

# COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

VERSION 3.0 / APRIL 2024



**LIVE  
LEARN  
WORK  
INVEST  
VISIT**

Document Control			
<b>Title</b>	Communications and Engagement Strategy		
<b>Owner</b>	Stephen Penman, Chief Officer, Strategic Communication and Engagement	<b>Contact</b>	penmanste@northlan.gov.uk
<b>Governance Group</b>	Policy and Strategy Committee		
<b>Author</b>	Stephen Penman Carolynne Coole	<b>Contact</b>	penmanste@northlan.gov.uk coolmillerc@northlan.gov.uk

Revision History			
Number	Originator	Date Review Commenced	Revision description / record of change
1.0 Original Strategy 2015	Stephen Penman	19.3.2015	Strategy approved
2.0 Updated strategy	Stephen Penman	1.5.2019	Updated strategy approved
3.0 Updated strategy 2024	Stephen Penman	15.4.24	Updated strategy incorporating wider service

Document approvals			
Number	Governance Group	Date approval granted	Date approval to be requested (If document still draft)
<b>Original strategy</b>	<b>Policy and Strategy</b>	19.3.2015	
<b>2.0 Updated strategy</b>	<b>Policy and Strategy</b>	1.5.2019	
<b>3.0 Updated strategy</b>	<b>Policy and Strategy</b>		6 June 2024

Consultation Record (for most recent update)	
<b>Status of document consulted upon</b>	Version 3.0 Draft Corporate Communications Strategy
<b>Stakeholders consulted / date</b>	Chief Executive (26.04.24), Corporate Management Team (10.05.24), Council Leader and Convener, Policy and Strategy (16.05.24), Convener, Communities Committee (16.05.24)

Strategic Alignment		
<p>The Plan for North Lanarkshire and Programme of Work (including The Place The Vision). Priorities and Ambition Statements in The Plan for North Lanarkshire:</p> <p><b>Improve economic opportunities and outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market and promote North Lanarkshire as the place to live, learn, work, invest and visit.</li> </ul> <p><b>Support all children and young people to realise their full potential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance collaborative working to maximise support and ensure all our children and young people are included, supported, and safe</li> <li>Engage children and families in early learning and childcare programmes and making positive transitions to school.</li> <li>Engage with children, young people, parents, carers and families to help all children and young people reach their full potential.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve preventative approaches including self-management and giving people information and choice over supports and services.</li> <li>Ensure the highest standards of public protection.</li> <li>Encourage the health and wellbeing of people through a range of social, cultural and leisure activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enhance participation, capacity and empowerment across our communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve engagement with communities and develop their capacity to help themselves.</li> <li>Improve the involvement of communities in the decisions, and development of services and supports, that affect them.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to identify and access opportunities to leverage additional resources to support our ambition</li> <li>Build a workforce for the future capable of delivering on our priorities and shared ambition.</li> </ul> <p>Strategic Policy Framework, Strategic Governance Framework, Strategic Performance Framework, Programme and Project Management Framework.</p>		
<b>Next review date</b>		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>Review date</b></td> <td>January 2029</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Review date</b>	January 2029
<b>Review date</b>	January 2029	

# Introduction

Communication and engagement are crucial to achieving our ambition to make North Lanarkshire the place to **Live, Learn, Work, Invest** and **Visit**.

This strategy sets out a clear direction for our public-facing and internal communications and engagement activity. The work of Strategic Communication and Engagement has a positive impact on the council's ability to build community resilience, keep people informed and enhance our reputation.

More than that, inspiring communities, supporting service delivery and changing behaviour supports the Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work. This requires a strategic approach, creativity and challenge, using all the tools available.

Strategic Communication and Engagement already carries out sector-leading work. With this integrated strategy, we believe that communication and engagement will continue to play a significant part in delivering our ambitions.

