satisfied responses received out of 3,901 for the year. Prior to March 2022 a non response was counted as satisfied. After March 2022 only responses received (with a satisfied or dissatisfied response) are counted. This has significantly reduced the volume of responses recorded within this indicator by almost 90%, with responses now averaging less than 400 per month (compared to over 3,000 prior to March 2022); however it does mean a more accurate record of satisfaction. It is a low response rate however (on average less than 5%) considering the volume of service desk calls now recorded in the indicator above.	Finance and Technology
Service desk - % tickets logged through the self-serve portal	i128	higher figure is better	%	3.5	6.8	6.2	53.0	58.4	59.5	62.0	75.0	red		Figures for 2024/25 shows performance remains below the target at 62%. When broken down further this reflects a year to date position of 71% corporate and 40% schools. A new process was implemented in May 2021 to push all non-critical traffic down a self-serve digital channel. This indicator monitors the usage of that channel and thus the effectiveness of the digital transformation. 59.5% of all calls made in 2023/24 have been made through the portal, compared to 58.4% in 2022/23, 53% in 2021/22, and 6.2% at the 2020/21 year end. Usage of the portal has levelled out in recent months as the corporate estate is now fully enabled to utilise this functionality, thus impacting on the ability to further maximise usage of the portal. To continue to monitor usage of the portal by the corporate estate and ensure this is maximised, a target of 70% has been set for 2023/24 and 75% for 2024/25. Performance for 2023/24 (59.5%) was lower than the revised target of 70% and this has remained the position for 2024/25.	Finance and Technology

Indicator	id	Ideal direction	unit of measurement	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25 target	2024/25 RAG status	trend	comments as at 29/04/25	Moving forward, this indicator will be transferred to the following Chief Officer portfolios.
Technology - efficient operation of day to day activities and volume of business															
IT incidents	i129	lower figure is better	number	18,261	12,935	17,602	15,668	13,589	12,685	11,672	n/a			The volume of corporate IT incidents has remained relatively steady over the years, with no significant trends occurring in the corporate or school estates that suggests an issue. 2024/25 data shows 11,672 incidents for the year, which continues a year on year reduction seen in the trend over the last four years.	Finance and Technology
IT service requests	i130	lower figure is better	number	40,971	44,955	49,155	33,684	36,633	38,106	37,835	n/a			The volume of corporate IT requests has remained relatively steady over the years, with no significant trends occurring in the corporate or school estates that suggests an issue. 2024/25 data shows 37,835 requests for the year, which is lower than 2023/24, but higher than 2022/23 and 2021/22.	Finance and Technology
Data protection compliance															
Data protection - number of breaches	i126	lower figure is better	number	62	67	49	69	92	112	73	n/a			There were 73 breaches in 2024/25, a decrease from the previous two years which reflects the ongoing scrutiny of breaches and near misses in various forums across the council (including the Data Governance Board, Business Management Team, and Service Senior Management Teams). This follows a higher than usual increase in the volume of data breaches in previous years when an analysis was undertaken to ascertain the root cause. This was found mainly to be operating error (e.g. keeping details on systems up to date to avoid information being sent to wrong addresses, the use of auto-fill in Outlook, ensuring blank forms are sent to those that request them (and are not already completed with someone else's details), ensuring the correct attachments for letters / e-mails, and the importance of knowing how to use Glow). Egress Prevent has since been installed on pc's across the council to help monitor outbound and internal e-mail traffic to alert users to potential data breaches and stop them from happening. This tool is a pilot and is continuing to be monitored for effectiveness. Remedial action also continues to be undertaken as at the point the breach is found (i.e. staff training, learning from mistakes, and reiterating the need to avoid basic admin errors) to try and ensure the same issue does not recur. In addition, all Chief Officers, and the council's senior management team, are continuing to monitor employee uptake of the mandatory e-learning modules on a monthly basis with remedial action being undertaken for non completion, including the module for information security awareness. The annual Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) report to the Finance and Resources Committee in cycle 1 of 2025 provided further details in respect of the council's approach to information risk and information governance.	Legal and Democratic
Data protection - number of near misses	i127	lower figure is better	number	1	2	4	5	2	3	2	n/a			There were 2 near misses in 2024/25. The volume of near misses has remained low over the years but this continues to be monitored by the council's Data Governance Board and Chief Officers.	Legal and Democratic

Indicator	id	ideal direction	unit of measurement	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25 target	2024/25 RAG status	trend	comments as at 29/04/25	Moving forward, this indicator will be transferred to the following Chief Officer portfolios.
Programme of Work delivery															
Broadband - % of properties receiving superfast broadband	ECON8a	higher figure is better	%	97.7	97.9	98.1	98.6	99.0	98.6		n/a			According to the Ofcom Connected Nations update, 98.6% of properties in North Lanarkshire receive superfast broadband - the 5th highest of all 32 local authority areas in Scotland. Ofcom define superfast broadband as supporting download speeds of at least 30Mbit/s. However to ensure the complete picture and delivery of the council's connectivity project is appropriately reflected, fibre connectivity - which requires fibre optic cabling which supports higher speeds than the copper cables used in traditional networks - also requires to be considered and therefore the undemoted indicator has been introduced to ensure fibre connectivity is reflected as well.	Finance and Technology
Fibre - % of residential premises in North Lanarkshire with full fibre availability	ECON8b	higher figure is better	%	4.2	7.2	9.7	14.4	26.8	31.8	43.4	n/a	36.0		Using the same data source as the Broadband indicator above (i.e. the Ofcom Connected Nations annual report), this indicator measures the proportion of residential premises that have coverage from a full fibre service from a fixed broadband. Full fibre coverage is defined as services that provide a fibre optic cable from the exchange to the end user's home or office. The annual Ofcom Connected Nations report shows this has increased from 31.8% in 2023 to 43.4% in 2024. The Connectivity contract currently being delivered aims to transform the area's digital infrastructure and ensure that 85% of homes across North Lanarkshire have access to gigabit capable broadband earlier than planned.	Finance and Technology
Performance in complaints handling in line with the national Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP)															
Complaints - % complaints dealt with at the frontline at stage 1	i113a	higher figure is better	%	92.1	89.9	91.0	82.5	81.3	83.2		90.0			The Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) sets out the council's aim to provide a quick, simple, and streamlined process for responding to complaints early and locally by capable, well-trained staff. Where possible, the council aims to deal with the complaint at stage one, i.e. at the frontline. This indicator measures the ratio of complaints closed at stage one. Historical figures in this respect show that the council has consistently responded to 9 out of 10 complaints received at stage 1; however, this ratio dropped to just over 8 out of 10 complaints from 2021/22 onwards. This coincides with the introduction of the new complaints handling system whereby the escalation process from stage one to stage two is a built-in automatic function which means care should be taken when comparing the data for 2021/22 onwards with previous years as calculations within the two systems have differed. Data for reporting as at the 2024/25 year end is currently undergoing its annual review and verification processes and will be published when this is complete.	Strategy and Engagement

Note for information in respect of performance indicators and targets

It should be noted that the nature of particular areas of service being measured in order to assess and manage performance do not always lend themselves to a traditional approach to either measuring performance or setting targets, for example:

- Some indicators (and targets) are required to monitor performance against a commitment or minimum standard the council has made in advance to achieve a stated level of performance when delivering a service.
- Some indicators (and targets) are required to assess compliance with legislative requirements.
- Some targets represent the level of performance that the council aims to achieve from a particular activity in either the short, medium, or long-term.
- Some indicators are needed to help present a complete picture of performance in the round, as a single performance indicator used in isolation rarely tells the whole performance story and a range of indicators are required to reflect the economic, efficient, and effective aspects of demonstrating best value.
- Some indicators and targets can help to support accountability to the public in terms of demonstrating best value and an efficient and effective approach to the delivery of services.
- Some indicators are monitored to ensure the council complies with specific requirements, such as information governance or health and safety.
- Some indicators are monitored to provide added context in order to help interpret performance results or supplement other existing measures. Information such as this can be critical to enhance knowledge and decision making in terms of demand to help determine priorities and allocate resources.
- For some indicators it is not appropriate to set targets as it is the trend in the data (i.e. the direction of travel) that provides more meaningful information to allow for an assessment in relation to whether performance has improved.
- Some indicators are national benchmarking indicators where their purpose is to allow for comparisons with other councils and the national average. These benchmarks are, in essence, can openers designed to focus questions on why variations in cost and performance are occurring between similar councils.
- Some indicators are proxy measures, particularly in the case of measuring outcomes, as without directly measurable data for a desired outcome the only alternative is to use a proxy that is an indirect measure of the desired outcome but which is itself strongly correlated to that outcome.

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref GT / PH

Date 21/05/25

Revenues and Benefits Update

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 07583 010692

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the performance within the Revenues and Benefits functions of Finance as at 31 March 2025.

Key points to note include:

- As at 31 March 2025, 94.52% of Council Tax due for 2024/25 had been collected. This is a marginal increase from the same period last financial year (0.47%).
- Non-Domestic Rates collection has shown a year-on-year increase from 94.62% to 31 March 2024 to 94.81% to 31 March 2025.
- The Service continues to meet statutory timescales for administering benefits applications and changes of circumstance.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the content of the report.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(21) Continue to identify and access opportunities to leverage additional resources to support our ambitions
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

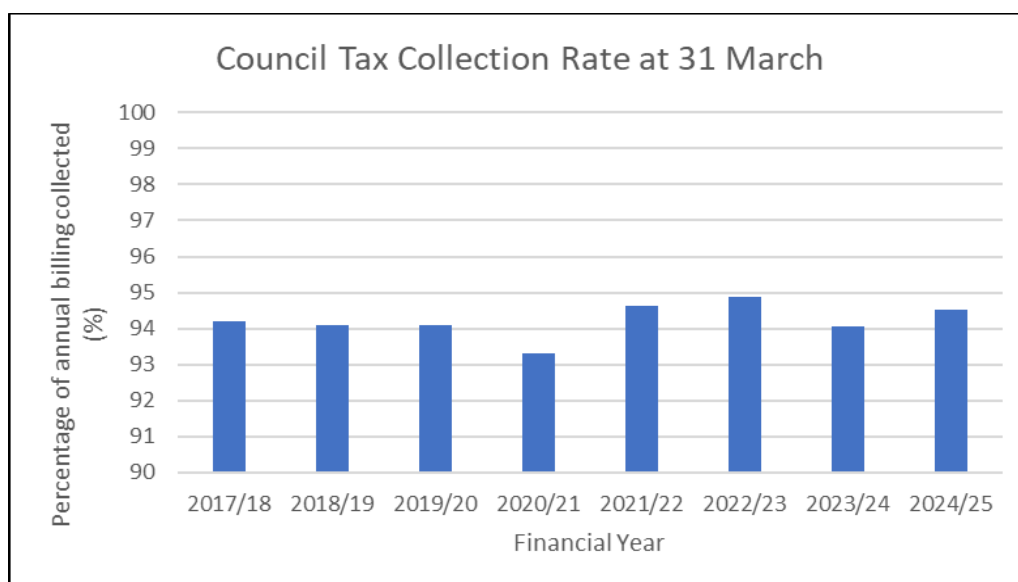
1. Background

- 1.1 The Finance Service is responsible for the administration and collection of all local taxation in North Lanarkshire in the form of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.
- 1.2 In addition, the Service administers a number of benefits for residents of North Lanarkshire including Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Scottish Welfare Fund, Discretionary Housing Payment, Free School Meals, Clothing Grants and Blue Badges.

2. Report

Council Tax

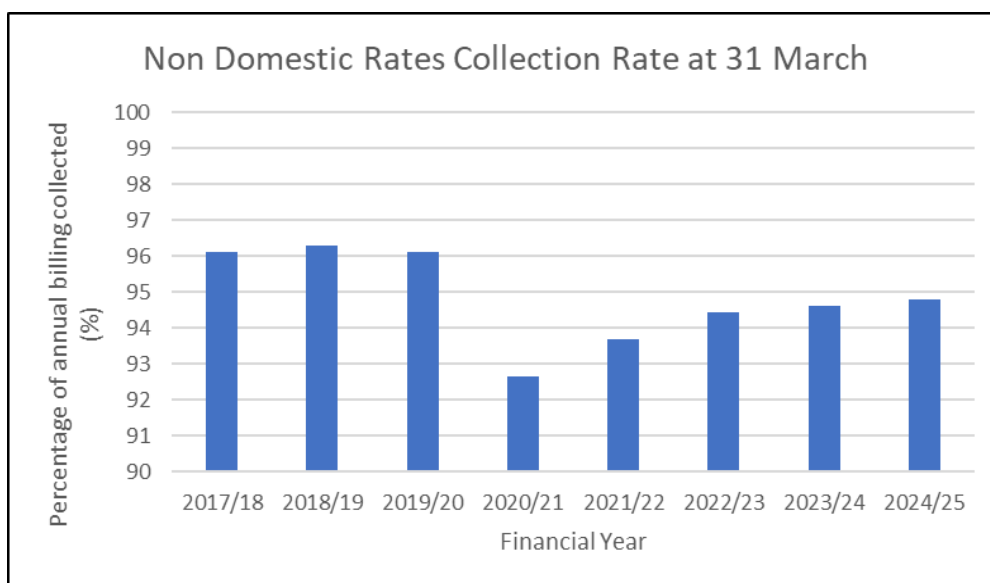
- 2.1 The graph below shows the cash collected at 31 March for each financial year. It is worth noting that cash is allocated to specific Council Tax years so the graph represents cash received against the initial billing year (i.e. billed and received in 2024/25) and does not include cash collected in subsequent years (i.e. billed in 2023/24 but received in 2024/25). This ensures a like for like comparison.



- 2.2 The collection figure to 31 March in the 2024/25 financial year of 94.52% is 0.47% higher than the same period last financial year.
- 2.3 It should be noted that in-year collection of Council Tax is a Statutory Performance Indicator. However, it does not reflect the overall collection rate of Council Tax which includes collection of prior year arrears. This latter measure has a greater bearing on the Council's finances and is reflected in the regular budget monitoring reports to Committee.

Non-Domestic Rates

2.4 The following graph shows the cash collected at 31 March for each financial year:



2.5 The collection figure to 31 March in the 2024/25 financial year is 94.81%. This represents an increase of 0.19% compared to the same time period in 2023/24.

Housing Benefits

2.6 The data below highlights the Statutory Performance Indicators measuring the speed of processing for new Housing Benefit claims and for changes in circumstances. The table below shows the cumulative figures for the 2024/25 financial year.

Days to Process	2023/24	2024/25	DWP Processing Target
New Claims	15	15	< 30 days
Change of Circumstances	8	9	< 16 days

2.7 The Service continues to meet DWP targets aligned to the statutory requirements for the speed of processing of both new claims and changes of circumstances.

2.8 To further improve efficiency the Service continues to progress a number of digital related improvements such as development of the Landlord Portal and robotic process automation for a number of high-volume tasks.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

2.9 As at 31 March 2025 a total of £26.364m in Council Tax Reduction has been awarded for the 2024/25 financial year. This compares to £26.097m to the same period during 2023/24, representing an increase of £0.267m (1.02%).

2.10 The Service received 6,775 applications between 1 April and 31 March 2025 compared with 7,497 during 2023/24, representing a decrease of 9.63%.

- 2.11 The Service saw an upward trend in the volume of changes in circumstances requests. From 1 April to 31 March 2025 a total of 161,749 changes were processed compared to 119,698 for the previous financial year; an increase of 35.13%.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

- 2.12 From 1 April 2017 funding for DHP has been devolved to Scottish Government. This funding supports both the Scottish Government's commitment to fully fund the implications of the Bedroom Tax and an additional sum available for other reasons such as the Benefit cap and the restrictions on Local Housing Allowance rates.
- 2.13 From 1 January 2023 the Scottish Government is fully funding the implications of mitigating the benefit cap. This was announced as part of the tackling child poverty delivery plan 'Best Start, Bright Futures' in March 2022. Local authority Leaders have agreed to fuller benefit cap mitigation through the DHP scheme from 1st January 2023. For 2024/25 the Scottish Government has provided ring-fenced funding of £0.436m to mitigate the benefit cap. As at 31 March, the amount paid and committed in respect of the benefit cap was £0.101m (23%).
- 2.14 As at 31 March 2025 the total paid and committed in respect of Bedroom Tax was £6.100m. In comparison, this sum was £5.805m at the same point during 2023/24.
- 2.15 In addition the Council also receives £0.459m in respect of non-bedroom tax related issues. An additional £0.051m has been received for 2024/25 due to a redistribution of collective unused funds for 2023/24 bringing the total budget to £0.511m. As at 31 March 2025 £0.502m (98.3%) has been paid or committed from the fund.
- 2.16 As in previous years, the Service will continue to liaise with colleagues in Housing and Housing Associations to encourage applications to the fund. In addition, the Service will also liaise with Universal Credit claimants affected by the benefit cap who could possibly be eligible for the mitigation.

