

NCC Group: Chief Executive Services

Business Plan Template

2017-18 to 2020-21

NCC Group and Chief Executive Services commissioning intentions

During 2017/18 as we complete the Next Generation working and structure plans, we will focus, within our financial resources, on ensuring the best possible wellbeing and safeguarding outcomes to our citizens, communities and consumers in Northamptonshire by:

- Ensuring our Next Generation model components are in place and fully functioning;
- Deliver the transformation of how the public access wellbeing goods and services through the new marketplace portal (formally referred to as breeze-e);
- Delivering a self-financing model for NCC, including fully understanding the impact of the new Government funding models of business retention and fully embedding the new federated business model for NCC;
- Delivering Digital Northamptonshire, bringing applications and modern technology into all that we do;
- Delivering greater integration with the NHS through the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)

These intentions are in conjunction with our People and Place commissioning intentions.

1. Vision Statement

NCC's vision is to "Make Northamptonshire a great place to live and work" thus ensuring the wellbeing and safeguarding of the residents and visitors to our wonderful county.

1.1. Our Purpose & Main Activities

NCC Group is responsible for ensuring that commissioning decisions are made based on robust intelligence and have the appropriate democratic input, in order that the most successful and best

value for money interventions are commissioned for the residents and communities of Northamptonshire.

The functions and teams which form the Chief Executive's Services are:

- **Customer Insight and Business Intelligence:** This represents the repository of data, analysis and intelligence which will help the organisation understand demand and markets, current and future customer trends and inform effective commissioning across the Group.
- **Communication and Brand Development:** This will ensure that customers and residents have access to the information they require on access to services. It will also deliver societal-wide messaging and help demand management, while also protecting the brand and reputation of the Council.
- **Financier, Shareholder and Funder:** This function, through the Finance Director (Section 151 Officer), will ensure that state funding, treasury and investments are effectively managed to deliver value for money and achieve outcomes, and will also ensure that the Council delivers a balanced budget.
- **Customer Services and Web team:** our front door to services, advice and information, and the main instrument for the delivery of our Digital Northamptonshire programme, designed to maximise the digital content of our customer interactions and information provision.
- **Regulatory and Policy Engagement:** active engagement with the Government and central policy setters to influence policy development and get the best deal for the county.

1.2. Our Vision in Four Years

Our design principles, outlined below, will allow us to develop a sustainable model of local government, which is flexible and responsive to resident needs, while allowing for enhanced partnership working:

- Outcome focused
- Commissioning decisions based on data and intelligence
- Partnership working across the model
- Smart and responsible financing
- A culture of trust and joint responsibility
- A flexible and responsive consumer strategy
- Strategy based on democratic mandate and clear understanding of wider political and economic environment.