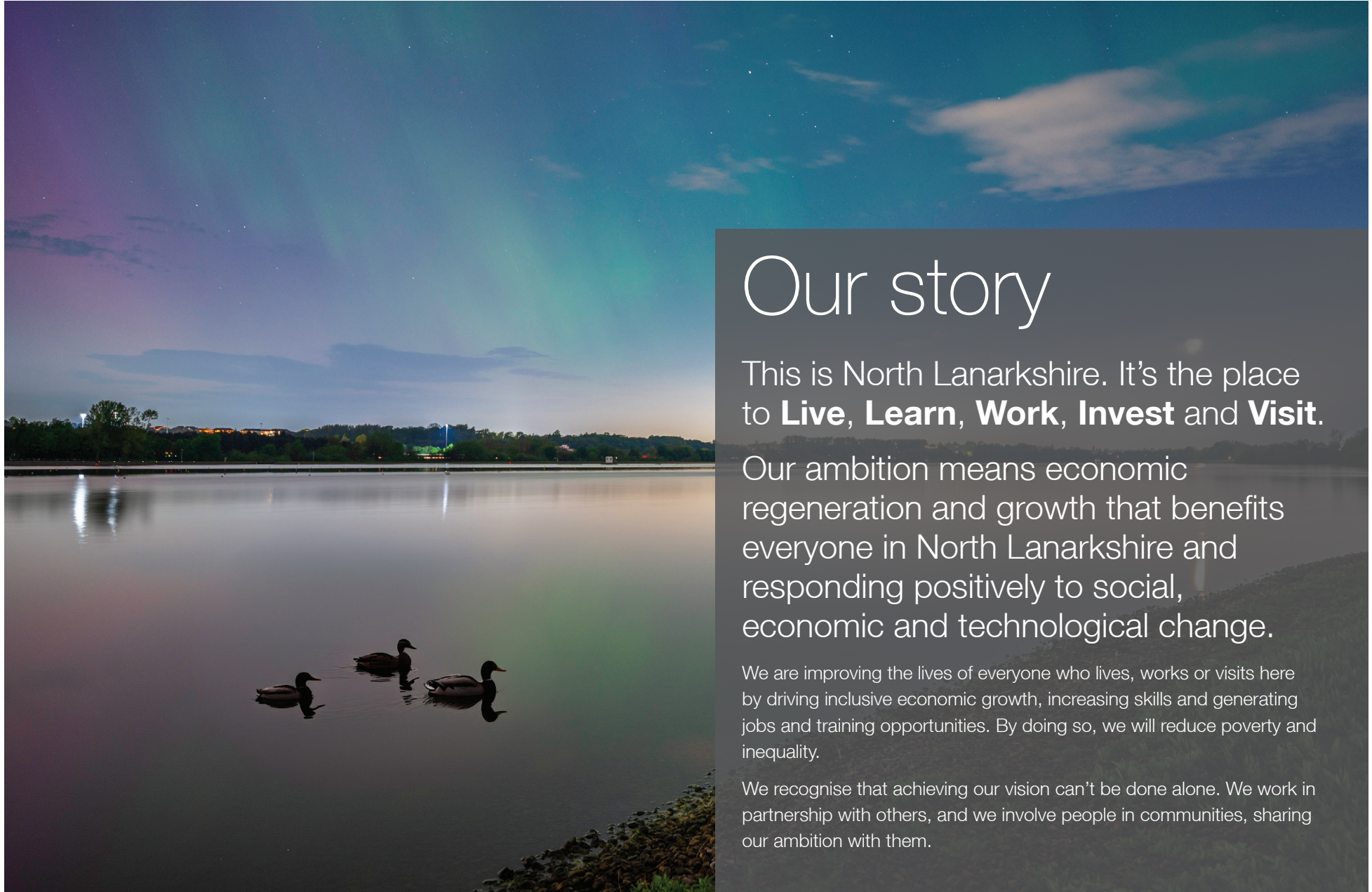
## **Councillor Jim Logue**

Leader  
North Lanarkshire Council

## **Councillor Kenneth Stevenson**

Convener of the Communities Committee  
North Lanarkshire Council





# Our story

This is North Lanarkshire. It's the place to **Live, Learn, Work, Invest** and **Visit**.

Our ambition means economic regeneration and growth that benefits everyone in North Lanarkshire and responding positively to social, economic and technological change.

We are improving the lives of everyone who lives, works or visits here by driving inclusive economic growth, increasing skills and generating jobs and training opportunities. By doing so, we will reduce poverty and inequality.

We recognise that achieving our vision can't be done alone. We work in partnership with others, and we involve people in communities, sharing our ambition with them.

# Our strategy

We will deliver outstanding communications and engagement activity that helps to ensure North Lanarkshire is the place to **Live, Learn, Work, Invest** and **Visit**.

The quality of our work matters in delivering the council's policy priorities, The Plan for North Lanarkshire, and the Programme of Work to 2028 and beyond.

To achieve this we will tell the story of North Lanarkshire as the place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit and inspire action. We will engage people in communities. All our activity will be targeted, measurable and have impact. Crucially, communications will be responsive, relevant and customer-focused. It will be based on outcomes, not outputs. And it will be smarter; using data and insight to deliver the right message to the right person at the right time.