Scottish Welfare Fund

- 2.17 The Council has administered the Scottish Government's Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) since 1 April 2016.
- 2.18 The Scottish Government provides an annual award budget of £2.760m to North Lanarkshire Council. In December, the Scottish Government confirmed additional one-off funding for the SWF. North Lanarkshire's share of that additionality is £1.361m with a further £0.194m to support increased administration costs.
- 2.19 As indicated in the last update to Committee, the Council has continued to assess applications at High priority. This means that applications will only be considered where there is immediate and severe need, applicants are highly vulnerable, where there will be significantly adverse impacts to health and wellbeing with a no grant award, and where the effect of the grant is immediate and substantial. Staff assessing Scottish Welfare Fund applications are highly trained in making these judgements in accordance with the statutory guidance and where an application is unsuccessful they will signpost the applicant to other community-based supports.
- 2.20 There are two grant schemes and their relative performance during 2024/25 and prior year comparison is as follows:

2024/25

	Applications Assessed	Awards	Unsuccessful Applications	Acceptance Rate
Crisis Grants	19,942	14,312	5,630	71.8%
Community Care Grants	5,466	3,746	1,720	68.5%
Total	25,408	18,058	7,350	71.1%

2023/24

	Applications Assessed	Awards	Unsuccessful Applications	Acceptance Rate
Crisis Grants	21,558	15,279	6,279	70.9%
Community Care Grants	6,488	4,737	1,751	73.0%
Total	28,046	20,016	8,030	71.4%

- 2.21 As at 31 March 2025, the total financial value of grants paid from the Scottish Welfare Fund amounted to £3.4m, which represents 82.5% of the total revised budget for the current financial year. The underspend of £0.720m will be carried forward for use in 2025/26.
- 2.22 During 2024/25, the Scottish Welfare Fund has seen a decrease in demand for Crisis applications of 7.5% and a decrease in demand for Community Care Grant applications of 15.75%. These reductions in demand should be considered in the context of historically high applications numbers experienced during 2023/24. The slightly lower acceptance rates are reflective of the move to High priority levels for the current financial year meaning a number of residents have not been eligible for support. For 2025/26 financial year, Scottish Welfare Fund applications will continue to be assessed at High priority.
- 2.23 The Service strives to assess applications within the timescales outlined within Scottish Government guidance. Throughout the period the Service has largely continued to assess Crisis applications within the two working day time limit. Whilst it has been more challenging throughout the last year to meet the 15 working day time limit for Community Care Grants, the Service is currently assessing such applications within that timeframe and continues to Fastrack applications linked to homelessness supporting the wider Rapid Rehousing and Homes First strategies.

Clothing Grants and Free School Meals

- 2.24 The Finance Service administers Clothing Grant payments and applications for Free School Meals on behalf of the Council for families meeting low-income eligibility criteria.
- 2.25 Up to 31 March 2025 the Service administered and paid out 11,895 Clothing Grants compared to 11,864 by the end of March 2024.
- 2.26 The Service awarded 10,617 Free School Meal applications to 31 March 2025 compared to 10,401 to the same period in 2024.
- 2.27 From 20 February 2025, Free School Meal eligibility has been expanded to include P6 and P7 pupils eligible for the Scottish Child Payment. The Council's online form has been updated to reflect the updated eligibility criteria and a social media campaign has been ongoing to ensure parents and carers are aware of the expansion of the scheme.


Blue Badges

- 2.28 The Finance Service administers the Blue Badge scheme in accordance with Scottish Government guidance. The eligibility criteria means that some are automatically entitled to a Blue Badge. In other cases, the Council assesses an individual's eligibility which may include the requirement for a mobility assessment and meeting a healthcare professional.
- 2.29 As at 31 March 2025, the Service administered 11,715 Blue Badge applications with 10,514 awarded (89.75% award rate). Over the same period in the 2023/24 financial year the Service administered 10,287 applications with 8,619 awarded (83.7% award rate).
- 2.30 Scottish Government guidance states that applicants should receive a decision on their application in around 12 weeks. The Council is currently reaching a decision within 4 weeks.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Continuous improvement in processing and collection rates.

4. Supporting documentation



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	Technology / Digital impact
Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
The Service has been liaising with Business and Digital on the Landlord Portal and RPA developments and these will be managed in line with Business and Digital's available resources.	
Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5.7	Environmental / Carbon impact
Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
5.8	Communications impact
Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
5.9	Risk impact
Is there a risk impact?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?	
5.10	Armed Forces Covenant Duty
Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.	
5.11	Children's rights and wellbeing impact
Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).	
If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref GT/KS/FC/DC

Date 21/05/25

Revenue Monitoring Report Council Summary 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 07583 010692

Executive Summary

This report updates on the overall financial position for the General Fund Account, Housing Revenue Account and Adult Health and Social Care, for the financial year to 31 March 2025. The report consolidates the budget monitoring position of all Services, highlighting and explaining major variances as per the Council's approved Financial Regulations.

The Council approved its General Fund Revenue Budget on 15 February 2024. Following notification from Scottish Government of further funding made available to local authorities the overall budget is now £1,008.920m. A surplus of £7.080m is currently projected, largely due to the reported position on loan charges and interest earned on revenue balances. This surplus is to support future budget challenges in accordance with the approved reserves policy, and any budget smoothing strategy recommended by the S95 Officer.

The 2024/25 budget incorporates £21.667m of net savings. It is projected that £20.189m of the savings (93%) will be delivered within the financial year, with replacement savings of £1.478m identified to fully address the shortfall.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the financial position of the 2024/25 revenue budget; and
- (2) Otherwise endorse the contents of this report.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	(25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's approved Financial Regulations require services to remain within their approved budgetary provision, and to report all significant deviations - defined as the higher of £100,000 or 5% - within their budget monitoring reports. Where significant deviations are identified, services must provide explanatory commentary, outline the action required to rectify such deviations and where relevant, must also highlight the impact this has on other budget headings.

2. Report

- 2.1 At its meeting of 15 February 2024, the Council approved a General Fund Revenue Budget of £1,016.750m including expenditure budgets which will be offset by ring fenced grant resources of £15.290m, resulting in a net expenditure position for monitoring purposes of £1,001.460m. Additional funding has since been confirmed as part of the Scottish Government budget setting, resulting in an overall total budget of £1,008.920m. It should be noted that this overall budget also reflects the transfer of £20.000m of funding from Revenue to Capital linked to Scottish Government funding towards pay award. Further details of this are provided in paragraph 2.12 below.
- 2.2 Following the budget setting in February 2024 the Council has an approved savings target of £21.667m for 2024/25. Further detail can be found in Section 2.13 below.
- 2.3 Table 1 below summarises the projected income and expenditure position, which illustrates a projected surplus of £7.080m, which will be available to support future budget challenges in accordance with the approved reserves policy, and any budget strategy recommended by the S95 Officer.

	Annual Budget (£m)	Projected Outturn (£m)	P12 Variance (£m)	P10 Variance (£m)	P10 to P12 Movement (£m)
Expenditure					
Total Expenditure	1,008.920	1,001.840	7.080	6.830	0.250
Income					
Aggregate External Finance	835.719	835.719	-	-	-
Local Tax Collection	168.999	168.999	-	-	-
Use of Balance	4.202	4.202	-	-	-
Total Income	1,008.920	1,008.920	-	-	-
Forecast Surplus/ (Deficit): to support future budgets	-	7.080	7.080	6.830	0.250

Table 1

Analysis of Significant Variations

2.4 Table 2 below illustrates the projected outturn financial position of services:

Service	P12 Outturn (£m)		P10 Outturn (£m)		P10 to P12 Movement (£m)
Education, Children and Families	-	On Budget	-	On Budget	-
Enterprise and Communities	-	On Budget	-	On Budget	-
Chief Executives and Other Corporate Services	3.065	Underspend	2.815	Underspend	0.250
Social Work (Non-Integrated)	-	On Budget	-	On Budget	-
Executive Services Total	3.065	Underspend	2.815	Underspend	0.250
Financing Costs	3.000	Over recovery	3.000	Over recovery	-
Other Budgetary Issues	1.015	Underspend	1.015	On Budget	-
Forecast Surplus/ (deficit): to support future budgets	7.080	Underspend	6.830	Underspend	0.250

Table 2

2.5 Education, Children and Families is reporting an overall breakeven position. However, it should be noted that there are a number of compensating variances within this position. Underspends are projected within employee costs of £0.516m reflecting actual and projected vacancies, along with the roll out of finalised HQ, cluster, and school staffing structures, £0.554m in other costs primarily linked to external grant synergies aligned to music provision and external company payments within employability, £0.822m underspend in supplies and services due to various compensatory factors across the service, and Payments to other bodies underspends of £0.693m mainly due to family placements payments. These underspends are offset by overspends in transport costs of £2.192m in relation to 'Home to School' transport pressures linked to ASN and Gaelic provision, together with a forecast under-recovery in income of £0.463m primarily in relation to reduced cross-boundary ASN placements within NLC settings.

2.6 Enterprise and Communities continue to report a projected breakeven position, with a number of compensatory variances contributing to this overall position. Employee costs are forecast to underspend by £4.585m as a result of vacancy savings partially offset by increased overtime and turnover, together with an underspend of £0.761m in administration costs due to grant income linked to free school meals received in advance of need, partially offset by increased external advisor costs as a result of vacancies. These underspends are offset by overspends in payments to other bodies of £1.875m, primarily as a result of increased costs in relation to the finalisation of the previous roads contract and the mobilisation of the new contract and increased agency and sub-contractor costs, £1.943m in supplies and services of primarily in relation to ICT costs, food provisions and sub-contracted work. In addition, income is projected to under-recover by £1.304m due to lower than anticipated income from Active NL membership Fees and Leisure pay as you go income, net Culture ticket sales and reduced building control and waste sales income.

2.7 Chief Executives and Other Corporate Services is reporting a projected underspend of £3.065m, primarily as a result of employee cost savings across the service totalling £1.929m linked to vacancies, and an underspend of £1.273m within supplies and services resulting from the current usage levels of cloud-based systems.

- 2.8 In respect of loan charges and interest earned on revenue balances, as previously advised, due to significant uncertainty and volatility within market conditions, and other variables, there is a risk of movement in the level of net financing costs expected in the current financial year. Following further consideration and updating of a number of factors, including latest projections on profiled capital expenditure, further refining of interest on revenue balances modelling and interest rates observed, £3.000m of the overall forecast net over recovery on budget is reported. Committee should note that some of the factors contributing to the overall financing costs position are purely timing, therefore, it is prudent to ensure the funding to manage these elements is earmarked in line with the overall longer term funding strategy for loan charges and interest on revenue balances. The final position in this respect will be kept under review and reported as part of the year end process.
- 2.9 In addition, there is a further underspend of £1.015m mainly in respect of additional Scottish Government funding for costs which are being partly met by other budgetary provision.
- 2.10 Committee are also advised that the budget for both council tax income and council tax reduction (CTR) are monitored on an ongoing basis. This includes consideration of council tax collection, CTR uptake and household numbers. In addition, an assessment of expected credit losses will be required. At this point in the financial year the Council Tax product is expected to be on budget with the position being finalised as the Council completes the annual accounts process.
- 2.11 The 2024/25 pay awards have now been agreed with the settlement for teachers being an uplift of 4.27%, and for non-teachers an uplift of 3.6% or £0.67 per hour, whichever is greater. The full implications have been incorporated into the monitoring position reported by each Service.
- 2.12 It should also be noted that Scottish Government has confirmed that £53.000m of their funding towards local government pay will be made through capital funding for 2024/25. In line with recent years, the Council has been asked to absorb a proportion of the capital funding in lieu of revenue funding. As a result, the reported net budget illustrated in appendix 1 has been reduced by £20.000m, with a corresponding increase in General Capital Grant. Local Government Finance Circular 9/2024 provides a temporary amendment to the statutory accounting requirements for capital grant which allows the necessary flexibilities in accounting such that the grant can be used to offset the revenue pressures linked to pay award, thus ensuring this transfer does not have a negative impact on the Council's overall revenue position.

2024/25 Budget Savings

- 2.13 As outlined in paragraph 2.2 above, the Council has approved net savings of £21.667m for 2024/25. Each Service reports on the achievement of their savings within the relevant service monitoring report. It is projected that £20.189m of savings (93%) will be achieved in the current year, with the in-year gap of £1.478m being fully mitigated by replacement savings.

Earmarked Reserves and Change Management Fund

- 2.14 The Council's audited annual accounts highlight a General Fund reserve balance of £283.893m. This balance includes £8.000m for the Contingency Fund, with a further £245.690m earmarked for specific future commitments including £19.358m allocated to the Change Management Fund to support one off costs of approved savings and to

ensure the Council has a resilient and sustainable financial plan. The remaining £30.203m of funds represent balances that were not earmarked as at 31 March 2024 and have therefore been set aside to support future budget strategies.

- 2.15 A total of £91.161m of earmarked reserves is profiled for use in 2024/25 with a further £154.529m profiled for use in future years. It is currently projected that £53.895m will be spent during this financial year with £191.768m anticipated to be required in future years, and £0.027m no longer required. A summary position is shown in Appendix 2. Taking into account the projected forecast surplus of £7.080m, and the drawdown of historic balances from the Capital Fund of £2.951m, it is expected that at the end of the financial year the General Fund will include non-earmarked balances of £40.261m as detailed in Appendix 3. These balances are to support future budget challenges in accordance with the approved reserves policy, and any budget smoothing strategy recommended by the S95 Officer.

Risks and Uncertainty

- 2.16 All activities undertaken by the Council are subject to risk, and in acknowledging the Council's approved Risk Management Strategy, Services manage these as part of their overall corporate and service planning processes. The current economic climate and pay and non-pay inflation continuing at historically high levels, are some of the key factors that have the potential to impact upon the Council's ability to provide quality services within approved budget levels.

Housing Revenue Account

- 2.17 The Housing Revenue Account is currently projecting an underspend of £0.835m for the financial year. This position is primarily as a result of underspends in repairs costs of £1.202m, electricity of £0.200m, a reduction in expected future credit losses required of £0.700m, and an underspend within other costs of £0.419m linked to contingency sums not required within 2024/25, partially offset by awards for Universal Credit Assistance Fund applications to support tenants transitioning to Universal Credit. These underspends are partially offset by an under-recovery of £0.423m for mainstream rent collection, an overspend reported within payments to other bodies to recognise the decision taken by the Housing Committee to use £1.233m of the current year surplus for the provision of grant to owners in multi tenure blocks where RAAC has been confirmed, and work will be required. The service anticipates that £1.165m of savings (100%) will be delivered by year end.

Adult Health and Social Care

- 2.18 Council Adult Health and Social Care provision to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) is projecting an underspend of £3.778m. This position is primarily due to a projected net underspend in employee costs of £6.561m mainly as a result of non-recurring reduction of employer's superannuation costs coupled with slippage in recruitment, partially offset by higher than anticipated costs in relation to home support staffing costs. There is also an underspend in supplies and services of £0.366m mainly as a result of lower than anticipated spend in equipment and adaptations, and an over-recovery in income of £0.473m primarily linked to increased spend on Care of Gardens and Adaptations which are met by contributions from housing, and recently received 'Winter Planning' funding, offsetting expenditure incurred. These favourable variances are partly offset by a projected overspend of £3.166m in payments to other bodies and transfer payments primarily in relation to anticipated spend in 'Care at Home' and Independent Care Homes, higher than anticipated transport and plant costs of £0.362m mainly in relation to higher than anticipated running costs associated with vehicles for use across

the Service, and an overspend in property costs of £0.352m predominantly due to higher than anticipated spend on Care of Gardens and Adaptations which is offset by increased income as noted above. It should be noted that the reduction in pension cost is part of the delivery plan solution to manage an overall recurring cost pressure of £11.400m over 2024/25 and 2025/26.

