

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Policy and Strategy Committee

Does this report require to be approved? Yes No

Ref DM Date 07/12/23

One Place One Plan - annual governance update

From Des Murray, Chief Executive

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Executive Summary

In the five years since establishing the ambition for North Lanarkshire to be a place of *inclusive growth and prosperity for all*, members of the Policy and Strategy Committee have been instrumental in maintaining the direction for delivery of the clear ambitious vision which (as noted in the October 2023 Best Value thematic report) has been driven by effective leadership. Policy and Strategy Committee has also maintained oversight of the governance arrangements and operating framework supporting The Plan for North Lanarkshire as these have undergone incremental refinements to ensure ongoing alignment of vision, plan, governance, and operations. This has enabled an approach to policy setting and strategic and operational decision making that has been steadfast in its direction. The positive results for North Lanarkshire, reported in March this year, around economy, employment, average pay, reduced poverty, exclusions, etc. were hugely impactful in demonstrating the effectiveness of The Plan to date and the need to support its ongoing implementation to further accelerate change for the future.

Ensuring ongoing alignment of vision, plan, governance, and operations is key to realising a *one place with one plan* approach that supports the delivery of a wide range of programmes, projects, and activities which focus on regenerating the physical environment of local communities and setting the foundations for the place-based ambition (see Appendix 1). These successes have been achieved against a backdrop of relentless financial, economic, and national policy pressures that show no sign of diminishing, making the council's achievements to date all the more remarkable. To keep accelerating the changes required, it is critical therefore that the council's focus remains ahead of the pressures and concentrated on further creating, delivering, and sustaining the conditions and services that mean local people (and the place that is North Lanarkshire) continue to thrive.

Shaped by the local demographic, social, and economic profile, the new Programme of Work to 2028 (approved by the Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2023) continues the ambition for North Lanarkshire but aims to do so with an even greater focus on escalating the pace and depth of change through a more targeted approach to improving social conditions and outcomes. It is recognised that progress has not been uniform and further effort is required to ensure *inclusive growth and prosperity for all* remains at the core of the ambition.

With the interconnected and intergenerational social, economic, and health challenges becoming more prevalent locally and even more unprecedented and complex, it is critical

that delivery of the Programme of Work - and continuing to secure critical frontline care, supports, and services for those individuals most in need - remains facilitated by a clear and simple alignment between strategic direction and operational delivery that capitalises on synergies and integrated functions operating through a one council one place approach.

This report therefore provides an update on the next stage realignments required to further create the conditions and capacities - and enhance the resources, skills, and inter-relationships while recognising the financial challenges - critical in supporting a more integrated approach to delivery, while ensuring there remains an unwavering focus on achieving *inclusive growth and prosperity for all* as set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee:

- (1) Approve the deletion of the post of Chief Officer (Housing Property Services) with effect from 1st April 2024 (realising recurring savings of £136,040 for 2024/25 onwards) and the realignment of these functions within existing remits, and note the commitment now fulfilled to review council assets and properties and associated services and functions (as noted in paragraph 2.7 and Appendix 3),
- (2) Approve the realignment of non-education and families related functions to wider service areas to create additional educational capacity to further focus upon the key areas of attainment and attendance which are of national and local importance, and
- (3) Support the next stage programme of linked reviews and are aware that a future report is scheduled to be presented to the Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2024 in this respect (as noted in paragraph 2.21).

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	All priorities
Ambition statement	All ambition statements
Programme of Work	All Programmes of Work

1. Background

- 1.1 The vision for North Lanarkshire to be a place of *inclusive growth and prosperity for all* was founded on the evidence presented in the report, *A Shared Ambition for North Lanarkshire*, approved at Committee in September 2018.
- 1.2 The 2018 report also set out the operating framework required for the council to enhance the alignment of, and synergies between, strategic and operational functions in order to successfully deliver on the vision which was thereafter formalised through approval of The Plan for North Lanarkshire in February 2019. This set a very clear focus and compelling narrative in terms of what the council is working towards.
- 1.3 Since then, delivery of the vision has been informed by an annual dynamic strategic planning process facilitated through the Programme of Work and, at each annual refresh, Policy and Strategy Committee has re-committed to maintaining the direction of The Plan for North Lanarkshire through the delivery of the Programme of Work priorities. This process has enabled Elected Members due consideration and approval of all aspects of the Programme of Work which has not only enabled delivery of The

Plan for North Lanarkshire's place-based ambition to continue at pace and at scale, but has also secured the ongoing provision of critical front-line care, supports, and services for those individuals most in need.