## Engaging communities

Community engagement is critical to the success of the Programme of Work. Through the work of the Community Partnership Team we will work with people and organisations in communities to help them have a voice in the work of the council and to mobilise more collaborative working.

## Working with others

The Plan for North Lanarkshire involves all community planning partners. The ambitions in the Plan can only be achieved with clear, consistent communication and collaboration and we will work with partners to ensure that our collective communication and engagement efforts are targeted appropriately.

## Focus on campaigns

As the council's services continue to change, we will devote most of our resource to campaigns which change behaviour and drive advocacy as these are essential to the efficient delivery of services. These campaigns will be tied to SMART objectives, creatively bold and provocative where necessary, aimed at ensuring a measurable impact.



## Focus on audiences

We will always choose the most appropriate channels and language to communicate with people, groups and communities.

# How we work

By utilising the full suite of communications and engagement disciplines and tools including campaigns and marketing, strategic consultancy, digital, brand and multi-media creative support, public relations, internal communications, community engagement, customer service and major events, we bring information to life for people and communities in North Lanarkshire.

## Our communications will be:

**Community focused** - we will foster a sense of community spirit that is supportive of taking positive action. By championing behaviours and attitudes, and listening to the voices of people in communities, we can promote community empowerment and participation. Our communications will help keep people safe, informed and connected to their community.

**Inspiring** - we will tell people what we are doing and planning to do through The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work, reinforcing a positive vision for the future and working collaboratively.

**Informative** - our work should direct people to the information and customer service routes they need and are most appropriate to them, helping

people to help themselves and making communities more resilient. We highlight support for businesses, guidance on protecting the environment and how community groups and businesses can access funding and support. We provide clarity and reassurance in times of emergency, signposting those in need to access the most applicable support and advice. This work demonstrates how services and policies make a positive impact on people, businesses and communities.

**Linked to the Programme of Work** - the council's Programme of Work sets out what we will achieve together. Our communications and engagement will support the delivery of the programme and will help to achieve the outcomes contained within each programme theme.





Activity will deliver meaningful behaviour change while enhancing customer experience.

**Quality-governed** - incorporating professionalism and practice, systems, standards and guidance through an operating model that provides a consistent approach to delivering communications.

**Inclusive** - we will consider our audiences when planning campaigns or utilising our communication platforms to ensure they are as accessible as possible and where applicable, can be adapted to an appropriate format on request. We will make every effort to ensure communications comply with legislation and are published in line with

appropriate regulations, involving relevant people and organisations for advice.

**Integrated** - whether through multi-disciplinary campaigns or through the collaborative networks developed with partners. Our own internal networks will enhance delivery to ensure a joined-up approach to communications and public engagement.

**Responsive** - our work listens to communities and individuals, providing or signposting to the right information they're looking for. Often, that information will be served up organically through data analysis and other times, that will through collaboration and two-way communication methods.

**Creative** - we will use the full range of creative skills to ensure our messages are compelling, embracing digital innovation, video, animation, photography, design and writing and using channels that are relevant, relatable and accessible to individual audiences.

**Challenging** - our communications will be frank and forthright, encouraging people to change their behaviour or take action.

**Driven by data** - the council's investment in digital technology is firmly aligned to communications, which are driven by insight from analysis of data and service need and underpinned by technological advancements in automation, AI and social media algorithms. This flow of information serves up the right message at the right time, targeting and personalising where possible, to make communications more effective and efficient.



## LIVE HERE

North Lanarkshire has is a welcoming, vibrant place where people want to live.

We acknowledge our history but we recognise we have a much bigger future.

We have a great mix of housing, facilities, services and transport links. We're transforming our town centres and helping people to live longer in high quality housing.

We are creating hubs in towns and communities which meet the needs of residents able to access schools as well as community facilities and partner services.

People in communities will build resilience and we will engage with them to ensure their needs can be met.



## LEARN HERE

All young people in North Lanarkshire can achieve their full potential. They will be equipped to make their way in life through quality, exciting and challenging learning. We will work to close the poverty-related attainment gap and improve attendance at school.

Learners of all ages will have the skills to take advantage of the employment opportunities our growing economy brings, and we will have a flexible, resilient and skilled workforce.

Our schools are inclusive, energetic places which take into account the needs of all young people and provide them with the learning, teaching, facilities and technology to ensure they have experiences which last a lifetime.