3. Measures of success

3.1 The Council continues to operate within approved budgeted resources.

4. Supporting documentation

Appendix 1 Summary by Division

Appendix 2 Anticipated Commitments – Earmarked Reserves

Appendix 3 Availability of One-Off Funds – Change Management Fund



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>
5.11	<p>Children's rights and wellbeing impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).</p> <p>If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
SUMMARY BY DIVISION FOR PERIOD ENDING 28 February 2025 (PERIOD 12)

LINE NO.	SERVICE ACCOUNT (1)	ANNUAL BUDGET (2) £	PROVISIONAL OUTTURN (3) £	PROVISIONAL VARIANCES (4) £
1	Education, Children & Families	535,981,477	535,981,477	-
2	Early Years	31,417,926	31,417,926	-
3	Primary Schools	147,761,754	147,761,754	-
4	Secondary Schools	133,474,732	133,474,732	-
5	Special Schools	26,779,053	26,779,053	-
6	Education & Families Service Delivery	145,397,572	147,788,873	(2,391,301)
7	Childrens Services Social Work	40,648,864	38,818,993	1,829,871
8	Justice Services	91,691	(414,847)	506,538
10	Employability	3,014,911	2,766,524	248,387
11	Community Learning	5,393,020	5,518,798	(125,778)
12	Tackling Poverty	2,001,954	2,069,671	(67,717)
13	Enterprise & Communities	206,394,701	206,394,701	-
14	Assets & Procurement	37,435,179	37,559,464	(124,285)
15	Trading Accounts	(462,202)	(92,197)	(370,005)
16	Community Operations	152,387,643	154,578,966	(2,191,323)
17	Housing Management	5,725,566	3,889,811	1,835,755
18	Place	11,308,515	10,458,657	849,858
19	Chief Executives & Other Corporate Services	109,906,848	106,841,521	3,065,327
20	Directorate & Support	529,177	562,005	(32,828)
21	Finance	47,098,042	45,645,039	1,453,003
22	Audit & Risk	597,041	593,673	3,368
23	Legal & Democratic	2,579,482	2,303,309	276,173
24	Business & Digital	23,484,284	21,722,647	1,761,637
25	People Resources	8,933,567	8,847,471	86,096
26	Strategic Communication and Engagement	5,396,368	5,376,105	20,263
27	Other Corporate Services	6,284,817	6,787,202	(502,385)
28	Joint Boards	15,004,070	15,004,070	-
29	Social Work (non Integrated)	211,469,816	211,469,816	-
30	GENERAL FUND SERVICES	1,063,752,842	1,060,687,515	3,065,327
31	FINANCING COSTS	(36,205,584)	(39,205,584)	3,000,000
32	Reversal of Capital Charge	(87,964,980)	(87,964,980)	-
33	Loan Charges and Interest on Revenue Balances	51,759,396	48,759,396	3,000,000
34	OTHER BUDGETARY ISSUES	(18,627,005)	(19,641,817)	1,014,812
35	Assumptions not yet Realised	1,372,995	358,183	1,014,812
37	Transfer from capital grant (Pay Award)	(20,000,000)	(20,000,000)	-
38	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,008,920,253	1,001,840,114	7,080,139
39	SOURCES OF FUNDING	1,008,920,253	1,008,920,253	-
40	Aggregate External Finance	834,374,788	834,374,788	-
41	Council Tax	168,999,465	168,999,465	-
42	Use of balances	5,546,000	5,546,000	-
43	FORECAST (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT: TO SUPPORT FUTURE BUDGETS	-	(7,080,139)	7,080,139
44	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT	-	(835,000)	835,000
45	ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (SURPLUS) /DEFICIT	-	(3,778,184)	3,778,184

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

ANTICIPATED COMMITMENTS AGAINST EARMARKED RESERVES AS AT 28 February 2025 (PERIOD 12)

	Opening Reserve Balances	2024/25					Future Years			Total	Check Future Years
		2024/25 Revised Earmarked Reserve	24/25 Projected Spend	Anticipated Year End Balance	Anticipated Future Year Use	No Longer Required	Profilled for Future Years	Anticipated Future Year Use	No Longer Required	No Longer Required	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Change Management Fund	19,358	3,230	3,230	-	-	-	16,128	16,128	-	-	16,128 -
Earmarked & One Off Resources											
Schools Future Contractual Obligations	60,969	-	-	-	-	-	60,969	60,969	-	-	60,969 -
Strategic Workforce Planning	17,902	17,902	3,886	14,016	14,016	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Temporary Teachers	823	823	823	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Temporary Accommodation	8,038	8,038	-	8,038	8,038	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Early Years & Childcare Expansion	5,213	3,332	3,332	-	-	-	1,881	1,881	-	-	1,881 -
Refugee Resettlement Programmes	8,323	3,276	3,086	190	190	-	5,047	5,047	-	-	5,047 -
Loans Charges	17,905	-	-	-	-	-	17,905	17,905	-	-	17,905 -
Unmanaged burdens within Education, Children & Families	4,234	4,234	1,434	2,800	2,800	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Pupil Equity Fund	2,153	2,153	2,153	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Balances held by Schools under Devolved School Management	2,655	2,655	2,655	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Economic Recovery	1,519	1,419	1,319	100	100	-	100	100	-	-	100 -
Whole Family Wellbeing	4,417	2,071	1,471	600	600	-	2,346	2,346	-	-	2,346 -
Winter Reserve	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Business Gateway and Business Recovery	1,697	822	822	-	-	-	875	875	-	-	875 -
Strategic Capital Investment Programme	44,800	-	-	-	-	-	44,800	44,800	-	-	44,800 -
One Workforce Grading Pressures	5,000	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Digital NL	1,222	1,222	1,222	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Mobilisation of Strategic Contracts	2,177	2,177	2,177	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Shared prosperity Grants	1,753	1,753	1,753	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Teacher Induction Scheme Support	1,302	1,302	207	1,095	1,095	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Budget One-off Investment	8,119	8,119	6,901	1,218	1,218	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Other Earmarked Funds	24,611	20,133	15,924	4,209	4,182	27	4,478	4,478	-	27	4,478 -
Earmarked & One Off Resources Total	226,332	87,931	50,665	37,266	37,239	27	138,401	138,401	-	27	138,401 -
Total Reserves	245,690	91,161	53,895	37,266	37,239	27	154,529	154,529	-	27	154,529 -
Contingency Reserve	8,000										
Non-Earmarked Balance; to support future budget challenges	30,203										
General Fund Surplus at 31 March 2024	283,893										

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
 AVAILABILITY OF GENERAL FUND BALANCES AS AT 28 February 2025 (PERIOD 12)

	Change Management Fund	Non-Earmarked General Fund
	£000	£000
Total Balance B/f per 2023/24 Annual Accounts	19,358	30,203
Period 10 reported variance		7,080
Earmarked Reserves no longer required		27
Total Balance 2024/25 before commitments	19,358	37,310
Revised one - off costs of approved savings	(3,230)	
Draw down from Capital Fund		2,951
Total Balance 2024/25; to support future budget challenges	16,128	40,261
Known Commitments :- Revised one - off costs of approved savings	(2,774)	
Forecast Balance; to support future budget challenges	13,354	40,261

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref GT/PH/PF

Date 21/05/25

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report; Chief Executive's Service 01.04.24 – 28.02.25 (Period 12)

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 01698 302408

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the Chief Executive's Service financial performance for the period 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025 (Period 12). The report illustrates the provisional outturn as at 31 March 2025, with major outturn variances highlighted and explained per the Council's approved Financial Regulations.

The Council approved its General Fund Revenue Budget on 15 February 2024, of which £109.907m currently represents the net revenue budget for the Chief Executive's Service.

Incorporated within the revenue budget are approved service savings totalling £1.707m.

The Service is currently projecting a year-end underspend of £3.065m for the financial year predominately as a result of employee vacancies and underspends relating to ICT contracts.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the financial position of the 2024/25 Chief Executive's Service revenue budget.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's approved Financial Regulations require the Chief Executive to remain within the approved budgetary provision, and to report all significant deviations - defined as the higher of £100,000 or 5% - within budget monitoring reports. Where significant deviations are identified, the Chief Executive must provide explanatory commentary, outline the action required to rectify such deviations and where relevant, must also highlight the impact this has on other budget headings.

2. Report

Summary of Financial Position

- 2.1 The Council approved its General Fund Revenue Budget on 15 February 2024, of which £104.746m (10.38%) represented the approved Revenue Budget for the Chief Executive's Service. Additional SG grant funding for Scottish Welfare Fund, Pay Award uplifts and in-year transfers from Education, Children and Families results in a revised budget of £109.907m.
- 2.2 The overall projected outturn position of the Service is a year-end underspend of £3.065m. Appendices one to five provide further information in respect of this position.
- 2.3 As at Period 12 the position on Council Tax Reduction Scheme remains under review along with other elements of the Council Tax Product including household numbers and council tax collection for the year. The Council Tax Product will then be assessed for expected credit losses as part of the year end process. It is currently anticipated there will be no material variance overall.
- 2.4 The 2024/25 budget incorporates £1.707m of savings which are listed in Appendix 5. Of this, £1.027m relates to service specific savings approved by Council in February and these have been fully delivered through service restructures and a reduction in operational budgets. Furthermore, the historic underspend savings target of £0.680m has also been fully achieved across the service.

Analysis of Significant Variances

- 2.5 The service currently anticipates a projected underspend of £1.929m within Employee costs as a result of actual and projected vacancies to 31 March 2025.
- 2.6 Costs in relation to the annual insurance premium coupled with building costs relating to the Civic Centre has resulted in a projected overspend of £0.138m within Property Costs.
- 2.7 Within Supplies and Services the service is projecting a year end underspend of £1.273m which represents savings within Business and Digital resulting from the current usage levels of cloud-based systems.
- 2.8 Transport & Plant is projected to underspend by £0.046m due to reduced travel claims following the implementation of hybrid working and MOT plating.
- 2.9 The service is now anticipating an underspend of £0.145m within Administration Costs predominately due to lower than anticipated expected credit losses, training and advertising costs partially offset by increased costs for insurance premiums, legal fees as a result of the level of Solicitor vacancies meaning external advice is required, consultant fees and postages.

- 2.10 An income under-recovery of £0.126m is projected predominately attributable to a forecast reduction in PPP contributions and lower than budgeted recoveries from legal insurance, licensing and registrars partially offset by over-recoveries within rental allowances / rent rebates overpayments, additional statutory charges for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates and interest.
- 2.11 There are various minor variances across other budget areas resulting in the Service forecasting a year-end underspend of £3.065m as at 31 March 2025.

Earmarked and One-off Reserves

- 2.12 In finalising the Council's draft accounts to 31 March 2024, the service was given approval to earmark £3.567m of resources to fund key projects and initiatives profiled over a number of years. It is anticipated that £2.297m of the reserves balances will be utilised in 2024/25 with £1.248m required for future years and a balance of £0.022m to be returned to reserves. Details of the Service's earmarked funds are provided in Appendix 4.
- 2.13 The Service has also been given approval to utilise £1.059m of funds from the Corporate Strategic Workforce Planning Reserve over a number of years. It is anticipated £0.195m of this reserve will be utilised in 2024/25 with actual spend of £0.148m at P12. These funds are not included in the Service outturn position.
- 2.14 The Service was further given approval to utilise £0.296m of funds from the Change Management Fund over several years. It is anticipated that £0.043m will be utilised in 2024/25 with actual spend of £0.032m at P12. These funds are not included in the Service outturn position.
- 2.15 The Service has incurred £0.688m VRS costs relating to approved savings/restructures. Therefore, there is a requirement to utilise the Corporate Change Management fund at this time. Any further costs arising will be reported in future reports as they are incurred. These costs are not included in the Service outturn position.

2024/25 Budget Savings

- 2.16 The Council approved service savings of £1.707m savings of which £1.707m have been fully delivered as at Period 12. Further information regarding savings is included in Appendix 5.

Management Actions

- 2.17 The Service is being pro-active to ensure expenditure is contained within its approved 2024/25 budget.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 The Service continues to operate within approved budget resources.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1 Objective Summary
 4.2 Appendix 2 Subjective Summary
 4.3 Appendix 3 Payments to Other Bodies

- 4.4 Appendix 4 Earmarked Reserves
- 4.5 Appendix 5 Budget Savings



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? As stated in the main body of the report.
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p> <p>All activities undertaken by the Council are subject to risk, and in acknowledging the Council's approved Risk Management Strategy, Services manage these as part of their overall corporate and service planning processes. The current economic climate, in particular, has the potential to impact upon the Council's ability to provide quality services within approved budget levels.</p> <p>To minimise risk, this report has been prepared by service based Finance personnel in consultation with budget managers, in accordance with the Financial Regulations.</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Objective Analysis
Period 12 (01 April 2024 - 28 February 2025)
A - Chief Executives Service

DIVISION OF SERVICE	ANNUAL BUDGET	PROJECTED OUTTURN	PROJECTED OUTTURN VARIANCE	%	PERIOD MOVEMENT	ANALYSIS
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]
DIRECTORATE & SUPPORT	529,177	562,005	(32,828) ADV	(6.2%)	(45)	Overspend in legal fees as a result of seeking external advice due to solicitor vacancies.
FINANCE	47,098,042	45,645,039	1,453,003 FAV	3.1%	367,485	Underspends due to vacancies and an over-recovery in income relating to rent allowances / rent rebates overpayments, blue badges and Government grants offset by projected overspends in insurance premiums and postages.
AUDIT & RISK	597,041	593,673	3,368 FAV	0.6%	2,742	Underspends due to vacancies.
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SOLUTIONS	2,579,482	2,303,309	276,173 FAV	10.7%	1,744	Underspends within employee costs, photocopying and postages offset by an under-recovery in income in relation to insurance, photocopying, registrars and licensing income.
BUSINESS & DIGITAL	23,484,284	21,722,647	1,761,637 FAV	7.5%	(174,570)	Underspends within ICT contracts linked to the timing of costs associated with cloud based systems and vacancies.
PEOPLE RESOURCES	8,933,567	8,847,471	86,096 FAV	1.0%	28,339	Underspends within employee costs and training budgets are offset by increased medical fees.
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS	5,396,368	5,376,105	20,263 FAV	0.4%	4,263	Underspends within employee costs and administration costs are offset by turnover.
OTHER COPORATE SERVICES	6,284,817	6,787,202	(502,385) ADV	(8.0%)	19,866	Under-recovery in income within PPP Contributions coupled with projected costs for byelections offset by underspendsfor NLP Financial Guarantee and interest received.
JOINT BOARDS	15,004,071	15,004,071	0	0.0%	0	Balanced budget.
NET EXPENDITURE	109,906,849	106,841,523	3,065,327 FAV	2.8%	249,824	

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Subjective Analysis
Period 12 (01 April 2024 - 28 February 2025)
A - Chief Executives Service

CATEGORY	ANNUAL BUDGET	PROJECTED OUTTURN	PROJECTED OUTTURN VARIANCE	%	PERIOD MOVEMENT	ANALYSIS
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]
EMPLOYEE COSTS	43,703,104	41,773,970	1,929,134 FAV	4.4%	340,169	Underspends due to vacancies partially offset by overtime costs.
PROPERTY COSTS	1,847,739	1,986,188	(138,449) ADV	(7.5%)	16,906	Assumed increased costs relating to the insurance premium coupled with part year building costs relating to the Civic Centre.
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	10,703,627	9,430,606	1,273,022 FAV	11.9%	(155,813)	Underspends within ICT contracts linked to the timing of costs associated with cloud based systems
TRANSPORT & PLANT	842,483	795,988	46,495 FAV	5.5%	4,435	Underspends within travel expenses due to hybrid working and MOT plating.
ADMINISTRATION COSTS	8,291,447	8,146,320	145,127 FAV	1.8%	123,330	Assumed expected credit losses, training and advertising costs are offset by insurance premium increase, legal fees as a result of using external advice due to the level of internal vacancies and postages.
PAYMENTS TO OTHER BODIES	18,500,499	18,533,787	(33,287) ADV	(0.2%)	(45,961)	Projected costs associated with by-elections and medical fees offset by agency fees.
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	108,757,069	108,757,069	0	0.0%	0	
CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS	6,812,218	6,742,994	69,224 FAV	1.0%	0	Over-recovery of income re NLP Financial Guarantee.
REVENUE FINANCING COSTS	0	0	0	0.0%	0	
OTHER EXPENDITURE	5,619,314	5,719,094	(99,780) ADV	(1.8%)	(86,059)	Miscellaneous costs associated with the purchase of Cumbernauld Shopping Centre.
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	205,077,500	201,886,015	3,191,486 FAV	1.6%	197,007	
INCOME	(95,170,651)	(95,044,493)	(126,159) ADV	0.1%	52,817	Under-recovery in income within PPP Contributions, insurance, photocopying and registrars offset by over-recoveries for Rent Allowances / Rent Rebates Overpayments, Additional Statutory Charges and interest.
NET EXPENDITURE	109,906,849	106,841,523	3,065,327 FAV	2.8%	249,824	

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Payments to Other Bodies
Period 12 (01 April 2024 - 28 February 2025)
A - Chief Executives Service

CATEGORY [1]	ANNUAL BUDGET [2]	PROJECTED OUT-TURN [3]	PROJECTED OUT-TURN VARIANCE [4]	% [5]	PERIOD MOVEMENT [6]	ANALYSIS [7]
PAYMENTS TO OTHER BODIES GENERAL	669,336	711,715	(42,379) ADV	(6.3%)	(32,379)	Projected costs associated with by-elections.
MEDICAL FEES	10,722	41,592	(30,870) ADV	(287.9%)	(17,917)	Increased costs in relation to medical fees.
AGENCY FEES	79,847	53,346	26,501 FAV	33.2%	(3,499)	Lower than anticipated costs within Agency Fees.
TOWN TWINNING	0	0	0	0.0%	0	
CHILDRENS PANEL	24,972	20,958	4,014 FAV	16.1%	14	Minor variance
COSLA ANNUAL LEVY	195,000	193,434	1,566 FAV	0.8%	0	
COMMUNITY COUNCIL GRANTS	125,222	121,222	4,000 FAV	3.2%	4,000	Minor variance
GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS	987,294	987,294	0	0.0%	0	
EXTERNAL AUDIT FEE	679,389	643,986	35,403 FAV	5.2%	35,403	Lower than anticipated costs.
ELECTION PROVISION	0	0	0	0.0%	0	
TOURISM - VISIT NORTH LANARKSHIRE	84,837	84,837	0	0.0%	0	
SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND	4,120,844	4,120,844	0	0.0%	0	
SUB-CONTRACTOR PAYMENTS	1,869	1,809	60 FAV	3.2%	0	Minor variance
LOCAL TAX PAYPOINT COMMISSION	35,000	31,179	3,821 FAV	10.9%	3,821	Minor variance
COSLA MIGRATION SCOTLAND	200,000	200,000	0	0.0%	0	
LANDS VALUATION CONTRIBUTION	1,814,004	1,814,004	0	0.0%	0	
SPT CONTRIBUTION	5,481,746	5,481,746	0	0.0%	0	
SPT CONCESSIONARY FARES CONTRIBUTION	569,805	569,805	0	0.0%	0	
CUSTOMER FIRST CONTRIBUTION	4,100,000	4,100,000	0	0.0%	0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	19,179,887	19,177,772	2,116 FAV	0.0%	(10,557)	