- 1.4 In the face of a rapidly changing national policy context and uncertain local government future, the Programme of Work has also stabilised the strategic direction of the council, while allowing for appropriate flexibility in the operational delivery of many complex inter-connected programmes, projects, and plans. This consistency of commitment to the *one plan* direction has led to significant achievements which have been pivotal in maximising the potential of North Lanarkshire as a place. These highlights were reported to the Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2023 and included a focus on £1.3bn of capital programme investment in North Lanarkshire's communities.
- 1.5 The Programme of Work report to the Policy and Strategy Committee in September 2023 further highlighted the extent of achievements to date to establish solid foundations to support the place-based ambition. This includes the provision of high-quality housing, hubs at the heart of local communities, transformations to town centres, and enhancements to active green spaces to bring physical and mental benefits. This is supported by growing transport links, an enhanced digital infrastructure, and a network of active travel routes, all of which is aimed at boosting the local economy, attracting inward investment, securing improved opportunities and outcomes for employment, education, housing, and leisure, and creating places where people want to *Live, Learn, Work, Invest, and Visit* (see Appendix 1). The new Strategic Capital Investment Programme for 2024/25 to 2028/29, scheduled to be presented to the Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2024, will provide the means to ensure that investment in the place-based ambition continues at pace.
- 1.6 Structural realignments have also continued since 2018 to enable the narrative to become embedded consistently throughout all policy statements agreed by the council, as well as strategic management, strategy development, service delivery, and corporate governance approaches across the council. Approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2020, the *Delivering for Communities* report further strengthened the focus on communities and ensured the structure of the council's senior management team fully reflected the model established through the nine Community Boards.
- 1.7 The subsequent *One Place One Plan governance update*, approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2022, set out further structural refinements to ensure ongoing alignment of vision, plan, governance, and operations and maintain the focus on ensuring *inclusive growth and prosperity for all*. It also set out the intention for a programme of linked reviews to safeguard the sustainability of the organisation's capacity, ensure already challenged resources are maximised, and further strengthen the development and delivery of solutions through an integrated council and community approach, with updates on progress scheduled to be reported back to the Policy and Strategy Committee as noted below:
 - December 2023 - report following the conclusion of the review of council assets and properties and associated services and functions.
 - December 2024 - report following the conclusion of the review of the six strategic / statutory / corporate functions within the Chief Executive's Service.
- 1.8 Approval of a new five-year Programme of Work to 2028 in March 2023 further supported the stability of the organisation by re-iterating the clear direction set by The Plan for North Lanarkshire and agreeing the priorities that require to be resourced. The new Programme of Work to 2028 aims to provide an even greater focus on escalating

the pace and depth of change that is essential to ensure a heightened and more strategic focus on not only sustaining the economic and community aspects that will enable local people and communities (and the place that is North Lanarkshire) to thrive, but also on ensuring a more targeted approach to improving social conditions and outcomes.

1.9 The need to target an approach that improves social conditions and outcomes is founded on the latest demographic, social, and economic profile for North Lanarkshire that is evidenced through the 28 Health Check Indicators. To support the effective implementation of such an approach - and ensure ongoing alignment of vision, plan, governance, and operations - this annual governance update therefore focuses on two aspects to further strengthen the council's operating environment:

- (1) The outcome of the review of council assets and properties and associated services and functions (as noted in paragraph 1.7 above).
- (2) The structural realignments required to further enhance the synergies between strategic and operational functions in order to successfully deliver on the seven priorities in the new Programme of Work to 2028 and achieve the vision in The Plan for North Lanarkshire of *inclusive growth and prosperity for all*.

2. Further refinement and alignment

2.1 The next stage of structural realignments within this report maintains the operating framework and service groupings listed below which were originally established in September 2018 (see Appendix 2):

- Enterprise and Communities
- Education and Families
- Adult Health and Social Care
- Chief Executive's Services

2.2 Members will recall that by grouping service functions around relationships with communities and the key stages of a person's life, efforts have remained focused on addressing the social, economic, and health conditions prevalent within each life stage in each community. Combining skills and resources through the structural realignments - for *one place* with *one plan* - has enabled real and sustainable solutions to be developed with, and for, North Lanarkshire's communities.

2.3 As noted in paragraph 1.9, the next stage of structural refinements and alignments propose a further reconfiguration of specific functions following the review of council assets and properties and associated services and functions. In addition, the vacancy arising from a Chief Officer post in Education and Families provides an opportunity for an enhanced approach within the senior management structure to improve the focus upon attainment and attendance while ensuring a balanced portfolio across the council's senior management team is maintained. The specific changes in this respect are detailed in paragraphs 2.4 to 2.14 below and depicted in Appendices 3 and 4.

Review of council assets and properties and associated services and functions

2.4 As noted in the governance update report in December 2022, a review of council assets, properties, and associated services and functions was scheduled to be undertaken during 2023 with the outcome expected to be reported to the Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2023. This review was recognised as critical in line with the anticipated award for the enterprise strategic vehicle contract and it included due consideration of the potential to integrate two existing Chief Officer posts.

2.5 Responsibilities for the council's assets and properties currently resides within two Chief Officer portfolios - Assets and Procurement and Housing Property Services:

- Management of the council's corporate property estate is maintained by Assets and Procurement as set out in the Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) which was approved by the Finance and Resources Committee in September 2022. This relates to all assets for offices, the learning estate, and the Public Private Partnership (PPP) estate as well as the culture, leisure, community, and depot estates and the commercial estate and includes all related planned capital programme investment as well as planned and reactive asset maintenance.

The CAMP provides an overview of how the council is managing its assets in alignment with the strategic direction of the organisation and, as the asset base and landscape of the organisation is constantly evolving, it clearly outlines the directional change required for the council's assets to ensure there remains a stable estate with the required infrastructure to deliver on day to day operational requirements at the same time as shaping the council's future.

