

## North Northamptonshire Shadow Executive Committee

At 7:00 pm on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Held as a virtual meeting via Zoom

### Present:-

#### Shadow Members

Councillor R Roberts (Leader of the  
Shadow Authority and Chair)  
Councillor T Beattie  
Councillor D Jenney

Councillor M Griffiths  
Councillor S North  
Councillor J Smithers  
Councillor W Brackenbury

#### Officers

G Soulsby – Interim Chief Executive  
P Helsby – Programme Director  
L Hyde – Director of Transformation  
K Jones – Future Northants Programme  
B Smith – North Northamptonshire  
Democratic Services  
F McHugo - North Northamptonshire  
Democratic Services

M Hammond – Interim Monitoring Officer  
G Hammons – Interim Chief Finance Officer  
R Ellis- ICT and Customer & Digital  
Programme Lead  
A Longley- North Northamptonshire Joint  
Planning Unit  
J Conway- Kettering BC  
C Hohn- Kettering BC  
R Harris- Public Health, NCC

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor J Addison, Councillor I Jelley, Councillor T Partridge-Underwood.

### 2. Election of Deputy Leader

The Chair thanked Cllr Martin Griffiths for all his contributions as Deputy Leader to the North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority. It was stated that following the resignation and creation of a vacancy, in accordance with the Northamptonshire (Structural Changes) Order 2020, the Shadow Executive must elect a new deputy leader from among the members of the executive. One nomination had been received for Cllr J Smithers.

The nomination was MOVED by Cllr W Brackenbury and SECONDED by Cllr D Jenney.

Cllr J Smithers accepted the nomination and thanked the outgoing Deputy Leader for his contributions. Cllr Smithers commented that he looked forward to working with the Executive and the wider membership of the shadow authority going forward.

### RESOLVED that:-

- (i) Cllr J Smithers be duly appointed as the new Deputy Leader for North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority.

### **3. Notification of requests to address the meeting**

The Chair informed the meeting that no requests to address the meeting were received.

### **4. Members' Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were declared.

### **5. Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

The draft minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 had been circulated.

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

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

- (ii) The minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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

The Chair thanked Mr Helsby for his work on the programme and wished him well in his retirement.

A copy of the Programme Director's report and status summary for October 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.

In relation to the Programme Status Summary, it was noted that the Corporate, Children's and Adult's programmes were indicating as AMBER. The Children's Programme was on track to go live on 1 November and awaiting crucial sign-offs from government bodies. In relation to the Corporate Programme, it had not yet reached GREEN going into November. The new model for Adult's Services went live on 19 October and this is expected to move to GREEN for November.

The Programme Director updated the Committee on Level-Critical products. No items had been flagged as BLUE where implementation was missed. Business systems flagged as RED for potential GDPR concerns, progress on data sharing agreements was underway to mitigate this. Corporate areas such as staff transfer, contract transfer and lead and hosted agreements were flagged as YELLOW for an increased watch.

It was noted that the Communications & Engagement Programme would focus on the 100 days to vesting day, to broadly share information and provide reassurance.

The Future Northants Finance Monitoring Report had also been circulated to the Committee. Mr Hammons introduced the latest financial forecast for the Future Northants Programme and highlighted that the forecast £22.7 million was expected to meet budget target. The

forecasted benefit realisation of £14.5 million has seen a rough slippage of £400k and will reach £14.1million in benefit realisation by end of the financial year. Mr Hammons stated that the slippage had occurred due to reprofiling of the savings in the Adult's and Children's programmes as a result of the pandemic.

Since the last report there had been a £52k improvement in the variance. Ongoing risks to the outturn forecast for the year were identified to include the ongoing pandemic and speed of local economic recovery. The position would be kept under review.

Mr Hammons reminded members that £35 million of the target £80 million had already been delivered by the programme, with a further £14 million to be delivered during the current financial year. A further £35 million has been forecast to be delivered post Vesting Day, equalling a total of over £84 million in savings delivered by the Future Northants Programme.

Mr Hammons shared that the November report update would also provide members with an update on the financial position of all 5 sovereign councils.

Councillor M Griffiths MOVED and Councillor J Smithers 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.

**7. Customer Services Opening Hours**

Mr Ellis introduced the report. The report detailed a proposal to harmonise opening hours across the new authority. A 4 week consultation was carried out during July and August and was supplemented by evidence of logged call volumes. A clear 9am to 5pm preference was identified and concerns over the training hour would be mitigated through shared coverage.

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

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The North Northants Customer Services opening hours from vesting day to become 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

**8. Planning for the Future White Paper**

The report before the Committee detailed the fundamental reforms proposed by the White Paper and potential implications of such reforms passing into planning law.

Mr Longley introduced the report and thanked members for their time and input throughout a series of member briefings and seminars that had taken place through the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit. Proposals to digitalise the process were flagged as supported whilst Mr Longley drew attention to concerns which were set out in 5.11 of the report.

