

## North Northamptonshire Shadow Executive Committee

At 7:00 pm on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Held as a virtual meeting via Zoom

### Present:-

#### Shadow Members

Councillor R Roberts (Leader of the Shadow Authority and Chair)

Councillor I Jelley

Councillor T Partridge-Underwood

Councillor T Beattie

Councillor D Jenney

Councillor M Griffiths (Deputy Leader of the Shadow Authority and Vice Chair)

Councillor J Addison

Councillor S North

Councillor J Smithers

Councillor W Brackenbury

#### Officers

G Soulsby – Interim Chief Executive

P Helsby – Programme Director

B Smith – North Northamptonshire Democratic Services

A Earnshaw – Deputy Chief Executive NCC

J Conway – Kettering BC

L Hyde – Kettering BC

C Hadley – Director NCC

M Hammonds – Interim Monitoring Officer

G Hammons – Interim Chief Finance Officer

P Goult – North Northamptonshire Democratic Services

K Jones – Future Northants

R Mathieson – Kettering BC

L Hogston – ENC

#### Also in attendance

Councillor C Stanbra

Mr S Esler

Mr J Padwick

Mr D Dell

### 1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

### 2. Notification of requests to address the meeting

The Chair informed the meeting that there were four speakers who had requested to address the meeting, Councillor Chris Stanbra (NCC), Mr S Esler, Mr J Padwick and Mr D Dell.

### 3. Members' Declarations of Interest

With regard to the agenda item on Parish Council Election Costs, it was noted that a number of Members also held positions on town or parish councils. Councillors Roberts, North, Jelley, Smithers and Jenney declared personal interests, with the Interim Monitoring Officer granting a general dispensation for them to participate.

#### **4. Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

The draft minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020 had been circulated.

Councillor I Jelley MOVED and Councillor W Brackenbury SECONDED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

#### **RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Under this item Councillors Roberts and Councillor Brackenbury wished it recorded that they should have declared an interest at the meeting in relation to the report on Pensions Administration Authority. They apologised to the meeting for this oversight.

#### **5. Programme Director's Update**

A copy of the Programme Director's Update report for September 2020 had been circulated to the Committee. The report provided details of progress made towards the creation of the new unitary council on Vesting Day.

The Committee received the monthly report from the Programme Director updating them on the progress being made towards the creation of the new North Northamptonshire Council.

The Programme Director wished it noted by the Shadow Executive Committee in relation to recent discussions with representatives of the trade unions. A written update resulting from those discussions would be provided to Members.

In relation to the Programme Status Summary, it was noted that the Finance programme was now indicating GREEN and this was welcomed. In relation to the Corporate Programme and the Adults Programme these were expected to indicate GREEN next month.

In relation to Change Management, the report indicated the recent actions undertaken. It was noted that currently there were 332 Champions identified across the eight sovereign councils. The Programme Director indicated that a gap analysis had identified service areas which required cover; discussions would be held with senior officers from the sovereign councils to try to generate further volunteers to fill these gaps.

In conclusion, the Programme Director updated the Committee on the implementation of the approved Communication and Engagement Strategy.

The Future Northants Finance Monitoring Report had also been circulated to the Committee. It was noted that the overall variance of £468k was an increase on the previous report by £229k. It was, however still expected that any savings not delivered in 2020/21 would be realised in later years. This variance mainly related to Adult and Children's Services, and was a timing issue; there was still confidence these savings would be delivered. There still remained considerable financial risks to the reported projected outturn position, which would

not be fully understood for some time dependent upon the recovery of the economy and any further outbreaks of Covid-19.

It was further noted, that of the total of £84.448m savings, £34.907m had already been delivered in 2019/20, and the Programme was on track to deliver £14.013m during 2020/21. This would leave £35.528m to be delivered post-Vesting Day.

Councillor Addison updated the Committee in relation to discussions at the Communications and Engagement Task and Finish Group. The Group had agreed to conduct a survey among sovereign council staff to measure the potential impact of Covid-19 and current working arrangements on their health and well-being. This was noted.