The CAMP is one of the tools used by Assets and Procurement to manage the asset base and guide activities (i.e. maintain, rationalise, invest, dis-invest); it links into the ongoing review and development of the five year capital plan. This is further supported by estates management in terms of land valuations, transactions, titles searches, and disposals.

- As Scotland's largest local authority landlord, the council provides warm, secure, affordable homes to more than 36,000 households across North Lanarkshire and Housing Property Services play a key role delivering the core asset management activities that support maintenance, repairs, and improvements to the council's housing stock in line with the Housing Asset Management Plan (HAMP) 2021-26.

Core asset management activities include (i) investment management (through the housing investment programme, which generally focuses on replacing old components with new ones, for example, installing new kitchens and bathrooms), (ii) repairs and maintenance (such as the maintenance of roofs, windows, and doors) which help to prevent damage and extend the lifespan of the housing property estate and ensure that homes are safe, and (iii) contract strategy which ensures ongoing monitoring, procurement, and financial reporting across the property service. Activities also currently include the repairs and maintenance programme for corporate property.

Responsibilities in terms of the reprovisioning of the council's housing stock currently sits within Housing Property Services. This follows approval of the Towers Strategy at Committee in May 2018 (for phase 1) and August 2023 (for phase 2) given the age of the council's housing stock and future investment requirements for certain types of stock, particularly tower accommodation.

2.6 To ensure the *review of council assets and properties and associated services and functions* was considered in line with the overall operating environment of the organisation, the following was also taken into account during the review process:

- Good quality housing has long been recognised as an important contributory factor in supporting improved health, economic, and social benefits for residents and communities. These benefits are multi-dimensional and the council's Local Housing Strategy 2021-26 recognises this and contends that an affordable, warm,

and accessible home (that meets individual needs over the course of a person's life) is the foundation for people to achieve their full potential in all aspects of life, such as educational attainment and employment. The Housing Strategy further sets out that housing in North Lanarkshire plays a crucial role in addressing homelessness, tackling poverty, creating employment, mitigating the impacts of climate change, improving health and wellbeing, and promoting inclusive growth in line with the vision set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

- Like all social landlords, the council has legal duties to safeguard services for tenants, support people and families who experience homelessness, and repair and maintain tenant's homes in order to meet obligations set out in tenancy agreements and statute. This is reflected in the importance given to all aspects of housing management in the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), a yearly exercise co-ordinated by the Scottish Housing Regulator to assess social landlords' performance. In line with statute, the council is accountable to the Scottish Housing Regulator and is required to provide the relevant assurances in terms of performance in all aspects of housing management. Even though service delivery to fulfil these requirements currently sits across two Chief Officers portfolios, accountability to the Scottish Housing Regulator resides with the Chief Officer (Housing Management).
- A key area of work within Assets and Procurement which is central to realising the Programme of Work to 2028 is the Town and Community Hubs programme, as this aims to support rationalisation of the council's assets and maximise the efficiency of the asset portfolio in transitioning to a new operating model that will lead to more positive outcomes for children, communities, and the economy across North Lanarkshire. Creating greater integration of the wider community within these assets will mean communities have more direct access to the services they need, and staff are closer to the communities they work in. The Strategic Asset Review and Investment Strategy (SARIS) report also on the agenda today sets out the plans to progress both investment and rationalisation proposals that will inform investment decisions for both the Town and Community Hub programme, and the Strategic Capital Investment Programme for 2024/25 to 2028/29.

2.7 To provide the capacity for the Town and Community Hubs programme to flourish and to create single council operations, it is therefore proposed to delete the post of Chief Officer (Housing Property Services) from 1st April 2024, realising recurring savings of £136,040 for 2024/25 onwards. This will result in reconfiguration requirements as follows:

- (a) The housing investment and towers strategy, housing repairs and maintenance programmes, and contract strategy function will be realigned with the Chief Officer (Housing Management). This reflects the mature state of the council's housing estate and the reintegration of housing capital and housing maintenance with housing management, and within a single Chief Officer portfolio. It further supports the end-to-end implementation of the tower strategy and the provision of services and supports to tenants during the transition. Most importantly, this aims to strengthen a single service approach to housing to improve the multi-dimensional health, economic, and social benefits for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire. It also recognises a single service accountability to the Scottish Housing Regulator in terms of the council's performance in housing management.
- (b) The corporate property repairs programme will be realigned within the portfolio for the Chief Officer (Assets and Procurement). This means the entire corporate estate will reside within the remit of a single portfolio, with all assets (for offices, the

learning estate, and the Public Private Partnership (PPP) estate as well as the culture, leisure, community, and depot estates and the commercial estate) being maintained together and all decisions regarding rationalisation, investment, dis-investment being identified and considered together. This recognises the need to both deliver and sustain an asset base that will meet current and future requirements through strategic investment in new provision in the long-term, while at the same time ensuring short and medium-term investment continues to maintain the current estate during the transitional period. Alignment of investment is critical to balance current and future needs as well as to meet the requirements of the low carbon agenda and focus investment in the Hub programme as each hub is developed and its supporting operating model is mobilised across the estate.