## WORK HERE

We have a dynamic, diverse and growing economy with a great mix of small, medium-sized and large businesses.

People in North Lanarkshire are connected to employment and have the support they need to access jobs. They have skills appropriate to the needs of employers and are supported, no matter their background, needs of economic circumstances.

We provide great places to work, with engaged, ambitious people who are ambassadors for the services they provide.



## INVEST HERE

North Lanarkshire is the best location for business. We have excellent transport links, a strong employment market, a skilled workforce and flexible land and premises, with an outstanding digital infrastructure.

Businesses have the support to establish, grow and succeed, and are able to develop new products and markets to create and sustain quality jobs.

Our services are aligned to help businesses locate, grow and succeed and we make it easy for businesses to talk to us.



## VISIT HERE

North Lanarkshire is a great place to visit and play. Our tourism sector is growing, with improved opportunities and attractions.

We offer distinctive experiences which provide value for money and are accessible to all. This is a place for active, healthy lives, where the right facilities are developed in the places they are needed and can be enjoyed the most.





# The Programme of Work to 2028 and beyond

The council has approved its Programme of Work to 2028 and beyond. The programme is managed through seven strategic boards, each with a delivery plan approved by the council in March 2024.

We will align our work priorities with those in the delivery plans, ensuring that good and effective communication is incorporated in the delivery of each programme board's priorities and making a measurable contribution to those deliverables.



## The Plan for North Lanarkshire **PROGRAMME OF WORK**

### **DIGITAL NL**

Develop a skilled digital workforce, promote an innovative, sustainable culture and be the Digital Leader for a transformed North Lanarkshire.

### **ONE SERVICE**

Ensure services are delivered, regardless of owner, in a streamlined, efficient, and supportive model, with the overall vision of inclusive growth and prosperity for all.



### **TRANSFORMING PLACES**

An enhanced programme to accelerate transformation of town centres and communities.



### **INVEST IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE**

Accelerated outcome delivery and investment via a more streamlined advisory service and aligned operating model and infrastructure plan.



### **SUSTAINABLE FUTURES**

Focus commitments to Net Zero Carbon and the associated energy solutions and investments required to make it a reality.



### **RESILIENT PEOPLE**

Deliver whole family support locally, when families need it, in a way that addresses the impacts of poverty and reduces inequality.



### **BRIGHTER FUTURES**

Support and improve educational attainment, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, and volunteering.

## Transforming Places

To plan and coordinate public and private sector investment to deliver transformational change across town centres and local communities at pace, and to attract more people to live, learn, work, invest and visit within North Lanarkshire, improving economic outcomes and the health and wellbeing of residents.

This programme will involve attracting new (and sustaining existing) populations to create sustainable communities and a stable demographic spread that supports economic growth. This will mean enhancing greenspace, place and housing and integrating services to improve health, wellbeing and social outcomes as well as accelerating investment for job creation. We will provide access, physically and digitally, to local and regional opportunities to support business development and survival, as well as enabling urban and rural families to thrive.

## Invest in North Lanarkshire

To support and accelerate investment in North Lanarkshire, and the council's own investment programme, through a collaborative, streamlined, advisory service to help grow and sustain the local economy and communities. This programme will play a key role in facilitating employment opportunities and the associated infrastructure critical to supporting continued population growth and net inward migration.





## Sustainable Futures

To focus commitments to net zero carbon and climate resilience and the associated energy solutions and investments required to make it a reality. This programme will bring essential momentum to the council's commitment to achieve net zero by delivering an integrated approach to carbon reduction through more innovative energy generation and efficiency. This will be delivered along with a programme of climate adaptation, in partnership with local communities, to ensure local infrastructure and lifestyles are ready for the impacts already embedded due to climate change.

## Brighter Futures

To support and improve educational attainment, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship and volunteering, and prepare young people and the wider community for the future through specialised education, voluntary work and enterprise. This programme will give people the skills, knowledge and confidence to successfully transition to further education, training or employment. We will shape innovative employment pathways and maximise key industry growth sectors to boost economic growth, providing opportunities to develop real-world job skills that add value and pathways to specific industries. We will help to offer choice and inclusive access to jobs and training.

## Resilient People

To deliver whole family support locally, when families need it, in a way that addresses the impacts of poverty

and reduces inequality. This programme will provide an integrated approach, working with partners, to an earlier and more effective response to need. This includes promoting the strengths and skills of individuals and families increasing economic activity and providing practical and emotional support.