APPENDIX 4

Period 12 (01 April 2024 - 28 February 2025)
A - Chief Executives Service

DESCRIPTION OF EARMARKED RESOURCE	FINANCIAL YEAR - 2023/24									Commentary Regards Usage
	Reserve Allocation	Profiled in Future Years	Approved Reserve Total	Spend to Date	Projected Spend Value	Projected Spend %	Reprofile to Future Years	No Longer Required	Reserves Required In Year	
Service Specific Earmarked Reserves:										
Admin of Covid and Cost of Living related support scheme	11,919	0	11,919	11,919	11,919	100.0%			11,919	
COL Grant	34,645	0	34,645	34,645	34,645	100.0%			34,645	
Modern Apprentices	75,838	(18,959)	56,879	25,097	28,456	50.0%	28,423		28,456	Balance required to support future costs.
Insurance Premiums	812,876	0	812,876	812,876	812,876	100.0%			812,876	
Digitisation	83,797	0	83,797	83,797	83,797	100.0%			83,797	
B&D - Investment model replacement of funds	627,000	(168,382)	458,618	219,630	458,618	100.0%			458,618	
NLC10 posts	21,849	0	21,849	0	0	0.0%		21,849	0	Budget no longer required as project is now complete.
NLC12 post	312,055	(251,905)	60,150	50,970	59,292	98.6%	858		59,292	Balance of budget required to support residual costs in 2025/26.
B&D - Backfill for EUC Infrastructure Team (Windows 11)	137,900	0	137,900	95,766	102,466	74.3%	35,434		102,466	Balance of budget required to support residual costs in 2025/26.
Learning Academy	100,000	0	100,000	83,702	100,000	100.0%			100,000	
Construction Academy	228,000	0	228,000	0	43,694	19.2%	184,306		43,694	Balance required in 2025/26 to support ongoing commitments.
CSH Recover NL	81,000	0	81,000	44,835	71,855	88.7%	9,145		71,855	Balance required in 2025/26 to support ongoing commitments.
Recover NL CSH 2022/23 (Single Number)	457,861	(93,699)	364,162	0	0	0.0%	364,162		0	Balance required in 2025/26 to support ongoing commitments.
Recover NL Grants	23,863	0	23,863	3,953	13,863	58.1%	10,000		13,863	Balance required in 2025/26 to support ongoing commitments.
Cost of Living (Comms)	35,372	0	35,372	25,725	25,725	72.7%	9,647		25,725	Balance required in 2025/26 to support ongoing commitments.
Cumbernauld Community Grants (Antonine Centre)	225,000	0	225,000	155,643	225,000	100.0%			225,000	
Grant award Programme	148,000	(54,000)	94,000	94,000	75,000	79.8%	19,000		75,000	Balance required in 2025/26 to support ongoing commitments.
Audit Fee	150,000	0	150,000	0	150,000	100.0%			150,000	
TOTAL	3,566,975	(586,944)	2,980,030	1,742,558	2,297,207	77.1%	660,975	21,849	2,297,207	

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Savings
Period 12 (01 April 2024 - 28 February 2025)
A - Chief Executives Service

Ref.	DESCRIPTION OF APPROVED SAVING	APPROVED SAVINGS			
		Target Value	Value Deliverable	Savings Gap	Reasons for Savings Gap
		£000	£000	£000	
01CEX	Directorate & Support - Reivew of Support Services	56	56	0	
03CEX	Directorate & Support	4	4	0	
04CEX	Finance (5%)	48	48	0	
07CEX	Legal & Democratic - Central Services (10%)	14	14	0	
13CEXD	Business & Digital - Reivew of Support Services	43	43	0	
10CEX	Business & Digital - Digital / Field Services - Technical Support to Education & Families	92	92	0	
11CEXD	Business & Digital - DigitalNL (MS Licences)	200	200	0	
12CEX	Business & Digital - Technoclogy Solutions - restructure and review of contracts	110	110	0	
13CEX	Business & Digital - Business Strategy	154	154	0	
19CEX	Strategic Communications & Engagement - Corporate Communications	149	149	0	
20CEX	Strategic Communications & Engagement - Communities	157	157	0	
	Historic Recurring Underspends	680	680	0	
	TOTAL	1,707	1,707	0	

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref GT/VR/RM

Date 21/05/25

Capital Programme 2024/25 Monitoring Report

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 07583 010 692

Executive Summary

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the 2024/25 resources and expenditure for the Council's Strategic Capital Investment Programme. The report shows the 2024/25 projected outturn position and the resultant variances.

It is currently anticipated that the General Fund programme will have a projected programme expenditure variance of £16.677m, primarily due to the ongoing reassessment of vehicle replacement programme requirements, timing delays within the Town and Community Hub programme and the new Roads and Infrastructure contract and public utilities works for City Deal projects within Enterprise and Communities.

The HRA programme is currently anticipating that expenditure will be £8.114m lower mainly due to the reduced land costs as higher level of abnormalities costs being identified within the New Build programme, together with a reduction in the number of projected acquisitions through the Mortgage to Rent and Buy Back schemes within the Buy Back programme. In addition, the Mainstream programme is now projected to underspend by £4.000m due to the outcome of an adjudication which reduced a contractors claim and delayed works.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledges the provisional outturn financial position of the Council's Strategic Capital Investment Programme as at 28 February 2025.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Strategic Capital Investment Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29 was approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2024 and represents the total Community Investment Programme incorporating the General Services Capital Programme and HRA Capital Programmes. The programme was developed in conjunction with Services and led by the Strategic Capital Delivery Group (SCDG) using the principles established by the Council's Capital Strategy.
- 1.2 The General Services Capital Programme supported by General Services resources demonstrates to communities that the place making visions for towns remains a priority and that the approved 5-year capital investment plan supports delivery of The Plan for North Lanarkshire. The programme includes additional investment in Town and Community Hubs, the City Deal programme, and external grant funding.
- 1.3 In addition, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) resources support several HRA Capital Investment Programmes including the Mainstream programme for investment in the Council's existing estate and delivery of the ambition for 5,000 additional supply through the New Build and Council Buy Back programmes.
- 1.4 The 2024/2025 General Services Capital Programme is currently £139.464m with a £111.291m investment programme in relation to the Housing Revenue Account. This reflects the approved budget in March 2024 at Policy and Strategy Committee and subsequent decisions made at the Strategic Capital Delivery Group (SCDG) in accordance with the SCDG terms of reference, and where appropriate either by the individual service committees, Finance and Resources Committee or the Policy and Strategy Committee per the Scheme of Administration. Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the overall 2024/25 budget by Service Programme and associated approved budget movements.

2. Report

Overall Council Strategic Capital Investment Programme

- 2.1 The overall Council Strategic Capital Investment programme for 2024/25 and the provisional outturn to 31 March 2025 is summarised in Table 1 as follows:

Community Capital Investment Programme Summary 2024/25

	Current Programme £000s	Projected Outturn £000s	Outturn Variance £000s
Enterprise & Communities	129,060	113,642	15,418
Chief Executives	8,233	7,145	1,088
Adult Health & Social Care	2,171	2,000	171
General Services: Total Capital Investment	139,464	122,787	16,677
General Services Resources:			
General Fund			
External Grants & Contributions 2024/25 - GCG	45,183	45,183	0
External Grants & Contributions 2024/25 - Other Grants	9,365	9,365	0
External Grants & Contributions b/f 2023/24 - Other Grants	7,203	7,203	0
External Grants & Contributions Unapplied	(2,974)	(2,974)	0
Net External Grants & Contributions	58,777	58,777	0
Advanced Developers Contributions	1,507	1,507	0
City Deal Grant	1,264	1,264	0
Capital Receipts	3,250	6,291	3,041
Capital Receipts -Transfer to Capital Fund	0	0	0
CFCR	4,728	4,728	0
General Services: Total Resources	69,526	72,567	3,041
General Services : Borrowing Requirement	69,938	50,220	(19,718)
HRA : Total Capital Investment	111,291	103,177	8,114
HRA Resources:			
Net External Grants & Contributions	15,452	17,236	1,784
Capital Receipts	0	15	15
CFCR	20,089	20,089	0
HRA : Total Resources	35,541	37,340	1,799
HRA : Borrowing Requirement	75,750	65,837	(9,913)
Summary			
Total Council : Capital Investment	250,755	225,964	24,791
Total Council : Resources	105,067	109,907	4,840
Total Council : Borrowing Requirement	145,688	116,057	(29,631)

- 2.2 On a budgeted programme of £250.755m expenditure is anticipated to be £24.791m lower than current programme at this stage of the financial year. Further financial performance information regarding each of the programmes is discussed in section 2.3 and 2.29 below.

General Services Capital Programme and Projected Outturn by Service/ Programme

- 2.3 The forecast financial performance of the overall General Services Investment programme at 31 March 2025 is detailed in Appendix 2 and summarised below.

General Services Total Resources

- 2.4 The revised programme approved by the SCDG is £139.464m with total resources available to meet the current programme forecast to be £69.526m, resulting in a borrowing requirement of £69.938m.
- 2.5 In 2024/25 net external grants and contributions of £58.777m will be utilised. This capital resource primarily includes the Scottish Government (SG) General Capital Grant (GCG) receivable of £45.183m including allocations for Traffic Signals and Road Safety Fund (TSRS, £2.434m) and LG Pay Award (£20.000m) and other specific SG Grants including Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF, £1.231m), Live Labs II (LLII £1.369m and Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF £1.406m). It also includes contributions from other sources such as developer contributions of £4.483m. In addition, capital grants received in 2023/24 have been added to the programme to match expenditure in 2024/25 including £1.418m for VDLF, £1.841m for PBIP, £1.875m for Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, £1.477m for Live Labs II and £0.231m for Community Bus Fund. This has been offset by £2.974m of external grant and contributions for Live Labs II (LLII £1.864m), VDLF (£0.318m), PBIP (£0.766m) and the Scottish Wildlife Trust (£0.026m) which will not be applied in 2024/25, for projects which will now not be completed until 2025/26.
- 2.6 Receipts from the sale of assets are currently projected to be £6.291m, which is £3.041m greater than the budget of £3.250m. These receipts will continue to be closely monitored throughout the remainder of the financial year.
- 2.7 Whilst the approved 5-year capital programme had assumed phasing of known utilisation of developer contributions, the accelerated timing of drawdown of these contributions of an additional £1.507m during 2024/25 to match in-year expenditure reduces the borrowing requirement for 2024/25 and will instead be required in the 2025/26 financial year.
- 2.8 In addition, the approved 5-year capital programme had assumed phasing of City Deal grant income with no receipt in 2024/25 forecast, accelerated timing of receipt of this grant of £1.264m during 2024/25 results in a corresponding reduction in the borrowing requirement for 2024/25 and will instead be required in the 2028/29 financial year.

General Services Total Expenditure

- 2.9 As indicated in Table 1 the General Services investment programme is £139.464m. At Period 12, the provisional outturn spend is £16.677m lower than current programme. Further analysis by service/programme is outlined below and summarised within Appendix 2.
- 2.10 **Enterprise and Communities** is projecting outturn expenditure of £113.642m, which is a £15.418m variance from current programme.
- 2.11 Within Community Operations, the ongoing assessment of the Council's vehicle requirements has resulted in a positive in-year variance in the vehicle replacement programme of £4.662m within the Operational and Infrastructure theme. The service is now considering other purchases that can be ordered and delivered early next financial year in order to reduce the reliance on external hires. In addition, the service are also experiencing delays in orders for HWRC equipment and replacement litter bins which has resulted in an in-year variance of £0.569m.

- 2.12 Within Roads and Street Lighting theme, the timing of the commencement of the new Roads and Infrastructure contract has resulted in a positive variance of £1.551m for the LED Infrastructure & Street Lighting project. Delivery of works will be completed in the new financial year. Within the Infrastructure renewal programme there is a £0.429m variance for Vehicle Restraint Systems due to the installation of the barrier requiring an element of design work with contractor capacity issues delaying the completion of the project into 2025/26 financial year. There is also an underspend of £0.209m for car parks, due to other competing priorities there has been a delay in identifying and designs works relating to the carpark works, it is anticipated that this will be delivered next financial year.
- 2.13 Within Greenspace and Cemeteries theme, programme delivery schedules have now been received from the appointed contractor at Pather Farm Cemetery which has highlighted works will continue into 2025/26 with a variance of £0.679m. In addition, Tree Asset management is reporting an in-year variance of £0.105m. This spend is in part related to the Team moving to a new location and because that project is delayed this has impacted on our ability to spend on an agricultural shed, and Ash Dieback Roads contracts have been delayed with the introduction of the new Enterprise contract mechanism and securing a contract has been difficult. EMR will be carried to allow further Ash Dieback works for roadside trees in 2025/26.
- 2.14 Within the Parks Masterplan theme, an in-year variance of £0.286m in relation to Bothwellhaugh Cottage works has arisen due to design stage delays and works will now span into 2025/26.
- 2.15 Within Town and Community Hubs, there is an in-year variance of £5.308m which is mainly in relation to the St Kevin's Community Hub project which is now expected to result in a variance of £4.418m due to the requirement for additional pollution control testing and mitigation. These issues have now been resolved, and works are now underway. In addition, there is a variance of £1.011m in relation to the Grass Pitch at Gartcosh delays in Scottish Power completing work to move an electricity sub-station to enable the pitch works to take place. In addition, there are variances of £0.496m due to delays in contractor initial valuations at St Stephens Community Hub, £0.467m due to delays in the project start date at Glenboig Community Hub and £0.108m due to a delay in financial close at Chryston High School Extension. These underspends have been partially offset by increased in-year spend on Gartcosh Primary School of £1.649m where updated cashflows have now been received from the contractor on the spend that is achievable this financial year.
- 2.16 These are partially offset by cost increases within Assets & Procurement, where works have been accelerated within the Office Accommodation theme of £1.918m to support the needs of services.
- 2.17 Within Maintaining Existing Assets a programme variance of £0.958m is projected, primarily due to an emerging issue within the Time Capsule for the water sports facility and lifts within the venue which have resulted in a variance of £0.574m. The Service is working with the contractor to mobilise these works. This acceleration was approved at the SCDG in October 2024. Within the theme, there have also been cost increases experienced on a major rewire project at Glencryan School mainly linked to additional asbestos removal works resulting in a variance of £0.963m. However, these have been offset by positive variances on roofing works of £0.293m and the re-profiling of other works into next financial year of £0.286m.
- 2.18 Additional unforeseen drainage works for two modular accommodation projects within Sustainable Estate theme and completion of the Heathery Park nursery project within

the 1140 Early Learning and Childcare Expansion theme have resulted in cost increases of £0.300m and £0.124m respectively. A variance of £0.425m within Outdoor Education is now reported where works on three pitch replacements are now anticipated to be completed in April 2025. These increased budget requirements will be managed by the Service within their overall 5-year budget allocations.

- 2.19 These cost increases will be partially offset by a positive variance of £1.497m within the ASN theme linked to the Carnbroe and the Edward Lawson Centre projects which are now planned to complete in 2025/26.
- 2.20 Within Place, it is anticipated that City Deal is now expecting a positive variance of £3.149m as a result of delays relating to external factors such as the need for additional ecological works, reduced public utility diversion costs and design costs being less than estimated and more challenging market conditions around key procurements. In addition, a delay in the award of the Roads and Infrastructure contract has meant that some works will not be complete until early 2025/26 resulting in a variance of £0.509m. This is partially offset by the acceleration of £1.125m for the Newhouse project within Economic Regeneration to facilitate external works.
- 2.21 Committed expenditure of £112.455m is currently reported, which represents 98.96% of the targeted expenditure, and actual expenditure is £84.290m which represents 74.17% of targeted expenditure.
- 2.22 **Chief Executives** is projecting outturn expenditure is projecting outturn expenditure of £7.145m, which is a £1.088m variance from current programme.
- 2.23 This is primarily attributable to supply chain issues within the Strategic Communications and Engagement theme associated with the availability of suppliers to deliver play projects within the current financial year and prioritisation of UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding to support groups applying for a Community Asset Transfer. resulting in a programme variance of £0.539m.
- 2.24 Within the Business and Digital theme, programme variances have arisen due to lower than anticipated project costs. Variances are projected of £0.378m due to delays in the contract award for Paperless Office within Digitisation & Innovation, £0.150m due to timing of works and release of contingency budgets associated with the Mosaic project within Line of Business and £0.020m due to staff recruitment within Capacity respectively.
- 2.25 Committed expenditure of £6.761m is currently reported, which represents 94.63% of the targeted expenditure. Actual expenditure is £4.565m, which is 63.89% of targeted expenditure.
- 2.26 **Adult Health & Social Care** is projecting outturn expenditure of £2.000m, which is a £0.171m variance from the current programme.
- 2.27 The variance is due to uncertainties in both demand and complexity of need, following on from the pandemic.
- 2.28 Committed expenditure of £1.782m is currently reported, which represents 89.10% of the targeted expenditure, and actual expenditure is £1.577m which is 78.85% of targeted expenditure.