- (c) To create further capacity within Assets and Procurement to deliver the Town and Community Hubs programme in line with the Strategic Asset Review and Investment Strategy (SARIS), responsibilities for Facilities Support (i.e. janitorial, cleaning, and catering services) will be transferred to the Chief Officer (Community Operations) - see paragraph 2.14(c). This allows for a single front-line community operation that comprises a resource base on similar working terms and conditions, allows for greater integration and collaboration in terms of working practices, and will support appropriate consideration of synergies and economies of scale.

National Discussion on the future of Education

- 2.8 As noted in the governance update report in December 2022, a national discussion was underway on the future of Education in Scotland which aimed to set out what education in Scotland needs to look like in the near future and twenty years from now. An update provided to the Policy and Strategy Committee in September 2023 (within the Programme of Work report) noted that the report (All Learners in Scotland Matter: Our National Discussion on Education), published in May 2023, set out the need to sustain and build on what is working well in the Scottish education system. It also highlighted a need to move ahead with overdue changes urgently as well as a need to plan for longer-term future changes. Discussions are currently underway at a national and local level to determine how best to address the outcomes moving forward.
- 2.9 Against this backdrop, and with a vacancy arising from the Chief Officer (Education, South) post, an opportunity was presented to review responsibilities to create additional educational capacity to further focus upon the key areas of attainment and attendance which are of national and local importance, with recent developments continuing to highlight the need for further innovation and challenge.
- 2.10 While the Health Check Indicator for positive destinations continues to show year on year improvement, there remains 228 leavers from North Lanarkshire's schools not achieving a positive destination (this reflects the 2021/22 results published in February 2023). In addition, the proportion of North Lanarkshire's working age population that have no formal qualifications remains below the national average, and of concern as this restricts an individual's ability to access current or developing employment opportunities. A refreshed approach, which sustains two Chief Officer (Education) posts, while transferring non-education and families related functions to wider service areas seeks to both build upon the integration work undertaken to date and strengthen education across the wider community to ensure a seamless service for children and families in every area of need.
- 2.11 A report by the Auditor General for Scotland (AGS) and the Accounts Commission, *Improving Outcomes for Young People Through School Education (2021)*, showed wide variation in outcomes (like exam results) across councils. It also highlighted a

large and persistent gap in attainment between pupils from the most and least deprived areas (i.e. a poverty-related attainment gap). The North Lanarkshire response was reported to the Audit and Scrutiny Panel in June 2021 and the improvements put in place were done so within a challenging pandemic recovery environment. Notwithstanding the challenges, the Health Check Indicators for educational attainment in North Lanarkshire show ongoing improvement in terms of educational attainment for all pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5, as well as pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas. However, the gap in attainment in this respect is not showing any significant signs of narrowing.

- 2.12 With the wider reform agenda for education in Scotland still live, the future of Scottish education uncertain, and national restructuring currently underway (to create three new national education bodies, i.e. a qualifications body, a national agency for Scottish education, and an independent inspectorate body to replace the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Education Scotland), there are risks with so much potentially changing at the same time. As such, *improving educational outcomes* remains a risk on the council's Corporate Risk Register for 2023/24.
- 2.13 Within the national and local education context set out in the paragraphs above, it is important that the council seeks to further enhance its targeted approach to improving outcomes for children and young people. Research shows that disparities between the attainment of pupils start in primary school, but their effects can be complex and lasting. They can affect individuals' participation and performance in higher education as well as their prospects in later life, and the quality of that life in terms of the social, economic, and health benefits. Improving attainment improves life chances - whether this is going on to higher education, getting a degree, and a graduate-level job or heading on a different pathway and a chosen destination that does not necessarily involve further education.
- 2.14 These changes will result in the following reconfiguration requirements:
- (a) Responsibilities for Employability (currently residing within Chief Officer, Education - South) will be transferred to the Chief Social Work Officer (Education, Families, and Integrated Practice). This will strengthen operational alignment with the tackling poverty service and other key services with reach to those within local communities who are furthest from employment while maintaining strong links with education's pathways programmes. The Employability service will also continue to play a critical role in the Brighter Futures Programme of Work to 2028 and be a key driver for a range of council services to support and improve educational attainment, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, and volunteering.

As noted in the Programme of Work report to Policy and Strategy Committee in September 2023, North Lanarkshire's economy continues to show increasing and positive growth in line with a positive position nationally and the number of people economically active has shown a positive increase for the last three consecutive quarters, with the number of people claiming employment related benefits continuing to show a gradual decrease and remaining lower than pre-pandemic levels.

However, the number of people economically active has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels and there remains concerns around the population who are recorded as being economically inactive. This reconfiguration will strengthen the council's approach to targeting resources towards tackling the economically inactive trends and improving social conditions to support the development of a workforce for the future that encapsulates everyone in North Lanarkshire.

