

North Northamptonshire Shadow Executive Committee

At 7:00 pm on Thursday 4th March 2021

Held as a virtual meeting via Zoom

Present: -

Shadow Members

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

Councillor S North

Councillor I Jelley

Councillor M Griffiths

Councillor D Jenney

Councillor J Smithers (Deputy Leader of the Shadow Authority)

Councillor W Brackenbury

Councillor T Beattie

Officers

R Bridge – Chief Executive

A Wylie – Monitoring Officer

G Candler – Executive Director Place & Economy

R Mathieson – Head of Commercial & Economic Development, KBC

J Waterworth – Acting Head of Paid Service, CBC

F McHugo – North Northamptonshire Democratic Services

J Gotts – Executive Director Finance

D Watts – Director of Adult Services

K Purnell – Assistant Director Corporate & Community Services, NCC

M Hammond – Executive Director, KBC

B Smith – North Northamptonshire Democratic Services

Also in attendance – Councillor Helen Harrison (for item 5).

The Chair welcomed members and the viewing public to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor J Addison and Councillor T Partridge - Underwood.

2. **Notifications of requests to address the meeting**

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

3. **Members' Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2021

It was noted that the draft minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 10th February 2021 had been circulated.

Councillor W Brackenbury MOVED, and Councillor T Beattie SECONDED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

It was RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The minutes of the Shadow Executive Committee meeting held on 10th February 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. Blueprint Task & Finish Group Update

Councillor H Harrison, Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Blueprint Task & Finish Group presented the report.

The report before members set out that the Blueprint Task and Finish Group had been established, to give members insight and assurance that the blueprint agreed by the Shadow Executive was realistic, was being implemented effectively, and to make any proposals it saw fit to recommend changes to any part of the blueprint or any aspect of the implementation stage.

Councillor Harrison outlined the Terms of Reference and highlighted the 3 chosen areas of focus;

- Housing standards in the public and private sector
- Waste collection and disposal - harmonisation and integration
- Public health and how it is enabled to influence all aspects of the work of the new council

The focus areas had been selected as members of the group had felt they would affect the greater majority of the population in North Northamptonshire and would be amongst the first to raise public concerns should transition not go well.

Councillor Harrison summarised key comments on behalf of the Task & Finish Group and highlighted the key theme of collaboration across council services being vital to success.

Integration across the council service areas was felt to be vital in driving up housing standards and a concern was raised over how to address the increased demand and backlog of DFG grants. It was noted that the DFG allowed the council to provide adaptations for residents that ensure they are kept safe, well and living independently for longer.

It was recognised that a significant amount of harmonisation across the waste collection & disposal service had been completed and strong and clear communication would be needed to ensure a seamless transition across to the new council service.

It was highlighted that members recognised the opportunity for strategic planning going forward and the potential development of collections contracts and waste disposal infrastructure.

Members of the Scrutiny Task & Finish Group had felt that Health & Wellbeing should be built into all strategy and policy from the start to ensure collaborative and seamless working across the council. Community Hubs and relationships with the voluntary sector were widely recognised as a valuable partner in delivering services and bringing them closer to residents.

High parking charges were used as an example of barriers to mental and physical health, that could be addressed through decision making, particularly for residents with low incomes.

Councillor S. North suggested that members should be mindful of the wait times for outside professionals such as Occupational Therapists and contractors when discussing the backlog of DFG applications but noted these are key areas to address moving forward.

Councillor D Jenney reasoned that standards in housing are a result of multiple local and national policies. It was noted that the Joint Planning Unit had been working with government to enhance standards and that there is a proud record of enhancing standards locally. Members looked forward to progressing this further.

Councillor North commented that capacity for waste disposal should be addressed through future decision making and allow for neighbouring agreements and solo ventures with commercial interest to be considered.

Councillor J Smithers thanked the Task & finish group for their provision of detailed information and highlighted housing energy, efficiency and design as needing attention early on in the new authority.

Councillor I Jelley commented that the increase in recyclates, which peaked at a 30% increase should be considered by the service and supported Councillor North's comments on assessing the future direction of the service under the new council.

Members were in favour of the suggestion for the assessment of supported parking charges and felt this could be a step towards decisions improving public health across the new council.

Councillor R Roberts echoed members support for collaboration across services and noted that the culture change for the new council would bring everyone together.

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

It was RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The Executive Committee consider its response to the conclusions made by the Task and Finish Group and the report be noted.

6. Kettering Leisure Services Contract

M Hammons, Executive Director at Kettering Borough Council, introduced the report. The report before members set out that the existing contract for leisure services in Kettering Borough would end in April 2022 and could not be extended again. Members were advised that a short contract procurement for up to five years would bring the end date for the Kettering contract into line with the contracts for Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire areas. A contract would be put out to tender until 2028 to tie in with these existing contracts. An alignment would allow the new Council to take an authority wide view of its future leisure provision over the longer term and start planning for future whole council contracts. Members were advised that the new contract would need to include investment for an all-weather pitch to ensure the facility would remain fit for purpose.

Councillor S North expressed a keenness for member involvement going forward where contracts were of significance. Councillor D Jenney also supported the request for wider member involvement.

R Bridge, Chief Executive of North Northamptonshire Council, assured members that there would be a process for member involvement and portfolio member engagement across the new council and a decision on the process would be made.

Councillors M Griffiths and D Jenney asked officers to clarify the materials to be used for the 3G pitch refurbishment and sought assurance it would be fit for purpose for the sports to be played.

Councillor I Jelley commented on the intense use of the facility over the past 8 years and suggested that the refurbishment would need to be a substantial replacement to be fit for purpose.

Councillor M Griffiths MOVED and Councillor I Jelley SECONDED the recommendations.

It was RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The re-procurement of the leisure services contract for Kettering Borough's existing leisure facilities, such contract to run from 2022 to 2028 be approved.

(Reason for Decision – To allow a short contract for up to five years to be procured from the April 22 expiry date and bring the end date for this contract into line with the contracts for Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire areas. This alignment will allow the new Council to take an authority wide view of its future leisure provision).

7. Motion to exclude the press and public.

The Chair confirmed that one item of exempt business was to be considered and proposed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during consideration of item 8, 'Assets, Capital Schemes Notification Process – Land off Rothwell Road, South Desborough'.

Councillor J Smithers MOVED and Councillor W Brackenbury SECONDED the proposal.

It was RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, 'Assets, Capital Schemes and Reserves Notification', in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, because exempt information may be disclosed

8. Assets, Capital Schemes Notification Process – Land off Rothwell Road, South Desborough'

As part of the Assets, Capital Schemes & Reserves Notification procedure rules, the report which had been circulated, asked members to consider the notification. The report was not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government 1972.

J Gotts, Executive Director for Finance, introduced the report and directed members to the outlined decisions made by KBC at its meeting held 13 January. Head of Commercial & Economic Development, KBC, outlined the background to the report and progress made. Members received clarifications over figures outline in the report and were assured that mitigation measures and Flood Risk Assessments would be considered as part of the planning process.

Councillor J Smithers MOVED and Councillor T Beattie SECONDED the recommendations.

It was RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The decisions made by Kettering Borough Council at its meeting held on 13th January 2021 regarding Land off Rothwell Road, South Desborough be noted and endorsed.
- (ii) The increased revised purchase offer be noted

(Reason for Decision:- Consistency with the Assets, Capital Schemes and Reserves Notification process.)

9. Urgent Items

The Chair confirmed there were no urgent items for consideration.

10. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 7:55 pm