HRA Capital Investment

- 2.29 The financial performance of the HRA Capital Programme is reported in detail to the Housing Committee. A summary of performance as at 28 February 2025 is provided at Appendix 3. Total expenditure of £103.177m is forecast for 2024/25 which is a reduction in programmed expenditure of £8.114m.
- 2.30 Within the Mainstream programme, a variance of £4.000m is projected as result of a successful outcome to the adjudication relating to the 4 Towers project in Coatbridge of £1.600m, and delayed work within the kitchen and bathroom replacement and fire door programmes partially offset by acceleration of programmed additional works following appointment of a new demolition contractors with net variance reported of £2.400m.
- 2.31 A request will be made to the next meeting of the SCDG to re-profile £2.400m of expenditure into 2025/26.
- 2.32 Projected costs within the New Build programme are expected to be £2.636m lower due to reduced land costs as a result of a higher level of abnormal costs being identified and some minor delays reprofiling expenditure to the next financial year. In addition, a reduction in combined programmed expenditure of £1.478m is projected due to a reduction in acquisitions through the Mortgage to Rent programme and the Buy Back scheme.
- 2.33 Committed expenditure of £103.177m is currently reported, which represents 100.00% of the targeted expenditure, and actual expenditure is £79.837m which is 77.38% of targeted expenditure.

Service Re-profiling Requests

- 2.34 As mentioned in paragraph 2.29 , to ensure available resources more closely reflect operational activity across themes, requests within the HRA programme to reprofile budget to future years of the programme will be required and these will be presented for approval at future meetings of the SCDG and will be incorporated in future reports.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 N/A

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1: Strategic Capital Investment Programme 2024/25 budget movements
- 4.2 Appendix 2: General Services Capital Investment Programme Summary 2024/25
- 4.3 Appendix 3: HRA Capital Investment Programme Summary 2024/25



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? The financial impact is outlined within the report.
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p> <p>Despite the updated programme approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2024 the capital programme continues to face challenges in relation to the wider economic climate, linked to availability of materials, contractors and inflationary pressures. These are currently being managed by services and Project Boards associated with specific programme delivery and will continue to be monitored throughout the year in accordance with the SCDG Terms of Reference</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2024/25 Strategic Capital Investment Programme – budget movements

Appendix 1

	Enterprise & Communities	Chief Executives	Adult Health & Social Care	Corporate	Total General Services Investment Programme	Total HRA Investment Programme	Total Community Investment Programme
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
24/25 Opening programme approved Policy& Strategy Committee 1 March '24	99,161	5,589	2,200	450	107,400	115,291	222,691
23/24 Overs/Unders Carry Forward	15,802	4,506	(29)	(37)	20,242	0	20,242
24/25 Budget adjustments approved by SCDG	872	0	0	(872)	0	0	0
Increase/(Decrease) in Externally Funded Projects	17,161	1,919	0	0	19,080	0	19,080
Increase/(Decrease) in Council Funded Projects	(1,264)	0	0	0	(1,264)	0	(1,264)
Increase/(Decrease) in CFCR	3,355	0	0	0	3,355	0	3,355
24/25 Re-profiling of projects to future years approved by SCDG	(6,027)	(3,781)	0	459	(9,349)	(4,000)	(13,349)
Revised Capital Programme 2024/25	129,060	8,233	2,171	0	139,464	111,291	250,755

General Services Capital Investment Programme Summary 2024/25 - as at 31 March 2025

Appendix 2

Investment	Current Programme 2024/25 £000s	Projected Outturn 2024/25 £000s	Outturn Variance 2024/25 £000s	Committed Expenditure @ P12 £000s	Committed Expenditure % of Projected Outturn	Actual Expenditure @ P12 £000s	Actual Expenditure % of Projected Outturn
Enterprise & Communities	129,060	113,642	15,418	112,455	98.96%	84,290	74.17%
Chief Executives	8,233	7,145	1,088	6,761	94.63%	4,565	63.89%
Adult Health & Social Care	2,171	2,000	171	1,782	89.10%	1,577	78.85%
Total General Services Investment	139,464	122,787	16,677	120,998	98.54%	90,432	73.65%

General Services Resources;			
External Grants & Contributions 2024/25 - GCG	45,183	45,183	0
External Grants & Contributions 2024/25 - Other Grants	9,365	9,365	0
External Grants & Contributions b/f 2023/24 - Other Grants	7,203	7,203	0
External Grants & Contributions Unapplied cfwd to 2025/26	(2,974)	(2,974)	0
Net External Grants & Contributions	58,777	58,777	0
Advanced Developers Contributions	1,507	1,507	0
City Deal Grant	1,264	1,264	0
CFCR	4,728	4,728	0
Capital Receipts	3,250	6,291	3,041
Total Resources	69,526	72,567	3,041
<i>Borrowing Requirement:</i>			
General Services	69,938	50,220	(19,718)
Total General Services Borrowing Requirement	69,938	50,220	(19,718)
Total Resources incl Borrowing Requirement	139,464	122,787	(16,677)

HRA Capital Investment Programme Summary 2024/25 - as at 31 March 2025

Appendix 3

Investment	Current Programme 2024/25 £000s	Projected Outturn 2024/25 £000s	Outturn Variance 2024/25 £000s	Committed Expenditure @ P12 £000s	Committed Expenditure % of Projected Outturn	Actual Expenditure @ P12 £000s	Actual Expenditure % of Projected Outturn
Mainstream Programme	63,114	59,114	4,000	59,114	100.00%	45,667	77.25%
New Build Programme	35,541	32,905	2,636	32,905	100.00%	25,770	78.32%
Council Buy Back Scheme	12,636	11,158	1,478	11,158	100.00%	8,400	75.28%
Total HRA Investment	111,291	103,177	8,114	103,177	100.00%	79,837	77.38%

HRA Capital Resources;			
External Grants & Contributions	15,452	17,236	1,784
External Grants & Contributions Unapplied	0	0	0
Net External Grants & Contributions	15,452	17,236	1,784
CFCR	20,089	20,089	0
Capital Receipts	0	15	15
Total Resources	35,541	37,340	1,799
<i>Borrowing Requirement:</i>			
HRA - Mainstream	47,695	43,680	(4,015)
HRA - New Build	19,925	15,530	(4,395)
HRA - Buyback Scheme	8,130	6,627	(1,503)
Total Borrowing Requirement	75,750	65,837	(9,913)
Total Resources incl Borrowing Requirement	111,291	103,177	(8,114)

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref GT/PH/PF

Date 21/05/25

Chief Executive Service – Capital Monitoring Report 1 April to 28 February 2025 (Period 12)

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 01698 302408

Executive Summary

This report highlights the financial performance and projected outturn of 2024/25 Chief Executive capital programme for the period ended 28 February 2025 (Period 12).

In summary the Service has a total capital budget of £8.233m, comprising of £5.203m within Business and Digital and £3.030m within Strategic Communications and Engagement. This budget reflects the budget approved by the Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2024; balances carried forward from previous years, UKSPF funding, other external funding and subsequent decisions made at the Strategic Capital Delivery Group (SCDG) in relation to reprofiling.

The Service is currently projecting a year-end underspend of £1.087m at this stage of the financial year. Further explanation of management action taken by the Service is included within the main report and attached appendices.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Considers the financial position of the 2024/25 Chief Executive capital programme.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the Chief Executive Service financial performance for the period 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025 (Period 12), with major outturn variances highlighted and explained per the Council's approved Financial Regulations.
- 1.2 The Council approved its Capital programme at Policy and Strategy Committee on 14 March 2024 with an allocated budget of £6.620m for the current year. In addition, carry forwards from the previous year, Scottish Government funding for Play Areas, UKSPF Grant funding, external funding and decisions made at SCDG in relation to reprofiling have resulted in a revised Capital Programme of £8.233m for the 2024/25 Financial Year as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 1.3 The Council's approved Financial Regulations required the Chief Executive to remain within his approved budgetary provision, and to report all significant deviations – defined as the higher of £0.100m or 5% - within their budget monitoring reports. Where significant deviations are identified, Chief Officers must provide explanatory commentary, outline the action required to rectify such deviations and where relevant, must also highlight the impact this has on other budget headings.

2. Report

Summary of Financial Position

- 2.1 The Service is projecting an underspend of £1.087m for the financial year 2024/25. Capital budgets and expenditure are summarised in Appendix 1.

Analysis of Significant Variances

- 2.2 An explanation of variances within Business and Digital is detailed below:
 - Digitisation & Innovation
An underspend of £0.378m is projected due delays in the contract award for Paperless Office and delivery of Community Alarms project.
 - Line of Business (LOB)
The service is projecting an underspend of £0.150m within the Booking System project for ACC due to timing of works and release of contingency budgets within the Mosaic project.
 - End User Devices (EUD)
The service is currently projecting a break-even position.
 - Cyber
The service is currently projecting a break-even position.
 - Capacity
The service is projecting an underspend of £0.020m due to further delays in the recruitment of staff.
 - Innovation
Approval was further given from SCDG to reprofile budgets due to timing of recruitment resulting in the service is now projecting a break-even position.

- 2.3 A explanation of the current position within Strategic Communications and Engagement is detailed below:
The service is currently projecting an underspend of £0.539m due inability to deliver planned projects prior to 31 March 2025, including play areas and prioritisation of UKSPF funding to support groups applying for a Community Asset Transfer.

Management Action

- 2.4 The Service closely monitors all activities to ensure available budgets are maximised whilst monitoring and actively managing the ongoing external challenges in delivery of projects. The Service continues to review the programme with updates being provided to the SCDG and Committee.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 The Service aim is to operate within approved budget resources over the term of the capital programme.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1 Summary Expenditure by Project / Theme



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? As stated within the main body of the report.
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p> <p>5.9.1 All activities undertaken by the Council are subject to risk, and in acknowledging the Council's approved Risk Management Strategy, Services manage these as part of their overall corporate and service planning processes. The current economic climate, in particular, has the potential to impact upon the Council's ability to provide quality services within approved budget levels.</p> <p>5.9.2 To minimise risk this report was prepared by Finance personnel in consultation with budget managers, in accordance with the Financial Regulations.</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Chief Executives Capital Programme 2024/25
Summary Expenditure by Thematic Categories
1st April 2024 - 28th February 2025 (Period 12)

Theme	YTD				OUTTURN	
	Budget £	Actual £	Committed £	Uncommitted £	Projected Outturn £	Outturn variance £
Digitisation & Innovation	2,682,431	1,491,291	2,257,165	47,205	2,304,370	378,061
Line of Business (LOB) System Portfolio	982,243	409,755	701,152	131,092	832,243	150,000
End User Device (Eud) Refresh	1,361,528	305,493	1,255,003	106,525	1,361,528	-
Cyber	114,000	114,000	114,000	-	114,000	-
Capacity	43,000	-	22,547	-	22,547	20,453
Innovation	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000	-
TOTAL BUSINESS and DIGITAL	5,203,202	2,320,539	4,349,867	304,821	4,654,689	548,513
Community Board Project Investment Fund	2,474,520	1,789,381	1,956,314	79,282	2,035,595	438,925
Community Asset Transfers	555,000	455,000	455,000	-	455,000	100,000
TOTAL STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS and ENGAGEMENT	3,029,520	2,244,381	2,411,314	79,282	2,490,595	538,925
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVES	8,232,722	4,564,920	6,761,181	384,103	7,145,284	1,087,438

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref GT/KS/RM/GM

Date 21/05/25

Treasury Management Monitoring Report for quarter ended 31 March 2025

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail McnameeR@northlan.gov.uk **Telephone** Ryan McNamee, Finance Manager

Executive Summary

This report fulfils the key requirements of the Council's reporting procedures for Treasury Management in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. It informs on the quarterly Treasury Management activity for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025 and compliance with the mandatory treasury and prudential indicators.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the Treasury Management Activity for the quarter ended 31 March 2025 including the performance against the key treasury and prudential indicators.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning
Programme of Work	Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council manages its treasury activities in line with the CIPFA Code 'Treasury Management in the Public Services'. The Code requires the Council to produce reports on its Treasury Management policies, practices and activities on a regular and ongoing basis. The Council fulfils these obligations, in part, by the preparation of this Treasury Management Monitoring report produced on a quarterly basis, encompassing a review of performance.
- 1.2 The Council's "Treasury Management Strategy 2024/2025 and Treasury and Prudential Indicators 2024/2025 to 2028/2029" was approved by Committee at its meeting on 28 February 2024. The Treasury activity undertaken in the final quarter of 2024/25 reflects the key requirements of the Council's 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy, with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and Long-term Money Market being the prime source of long-term funds. In terms of investment activity, this is conducted in accordance with the approved 2024/25 investment strategy.

2. Report

Summary Position

- 2.1. The net overall borrowing position to 31 March 2025 is £1,142.4m, which is an increase of £82.4m from the position at the 31 December 2024. A detailed breakdown of the net cash movement is shown in column (6) within Appendix 1 and is discussed below.

Borrowing

- 2.2. At the end of the quarter, total external debt amounted to £1,188.1m, an increase of £57.8m. This was primarily due to additional net longer-term borrowing of £69.8m being undertaken, comprising new PWLB borrowing of £80.0m, offset by repayment of existing PWLB debt of £10.2m.
- 2.3. During the quarter the Council sourced PWLB loans totalling £70.0m on an equal instalment payment (EIP) basis, which provides a smoother debt maturity profile, thus spreading the refinancing risk and £10.0m on an annuity basis for a 1-year loan replacing some temporary borrowing. Of this, £35.0m of the EIP loans were sourced at interest rates ranging from 4.94% to 4.97% over an 8-year repayment period, £20.0m sourced at an interest rate of 4.91% over a 9-year repayment period and £15.0m taking advantage of the PWLB HRA rate (see para 2.7) of 4.51% over a 6-year repayment period. The £10.0m annuity borrowings were sourced at an interest rate of 5.07% over the 1-year period. In each case, the respective certainty rate or HRA rate discounts (see para 2.6 and para 2.7) were utilised.
- 2.4. In addition, there was a decrease in net temporary borrowing of £10.0m, due to £45.5m falling due for repayment being offset by £35.5m of new borrowing. There was also a £2.0m reduction in long term liabilities due to existing finance lease and Service Concessions obligations falling due for repayment.
- 2.5. The Council's approach to borrowing is in line with the approved strategy which aims to source long-term borrowing and take advantage of temporary (short-term) borrowing at attractive rates, and where possible, using internal cash balances, to meet the principal repayments, daily revenue account requirements and the capital financing requirement, in lieu of borrowing for capital purposes. The strategy adopted considers interest rate forecasts, the management of carrying costs and the retention of cash balances at appropriate levels, whilst managing the associated investment, interest, and liquidity risk.

- 2.6. The Council made a successful application to the PWLB to access the certainty rate which allows a 20-basis point (bps) (0.20%) discount on loans from the PWLB under the prudential borrowing regime. This will continue to provide the Council with an opportunity to borrow from the PWLB at more beneficial rates until 31 March 2025.
- 2.7 A new PWLB HRA rate, which is 0.40% below the certainty rate, has been available from 15th June 2023, which has been extended until March 2026 in the UK Budget in October 2024, to support local authorities borrowing for Housing capital purposes or refinancing existing loans. In conjunction with our treasury advisors, we continue to review borrowing requirements and assess borrowing opportunities for the Council during 2024/25.
- 2.8 The CIPFA Prudential Code stipulates that local authorities cannot borrow to invest primarily for financial return, deeming it imprudent to make investment or spending decisions which will increase the capital financing requirement resulting in new borrowing, unless it is directly and primarily related to the functions of the Council. The Council is compliant with this requirement. Members should note also that PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield.
- 2.9 Members will be aware interest rates have risen significantly over the past 2 years, increasing materially the cost of both short and long-term borrowing. In this quarter, the Bank of England reduced the base rate to 4.50% in February. It should be noted that the Council's cost of short-term borrowing reduced slightly during the quarter. For the majority of the year the cost of short-term borrowing from other local authorities closely tracked base rate at around 5.00% - 5.25%. However, from late 2024 rates began to rise, peaking at around 6% in February and March 2025. The average rate on the Council's short-term loans as at 31st March 2025 was 4.96%.
- 2.10 After substantial rises in interest rates since 2021 many central banks have now begun to reduce their policy rates, albeit slowly. Gilt yields were volatile but have increased overall during the year. Much of the increase has been in response to market concerns that policies introduced by the UK government will be inflationary and lead to higher levels of government borrowing. The election of Donald Trump in the US in November is also expected to lead to inflationary trade policies.
- 2.11 The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 5.40% at the beginning of the period and 5.38% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity rate was 5.23% and the highest was 5.71%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.68% to 6.14% during the period, and 50-year maturity loans ranged from 5.44% to 6.08%.