- (b) Responsibilities for the Leadership and Operating Model, which supports the Town and Community Hub programme, (currently residing within Chief Officer, Education - South) will be transferred to the Chief Officer (Strategic Communication and Engagement). This aims to further strengthen a clear and inclusive corporate approach that connects people and place, and that accelerates a fully joined up one council approach to delivering services and supports that are critical to improving life chances and outcomes for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire. This will complement delivery of the One Service priority in the Programme of Work to 2028, as the Chief Officer (Strategic Communication and Engagement) has the Senior Responsible Officer role for the One Service Programme of Work

As one of four deliverables within the One Service priority (i.e. leadership and operating model, workforce and culture, working with other boards, and shared services and public service reform), the Leadership and Operating Model aims to ensure there is a unified approach to maintaining effective delivery and management within each Hub which will, in essence, be unique to the surrounding community within which it is based and based on the needs of that community. Key to this is (i) ensuring effective operational delivery, and (ii) ensuring effective leadership of the shared Hub which is encouraging to all who use the facility, which builds collective responsibilities across each community, school, partnership body, and the council, and which further supports Elected Members in their role in terms of leading North Lanarkshire's communities and representing the best interests of local people.

- (c) Responsibilities for Active and Creative Communities (currently residing within Chief Officer, Education - South) will be transferred to Community Operations. As noted in paragraph 2.7(d), this will solidify a single community operation that comprises all front-line staff who are employed on similar working terms and conditions. The alignment of Active and Creative Communities and Facility Support within the same service will also ensure greater cohesion and co-ordination of working practices and resources to better support what communities need. Overall, a single community operation will provide important opportunities to capitalise on synergies and integrated ways of working in order to maximise service delivery and gain economies of scale.
- (d) Responsibilities for school transport (currently residing within Chief Officer, Education - North) will be transferred to Fleet Services within Community Operations. This will allow for a more integrated approach to all transport planning and delivery across the council area, while freeing up education and families management resource to further address attainment and attendance priorities.

Next steps

- 2.15 As noted in section 1 of this report, the rapidly changing national policy context and uncertain local government future requires to be kept under ongoing review to ensure the council continues to create the conditions and capacities for its operating framework to thrive and support local people and communities in line with the vision set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire. As such, the need for a future programme of linked reviews (to be undertaken in line with local commitments and priorities and the advancement of national developments) was identified in the December 2022 governance update.
- 2.16 The programme of linked reviews set out in the December 2022 governance update report included an indicative timeline of when future reports were scheduled to be

presented to the Policy and Strategy Committee in this respect. Paragraphs 2.17 to 2.21 below therefore provides an update in terms of the review of the six strategic / statutory / corporate functions within the Chief Executive's Service (i.e. legal and democratic, finance, people resources, business and digital, strategic communications and engagement, and audit and risk) and the future streamlining and/or structural realignments required thereafter.

Review of the six strategic / statutory / corporate functions within the Chief Executive's Service

- 2.17 The backdrop to the December 2022 governance update report was primarily focused on the National Care Service and the proposals at that time to transfer existing functions and staffing, as well as the wider impact on service delivery and delivery of The Plan for North Lanarkshire, and the implications on the future functions of the council.
- 2.18 The National Care Service (Scotland) Bill was introduced by the Scottish Government in June 2022 with the intention of reforming how social care, social work, and community health services are delivered in Scotland. An update was provided to the Policy and Strategy Committee in September 2023 (in the Programme of Work report), this noted that developments in respect of the National Care Service had been publicly reported over the last year and they continued to unfold. In June 2023, a further delay was announced to the Stage 1 scrutiny of the Bill, and its first Parliamentary vote is now not expected until January 2024. Since April 2023, COSLA has been engaged in intensive discussions with the Scottish Government and a range of bodies with the aim of agreeing a framework to progress with the National Care Service development. As such, five groups (covering governance and function alignment, collaborative leadership, finance and integrated budgets, commissioning and procurement, and membership and representation) are now in place to support the development of a local framework; these groups have representation from a wide range of relevant bodies.
- 2.19 Notwithstanding the developments over the last year and the change in direction, the impact of the proposals to create a National Care Service remains the highest risk on the council's Corporate Risk Register for 2023/24. As such, the *review of the six strategic / statutory / corporate functions within the Chief Executive's Service* remains framed with the context of the National Care Service as well as the wider impact on service delivery and delivery of The Plan for North Lanarkshire, and the implications on the future functions of the council. However, further challenges also require due consideration in terms of the increasing programme of national reform and its impact on local government, along with substantial funding implications and the increasing uncertainty in this respect. Within this context, the council needs to ensure that services remain financially sustainable in the future. As such, it is vital that these latest reforms are delivered efficiently and effectively, and resources are focussed on continuing to protect services and improve the lives of the people and communities of North Lanarkshire both in the here and now and in the longer-term.
- 2.20 The One Service priority in the Programme of Work to 2028 will be key to ensuring the council delivers services (regardless of structures or the alignment of functions) in a streamlined and efficient manner and in line with the overall vision of *inclusive growth and prosperity for all*. The structural refinements and realignments set out in this report further supports the One Service priority by creating the conditions and capacities that are critical to strengthening the council's operating environment and securing a more integrated one council approach to delivery. This will also require a focus on strengthening combined solutions, resources, skills, and relationships and, as such, the One Workforce report on the agenda today complements these strategic level structural changes as it sets out the intention for a linked review of the pay and grading model for the operational level below Chief Officers to reflect the inevitable additional

responsibilities and capabilities that will be fundamental to ensuring the seven priorities in the Programme of Work to 2028 are delivered. It is expected that this review will result in future realignments below Chief Officer level which will be undertaken under the already approved Scheme of Delegation.