Councillor Griffiths wished to particularly congratulate the officers involved in the recent ICT workshop held for Members, which illustrated how customers and residents would be able to interact with the future council through IT. Councillor Griffiths hoped the key points arising from the workshop could be rolled-out to all Shadow Members for reference.

Councillor Beattie queried the slides on Change Champions, which showed there was some disparity given the number of champions coming from Kettering BC and those from other sovereign councils. The Programme Director confirmed they would look to see why Kettering BC staff seemed to have greater engagement, and whether any lessons could be learnt.

Councillor T Beattie MOVED and Councillor T Partridge-Underwood SECONDED the recommendations.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The high-level Programme Delivery Status be noted;
- (ii) The update on Change Readiness and Change Champion recruitment be noted;
- (iii) The Communication and Engagement update be noted; and
- (iv) The Finance Monitoring report be noted.

**6. Assets, Capital Schemes and Reserves Notifications**

**6a. GLaM Project (Kettering BC)**

The report before Committee provided details of developments in relation to the Kettering Borough Council's GLaM Project (Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Manor House Museum Project) and to request endorsement of the additional capital budget provision.

The Chair invited Mr J Padwick to address the Committee. Mr Padwick drew attention to the number of heritage assets in Kettering, welcomed the GLaM Project, and hoped these assets would be protected going forward into the unitary council.

*(On conclusion of his contribution, Mr Padwick was removed from the virtual meeting)*

Ms Mathieson introduced the report. It was noted that Kettering BC had already agreed the recommendations, and Kettering BC were awaiting the final confirmation of funding from SEMLEP.

Councillor Griffiths, a Board Member of SEMLEP, spoke in favour of the GLaM Project, and hoped that future projects would find funding in the future for other proposals across North Northamptonshire.

Councillor Jenney noted that external consultants had been appointed to see the project through to the construction phase; he queried whether this would include overseeing the construction or whether additional consultants and expenditure on additional fees would be required after Vesting Day. Ms Mathieson confirmed that the current consultants would see the project through to the construction phase, at which point it would be handed back to council officers to progress.

Councillor Jelley spoke in favour of the report, and wishing to see these public assets protected for the public in the future.

Councillor I Jelley MOVED and Councillor D Jenney SECONDED the recommendation.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee endorse the additional capital budgets of £3.740m as set out in Table 1 of the report in Appendix A, and note the significant external investment in the new authority area.

**6b. Scott Road and Albert Street Projects (Kettering BC)**

The report sought approval for the acceptance of tenders for the Scott Road and Albert Street new build schemes.

Mr J Conway introduced the report. The proposal was for the construction of 28 units across the two sites. Mr Conway explained the procurement procedure used. It was noted that the same contractor had been appointed for both schemes.

Mr Conway confirmed that a project team had been established, and any consultancy fees required included within the cost of the scheme.

Councillor Jenney sought clarification whether it was a “design and build” contract or a traditional building contract. Mr Conway confirmed it was a traditional building contract. The Council wished to retain a high-degree of control over design and specification, so a traditional building contract was to be used.

Councillor Addison fully supported the schemes, and hoped future schemes would be forthcoming.

Councillor J Addison MOVED and Councillor T Partridge-Underwood SECONDED the recommendation.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee endorse the following additional capital budgets as set out in Section 7 of the report in Appendix A:
  - £398,000 for the Scott Road Project; and

- £253,000 for the Albert Street Project.

## 7. Council Tax Support Scheme

The report before the Committee detailed the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme for North Northamptonshire following the conclusion of the work undertaken by the Council Tax Harmonisation Task and Finish Group. In addition, further details of the consultation requirements and proposed timeline were included within the report before Members.