Debt Restructuring

- 2.12 In conjunction with our Treasury advisors, we monitored the economic climate in relation to our financial targets and Treasury Management Strategy, for the quarter under review. The interest rates prevailing throughout the period resulted in no beneficial opportunities for debt restructuring/rescheduling of the existing PWLB debt portfolio arising.
- 2.13 The Council continues to hold £3.0m of LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. The rise in market interest rates increases the probability of LOBOs being called, however, no lender exercised their option during the quarter.
- 2.14 Further reports regarding future activity will be presented to Committee as appropriate.

Investments

- 2.15 Treasury management investments arise from cash flows or treasury risk management activity, that results in balances being invested, until the cash is required for use in the course of business.
- 2.16 At the end of the final quarter of 2024/25, the Council held total investments of £45.7m, which is a net decrease of £24.6m in cash and cash equivalents, primarily due to a £17.0m increase in short-term investments, reflecting maturing temporary investments of approximately £375.9m, and undertaking new short-term investments of £358.9m, and a movement in uncleared balances due to timing differences including cash in transit of £41.6m. See summary at Appendix 1, column 6.
- 2.17 At quarter end the uncleared balances including cash in transit was £37.0m which is a net deficit position, a decrease of £41.6m compared to the position reported at the end of the previous quarter of a net surplus position of £4.6m. This primarily reflects the timing of significant BACS receipts and payments as a result of the Easter holiday period being later than last year. The balance at 31 March 2025 comprises £37.0m of net BACS credits outstanding due for clearance within 3 days of the quarter end date, cash in transit balance of £0.2m, partly offset by cheques unrepresented of £0.2m.
- 2.18 In line with the approved strategy to manage liquidity, the Council aims to maintain a minimum balance of £30.0m available on an overnight basis (instant access), ensuring a prudent level of funds is maintained to meet all service requirements.
- 2.19 During the quarter, the MPC voted to reduce the Bank of England base rate by 0.25% to 4.50%, which resulted in short-dated cash rates also reducing, with rates ranging between 4.70% in early January to 4.37% in February, a reduction of 0.33% for overnight/7-day maturities. There is little noticeable difference between the 7 day and 1-month SONIA (Sterling Overnight Rate) bid rates and generally available investment rates offered by financial institutions and money market funds. Despite this, the Council will endeavour to achieve good performance levels in investment activity.
- 2.20 Overall the Treasury Management team continues to take a prudent approach to investing surplus funds in line with the approved 2024/25 Investment Strategy. Security of investment and ensuring sufficient liquidity are key investment criteria governing Council investment decisions. This approach is aligned to the prudent management of current commitments and future cash demands based on latest robust cashflow projections. During the quarter, the rates on Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) deposits ranged between 4.45% and 4.70% and money market rates between 4.42% and 4.74%.
- 2.21 However, as demonstrated by the liability benchmark reported at (xi) below and Appendix 3 attached, it is anticipated the Council will be a long-term borrower and therefore new treasury investments are primarily made to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments. The existing portfolio of strategic pooled funds will be maintained to diversify risk into different sectors and boost investment income.

Non-Treasury Management Investments

- 2.22 During the quarter, no repayments were made in respect of third-party advances in connection with the Cumbernauld Academy DBFM and Greenfaulds DBFM.

Interest Rate Movements & Other Economic Updates

- 2.23 As outlined by our treasury management advisors, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered her Spring Statement in March 2025, following her Budget in October 2024. Based on the plans announced, the Office for Budget Responsibility downgraded its predictions for UK growth in 2025 to 1% from 2%. However, it upgraded its predictions for the four subsequent years. Inflation predictions for 2025 were pushed up, to 3.2% from 2.6%, before seen as falling back to target in 2027. The market reaction to the Spring Statement was more muted compared to the Budget, with very recent market turbulence being driven more by US trade policy decisions and President Trump.
- 2.24 UK annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation continued to stay above the 2% Bank of England (BoE) target in the later part of the period. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported headline consumer prices at 2.8% in February 2025, down from 3.0% in the previous month and below expectations. Core CPI also remained elevated, falling slightly in February to 3.5% from 3.7% in January, just below expectations for 3.6% but higher than the last three months of the calendar year.
- 2.25 The UK economy Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 0.1% between October and December 2024, unrevised from the initial estimate. This was an improvement on the zero growth in the previous quarter, but down from the 0.4% growth between April and June 2024. Of the monthly GDP figures, the economy was estimated to have contracted by 0.1% in January, worse than expectations for a 0.1% gain however in surprising news, February GDP grew 0.5%, exceeding expectations of 0.1% growth.
- 2.26 The labour market continued to cool, but the ONS data still require treating with caution. Recent data showed the unemployment rate rose to 4.4% (3mth/year) in the three months to January 2025 while the economic inactivity rate fell again to 21.5%. The ONS reported pay growth over the same three-month period at 5.9% for regular earnings (excluding bonuses) and 5.8% for total earnings.
- 2.27 The BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held base rate at 4.5% at its March 2025 meeting, having reduced it in February. This follows earlier 0.25% cuts in November and August 2024 from the 5.25% peak. At the March MPC meeting, members voted 8-1 to maintain base rate at 4.5%, with the one dissenter preferring another 25 basis points cut. The meeting minutes implied a slightly more hawkish tilt compared to February when two MPC members wanted a 50bps cut. In the minutes, the Bank also upgraded its Q1 2025 GDP forecast to around 0.25% from the previous estimate of 0.1%.
- 2.28 The February Monetary Policy Report (MPR) showed the BoE expected GDP growth in 2025 to be significantly weaker compared to the November MPR. GDP is forecast to rise by 0.1% in Q1 2025, less than the previous estimate of 0.4%. Four-quarter GDP growth is expected to pick up from the middle of 2025, to over 1.5% by the end of the forecast period. The outlook for CPI inflation showed it remaining above the MPC's 2% target throughout 2025. It is expected to hit around 3.5% by June before peaking at 3.7% in Q3 and then easing towards the end of the year, but staying above the 2% target. The unemployment rate was expected to rise steadily to around 4.75% by the end of the forecast horizon, above the assumed medium-term equilibrium unemployment rate of 4.5%.
- 2.29 Our treasury management advisors maintain its central view that base rate would continue to fall throughout 2025. From the cuts in August and November 2024 and February 2025, which took bank rate to 4.50%, May is considered the likely month for

the next reduction, with other cuts following in line with MPR months to take base rate down to around 3.75% by the end of 2025.

- 2.30 In global terms, the US Federal Reserve paused its cutting cycle in the first three months of 2025, having reduced the Fed Funds Rate by 0.25% to a range of 4.25%-4.50% in December, the third cut in succession. Fed policymakers noted uncertainty around the economic outlook but were anticipating around 0.50% of further cuts in the policy rate in 2025. Economic growth continued to rise at a reasonable pace, expanding at an annualised rate of 2.4% in Q4 2024 while inflation remained elevated over the period. However, growth is now expected to weaken by more than previously expected in 2025, to 1.7% from 2.1%. The uncertainty that President Trump has brought both before and since his inauguration in January is expected to continue. The European Central Bank (ECB) continued its rate cutting cycle over the period, reducing its three key policy rates by another 0.25% in March, acknowledging that monetary policy is becoming meaningfully less restrictive. Euro zone inflation has decreased steadily in 2025, falling to 2.2% in March, the lowest level since November 2024. Over the current calendar year, inflation is expected to average 2.3%. GDP growth stagnated in the last quarter of the 2024 calendar year, after expanding by 0.4% in the previous quarter. For 2025, economic growth forecasts were revised downwards to 0.9%.
- 2.31 Financial market sentiment was reasonably positive over most of the period, but economic, financial and geopolitical issues meant the trend of market volatility remained. In the latter part of the period, volatility increased, and bond yields started to fall following a January peak, as the economic uncertainty around likely US trade policy impacted financial markets. Yields in the UK and US started to diverge in the last month of the period, with the former rising around concerns over the fiscal implications on the UK government from weaker growth, business sentiment and higher rates, while the latter started falling on potential recession fears due to the unpredictable nature of policy announcements by the US President and their potential impact.
- 2.32 The 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started the period at 4.57% and ended at 4.69%, reaching a low of 4.44% in February and a high of 4.90% in January in between. While the 20-year gilt started at 5.08% and ended at 5.22%, hitting a low of 4.97% in February and a high of 5.40% in January. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.55% over the period.
- 2.33 Due to the cut in the base rate during the period, short-term borrowing interest rates reduced with the short term 7-day offer rate ranging between 4.57% and 4.90% over the period. Taking account of the increase in borrowing rates and advice from our treasury management advisors, it was considered more cost effective in the near term to use a combination of internal resources or to borrow rolling temporary / short-term loans at lower interest rates where possible rather than long term borrowing. This will result in increased temporary borrowing costs for the Council partially offset by increased investment income earned on surplus balances.
- 2.34 The Treasury Management team will continue to monitor financial and economic policy and their impact upon the Council's investment and borrowing activity.
- 2.35 The period in question ended shortly before US President Donald Trump announced his package of 'reciprocal tariffs', the immediate aftermath of which saw stock prices and government bond yields falling and introduced further uncertainty over the economic outlook and possible impacts will be reported in future reports.

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities

- 2.36 The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 requires the Council to undertake its Treasury activities in line with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 2.37 Committee, at its meeting on 28 February 2024, approved a report titled, "Treasury Management Strategy 2024/2025 and Treasury and Prudential Indicators 2024/2025 to 2028/2029". This report detailed a variety of mandatory and local indicators aimed at assisting members to determine that proposed capital investment levels and treasury management decisions satisfied the key requirements of affordability, prudence and sustainability. Performance against key prudential indicators for 2024/25 to date is detailed within Appendix 2.
- (i) Indicator 1(a) illustrates planned investment on capital expenditure is forecast to be lower than initially anticipated by £76.3m in 2024/25. This reflects a reduction of £33.7m in the General Fund capital investment and £52.6m for the HRA Mainstream and New Build programmes partly offset by an increase in Credit Arrangements of £10.0m reflecting updated estimates of IFRS16 on service concession contracts. For further information, this is monitored in detail as part of the Council's capital programme reporting mechanisms which will provide spend details including any revisions to the estimates approved in 2024/25.
 - (ii) The mix of resources required to finance the capital expenditure in 2024/25 reflects the updates on forecast capital investment. Therefore, the level of in-year borrowing is anticipated to be lower by £100.7m due to a reduction in General Fund programme requirements of £64.5m and £36.2m for HRA programme. This forecast level of borrowing also reflects a net increase in capital grants and external contributions of £6.7m with increased funds available to General Fund of £23.2m primarily due to additional Scottish Government General Capital Grant of £20.0m partly offset by a decrease in HRA programmes of £16.5m. An increase of £4.7m in General Fund CFCR is also anticipated and an increase in capital receipts of £3.0m.
 - (iii) As a result of accounting issues arising from the pandemic recovery, the implementation of IFRS 16 Lease Accounting was further delayed, but will be implemented in 2024/25. Therefore, a restatement of existing liabilities for operating leases to the credit arrangement category is estimated to have a £2.2m impact. In addition, there is a subsequent impact of IFRS16 implementation on Service Concessions liabilities in 2024/25. The accounting impact is an estimated increased capital investment of £96.5m (increase to capital financing requirement) being recognised in 2024/25. It should be noted that this is an accounting adjustment and does not represent cash expenditure, which is offset by an equal and opposite recognition of associated credit arrangements financing.
 - (iv) Indicator 1(b) – The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). The CFR is essentially a measure of Council's underlying borrowing need i.e. capital expenditure not resourced by capital grants, receipts or CFCR, with any new borrowing increasing the CFR. The CFR is projected to rise to £1,561.3m within financial year 2024/25.
 - (v) The Prudential Code requires the Council's capital investment to be prudent and affordable. To demonstrate this, a Prudential Margin (the need to borrow versus actual borrowing) is calculated. Indicator 1(c) demonstrates a healthy prudential margin of £280.3m estimated as at 31 March 2025. The timing and profile of

external borrowing to replenish cash reserves and balances are being managed, giving full consideration to liquidity, interest rate and refinancing risk, whilst minimising the potential carrying costs.

- (vi) Indicator 1(d) illustrates that both the overall Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary limits for borrowing and long-term liabilities have not been exceeded, with the maximum borrowing undertaken within the period being well below the approved boundaries.
- (vii) Indicator 1(e) illustrates the financing costs forecasts as at 31 March 2025 for both general fund and HRA as a proportion of net revenue stream. Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to revenue, interest payable on loans, and loan fund and long-term liability repayments are. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Council Tax, NDR and government grants.
- (viii) Indicator 2(a) highlights the proportion of external interest payable by the Council which is fixed and variable over the term of the borrowing, and therefore the exposure to the effects of interest rate changes. As at 31 March 2025, the level of borrowing subject to variability is deemed to be within acceptable levels.
- (ix) Indicator 2(b) highlights a projected increase in loan charges of £0.4m compared to the initial Treasury Management Strategy estimates for 2024/25. This projection takes into account treasury management activity, internal Interest on Revenue Balances (IORB) recharges due to increased market interest rates, the loans fund holiday flexibility adopted in 2022/23 and decisions of the Policy and Strategy Committee and the Strategic Capital Delivery Group to approve and reprofile the new capital programme for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 based on current programme delivery plans. This current loan charge variance is made up of:
 - A net treasury management interest and expenses increased spend of £0.7m is projected (HRA £1.3m partly offset by decreased spend of £0.6m General Fund), which is a primarily a reflection of increased internal IORB charges, and incorporates cashflow management techniques adopted, e.g. directing the timing of new borrowing, managing investment security, liquidity and interest rate risk.
 - In 2024/25 it is anticipated there will be a minor reduction in anticipated loans fund advance repayments of £0.3m (£0.2m General Fund, HRA £0.1m). This is primarily due to revised average loan pool rates from previously forecast.
- (x) Indicator 2(c) relates to the level of fixed debt due to mature within time periods. The level of debt maturing remains within the upper limits set for each category at the beginning of the financial year.
- (xi) The Liability Benchmark at Appendix 3. The Treasury Management Code states that organisations should evaluate the amount, timing and maturities needed for new borrowing in relation to planned borrowing needs, in order to avoid borrowing too much, too little, too long or too short. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future and so shapes its strategic focus and decision making. Essentially this benchmark identifies the projection of external debt/borrowing required over the long term to fund approved revenue & capital budgets, while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash.

- (xii) This represents the comparison of the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy. This utilises the forecasts for Capital Financing Requirement, long-term liabilities, current external borrowing, balance sheet resources i.e. reserves, and that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum of £30.0m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

	31/3/24 Actual £m	31/3/25 Forecast £m	31/3/26 Forecast £m	31/3/27 Forecast £m	31/3/28 Forecast £m	31/3/29 Forecast £m
Loans CFR	1,175.8	1,267.9	1,427.7	1,717.1	1,939.7	2,231.2
less Balance Sheet Resources	(369.5)	(372.6)	(330.8)	(313.9)	(254.8)	(242.5)
Net Loans Requirement	806.3	895.4	1,096.9	1,403.2	1,684.9	1,988.7
plus: Liquidity Allowance	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
Liability Benchmark	836.3	925.4	1,126.9	1,433.2	1,714.9	2,018.7
Existing Borrowing	866.9	987.6	689.6	629.4	575.9	526.7
New Borrowing Required	0.0	0.0	437.3	803.9	1,139.0	1,492.0

- (xiii) The Loans CFR (solid light blue) represents the total cost of the capital expenditure plans based on the estimated current profile of the 5-year Capital Programme 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 as approved by Policy & Strategy Committee on 14th March 2024. This reduces over time as scheduled principal repayments are made to the loans fund. The Net Loans Requirement (dotted red line) represents the minimum external borrowing required to fund the current capital expenditure plans assuming all cash reserves and balances are utilised to offset borrowing requirements. The Liability Benchmark (solid red line) represents the estimated borrowing required, taken account of liquidity allowance required of £30.0m to be held to maintain liquidity and to manage day-to-day cashflows.
- (xiv) The solid grey section shows the maturity profile of current borrowing. The gap between the grey section and the liability benchmark line represents the estimated additional borrowing that is forecast will be required to fund the current capital expenditure plans, via long-term and short-term borrowing options.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Overall the approach adopted by the Council's Treasury Management team during the quarter under review met the key requirements of the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy. Prudential indicators have remained in accordance with those approved by Committee on 28 February 2024. The projected final outturn illustrates a healthy prudential margin and borrowing levels that are below sustainable limits, ensuring that the projected capital investment levels remain affordable and sustainable. However, the current financial volatility and increased borrowing costs has resulted in an assessment being undertaken of the potential impact on future years of the current capital programme. This will continue to be monitored to determine if any further review of the programme is required to ensure that it remains sustainably affordable.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1: Loans, Long term Liabilities & Investments as at 31 March 2025
- 4.2 Appendix 2: Summary of Treasury and Prudential Indicators as at quarter ended 31 March 2025
- 4.3 Appendix 3: Liability Benchmark as at quarter ended 31 March 2025