- 2.21 As noted in the December 2022 governance update report, this review includes due consideration of the potential for the future reduction of Chief Officer posts in the Chief Executive's Service from six to five. This review will also include due consideration of the resultant impacts across all Chief Officer portfolios. The outcome from this review remains scheduled to be reported to the Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2024.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Measures of success include maintaining, and sustaining, the organisational capabilities and capacity that are fundamental to delivering the seven priorities in the Programme of Work to 2028 and achieving the shared ambition of *inclusive growth and prosperity for all* as set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix 1 - Latest Programme of Work achievements
Appendix 2 - Council operating framework (established in September 2018).
Appendix 3 - Proposed workforce changes, effective from 1st April 2024.
Appendix 4 - Senior management structure and functional overview.



Des Murray
Chief Executive

5. Impacts

<p>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"/></p>
<p>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? Proposed workforce changes (detailed in paragraph 2.7 and Appendix 3) - with effect</p>

from 1st April 2024 - will realise recurring savings of £136,040 for 2024/25 onwards. Findings arising from the programme of linked reviews (noted in paragraph 2.21) have the potential to result in further savings; these will be identified and reported once concluded.

5.3 HR policy impact

Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Proposals for workforce implications are detailed in paragraph 2.7 and Appendix 3. These changes will be undertaken explicitly in line with the council's *Managing Workforce Change Policy*.

Formal consultation with stakeholders, including Trade Unions, has commenced.

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 No

If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic?

Yes No

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 No

If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?

Yes No

If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk

Yes No

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 No

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 No

5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes No

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 No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes No

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?

Without appropriate alignment of the vision, plan, governance, and operations, there is a risk in terms of the decision making and delivery of the extensive range of programmes, projects, and activities required to fulfil the seven priorities in the Programme of Work to 2028 and achieve the council's overall vision of *inclusive growth and prosperity for all* as set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire. The information presented in this report therefore aims to contribute towards the mitigation of the risks on the Corporate Risk Register for (a) *Governance, Leadership, and Decision Making* and (b) *Managing Strategic Change*.

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 No

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 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

Latest Programme of Work achievements

- (1) £1.3bn of capital investment approved by the Policy and Strategy Committee for delivery in North Lanarkshire (over the five-year period from 2021/22 to 2025/26) has contributed significantly to improving the physical environment of North Lanarkshire's communities.
- (2) Through the Hub programme, three community hubs have been completed this year - Newmains and St Brigid's (February 2023), Riverbank (August 2023), and Chryston (October 2023) and five are at the design stage (Orbiston, St Kevin's, St Stephen's, and Gartcosh Community Hubs, along with the Chryston High extension). This adds to the 63 new establishments (11 secondary, 36 primary, and 16 family learning centres, including 1140 hours related centres) that have been built since 1996. This demonstrates the significant shift in designing multipurpose Town and Community Hubs that support a much wider integrated service offering in the heart of the local community, bringing education together with other local services, businesses, and partnership organisations.
- (3) The 1,000th new build council home was completed on the site of the Holehills high rise flats in Airdrie, which also saw completion of 11 low carbon (net zero) homes which are part of a pilot to deliver sustainable and affordable homes.
- (4) 1,217 new affordable homes have been built through the council's new supply programme since 2010, with a further 372 on site. Additional sites have been identified and approved at committee for a further 1,290 homes across North Lanarkshire, including town centre and phase 1 tower re-provisioning sites. In addition, over 700 homes have been purchased through the council's buy back scheme which, as well as contributing to new supply, helps to prevent homelessness and enable common works to progress in flatted blocks.
- (5) 831 properties across high rise towers and low-rise blocks have been demolished to date as part of the phase 1 towers re-provisioning programme (since approved in May 2018). Work is currently on site at Coursington Towers in Motherwell, Gowkthrapple low-rise blocks in Wishaw, and Jackson Court and Shawhead back flats in Coatbridge where a further 4 towers and 30 low-rise blocks are being demolished.
- (6) In May 2023 proposals were approved to consult tenants and stakeholders regarding the second phase of the Tower Strategy re-provisioning which comprises 974 properties, including 8 tower blocks. Following a positive response to the consultation, approval was granted in August 2023 to progress with phase 2 of the re-provisioning programme to create new, high quality, energy efficient housing that will meet the current and future needs of the local area.
- (7) Investment has continued in town centres / edge of town projects, with 58 buildings or vacant sites repurposed or redeveloped. Since 2019, the growth team has acquired 19 town centre properties / sites across North Lanarkshire to enable the council and its arm's length external organisations to either convert existing properties to residential developments, build new homes on cleared sites, or upgrade commercial premises. Around 7.7 hectares of vacant and derelict land has been improved or enabled for future industrial use.
- (8) £7.8m investment in local nature reserves, country parks, and key greenspace sites has created places where visitors are more active, share better experiences, and stay longer. Such investment has provided opportunities for improvements in physical and mental

health, environmental education, outdoor education, and heritage appreciation. Recent improvements include Bellshill-Gateway cycle facilities in Strathclyde country park, improved path and natural play trail network at Palacerigg, improved parking and visitor interpretation at Drumpellier country park, peatland restoration at greenspace sites in Cumbernauld, path upgrades at Broadwood Loch, and investment in tree planting and wildflower planting across community greenspaces. Improvements also include a new outdoor education centre where almost 7,000 pupils have experienced exciting outdoor learning on site since it opened in 2021.

