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North Northamptonshire Shadow Executive Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held at 7:00 pm on Thursday 23rd July 2020
Held as a virtual meeting via Zoom

Present: -

Shadow Members

Councillor R Roberts (Leader of the Shadow Authority and Chair)	Councillor M Griffiths (Deputy Leader of the Shadow Authority and Vice Chair)
Councillor I Jelley	Councillor T Beattie
Councillor T Partridge-Underwood	Councillor S North
Councillor J Smithers	Councillor W Brackenbury
Councillor D Jenney	Councillor J Addison

Officers

L Elliott – Interim Head of Paid Service	B Gill – Interim Monitoring Officer
G Hammons – Interim Chief Finance Officer	P Helsby- Future Northants Programme Director
B Smith – North Northamptonshire Democratic Services	F McHugo- North Northamptonshire Democratic Services
P Goult – North Northamptonshire Democratic Services	L Spolton- Future Northants Communications & Engagement Enabler
K Turner- East Northamptonshire Council	

Also in attendance

Councillor C Stanbra
Councillor R Reichhold

1 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

2 Minutes of the meeting held

The draft minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 25th June 2020 had been circulated.

Councillor W Brackenbury MOVED and Councillor I Jelley SECONDED that the minutes be approved as a correct record. The recommendation having been MOVED and SECONDED was put to a vote.

RESOLVED that –

- (i) The minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 25th June 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 Notifications of request to address the meeting

Two requests to address the meeting had been received. One request had been received by Councillor Rupert Reichhold who asked -

“Could the Shadow Executive agree that the numbers & information officers are assembling in preparation for draft Budgets for 2021-22 about community organisations funded by all 8 Councils should include the Councils' advice on the value of the organisations to the community?”

In response Councillor Roberts informed Councillor Reichhold that advice would be consolidated and considered as part of the preparations for the draft budget for North Northamptonshire Council for 2021/22.

The Chair invited Councillor Reichhold to ask a supplementary question. Councillor Reichhold asked the Chair to confirm that once the draft budget was prepared it would be circulated for public consultation. The Chair confirmed that the draft budget would be subject to full public consultation.

Another request had been received under the approved Public Participation Procedure to address the Shadow Executive Committee. Under Agenda Item 6 and 7, Councillor Chris Stanbra had requested to speak.

Councillor Reichhold left the meeting at that point.

4 Members' Declaration of Interest

Councillors were invited to declare any matters of interest on items to be discussed during the meeting. No declarations were made.

5 Announcements

There were no announcements.

6 Programme Directors' Update

The Chair received the request to speak on item 6 and Councillor Stanbra was welcomed to the meeting.

Councillor Stanbra stressed the importance of ensuring that both trade unions and staff were fully engaged in the LGR Programme. Councillor Stanbra was concerned that the Change Champions recruitment was low in some areas and was concerned that this may indicate that staff did not feel fully engaged and valued.

Councillor Stanbra further enquired as to under the Adult Services Review of Target Operating Model section of the budget report in Appendix B1, whether the fees of Newton Europe were fully reflected. Councillor Stanbra sought clarification of where the consultant's fees featured in that particular item.

Councillor Stanbra left the meeting at that point.

Mr Paul Helsby introduced the report. The purpose of the report was to appraise the members of the progress being made to create North Northamptonshire Council.

A presentation detailing the progress made to date on the implementation of the Future Northants Programme was introduced by Mr Helsby. The presentation included details of the Programme Delivery RAG Status, change readiness and change champion recruitment, communication and engagement, progress on draft blueprint development, development of the portfolio structure and a finance monitoring report.

In relation to the Programme Delivery Mobilisation Plan, it was noted that all activities on the Plan were GREEN status except the ICT Plan which remained AMBER. Mr Helsby noted that the ICT Plan would be picked up by the Programme Report going forward, and that additional resources had been provided. Mr Helsby was confident that a GREEN status would be achieved.

Under the Programme Status Summary, four areas were showing as AMBER – Finance, Corporate, Children's and ICT; the remainder were all GREEN.

It was suggested that under the Corporate Programme, subject matter experts across the sovereign councils would be required to improve focus and resource capability. It was noted that the Children's Trust was on track to meet the go live date of 01/11/20 and measures were in place to ensure critical services are delivered and effective.

It was noted that the recruitment of Change Champions had been paused during the initial COVID-19 reaction phase and work is underway to fill gaps in representation across councils and service areas. Mr Helsby offered to discuss the Change Champions in more detail if requested. Mr Helsby also noted that portfolios had been set up and would offer members of the Shadow Executive Committee additional knowledge and experience of the key service areas.

Mr Glenn Hammons introduce the Budget Monitoring Report in the absence of Ms. A Statham. Mr Hammons noted that the report was for the current financial year and on track to be within budget. It was indicated that some favourable savings were being made and that these would be set aside to mitigate risks. Mr Hammons noted that extra attention was

being made to financial monitoring of the impacts of COVID-19. Mr Hammons highlighted the savings already achieved during the previous financial year alongside the current projection for 2020/2021.