This will integrate family support with the town and community hubs to maximise opportunities for community-led and strengths-based approaches, and ensure families receive the right support when they ask for it and in their own community. This approach will break down referral pathways built around the needs of systems rather than people, which are at best confusing and at worst stigmatising.

## Digital North Lanarkshire

To develop a skilled digital workforce, promote an innovative, sustainable culture, and be the digital leader for North Lanarkshire. This programme will be a key enabler in delivering the other programme of work priorities and driving economic growth, as well as transforming the education and abilities of learners of all ages.

## One Service

To ensure services are delivered, regardless of owner, in a streamlined, efficient and supportive model. This programme will be a key enabler in delivering the other programme of work priorities and ensuring the council delivers services (regardless of structures of the alignment of functions) in line with the overall vision of growth and prosperity for all.

# Internal communication

We recognise that most of the council's staff not only work for the council but are also residents of North Lanarkshire.

We want our staff to be ambassadors for the services we provide, and we commit to keeping them informed about issues that affect them directly as well as telling them about the council's ambition, policies, the Plan for North Lanarkshire and the Programme of Work.

As part of our work, we will celebrate our employees' successes and achievements in a way which best represents the services of the council.



## Seldom-heard voices

We recognise that some people and groups of people are at risk of their voices being seldom-heard by public bodies. It is essential that we target appropriate engagement activities for these groups.

Groups of people can be seldom-heard due to, for example:

- disability
- ethnicity
- sexuality
- difficulty with communication
- mental health problems
- homelessness
- geographical isolation
- experience of living in poverty
- being offenders or ex-offenders
- being victims of domestic abuse
- being part of the traveller community

This list is not exhaustive. It is important to understand that, while some people and sectors could be characterised as seldom-heard, it is not necessarily true for everyone in a broader group. Consideration always needs to be given to characteristics within a group for each piece of engagement.

We will always ensure that our engagement work considers the particular needs of people who are at risk of be seldom-hard, for example by considering where and when we engage, what methods are most appropriate, and what additional support may be required.



## Measuring success

We will measure all communications and engagement activity to ensure alignment with the Programme of Work and to demonstrate positive outcomes.

For corporate communications, we will report annually in June to the Policy and Strategy Committee about our work and its outcomes and impacts, linking this to both our key themes and to the Programme of Work.

For community partnership and engagement, we will report annually in June to the Communities Committee about the number of individuals and community organisations participating in the delivery of the local outcome improvement plans.

We will measure the engagement we have with equalities groups and those whose voices are at risk of being seldom-heard, and levels of participation in community events and local activities. We will report on the outcomes of activity aimed at community use of council assets and the number of groups being supported to increase resilience in communities.

While many of these areas will be routinely reported to committee, we will incorporate all of these in an annual report to demonstrate the progress we make.





**This document can be made available in a range of languages and formats, including large print, braille, audio, electronic and accessible formats.**

To make a request, please contact Corporate Communications at: [corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk)

'S urrainn dhuinn an sgrìobhaidh seo a chur ann an diofar chànanan agus chruthan, a' gabhail a-steach clò mòr, braille, cruth claisneachd agus cruthan dealanach agus ruigsinneach.

Gus iarrtas a dhèanamh, cuir fios gu Conaltradh Corporra aig: [corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk)

Niniejszy dokument można otrzymać w wielu różnych językach i formatach, w tym również dużym drukiem, alfabetem Braille'a, w wersji dźwiękowej, elektronicznej i w innych dostępnych formatach.

Prośby należy składać na ręce zespołu ds. komunikacji drogą elektroniczną na adres: [corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk)

此文件可以多种不同语言和格式提供,包括大字体、点字、音频、电子和易读格式。

如想提出请求,请联系企业传讯部: [corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk)

اس دستاویز کو مختلف زبانوں اور صورتوں بشمول بڑے حروف، بریل، آڈیو، ایکٹرائٹ اور قابل رسائی صورتوں میں فراہم کیا جاسکتا ہے۔  
[corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:corporatecommunications@northlan.gov.uk) پر رابطہ فرمائیں۔

Produced by

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL**

Corporate Communications

Chief Executive's Office

Civic Centre

Windmillhill Street

Motherwell ML1 1AB

t. 01698 302141

e. [marketing@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:marketing@northlan.gov.uk)

**NORTHLANARKSHIRE.GOV.UK**

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE**  
We invest in people Silver

**disability**  
**confident**  
LEADER

CC\_2024\_00092