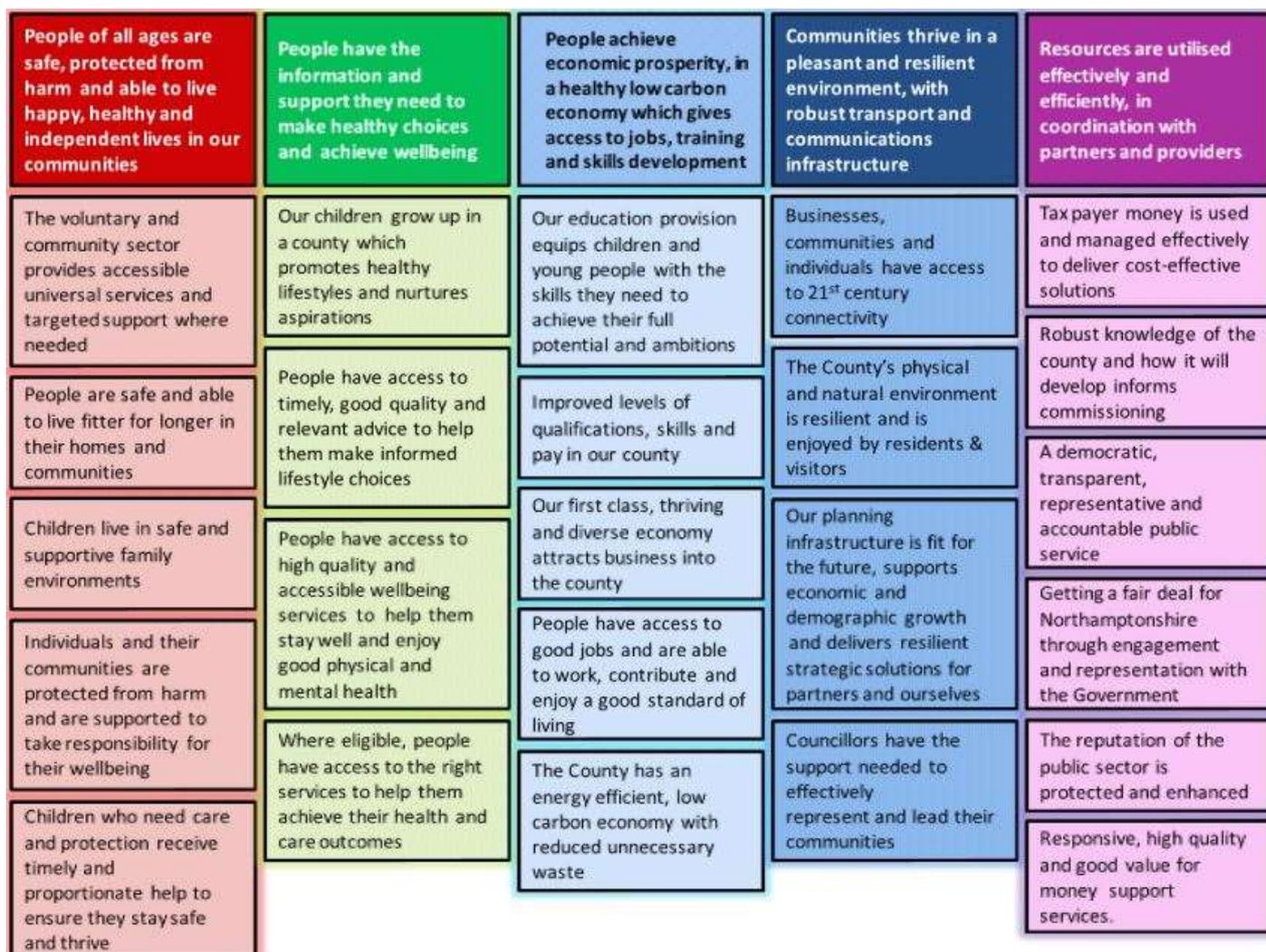
1.3 Priorities

- Ensuring the effective and financially-efficient implementation and running of the Next Generation Model, via a robust and mature strategic commissioning framework;
- Delivering our savings and a balanced budget against a challenging financial settlement;
- Establishing and delivering our Digital Northamptonshire agenda and making digital content and contacts our default setting;
- Aligning our corporate agenda to the local STP;
- Continuing to use technology of a system disruptor to drive change;
- Delivering a health and wellbeing e-marketplace for the county and beyond.

2. Strategic Outcomes

The Council has agreed an outcome framework at Cabinet in October 2016, which is outlined in figure 1. The framework consists of two parts, the first of which are 5 strategic objectives for the Council, and second of a series of specific outcomes to the achievement of which all of our services are contributing.

Fig 1. Strategic Outcomes for the Council



NCC Group, in the Next Generation Council structure, is ultimately responsible for the delivery of all of the Council's strategic outcomes. We will do this by commissioning the federated organisations in the Next Generation Council structure to deliver the majority of these outcomes on our behalf. There are, however, functions that remain within NCC Group, particularly within the Chief Executive Services teams, which are responsible for the delivery of a number of the Council's strategic outcomes; these are detailed below:

Tax payer money is used and managed effectively to deliver cost-effective solutions – The majority of functions and responsibilities in NCC Group support effective use of resources. Corporate Finance and BIPI ensure that there is high quality information to support strategic planning and also to monitor our spending and performance. Our Customer Service and Communications functions will enable the voice of the customer to come through, highlighting areas where we are doing well as well as those where we could do better.

We want to demonstrate that we provide good value for money. We will achieve this by ensuring that we extract maximum value from the public money we receive – either as grants from government or revenue raised via local taxation such as Council Tax and Business Rates. We will be proactive in examining all options for financing our operations. This will include exploiting economic conditions that may, for example, make it the right time to borrow to fund capital infrastructure programmes when the benefits to the county and return of investment make good business sense.

We will benchmark our financial and operation performance sector to determine how we measure up against others in and outside the sector.

Our role in strategic business planning will be fundamental to ensuring our resources are directed in to the right priority areas. We will ensure that budget and service development proposals from delivery vehicles are rigorously tested not only for viability but that they are likely deliver the anticipated outcomes and benefits, and that potential risks and mitigating actions are considered.

Robust knowledge of the county and how it will develop informs commissioning – At the heart of the new model is intelligence-led commissioning, and this can only be achieved by having robust and accurate intelligence about the county, its residents and national demographic and policy changes. The Business Intelligence and Performance Improvement unit, which is in charge of providing the wider organisation with an understanding of its own performance, external factors influencing demand, market and outcomes, and with exploring the art of the possible in terms of creative and sustainable solutions. Over the short to medium term, we will also enhance the improvement and transformation arm of the function, in order to realise real benefits to the organisation and vehicles.

The value in the strategic needs assessments we produce along with contract management data and business intelligence will be maximised to ensure resources are directed to where they are most needed.

Getting a fair deal for Northamptonshire through engagement and representation with the Government –

Through the creation of the Public Affairs function, we are better equipped to influence decision making with central government, join other authorities in their work and ensure that we are recognised nationally as a key player.