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1	<p>Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p>Financial impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any financial impacts?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Financial impacts are outlined within the report.</p>
5.3	<p>HR policy impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.4	<p>Legal impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.5	<p>Data protection impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p> <p>As the Council borrows and invests significant sums of money it is exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. Therefore, successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Council's treasury management strategy.</p> <p>Treasury Management activity by its very nature has a number of inherent risks including interest rate, liquidity and refinancing risks. To minimise risk for its treasury management activities the Council adopts and operates in accordance with the guidelines for best practice prescribed within the CIPFA "Treasury Management in the Public Services" Code of Practice and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

LOANS, LONG TERM LIABILITIES & INVESTMENTS AS AT 31 MARCH 2025
Appendix 1

	BALANCE 1-January-25 (1)	DEBT RESTRUCTURING		NEW BORROWING / LONG-TERM LIABILITIES (4)	PRINCIPAL REPAYMENTS (5)	NET CASH MOVEMENTS (6)	BALANCE 31-March-25 (7)
		EARLY REDEMPTION (2)	REFINANCING (3)				
<u>LONG-TERM LOANS</u>							
PWLB	640,283,717	0	0	80,000,000	(10,160,387)	69,839,613	710,123,329
MONEY MARKET LOANS	54,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	54,000,000
LOBO	3,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	3,000,000
ENERGY EFFICIENCY LOAN	507,542	0	0	0	(26,023)	(26,023)	481,519
	697,791,259	0	0	80,000,000	(10,186,410)	69,813,590	767,604,849
<u>SHORT-TERM LOANS</u>							
TEMPORARY	230,000,000	0	0	35,500,000	(45,500,000)	(10,000,000)	220,000,000
MUNICIPAL BANK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INTERNAL LOANS	6,280	0	0	0	0	0	6,280
	230,006,280	0	0	35,500,000	(45,500,000)	(10,000,000)	220,006,280
<u>LONG -TERM LIABILITIES</u>							
FINANCE LEASE OBLIGATIONS	1,055,925	0	0	0	0	0	1,055,925
LONG TERM LIABILITY	201,425,455	0	0	0	(1,992,769)	(1,992,769)	199,432,685
	202,481,379	0	0	0	(1,992,769)	(1,992,769)	200,488,610
<u>TOTAL EXTERNAL DEBT</u>	1,130,278,918	0	0	115,500,000	(57,679,179)	57,820,821	1,188,099,739
<u>INVESTMENTS</u>							
THIRD PARTY ADVANCES	1,135,267	0	0	0	0	0	1,135,267
BANKS & OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	64,528,531.88	0	0	0	0	16,973,166	81,501,698
UNCLEARED BALANCES INCL CASH IN TRANSIT	4,612,570	0	0	0	0	(41,594,361)	(36,981,791)
<u>CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS</u>	70,276,369	0	0	0	0	(24,621,194)	45,655,175
<u>NET BORROWING</u>	1,060,002,549	0	0	115,500,000	57,679,179	82,442,015	1,142,444,564

Appendix 2

Summary of Treasury and Prudential Indicators as at quarter ended 31 March 2025

1. Prudential Indicators

(a) Capital Expenditure	<u>Initial Estimate 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Variance 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2025/2026 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2026/2027 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2027/2028 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2028/2029 (£m)</u>
Capital Expenditure: General Services	156.5	122.8	(33.7)	167.2	166.1	134.0	246.4
Capital Expenditure: HRA	155.8	103.2	(52.6)	132.4	220.3	189.5	157.6
Total spend : Capital Expenditure	312.3	226.0	(86.3)	299.6	386.4	323.5	404.0
Total spend : Credit Arrangement	88.7	98.7	10.0	14.4	15.5	16.1	15.0
Total Capital Investment	401.0	324.7	(76.3)	314.0	401.9	339.6	419.0
Financed By:							
Capital Grants & Other External Contributions	72.1	78.8	6.7	63.4	44.5	44.6	52.0
Capital from Current Revenue	20.1	24.8	4.7	46.8	20.1	20.1	20.1
Capital receipts	3.3	6.3	3.0	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4
Capital receipts transfer to Capital Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CFR : Borrowing - General Services	114.8	50.3	(64.5)	94.1	135.2	103.0	208.0
CFR : Borrowing - HRA	102.0	65.8	(36.2)	92.0	183.2	152.4	120.5
Credit Arrangements	88.7	98.7	10.0	14.4	15.5	16.1	15.0
<i>check</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>

(b) Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	<u>Initial Estimate 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Variance 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2025/2026 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2026/2027 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2027/2028 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2028/2029 (£m)</u>
General Services	1,081.8	1,000.0	(81.8)	1,082.7	1,204.0	1,291.4	1,479.6
HRA	603.8	561.3	(42.5)	638.9	806.3	940.9	1,041.1
Total CFR	1,685.6	1,561.3	(124.3)	1,721.6	2,010.3	2,232.3	2,520.7
Movement in CFR	276.6	152.3		160.3	288.7	222.0	288.4

(c) Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement	<u>Initial Estimate 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Variance 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2025/2026 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2026/2027 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2027/2028 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2028/2029 (£m)</u>
Gross Borrowing : Loan Debt	1,147.1	987.6	(159.5)	1,186.6	1,492.4	1,773.4	2,083.2
Long-term Liabilities	293.0	293.4	0.4	294.0	293.2	292.7	289.6
Gross Debt	1,440.1	1,281.0	(159.1)	1,480.6	1,785.6	2,066.1	2,372.8
Capital Financing Requirement	1,685.6	1,561.3	(124.3)	1,721.6	2,010.3	2,232.3	2,520.7
Prudential Margin	245.5	280.3	34.8	241.0	224.7	166.2	147.9

Appendix 2 (cont)

Summary of Treasury and Prudential Indicators as at quarter ended 31 March 2025

1. Prudential Indicators

(d) Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary	<u>Initial Authorised Limit 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Initial Operational Boundary 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Maximum Borrowing Level Q4 2024/2025 (£m)</u>
Borrowing	1,515.0	1,465.0	975.5
Other Long-term Liabilities	340.0	340.0	200.5
Total Debt	1,855.0	1,805.0	1,176.0

(e) Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	<u>Initial Estimate 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Variance 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2025/2026 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2026/2027 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2027/2028 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2028/2029 (£m)</u>
General Fund Loan Charges	49.8	43.0	(6.8)	46.9	54.5	63.8	72.7
General Fund Finance Lease/PPP Costs	15.3	15.6	0.3	15.3	15.1	14.9	14.6
General Fund : Capital Financing Costs	65.1	58.6	(6.5)	62.2	69.6	78.7	87.3
General Fund : Net Revenue Stream	988.8	990.3	1.5	1,068.8	1,068.8	1,068.8	1,068.8
Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - GF	6.6%	5.9%	(0.7%)	5.8%	6.5%	7.4%	8.2%

	<u>Initial Estimate 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Variance 2024/2025 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2025/2026 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2026/2027 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2027/2028 (£m)</u>	<u>Forecast 2028/2029 (£m)</u>
Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream							
HRA Loan Charges	42.8	38.5	(4.3)	41.7	49.1	60.3	72.2
HRA Finance Lease/PPP Costs	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
HRA : Capital Financing Costs	43.1	38.8	(4.3)	42.0	49.4	60.6	72.5
HRA : Net Revenue Stream	167.1	160.5	(6.6)	171.9	175.3	188.6	201.6
Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - HRA	25.8%	24.2%	(1.6%)	24.4%	28.2%	32.1%	36.0%

Appendix 2 (cont)

Summary of Treasury and Prudential Indicators as at quarter ended 31 March 2025

2. Treasury Management Indicators

a) Interest Rate Exposures on External Interest Payments

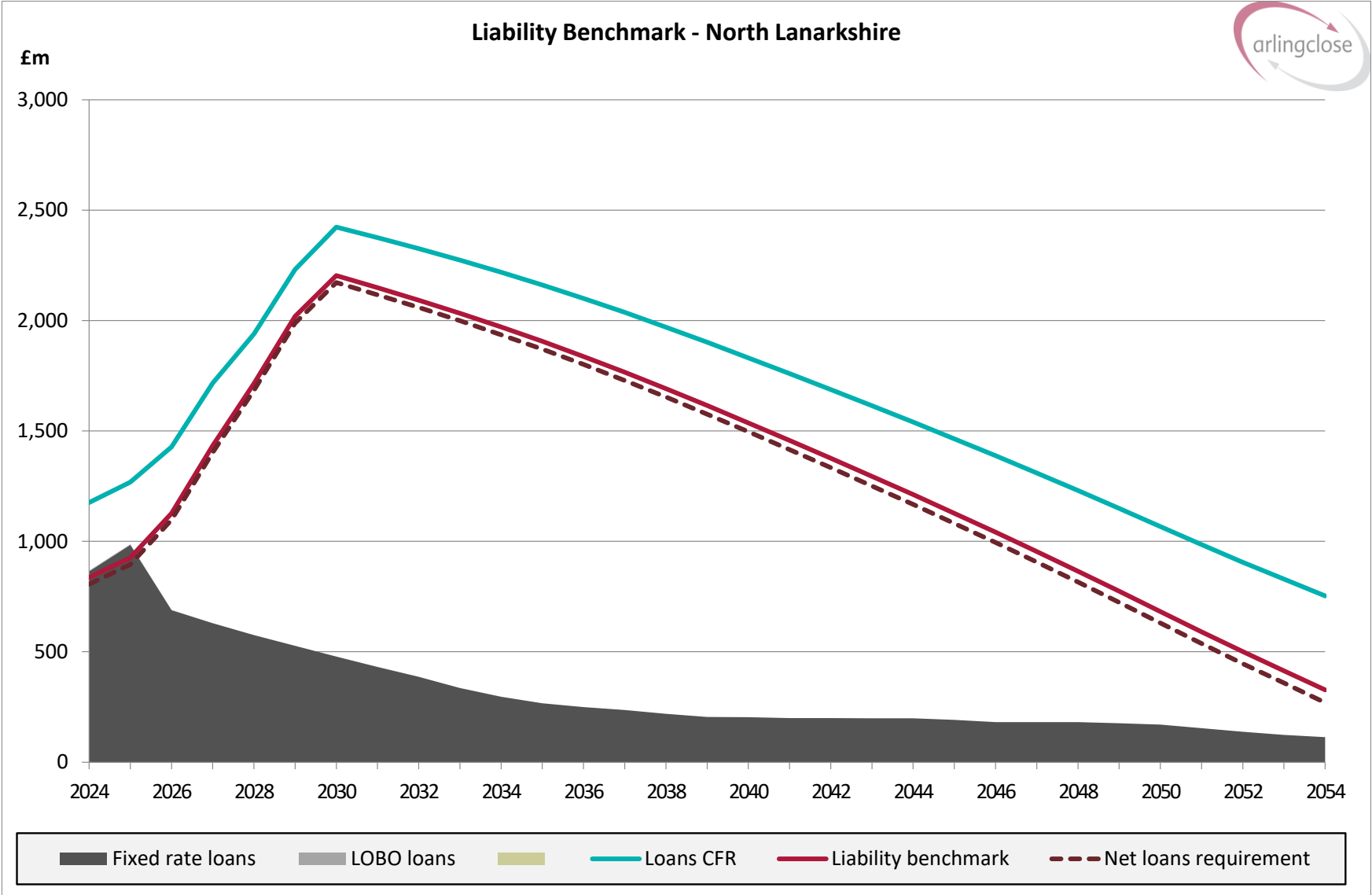
	Position as at 31/03/2025 (£m)	%
External Interest Payable on Fixed Rate Loan Debt	38.3	99.2%
External Interest Payable on Variable Rate Loan Debt	0.3	0.8%

b) Loans Fund Revenue Account

	Initial Estimate 2024/2025 (£m)	Projected Outturn 2024/2025 (£m)	Variance 2024/2025 (£m)	%age
Loans Fund Interest Payments	58.2	59.5	(1.3)	(2.2%)
Loans Fund Expenses	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0%
Total Loans Interest Payments & Expenses	58.6	59.9	(1.3)	(2.2%)
Loans Funds Investment Income	(1.9)	(2.5)	0.6	(31.6%)
Total Loans Fund Interest Payments Investment Income & Expenses	56.7	57.4	(0.7)	(1.2%)
Allocated as follows :				
Loans Fund Interest Payments Investment Income & Expenses:General Fund	32.4	31.8	0.6	1.9%
Loans Fund Interest Payments Investment Income & Expenses:HRA	24.3	25.6	(1.3)	(5.3%)
Capital Advances Repayments - General Fund	11.3	11.1	0.2	1.8%
Capital Advances Repayments - HRA	13.0	12.9	0.1	0.8%
Total Capital Advances	24.3	24.0	0.3	1.2%
Total Loan Charges	81.0	81.4	(0.4)	(0.5%)

c) Maturity Structure of Borrowing

	<12months	12 months to 2 years	2 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	20 to 40 years	>40 years
Upper Limit maturing :Fixed & Variable Rate Debt	15.0%	15.0%	25.0%	30.0%	35.0%	45.0%	30.0%
Lower Limit maturing :Fixed & Variable Rate Debt	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Maturity structure at the start of Q4	8.4%	7.3%	17.8%	27.6%	11.3%	23.8%	3.7%
Maturity structure at the end of Q4	10.2%	7.8%	19.6%	27.7%	9.8%	21.6%	3.4%



North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref NLC-NTP-24-127

Date

21/05/25

Contract Award for Progress Licence and Software Maintenance

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone

07583 010692

Executive Summary

Finance and Resources Committee is asked to acknowledge the award of a contract for Progress Licence and Software Maintenance (the 'Contract') to Progress Software Ltd.

The Contract is for an initial period of 24 months anticipated to commence on 1 April 2025.

The value of the Contract shall not exceed One hundred and Ninety-Eight thousand Pounds Sterling (£198,000) exclusive of VAT.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledges the award of the Contract to Progress Software Ltd at the maximum value of One hundred and Ninety-Eight thousand Pounds.

The contract award for Progress License and Software Maintenance was made using the Negotiated Tendering Procedure (NTP) outlined with section 9 of the GCSO to Progress Software, with advice sought from the Chief Officers of (Asset & Procurement and Legal and Democratic), for the proposed use of the Negotiated Tendering Procedure to make the contract award.

The contract is for a period of Twenty-Four months, and the value of the Contract shall not exceed One hundred and Ninety Eight thousand Pounds Sterling (£198,000) exclusive of VAT.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	(18) Ensure our digital transformation is responsive to all people's needs and enable access to the services they need
Programme of Work	Digital North Lanarkshire

1. Background

- 1.1 The requirements within the Contract are currently under contract with Progress Software Ltd. This contract is due to expire on 31st March 2025 with the Contract detailed within this report due to supersede it.
- 1.2 This contract is for the Annual licence Maintenance and support for NLC Progress applications deployed on Unix servers. There are currently 6 Progress applications residing on the council's Unix Solaris estate – all developed in-house over the last 20 years, namely:
- Building Cleaning Management System (BCMS) - provides work order and recharge facilities, for the maintenance of council facilities.
 - Municipal Bank – manages the council's bank (recently the bank service has stopped but the management of the legacy account information remains for a 6-year period).
 - Home Insurance – manages council house insurance for tenants.
 - Housing Services Management System (HSMS) – manages multiple Housing Service-related functions including Tenancy Management, Rent Accounting, Common Housing Register and Allocations, Homelessness, Arrears and Court Processing, Housing Support, Repairs and Maintenance, Gas Servicing, Property and Estate Management, Anti-Social Behaviour.
 - Application Control System (ACS) – manages the batch processing for all Unix hosted Progress and Oracle applications and databases.
 - GIFT – file transfer management system for BACS, ledger, files etc.
- 1.3 All these applications are subject to review of potential replacement systems and/or decommissioning over the next 3 years and the associated Unix platform on which they are currently hosted.
- 1.4 The licences cover the database and application server (concurrent user and CPU based) connections to the databases and client networking access software components for the various applications, and also for the application development tools that are required to develop in-house application software by NLC staff rather than external vendors of software applications.
- 1.5 Progress Software is the sole supplier of their own technology platform software components that organisations choose to develop IT applications internally and licences are not available through resellers.
- 1.6 Discussions were held to direct award this contract through the SVAR framework. However, this has been unsuccessful as the supplier Progress Software are unwilling to conform to the framework Terms and conditions. Further searches and confirmation from the supplier have confirmed that NLC cannot access this supplier on any framework, therefore the only option available for award is this NTP.

2. Report

- 2.1 A user intelligence group (the 'UIG') of technical and procurement representatives was formed to review technical specifications, discuss trading processes, market conditions and trends, ways to maximise community benefits and sustainability and to agree the procurement strategy that would deliver maximum benefit for the Council via the Contract.
- 2.2 The initial estimated value of the Contract dictated that the procurement procedure be undertaken in accordance with the Council's General Contract Standing Orders.