The Chair invited Councillor Stanbra to address the Committee. Councillor Stanbra welcomed the proposal for an 8-week consultation period. There were some potential significant changes for some residents; a long consultation period would hopefully assist in maximising resident comment and submissions. Councillor Stanbra hoped there would be a clear explanation in any consultation materials as to why these particular changes were being proposed. Councillor Stanbra also wished the Committee to give thought as to the means by which the consultation would be communicated, particularly those currently benefiting from current schemes and those without access to IT provision.

In conclusion, Councillor Stanbra queried whether there was a legal obligation for any consultation material to include the other options considered. Councillor Stanbra understood there were some legal implications that needed to be taken into account, the Interim Monitoring Officer had been consulted, and Councillor Stanbra sought a copy of any final legal opinion taken into account in formulating the proposals.

*(On conclusion of his contribution, Councillor Stanbra was removed from the virtual meeting)*

Ms Hyde introduced the report, and outlined the process used by the Task and Finish Group in formulating the proposal before Members. Comparisons of existing sovereign council schemes, the likely demand of the scheme in the future, and consideration of the options available and their respective affordability. The Group were proposing that the scheme be cost neutral, and set at 25%. In addition, other adjustments were required to harmonise the scheme across North Northamptonshire and these were detailed in the report.

Ms Hyde drew Members attention to the consultation process to be undertaken. Ms Hyde confirmed that accompanying the consultation paper, would be an explanatory document and a set of FAQs. Ms Hyde stressed that the Shadow Executive Scheme were not being requested to approve the scheme at this time, but to agree that the proposals be issued for consultation over an 8-week period.

Councillor Beattie recognised this was a sensitive issue, even given the variances in current sovereign council schemes. Councillor Beattie welcomed the 8-week consultation period, and hoped that as many residents would engage with the consultation as possible.

Councillor Jelley also welcomed the 8-week consultation period. Councillor Jelley noted that under current legislation, the new unitary council should have a harmonised scheme in place from Year 1, however discussions were ongoing with the MHCLG that given the variances that currently existed whether the scheme could be introduced over a longer period of time.

Councillor Jenney thanked officers and Members on the Task and Finish Group for the significant amount of work that had been undertaken. Councillor Jenney recognised that this

was a difficult situation to address, all options were considered, but a proposal had been agreed for consultation.

Councillor I Jelley MOVED and Councillor D Jenney SECONDED the recommendation.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) An 8-week consultation on a new Council Tax Support Scheme for 2020/21 on the elements included in the report which can be summarised as:
  - The LCTSS scheme headline rate at 25%; and
  - The alignment of the scheme across North Northamptonshire as outlined in paragraph 5.3.2.

**8. Talking a Community Development Approach to Addressing Health Inequalities**

The Committee received a briefing in relation to plans for a community development approach to addressing health inequalities across Northamptonshire. The Deputy Chief Executive NCC introduced the report.

The report before Members noted that NCC Cabinet had given approval to commission in a new community-based offer to address health inequalities, starting in April 2021, replacing the existing Social Wellbeing contract, but at a lower total contract value in response to reprioritisation of the public health budget.

The contract would have an extended reach to vulnerable groups most at risk of health inequalities and would focus on interventions that would have a positive impact on wider health and wellbeing.

The report circulated provided more detail to Members on the background to the issue, and the procurement process underway.

Councillor North noted that it was a NCC decision, with consequences for the new unitary council. Councillor North sought clarification as to why a commissioning approach was to be continued, and the services not brought back in-house. Councillor North noted that there were variances in requirements across the county, and he queried how North Northamptonshire could ensure that it achieved the outcomes it required, and those matters of priority in the unitary area were addressed.

The Deputy Chief Executive NCC explained that the continuing role of voluntary and community groups would be of importance, to ensure that local demands could be identified and met. The role of the proposed Community Hubs was also stressed. It was explained that there was some dovetailing with health provision. North Northamptonshire was split into two areas Corby/Kettering and Wellingborough/East Northamptonshire. This would assist in identifying priority local issues, and outcomes more clearly measured.