Mr Longley stated that his invitation to address the Parliamentary Select Committee would provide a further opportunity to present evidence addressing the concerns.

Councillor D Jenney expressed thanks to Mr Longley and his team on the response.

Cllr Beattie echoed the support and commended the response which was felt to be a good and accurate reflection of the views shared in seminars.

Cllr W Brackenbury gave her full support to the response and stated that the Planning White Paper would take away from democracy in planning.

Cllr M Griffiths also commended the report and commented that the NNJPU were active in achieving more than required for building and growth within the area. Cllr Griffiths suggested that support was needed to improve infrastructure to support development.

Cllr S North stressed the importance of issuing a strong and fair response and expressed concerns over local democracy and the infrastructure deficit.

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

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) The response to the Planning White Paper set out in Appendix A be agreed and submitted.

**9. North Northamptonshire Housing Allocations**

The report before Members outlined a draft housing allocation scheme for North Northamptonshire with the aim to achieve a common allocation scheme by April 2021. It provided a headline summary of the proposed scheme as well as further details on the proposed consultation and project timeline.

Mr Conway introduced the report and stated the legal requirement for local housing authorities to have a scheme in place for determining policies and procedures when allocating social housing. The aim for North Northamptonshire is to offer an integrated choice based lettings system from Day 1.

Councillor North welcomed the alignment and free movement across the new authority area. Councillor North highlighted 6.6.3 in relation to residency and was keen to ensure that border issues be addressed. Mr Conway stated that policy relating to family residence and employment would allow for consideration of cross border movement.

Cllr Beattie queried whether housing currently held by the two stockholding councils would be retained. Mr Conway replied that the report governs all social housing and no proposal was in place to change the status quo.

Councillor S North MOVED and Councillor J Smithers SECONDED the recommendations.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) A six-week consultation period for a new draft housing allocation scheme for North Northamptonshire which harmonises the four existing allocation schemes into one aligned and common scheme be approved
- (ii) The aim to launch a North Northamptonshire housing allocation scheme on vesting day, 1 April 2021, which will ensure that all residents of North Northamptonshire have the opportunity to access social housing be supported by the Shadow Executive.

## 10. Health & Wellbeing Board

The report before Members set out before members proposed the establishment of two HWBB one for North Northamptonshire and another for West Northamptonshire.

Ms Harris introduced the report and stated the legal requirement for each upper tier authority to establish a HWBB. Ms Harris highlighted the benefits individual boards would have on the differing needs of the areas and integrated care partnerships. Ms Harris commented that the community and place based approach would fulfil the statutory duty of promoting integration in health, social care and the wider remits of health. Ms Harris also commented that working within the local geography would increase opportunities for greater integration with the Better Care Fund and Disabled Facilities Grants.

Councillor Griffiths expressed his support for the report and the delivery of priorities to benefit the local communities.

Councillor M Griffiths MOVED and Councillor T Beattie SECONDED the recommendations.

### **RESOLVED that:-**

The Shadow Executive:

- (i) Endorsed the establishment of a HWBB to serve North Northamptonshire (noting a similar arrangement for West Northamptonshire) ensuring each new unitary authority can deliver against the statutory duties charged to HWBBs with a place based focus.

## 11. Covid-19 Response Operating Model

The Shadow Executive Committee received a report proposing an amendment to the blueprint, to retain public health and emergency planning services on a county wide basis for the first year of each unitary. This was sought to prioritise the response to Covid-19 and allow for an effective response to any second wave of infection during the winter period. The proposal would ensure a safe and legal service is delivered for 1 April 2021.

Ms Harris introduced the report and outlined the Blueprint structure for disaggregated Public Health and Emergency Planning Services. Ms Harris commented that the risk of disaggregation could splinter the response and make the response more fragile. Ms Harris highlighted the opportunity for the two new authorities to learn from the changes and transformation occurring in the Public Health system.

Councillor W Brackenbury offered her support for the recommendations.

Councillor D Jenney sought clarification over concerns as to whether a combined response could have implications for mass lockdown measures across the county. Ms Harris outlined how the shared service could offer a flexible response in deployment of resources. Ms Harris explained that levels would be monitored on a Unitary or more local level.

T Grant explained the difficulties with predicting the transmission and changing thresholds. T Grant expressed concerns over travel between high and low tier areas. T Grant stated that there is a collective view of the pandemic county wide and decisions would be made collectively with local MPs and council leaders.

Mr G Soulsby directed the debate to consider the purpose of the report in considering the operational structure for the upcoming year.

Councillor Griffiths addressed the confusion over the report title and supported the proposal for the amendment to the Blueprint to mitigate associated risks of disaggregation during a pandemic.

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

**RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) That a hosted model for Public Health and Emergency Planning services for a one-year period be adopted.
- (ii) A wider review of service disaggregation and resource requirements to take place during 2021/22 be agreed.

**12. Exempt Items.**

There were no exempt items.

**13. Urgent Items.**

There were no urgent items.

**14. Close of Meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:07 pm.