- 2.3 The procurement procedure was undertaken as a “Negotiated Tender Procedure” (NTP) in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 Following advice from the Chief Officer (Asset and Procurement) and the Chief Officer (Legal and Democratic), the Chief Officer (Business and Digital) approved the progression of the NTP on 06 March 2025.
- 2.4 The Contract award recommendation is made on the basis of the justification detailed and appraised within the associated “NTP Strategy” document and following an assessment of the offer received by Progress Software Ltd to ensure it was complete and compliant with the Council’s requirements.
- 2.5 Further details of the procurement procedure are provided in Appendix 1 and the SME status and location of the tenderer is located within Appendix 2.
- 2.6 The value of the Contract is One Hundred and Ninety-Eight Thousand pounds sterling (£198,000) exclusive of VAT including any option to extend the Contract.
- 2.7 The costs associated with contract delivery will be contained within Revenue budget for within Business & Digital.

Price Savings / Increases

- 2.8 The pre-tender whole life estimate for the Contract was £198,000.
- 2.9 The cost has remained the same as previous years, with no excessive increases.

Price Stability

- 2.10 The pricing is fixed for the duration of the contract.

Community Benefits

- 2.11 The procurement did not include a community benefit requirement.

Fair Work First

- 2.12 Within their tender submission, Progress Software Ltd. advised that they will commit to the Scottish Governments “Fair Work First” initiative:

Contract Management

- 2.13 Officers from Business & Digital will be responsible for managing the Contract which will be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s agreed approach to contract and supplier management.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 The Contract will deliver the following outcomes:
- Continued maintenance and support of the council’s Progress application systems hosted on Unix estate by Progress Software Ltd who licence the database and application services.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1 - Summary of Procurement Process
- 4.2 Appendix 2 - SME Status and Location of All Tenderers



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts have been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts have been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts have been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	Technology / Digital impact
<p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p>	
<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
<p>Progress licenses are required to continue the support of Unix services which host 6 council systems applications, Building Cleaning Management System (BCMS), Municipal Bank, Home Insurance, Housing Services Management System (HSMS), Application Control System (ACS) & GIFT the file transfer system for BACS. These applications are all subject to review of potential replacement systems and/or decommissioned over the next 2 - 3 years.</p>	
<p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
5.7	Environmental / Carbon impact
<p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
5.8	Communications impact
<p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>	
5.9	Risk impact
<p>Is there a risk impact?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p>	
5.10	Armed Forces Covenant Duty
<p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>	

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Appendix 1 – Summary of Procurement Process

	Response
CPT Contract Reference Allocated:	NLC-NTP-24-127
Tender Platform Utilised:	Other
Procurement Procedure Utilised:	Negotiated Tender Procedure (NTP)
Governing Legislation / Regulations:	Council's General Contract Standing Orders
Date Contract Strategy / NTP Approved:	07 March 2025
Date Tender Documents Released:	03 March 2025
SME % of Expressions of Interest:	0
NLC Based % of Expressions of Interest:	0
Tender Return Deadline:	07 March 2025
Number of Tenders Received:	1
Tenders Received from SME's:	0
Tenders Received from NLC Based Tenderers:	0
Number of Recommended Tenderers:	1
Assessment Team:	John McBride, Mark Brennan
Anticipated Contract Start Date:	01 April 2025
Total Contract Period (Months):	24 months
Maximum Total Contract Value:	£198,000

Appendix 2 – SME Status and location of all Tenderers

Name of Tenderer	Size of Tendering Organisation (Micro, Small, Medium or Large)	Location (Local Authority / Council Area)
Progress Software	Large	USA

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref: NLC-NTP-23-135

Date: 21 May 2025

Contract Extension for Provision of Merchant Acquiring Services 2024-25

From Greg Telfer, Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

E-mail TelferG@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone: Ryan McNamee,
Finance Manager

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Committee to note the modification for the existing contract for Provision of Merchant Acquiring Services 2024-25 (the 'Agreement') provided by Lloyds Bank Cardnet, which is for the provision for processing debit and credit card transactions.

The contract modification was made utilising the "Modification of contracts during their term" procedure which is set out in the Regulations (Regulation 72) of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

The existing contract expired on 31 March 2025 and the Agreement was modified for a period of 3 months which commenced on 1 April 2025 and will end on 30 June 2025. This interim measure was to ensure continuity of service for the Council's ability to receive card payments across its services via e-commerce, online or telephone transactions until such time as a new contract was awarded.

A longer-term procurement exercise is underway, which will result in a direct award to the current supplier via CCS Framework (RM6325 Payment Acceptance 2) with contract award to be approved at Committee, with formal commencement of new contract anticipated from 1 July 2025 for a period of 4 years.

The value of the modification shall not exceed Fifty-Two Thousand and Two Hundred Pounds Sterling (£52,200) exclusive of VAT

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the contract modification to the existing Provision of Merchant Acquiring Services contract.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base

Ambition Statement (25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning

Programme of Work Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 The contract is for the provision of merchant acquiring services to the Council, which incorporates an electronic card merchant acquiring solution to process debit and credit card transactions and manage the Council's relationship with card schemes e.g. VISA and issuers such as Barclays bank. These services enable the Council to accept / receive any card payments across its services via e-commerce, online or telephone transactions.
 - 1.2 The current contract was noted at Finance & Resources Committee on 22 May 2024 to award the contract to Lloyds Bank Cardnet utilising the Council's Negotiated Tender procedure (NTP). The Agreement was for a period of 12 months, commencing on 1 April 2024 and expiring on 31 March 2025. The initial Agreement was for a contract value of Two Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds Sterling (£220,000) exclusive of VAT
 - 1.3 The modification of this contract is through the Regulation 72 Contract Modification allowing the existing contract to continue until 30 June 2025. This interim modification is in place awaiting the new contract award process being completed with the new contract anticipated to commence 1 July 2025
-

2. Report

- 2.1 The Council intended to commence a new contract award utilising Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Framework - RM6325 Payment Acceptance 2 with new provision from 1 April 2025.
- 2.2 However due to delays getting clarification from CCS with regards calling off from their framework it has not been possible to have the new contract in place prior to the current contract expiring. A modification is required to the existing contract on current terms to ensure there will be no impact to service provisions and continuity prior to the new contract being put in place
- 2.3 The modification period would be for 3 months to allow a direct award to be carried out from the CCS Payment Acceptance 2 framework and ensure there is no break of service to the council.
- 2.4 Analysis of actual contract expenditure incurred estimates that modification of a three-month extension to 30 June 2025 could result in estimated additional contract costs of Fifty-Two Thousand and Two Hundred Pounds Sterling (£52,200) exclusive of VAT. This would equate to a contract variation of 23.7% of the original contract award.
- 2.5 Total actual contract costs estimated is currently £260,900 which would be additional expenditure of £40,900 (18.6%) on the initial contract award.
- 2.6 In line with Financial Regulations clause 15.4 any significant variations should be reported to Committee at the earliest opportunity.

3. Measures of success

The Agreement will deliver the following outcomes;

- 3.1 The continuity of service provision for the Council's receipt of card payments until the new contract is formally awarded.
- 3.2 Best Value has been considered to be demonstrated by current supplier who was the best value option for the Council in the previous full market tender exercise. Current supplier has agreed to continue the existing contract on a 3-month extension on current contract terms. Interchange fees are set by the market e.g. Visa / Mastercard. Service charges for transactions will remain as per current contract.

4. Supporting documents

N/A



Greg Telfer
Chief Officer (Finance and Technology)

5. Impacts

5.1	Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty
Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website?	
https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.2	Financial impact
Does the report contain any financial impacts?	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance?	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
Full impacts have been detailed in the report.	
5.3	HR policy impact
Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
5.4	Legal impact
Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
5.5	Data protection impact
Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.6	Technology / Digital impact
Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?	
Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

5.7	Environmental / Carbon impact Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.8	Communications impact Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.9	Risk impact Is there a risk impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?
5.10	Armed Forces Covenant Duty Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.
5.11	Children's rights and wellbeing impact Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref VarRepApr25/JMcG/JMcK

Date 21/05/25

Contracts with Variations

From James McKinstry, Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

E-mail mckinstryj@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone 07939 281 102

Executive Summary

In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, this report notifies the Committee of contracts completed between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, where the expenditure levels have exceeded the contract award levels by greater than 5% or £25,000.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the content of this report and the accompanying appendix.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence based decision making and future planning
Programme of Work	Statutory/Corporate/Service Requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Councils General Contract Standing Orders (the 'GCSOs') outline financial approval thresholds for contracts for goods, works and services. This report details Works (construction contracts) where funding has previously been approved in line with GCSO's.
- 1.2 The Councils Financial Regulation, (13.4) Significant Variations, details the threshold of variances where reporting is required.
- 1.3 The Chief Officer of Assets and Procurement is required to notify Committee on a periodic basis of any such contracts containing variations as identified by the criteria in 1.1 above.

2. Report

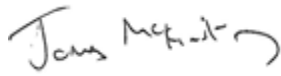
- 2.1 The Councils Financial Regulations state, any variations where the outturn/expected costs exceed the tendered contract price by the higher of £25,000 or 5%, or where the outputs/outcomes achieved by the expenditure differ from those originally envisaged, shall be reported by the Executive Director or appropriate Officer to the relevant Spending Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.2 Contracts awarded by the Chief Officer of Assets and Procurement for works undertaken in the period 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 containing variations are detailed in Appendix 1 below.
- 2.3 Due to the nature of construction contracts a flexible approach is required to manage contract deliverables and desired outcomes and typically this is achieved by the inclusion of a contingency allowance to address unknown quantities or abnormalities.
- 2.4 Any construction works undertaken within the Council's portfolio may encounter issues that can result in additional costs after work has commenced. Asbestos is problematic and costly to address, as is rot works, especially within the Council's ageing property estate. Working within "live" environments and restrictions of access is another contributing factor to prolongation related claims, with other expenditure being attributed to health and safety issues including addressing fire stopping issues. Additional client instructions being added to contracts following award will also increase the overall contract sum, but it should be noted that the scope of these instructions will be within the parameters of the original tender documents and rates will be a direct drawdown from those already provided or a benchmarking exercise is undertaken to demonstrate value for money.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Contracts support the delivery of Council objectives and service priorities.
- 3.2 Contracts containing variances are managed by the Council and are compliant with Financial Regulations, GCSOs and procurement legislation.
- 3.3 The Council's Contract Register, and budgetary monitoring systems are kept updated by services and management information is comprehensive and accurate.
- 3.4 Best Value is both demonstrable and achieved.

4. Supporting documentation

4.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of construction contracts containing variations.



James McKinstry
Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? As detailed in Appendix 1.
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	<p>Technology / Digital impact</p> <p>Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.7	<p>Environmental / Carbon impact</p> <p>Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.8	<p>Communications impact</p> <p>Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
5.9	<p>Risk impact</p> <p>Is there a risk impact?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?</p> <p>Contract management procedures may be susceptible to financial claims and legal challenge if they are not discharged in accordance with Contract Conditions, Financial Regulations, GCSO's and procurement legislation.</p> <p>Accumulation of contract overspends may impact on future Capital Programmes. Project risks are logged on the appropriate Risk Registers and managed by the Service.</p>
5.10	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Duty</p> <p>Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.</p>

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

APPENDIX 1 Summary of construction contracts containing variations:

Project Title	Estimated / Final Out-turn	Tender Amount	Variation Reason
Muirhead; St Barbara's Primary School – 4 x classroom refurbishments	£268,400.62	£226,211.27	Client changes to M&E requirements, refurbishment to additional rooms / areas and additional upgrading of existing door entry intercom system.
Cumbernauld: Woodlands Primary School - Provision of a New Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)	£153,196.34	£136,999.12	Alterations to fence lines, paths and gates to enable community access to the MUGA.
Motherwell; Dalziel High School Lift Installation	£251,180.22	£228,169.22	Out of hours working resulting in an extension of time claim (EOT), required to facilitate school timetable
Cleland; St Mary's Primary School - Front Entrance Upgrade	£60,688.16	£57,367.40	Client additional request to refurbish the reception area, instructed into the works.
Cumbernauld, Glencryan School – Rewire, Fire Stopping and Redecoration	£2,961,438.02	£1,298,988.23	Despite a full asbestos survey pre-tender, the true extent of asbestos was not evident. A change to school management plans meant only one classroom at a time was available to the contractor. H&S instructed all works could only commence out of hours due to a demographic change in school role, accumulating to further prolongation related claims and EOT award.
Cleland; St Mary's Primary School; Re-Roofing	£143,677.33	£128,834.75	Removal of asbestos containing material encountered within the works and additional rot repairs required to existing roof timbers
Cumbernauld; Internal Refurbishment Works to Tryst Sports Centre	£585,430.43	£508,531.88	Asbestos encapsulation works and a Fire Alarm system upgrade was required resulting in EOT claim.
Airdrie; Integrated Hub Delivery Phase 1 – Caldervale HS Tech Centre	£226,795.12	£123,721.37	RAAC related strip out works to ascertain extent of structural issues.
Viewpark; Demolition of Muirpark Home	£88,933.00	£67,926.00	Removal of unexpected asbestos cement packers below floor joists of asbestos. Subsequent areas of rubble were deemed contaminated which impacted on the removal strategy.
Motherwell; St Brendan's PS - New Kitchen Upgrade	£342,498.86	£309,743.33	Greater than anticipated asbestos removal required and additional steelwork required to support air handling unit.
Cumbernauld; Our Lady's High School - PE Changing Facilities	£322,000.00	£254,637.72	Additional Mechanical & Electrical works required. A change to fixed furniture specification. Replacement glazing was required. Removal of fly tipping and additional unforeseen asbestos removal.

Project Title	Estimated / Final Out-turn	Tender Amount	Variation Reason
Coatbridge; Coltswood Cemetery Alterations (Phase 1)	£109,264.73	£81,530.73	Additional civils works required to remove tree roots and historic soil bunding, client requested additional lairs to be added.
Chryston HS Enabling Works	£470,836.07	£330,896.07	To maintain timely progress on site and mitigate risk to the project completion date, additional site strip and removal of a service chamber was instructed in.
Pitch Upgrades	£3,491,271	£3,200,000	Unforeseen and challenging ground conditions, additional drainage work and unplanned lime stabilisation works required.

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Finance and Resources Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref JMcK/CPT

Date

21/05/25

Contracts awarded below Committee approval threshold

From James McKinstry, Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

E-mail McKinstryJ@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone

07939 281 102

Executive Summary

In accordance with the Council's [General Contract Standing Orders \("GCSOs"\)](#), GCSO 21.10 requires a summary report be presented to members with details of contracts awarded since last committee, specifically for the spend range:

- over £50,000 but below £500,000 for supplies or services; and,
- over £500,000 but below £2,000,000 for works.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the contract awards made since last committee reporting cycle.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority All priorities

Ambition statement All ambition statements

Programme of Work Statutory / corporate / service requirement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 81 requires local authorities to “...make standing orders with respect to the making by them or on their behalf of contracts for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works.”.
- 1.2 The Council's [General Contract Standing Orders \(“GCSOs”\)](#) set out the council's specific procurement procedures and responsibilities at all spend levels, and include the reporting requirements of procurement activity, including contracts awards, to committee for either approval or acknowledgement.

2. Report

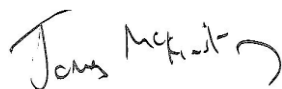
- 2.1 In accordance with GCSO 21.10, this report summarises the contract awards since last committee, specifically for the spend range:
- over £50,000 but below £500,000 for supplies or services; and,
 - over £500,000 but below £2,000,000 for works.
- 2.2 If you require further information regards the contract awards reported, please refer to the lead service area / Chief Officer detailed in the appendix.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 All requirements contracted contribute to either the council's programme of work and/or fulfil a statutory requirement.
- 3.2 All contract awards secure best value for the council in accordance with their evaluation criteria.
- 3.3 All necessary diligence has been undertaken in the evaluation and appointment of contractors.
- 3.4 All contract awards are logged in the council's contract register.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of contracts awarded.



James McKinstry
Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement)

5. Impacts

- 5.1 Impacts considered as part of the contract award procedures are recorded in the individual contract award reports held by the lead service area.

Appendix 1 – Summary of Contracts Awarded

Contract	Ref	NLC-SLP-24-068				
	Title	Corporate Web Filtering Solution				
	Classification	Supplies				
	Lead Service Area / Chief Officer	Katrina Hassell, Chief Officer (Business & Digital Solutions)				
Competition	Governance by Value	The Framework terms & conditions, with adherence to the council's GCSO 13 on 3rd party frameworks				
	Procurement Route	Call-off following Direct Award using Third Party Framework				
	No. of Framework Contractors	27				
	Award Criteria	Best Value assessment, in accordance with the Framework Information				
	Comments	This has been procured via Direct Award approach, considering the relevant information on Framework Contractors technical and commercial proposals available through the NHS Digital Workplace Solutions Framework (SBS/19/AB/WAB/9411).				
Award Details	Value	£498,984.03				
	Contract Duration	36 months				
	Contractor Name	Softcat PLC				
	Contractor Size	Large Company				
	Contractor Location	Buckinghamshire, UK				
	Status - Payment of Living Wage?	Yes				
	Status - Living Wage Accredited?	Yes				
Impacts <i>this section highlights which impacts were considered for this contract award procedure</i>	Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty <input type="checkbox"/>	HR Policy Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Data Protection Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Environment / Carbon Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Risk Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
	Financial Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Legal Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Technology / Digital Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Communications Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Armed Forces Covenant Duty <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Further details regarding these impacts can be obtained from the Lead Service Area / Chief Officer					