Primary strands for the function		
Strand	What this covers	Alignment within Group
'Telling the story'	Developing and promoting NCC Brand. Communicating achievements and the journey ahead. Use of data and intelligence to support 'the story'. Evidence for change in legislation, responses to calls for evidence.	
'Inside the lines'	Policy and legislation horizon scanning but focused on relevance for NCC. Analysis of 'Think Tank' recommendations. Building a best practice evidence base for Group Commissioners.	
'Setting the agenda'	Evidenced based strategic planning and policy development Shaping local policy. Developing the NCC Group voice as part of NCC Plc and Northamptonshire Plc. Analysis of local partner policy and strategy. Engagement with Cabinet – local political priorities. Use of information on the public and residents to inform decision-making.	
'Engagement and Influencing'	Supporting local influencers e.g. Members and CMT so they are armed with evidence and empowered to address local issues on the national stage and/or push for policy change where appropriate.	
'Positive Partnerships'	Enhancing the strength of local and regional partnerships – e.g. Economic Heartland and relationships with delivery vehicles. Relationships with LGA and EM Councils.	

The reputation of the public sector is protected and enhanced – We have several actions in place in order to achieve this outcome. Implementing the NCC Communications and Marketing Strategy will ensure fair and accurate representation of decisions and service outcomes across news media, social media and digital channels. Deploying the Council's branding strategy will ensure a clear and consistent approach to branding services and enterprises delivering council outcomes to engender public accountability and awareness.

By communicating with staff, partners and wider stakeholders we want to engender engagement and support for the Council's direction of travel and approach.

Responsive, high quality and good value for money support services – The success of the NCC Group and the Next Generation Council model will be judged by its ability to ensure the best services are in place to deliver – this applies to customer facing services as well as back-office functions. NCC is already benefitting from one of the best value for money arrangements for the delivery of support

functions. The expansion of LGSS and the addition of new stakeholders and customers will benefit NCC in the long-run and reduce even further the delivery costs to NCC.

3. Context and key data

The changing demographics of Northamptonshire, coupled with a change in the way people now expect to receive services and the most challenging financial climate for the public sector we have faced in decades, means nothing but radical transformation of public service provision will meet the increasing needs of the people of our great county. Historically, the majority of the Council's funding has been received via the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) with the final decision being made upon the settlement a matter of months before the start of a financial year. It was announced in February 2016 that the way councils receive their funding settlements is changing this year and that we would be able to access a 4 year settlement (pending submission on an efficiency plan covering the period), which will enable us to plan more effectively our services and budget expenditure proposals in the medium term. In the longer term, the RSG is being phased out and replaced with councils receiving the majority of their non-council tax funding from 100% business rates retention. This will pose significant risks to our sustainability, and we need to be prepared to manage extensive and profound change.

4. Risk Factors

Risk	Mitigations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to set balanced budget 	Close monitoring of delivery plans and mitigations and regular updates to Cabinet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inability to fund Delivery Vehicles to agreed budget levels due to cost over-runs in current financial year 	Close monitoring of delivery plans and mitigations and regular updates to Cabinet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery Vehicle - Contractual dispute – failure to meet performance targets 	Collaborative approach to budget and outcomes setting, and central intelligence support to vehicles and commissioners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service failure in Delivery Vehicle 	Robust safeguarding and quality assurance mechanisms within NCC Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICO/ LGO fines 	Centralised Complaints and Compliments, IM and FOI/ DP functions; governance arrangements in place via NCC Group and vehicles Caldicott Guardians; central intelligence support to vehicles and commissioners



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Devolution proposals by District and Borough Councils approved by DCLG	Close working with Government, LGA and other authorities to ensure we get the best deal for Northamptonshire
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Police and Crime Commissioner – Police and Fire merger and compulsory transfer of assets to combined Police and Fire Authority	Ongoing communication and collaboration with partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenge to budget proposals	Central consultation function supporting the budget setting process and ensuring timely management of proposals
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insufficiently developed and flexible provider markets	Increased focus on managing and influencing the market through commissioning intentions and our own delivery vehicles
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market - provider failure	Developing targeted provision for complex and hard to meet needs via our delivery vehicles
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NNDR reduction (D&B)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing building completions slow	

5. Net Revenue Budget Requirement – 2017-18 to 2020-21

	2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	2020-21 £000	Total
Prior Yr Base Budget b/fwd	64,053	69,506	68,606	76,134	
Inflation	2,332	2,324	2,349	2,645	9,650
Service Pressure	4,048	(658)	3,000	0	6,390
Total	6,380	1,666	5,349	2645	16,040
Efficiencies	836	(803)	(308)	49	(226)
Income Generation	(113)	(113)	(113)	0	(339)
Service Transformation	(1,650)	(1,650)	2,600	0	(700)
Total	(927)	(2,566)	2,179	49	(1,265)
Approved Budget	69,506	68,606	76,134	78,828	
Capitalisation					
Transformation Centrally Managed	(9,000)	(2,000)	0		
Net Budget	60,506	66,606	76,134	78,828	

Note: The table is based on the Budget approved by Council in February 2016 with the exception of costings for 2020-21. These have been adjusted to reflect organisation changes around the next generation model