- (9) The ten-year Active Travel Strategy (approved in 2021) has put in place - for the first time - a cohesive and holistic framework to prioritise and accelerate active travel interventions across North Lanarkshire. Aligned with the Town Visions and Town and Community Hub developments, these aim to provide better active travel networks between local communities and across the local authority boundary, and deliver improved health and wellbeing as well as environmental, social inclusion, and public access benefits. In 2023, a new active travel route was opened for pedestrians and cyclists between Craigneuk and New College Lanarkshire's Motherwell Campus at Ravenscraig. This includes lighting, seating, CCTV, and tree planting along the route.
- (10) High-level design concepts were created for Town Visions as well as associated Town Prospectuses to inform the future investment strategy for North Lanarkshire's towns and enable town centre Action Plans to be progressed. Following public consultation, Town Action Plans have now been completed for Airdrie, Motherwell, and Wishaw, and consultation is underway in Kilsyth, Coatbridge, Bellshill, and Shotts. Following the acquisition of Cumbernauld Town Centre in June 2023, work is progressing to develop the future plans for the town centre, including management arrangements for the shopping centre for the interim period.
- (11) £9.225m was secured from the UK Levelling Up Fund to support delivery of the Town Vision for Cumbernauld, including the acquisition of The Centre Cumbernauld. More recently, £20m (over 10 years) has been awarded for Coatbridge Town Centre from the UK Government's Town Fund to support the delivery of the Town Action Plan.
- (12) An initial award was secured from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for consultation, feasibility studies, and research into a multi-million-pound development project at Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life in Coatbridge and the Rediscovering Airdrie heritage project. This will hopefully lead to subsequent funding awards to significantly expand and enhance the visitor experiences and attractions on offer at Summerlee, and support the repurposing and refurbishment of heritage buildings within Airdrie town centre.
- (13) £6.5m investment has commenced at Braidhurst Industrial Estate in Motherwell (part funded from the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund) to improve and expand available business space and upgrade the surrounding environment to help create more employment opportunities.
- (14) City Deal investment has seen the completion of two North Lanarkshire infrastructure projects - Glenboig Link Road in 2018 and (more recently) Motherwell Town Centre Interchange improvement works at Motherwell Station. The West Coast main line crossing has also been completed as part of the Ravenscraig Infrastructure Access improvements, and work is at various stages of progression on the remaining projects (Orchard Farm roundabout, Ravenscraig Infrastructure Access North and South, East Airdrie Link Road, and Eurocentral Strategic Active Travel). This investment has started to realise significant changes in North Lanarkshire through improved regional

infrastructure and more joined up transport links. This has helped to connect local communities to new housing, business investment, and employment opportunities as well as access to leisure and health and wellbeing activities.

- (15) Housing investment of £333.815m (from 2021/22 to 2025/26) has seen planned safety works completed in the last year, improvement works (including sprinkler systems) within four towers in Coatbridge, homes made available for 200 Ukrainian families, enhancements to energy efficiency in homes (including 201 pv solar panel installations and 3,415 render/external wall insulation works), and an ongoing repairs and maintenance programme (including 3,949 lead pipe replacements, 5,768 new kitchens, 9,087 new windows, 12,057 new bathrooms, 12,868 heating systems, and 35,829 smoke and CO2 alarms).
- (16) Implementation of the Connectivity contract is already assisting the transformation of the area's digital infrastructure to help ensure that 85% of homes across North Lanarkshire will have access to gigabit capable broadband earlier than planned. To date 280 of the planned 340 kilometres of ultrafast, full fibre digital network has been laid to support the delivery of an ultrafast digital network across North Lanarkshire. Benefits of this new digital network include:
- New web filtering provisions and a boost to school internet bandwidth via upgrades for primary school bandwidth to 1Gb and secondary schools to 5Gb with a second resilient 5Gb connection for secondary schools by the end of 2023.
 - Providing the capacity to support a free public Wi-Fi network across town centres, libraries, schools, leisure, and community centres.
 - Enhancing the coverage and reach of gigabit-capable fibre networks to businesses, private, and council-owned social housing.
 - Attracting inward investment to local communities from a range of business sectors resulting in increased access to employment, health, and leisure opportunities.

In addition, advancements in digital technologies across the council and the establishment of digital as a channel for interacting with service users, residents, and businesses continues to enable the delivery of seamless services and self-serve channels that better meet local needs and expectations, while increasing the capacity for staff to provide more help and support for those who need it the most.