Councillor Griffiths welcomed the report and the approach being proposed. Councillor Griffiths was keen to ensure that the good work undertaken by sovereign councils continued, and inequalities continued to be addressed.

Councillor S North MOVED and Councillor M Griffiths SECONDED the recommendations.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee endorsed going out to tender for a new contract to address health inequalities;
- (ii) It be noted that engagement is taking place from 1<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020, and that this feedback will be used to update Northamptonshire County Council's Cabinet and to develop the service specification; and
- (iii) It be noted that once Northamptonshire County Council's Cabinet approval is obtained, the procurement for this new service will launch in November 2020 and the new service will start on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

**9. North Northamptonshire Unitary Council Detailed Blueprint**

The report before Members set out further information on the proposed future design of North Northamptonshire Unitary Council, in the form of a detailed Blueprint which gave insight into how functions and services would work, together with any changes that may be made.

The Chair invited Mr Esler to address the Committee. Mr Esler raised the issue of climate change, and concerns that this matter was still not fully addressed in the Blueprint. Mr Esler suggested that a dedicated Climate Board be established within the new structures, this would demonstrate the seriousness of the situation and the resolve of the new council to address the Climate Emergency. There were many groups locally that would be willing to assist. North Northamptonshire could become a benchmark organisation in this field.

The Chair invited Mr Padwick to address the Committee. Mr Padwick felt that the Shadow Authority should ensure addressing the Climate Emergency was integrated into the Blueprint, and that the new council see this as shaping their future policies and decisions.

The Chair invited Mr Dell to address the Committee. Mr Dell felt that addressing climate change should be at the forefront of any decisions made by the new council. Mr Dell felt that the positive work and initiatives currently underway by sovereign councils be fully integrated into future plans for the new council, and its policy making. A formation of a climate change board, with contributions from external bodies, would assist in prioritising this issue. Education and information should be disseminated to Members and the public highlighting the importance of this issue. Mr Dell also expressed disappointment that he was unable to participate in the motion later on the agenda regarding climate change, and felt that public participation should have been permitted.

The Chair thanked all the public speakers for their participation.

*(On conclusion of their contributions, the public speakers were removed from the virtual meeting)*

The Deputy Chief Executive NCC and the Programme Director introduced this report. The draft Blueprint circulated was developed from the high-level plan previously approved.

The detailed Blueprint had been produced in a consistent format with each service area Blueprint providing further detail on the source of the function, the scope of services included in the service Blueprint, the potential scope of services included in the service blueprint, and

any investment that had already been identified to support transformation or to support the safe disaggregation of NCC services into the two new unitary councils.

The detailed Blueprint also provided staff, trade unions and stakeholders more details about a number of “safe and legal” aspects of the services and their functions. It also included details of those services to be “hosted” or where a lead authority was to be appointed.

The report also included details about the transformation proposed, whilst conforming to the “safe and legal” approach. Officers stressed that the Blueprint was not a policy document, but laid the foundations for the new unitary. Officers confirmed that currently the project was within the approved budget.

The Programme Director provided Members with a summary of recent discussions with trade union representatives, particularly questions raised around the rationale around the concept of “hosting” and lead authority proposals.

Councillor North welcomed the report, that the new unitary would commence on a “safe and legal” position, but still have achieved some transformation of services. Councillor North stated that the Blueprint was not a structure chart, and there was still an opportunity to influence and improve the development of the new unitary.

Councillor North raised concern regarding the accuracy of the version of the Blueprint under discussion. Officers confirmed that some inaccuracies had appeared in the version under discussion, these would be corrected. The original high-level Blueprint was correct. Change control measures were to be strengthened, to ensure Members had greater confidence in the accuracy of the version under discussion.

Councillor Griffiths queried as to the number of services to be disaggregated by Day 1 of the new unitary council. Officers confirmed that 85% of services would be disaggregated between North and West. Councillor Griffiths welcomed the document, which was a blueprint, a foundation document.

Councillor Jenney also raised concerns about the inaccuracies in the document under discussion. Councillor Jenney requested that a corrected version be distributed to all Shadow Members as soon as possible.