Mr Hammons handed over to Mr Helsby. Mr Helsby responded to Councillor Stanbra's question and stated that the fees in relation to the consultancy support in Adult Services would be netted from the figures shown and no costs would incur if savings were not delivered. The Committee would receive a written response from Ms. Statham with more detail.

The Chair invited Shadow Executive Committee Members to comment on the presentation and report.

Councillor North sought clarification on whether the announced government loss of income top up of 75% had been included in the report figures. Mr Hammons confirmed that the report was based on information preceding the government announcements, and stated they would be included in the report to the next Shadow Executive Committee.

Councillor Smithers queried the deadline for ICT implementation with reference to the AMBER rating. Mr Helsby summarised components of the ICT Plan and explained the implementation as a live process. It was stated that management of the programme was in-house and reassurance is to be issued by mid-August.

Councillor Addison raised concerns over levels of trade union involvement and if this had been adequate. Councillor Beattie agreed the importance of trade union engagement and suggested lack of support for the move to unitary as a stumbling block to Change Champion recruitment. Mr Helsby noted a shift in uptake of engagement and had attended meetings with the Change Champions. Mr Helsby responded to the question of trade unions and stated that a series of meetings on specific programme elements had been in place before COVID-19 and that future involvement would be sought.

Councillor Griffiths expressed his thanks to all of the Task and Finish Groups for their excellent work, and the positive feedback received from the groups. Councillor Roberts agreed and commented that improving services was a universal aim.

Councillor Jelley queried the make-up of service area Change Champions and disparity between some services. Mr Helsby stated that recruits expressed areas of interest and it tended to relate to the function of their current role.

The recommendation having been **MOVED** by Councillor I Jelley and **SECONDED** by Councillor T Partridge-Underwood was put to an electronic vote. There were 10 votes FOR, 0 votes AGAINST and 0 ABSTENTIONS.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The completion of the mobilisation phase of the programme be noted and approved.
- (ii) The high level programme delivery status be noted
- (iii) The update on change readiness and change champion recruitment be noted.
- (iv) The communication and engagement update be noted.
- (v) The contents and progress on the development of the draft blueprint be noted.
- (vi) The development of a Portfolio Structure be noted.
- (vii) The finance monitoring report be noted and approved.

7 Shadow Authority Brand

Councillor Stanbra was readmitted to the meeting to ask his question on Item 7. Councillor Stanbra expressed concerns over future costs of substantive branding and suggested expenditure should be kept to a minimum.

Councillor Stanbra left the meeting at this point.

Councillor Addison presented the report as Chair of the North Communications and Engagement Task and Finish group.

The purpose of the report was to present the design for the North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority branding.

Councillor Addison noted the slight adaptation to the logos. Councillor W Brackenbury agreed with comments on keeping costs low and congratulated the group on their work.

The recommendations having been **MOVED** by Councillor I Jelley and **SECONDED** by Councillor T Beattie were put to an electronic vote. There were 10 votes FOR, 0 votes AGAINST and 0 ABSTENTIONS.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The interim brand for the North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority be approved.

8 Assets, Capital Schemes and Reserves Notification

Liz Elliot presented the report providing a brief background of the notification process outlined in Appendix C, and the timescales relating to the decision. As East Northamptonshire Council had needed to determine this matter ahead of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting, Councillor

Roberts had given support to the decision on behalf of the Shadow Authority.

The purpose of the report was for the Shadow Executive Committee to note the two proposals from East Northamptonshire Council for the transfer of £300k project funding and the draw-down of £195k of reserves.

Mr K Turner, on behalf of East Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and summarised the first proposal as a fund transfer from a dormant project to a new scheme. Mr Turner stated that the second proposal drew upon Business Rate Reserves to form part of an Economic Recovery Plan.

Councillor North referred to the Structural Changes Order and noted that the Shadow Executive had no right of veto regarding sovereign council spending. This was confirmed. It had been agreed that sovereign councils notify the Shadow Authority of significant new spend during 2020/21.

Councillor D Jenney commented that infrastructure and growth should be encouraged. Councillor Griffiths agreed and expressed that he was happy to support the report.

The recommendations having been MOVED by Councillor I Jelley and SECONDED by Councillor D Jenney were put to an electronic vote. There were 10 votes FOR, 0 votes AGAINST and 0 ABSTENTIONS.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The Leader of the Council's decision to endorse the two proposals from East Northamptonshire Council for the transfer of £300k project funding and the drawdown of £195k of reserves be noted.

9 Exempt Items

The Chair informed the meeting that there were no exempt items to be determined on this occasion.

10 Urgent Items

The Chair informed the meeting that there were no urgent items to be determined on this occasion.

11 Close of Meeting

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8:18 pm.