- (17) The Leadership and Operating Model continues to ensure that a unified approach is underway to maintain effective management, operation, and governance structures within each Hub. The model aims to ensure that Town and Community Hubs operate as a single entity and support a much wider integrated community offer - with communities having more direct access to the services they need and staff closer to the communities they work in. This unified approach puts communities at the heart of the council's model and seeks to ensure everyone is given equality of opportunity and individuals are supported, encouraged, and cared for at each key stage of their life.
- (18) An inspection of partnership support services in North Lanarkshire has resulted in a highly encouraging report for the positive difference made to the lives of children and young people at risk of harm. The inspection evaluated the services as *very good* following engagement with children, young people, parents, carers, Elected Members, and staff, as well as a review of cases and a staff survey. A key conclusion highlighted that integrated, collaborative support from a range of dedicated agencies was a clear strength in early intervention for children and young people at risk of harm. As part of the inspection, successful projects were highlighted including the virtual school which delivers bespoke services for care-experienced children and young people and has achieved vastly improved attainment and a marked reduction in school exclusions, and

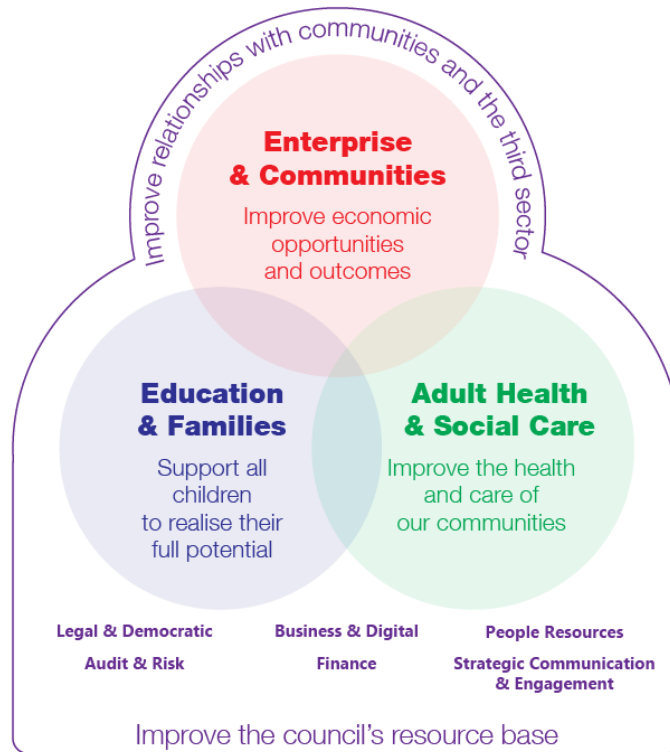
the Today Not Tomorrow group which has significantly influenced positive change in North Lanarkshire's care system.

- (19) Improving breastfeeding rates remains a local priority in particular to reduce health inequalities and poverty in families and, as such, work continues in partnership towards a whole council approach to supporting breastfeeding and changing the culture for babies and families in Lanarkshire. These efforts have been reflected in the latest infant feeding statistics which show that 6-8 week data for Lanarkshire shows an increase in exclusive breastfeeding and in any breastfeeding. Attrition from birth to first visit shows further reductions and there is also a significant decrease in attrition from birth to 6-8 weeks. Overall, this is a significant improvement in breastfeeding rates and further evidences the drive for sustainability and ensuring baby friendly standards are embedded into everyday practices across Lanarkshire.
- (20) The positive change in local economic conditions is reflected in the extent of inward investment, employment opportunities, environmental enhancements, improvements to the digital infrastructure and transport network, and the quality and range of housing achievements highlighted above. This is also reflected in the results for the 28 Health Check Indicators which continue to be regularly monitored in order to assess the latest context for North Lanarkshire as a place. In this respect a small number of the indicators have had updated data published nationally since the report to Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2023. The main points of note in the latest results are that North Lanarkshire's economy continues to show increasing and positive growth in line with a positive position nationally, the number of people economically active has shown a positive increase for the last three consecutive quarters (although this has still not returned to pre-pandemic levels), and the number of people claiming employment related benefits continues to show a gradual decrease and remains lower than pre-pandemic levels.

Appendix 2

Council operating framework (established in September 2018)

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE...
A PLACE TO LIVE, LEARN, WORK, INVEST AND VISIT**



**WHERE THERE IS A SHARED AMBITION FOR INCLUSIVE
GROWTH AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL**

Appendix 3

Table 1: Proposed workforce changes, with effect from 1st April 2024

Post	Current establishment FTE	Proposed adjustment	Proposed establishment FTE	Salary £	On-cost £	Turnover £	Total budgeted salary £
Chief Officer (Housing Property Services)	1.0	Delete 1.0 FTE	0.0	107,588	35,612	(7,160)	136,040
Total	1.0		0.0	107,588	35,612	(7,160)	136,040

The proposed workforce changes in Table 1 would realise recurring savings of £136,040 for 2024/25 onwards.

Table 1: Summary of workforce changes

Net change in employee costs	Net change in establishment (FTE)
<u>Posts deleted:</u>	
VRS / early retiral	1.0
<u>Posts created:</u>	0.0
<u>Net change:</u>	1.0

Appendix 4

Senior management structure and functional overview