Councillor Beattie queried why the trade unions were raising some of the issues at this stage, which he felt may have previously been explained. Councillor Beattie felt that this raised questions regarding the level of engagement to this point. Councillor Beattie suggested that details of these discussions be circulated to Committee members outside of the meeting.

Councillor Smithers broadly welcomed the document, and acknowledged the difficulties that Covid-19, Children’s Trust, NCC finances. Councillor Smithers felt that it was credit to all involved to have reached this point.

Councillor Smithers sought further clarification as to how easily it would be in the future for North Northamptonshire to exit any shared agreements, and exiting would not be cost-prohibitive or be barred by IT issues for example. Councillor Smithers noted that it was a “living document”, represented a good start, was “safe and legal”, and included some transformation of services.

Councillor Roberts suggested that the Shadow Executive Committee approve the Blueprint, whilst recognising that it was a “living document”, and proposed an additional recommendation for consideration. Councillor Roberts suggested that the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to go through the document, in whatever detail they wished, and to bring back to the Shadow Executive Committee any ideas they may have as to how it may be improved and developed. Councillor Roberts was keen to engage as many Members as possible.

Officers informed Members that it was their intention to reformat the document into a tabulated form, to aid with version control and assist Members in understanding references. Officers also confirmed that the discussions with the trade unions could be summarised, and distributed to Members for information.

The Programme Director in relation to ICT, confirmed that whilst there was proposed to be a lead authority, two IT infrastructures were being developed. The Programme Director would contact Councillor Smithers outside of the meeting to discuss in more detail.

Councillor Brackenbury welcomed the suggestion for the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the document in more detail, and feedback suggestions for improvement.

Councillor Griffiths supported the suggestion for as many Shadow Members to express views and suggestions on the Blueprint as possible, but they needed to be mindful of the time constraints faced by the Shadow Authority in ensuring that arrangements were in place for Vesting Day.

Councillor Beattie supported the suggested additional recommendation, and reference to the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor J Smithers MOVED and Councillor T Partridge-Underwood SECONDED the recommendations.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The content of the detailed Blueprint which sets out more detail of how services will operate and the design principles that will underpin their future operation and service to stakeholders;
- (ii) The key elements of service functions that we plan to transform and improve in the functions and services (the “plus”) be noted;
- (iii) The key activities that will be undertaken in each area during the first year of the new Council be noted;
- (iv) The high-level feedback from the initial detailed Blueprint briefings with staff, unions and Members be noted;
- (v) The detailed Blueprint be adopted, as the basis of the Day 1 functional design, subject to the identification of any further agreed opportunities to transform and improve service areas during the remaining months leading up to Vesting Day on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021; and
- (vi) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider the Blueprint, and identify further opportunities to transform and improve services during the remaining months up until Vesting Day.

## **10. Adult Safeguarding Board**

The Shadow Executive Committee received a report detailing an overview of the obligations for the two new unitary councils to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board under the Care Act 2014, and to seek a formal decision about how the two new unitary councils wish to fulfil their obligations.

The recommendation was to establish one single Safeguarding Adults Board which would encompass both North and West Northamptonshire councils. This would ensure that there was a clear and single line of accountability with partners and providers, and to have one independent Chair to provide leadership and direction for the single Board.

The recommendation included the creation of one system wide Chief Officer post to support the Board and provide professional advice and guidance to the DASS in each local authority. This would help to create consistency and best practise sharing and shared learning. Funding for the post would include contributions from all key partners.

The system wide Chief Officer role would work directly for and to the Board holding all partners to account, whilst providing ongoing support, advice and guidance. Due to the statutory nature of the Board, the system wide Chief Officer role would need to be employed by one of the unitary local authorities.

Councillor Griffiths welcomed the report and supported the recommendations.

Councillor M Griffiths MOVED and Councillor W Brackenbury SECONDED the recommendations.

### **RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee endorse the establishment of one single Safeguarding Adults Board which would encompass North and West Northamptonshire unitary authorities; and
- (ii) Endorse the creation of one system-wide Chief Officer post to support the Board and to provide professional advice and guidance to the DASS in each unitary authority.

## **11. Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership**

The report before Members provided recommendations for the future of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (NSCP), following consultation with partners and key stakeholders.

The report indicated that there was consensus amongst key partners and stakeholders that a single NSCP would provide the best opportunity to improve outcomes for children and young people in Northamptonshire. It was also suggested that locating the NSCP Business Office alongside the Joint Director of Children's Services, would help to ensure strong relationships and the effective operation of the Partnership for both unitary authorities.

Councillor Brackenbury welcomed the report and fully supported the recommendations.

Councillor W Brackenbury MOVED and Councillor M Griffiths SECONDED the recommendations.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee endorse continuing with a single Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (NSCP) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021; and
- (ii) Endorse a hosted model for the NSCP business support office, to be located with the Joint Director of Children's Services in North Northamptonshire Council.

**12. Parish Council Election Costs**

The Shadow Executive Committee considered a report in relation to the future treatment of election costs as they would apply to town and parish councils in the Kettering Borough area from Vesting Day.

The Chair invited Mr Padwick to address the Committee. Mr Padwick recognised the issues raised by the report, but sought assurance that any impact on town and parish precepts was minimised. The Chair thanked Mr Padwick for his contribution

*(On conclusion of his contribution, Mr Padwick was removed from the virtual meeting)*

The Committee noted that Kettering BC currently paid for election and by-election costs arising from elections held by town and parish councils within the Kettering Borough area. It was noted that in the rest of North Northamptonshire, town and parish councils were expected to cover the cost of their respective elections in full, or in the event of a combined election in part.

Councillor T Beattie MOVED and Councillor S North SECONDED the recommendation.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee advises the town and parish councils in Kettering Borough that they should precept for the possibility of election costs arising in May 2021, and that future by-election costs will also be borne by them where these are triggered after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

**13. Referral of Motions for the Shadow Authority Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**13a. Climate Change**

The Shadow Authority meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020, had received a motion relating to climate change, moved by Councillor Andrew Dutton, seconded by Councillor Chris Stanbra. The motion had been referred by the Shadow Authority to the Shadow Executive Committee for determination. The motion read:-

*This Shadow Authority notes that many councils across the country have agreed there is a climate emergency and commends the work that has already been undertaken locally to deal with that emergency.*

*This Shadow Authority believes that as the shadow successor authority, we should treat this issue with the seriousness it deserves and which the public rightly expects.*

*This Shadow Authority calls upon the Shadow Executive to set up a task and finish climate emergency group to advise on the way forward.*

*When set up this Shadow Authority calls on this group to consider and make proposals on:*

- 1. How best to draw on the knowledge, expertise and commitment of climate emergency groups;*
- 2. How to engage all partners in this issue;*
- 3. How to put the climate emergency on everyone's agenda and in everyone's work plan; and*
- 4. How to ensure that this council's policies on the environment and the climate emergency are incorporated into its planning policies and implemented in the planning and development control decisions taken by the council after Vesting Day next year.*

The Chair invited Councillor Stanbra to address the Committee. Councillor Stanbra stated that it was important that the issues relating to Climate Change were considered in the future planning of the unitary council's policies and strategies. Councillor Stanbra suggested that this could be achieved by the establishment of a working group to provide advice and guidance on future unitary council policy development.

*(On conclusion of his contribution, Councillor Stanbra was removed from the virtual meeting)*

Councillor Smithers agreed that climate change was an important issue, which required further consideration to ensure that future policies and strategies took the appropriate factors into account. To assist with this, Councillor Smithers suggested that the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to form a task and finish group, to start to develop an approach to ensure the future council incorporates climate change and sustainability issues at the heart of policy making.

Councillor Addison spoke supporting the motion, and felt that climate change needed to be at the heart of the policies of the future council.

Councillor J Smithers MOVED and Councillor I Jelley SECONDED the recommendation.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee resolved to invite the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish a task and finish group, to identify its membership and for it to work towards making recommendations to the Shadow Executive Committee, in time for a draft strategy to be ready for adoption by the new unitary council early in its life.

**13b. "Planning for the Future" (Government White Paper)**

The Shadow Authority meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020, had received a motion relating to the Government's recently published White Paper "Planning for the Future", moved by Councillor Chris Stanbra, seconded by Councillor Andrew Dutton. The motion had been referred by the Shadow Authority to the Shadow Executive Committee for determination. The motion read:-

*This Shadow Authority notes:*

1. *The publication by Government of the White Paper, "Planning for the Future" on 6 August 2020, which sets out proposals on reforms to the planning process for the future;*
2. *That the vast majority of planning applications are given the go ahead by local authority planning committees, with permission granted to around 9 out of 10 applications;*
3. *That research by the Local Government Association has said that there are existing planning permissions for more than one million homes that have not yet been started.*

*This Shadow Authority is concerned that the proposals seek to:*

1. *Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them;*
2. *Grant automatic rights for developers to build on land identified as "for growth"; and*
3. *Remove Section 106 payments for infrastructure and their replacement with a national levy.*

*This Shadow Authority further notes:*

1. *The Royal Institute for British Architects called the proposals "shameful and which will do almost nothing to guarantee delivery of affordable, well-designed and sustainable homes. RIBA also said that proposals could lead to the next generation of slum housing; and*
2. *The reforms are opposed by the all-party Local Government Association currently led by Conservative councillors.*

*This Shadow Authority believes:*

1. *That existing planning procedures through our sovereign councils allow for local democratic engagement over future development and give local people a say in planning proposals that affect them;*
2. *That proposals for automatic rights to build in "growth" areas, and increased permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities; and*
3. *That local communities must be in the driving seat on shaping the future of their communities, and local determination of the planning framework and planning applications play an important part in the process.*

*This Shadow Authority resolves to:*

1. *Take part in the consultation in the planning proposals, and to make representations against the proposals as outlined in this motion;*
2. *Write to and lobby all of our Members of Parliament, urging them to oppose these proposals and to circulate their replies to members; and*
3. *Publish its consultation response through the Future Northants webpages.*

The Chair invited Councillor Stanbra to address the Committee. Councillor Stanbra noted that the Joint Planning Unit (JPU) were to submit a response to the Government's consultation, and suggested that it may be appropriate for the Shadow Authority to do likewise.

*(On conclusion of his contribution, Councillor Stanbra was removed from the virtual meeting)*

Councillor North noted that sovereign councils were submitting responses to the White Paper, and that the JPU be requested to table a draft response for the Shadow Executive Committee to consider, ahead of submission to the Government on behalf of the Shadow Authority.

Councillor S North MOVED and Councillor D Jenney SECONDED the recommendation.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The Shadow Executive Committee resolved that the Joint Planning Unit be requested to compile a draft response on behalf of the Shadow Authority to the White Paper, for consideration and determination at the Shadow Executive Committee's next meeting.

**14. Exempt Item – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Councillor Roberts confirmed that an urgent exempt item had been received by consideration by the Shadow Executive Committee.

A motion to exclude the Press and Public was MOVED by Councillor North, and SECONDED by Councillor Partridge-Underwood.

**RESOLVED that:-**

The Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, "Website Supplier Award", in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, because exempt information may be disclosed.

**15. Urgent Item - Website Supplier Award**

The purpose of the report was to seek approval for the award of a contract to design and implement websites for the two new unitary councils. It was noted that Members had been engaged and involved throughout the process.

Councillor S North MOVED and Councillor I Jelley SECONDED the recommendation.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) Award the partnership approach to designing and building the websites for the two new unitary authorities to the highest scoring supplier.

**16. Close of Meeting**

Meeting closed at 9:11 pm.