

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Issued: 12th July 2023

The following decisions in this notice were made by the Executive on Wednesday 12th July 2023.

Any decisions identified below as a **KEY DECISION** will come into force and may be implemented on Thursday 20th July 2023, unless the decision is subject to call-in, in accordance with section 18 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules within North Northamptonshire Council's Constitution.

Requests for Call-In

A request for call-in shall only be considered to be valid if signed by at least 8 members of the Council (10% of the total number of members) who are not members of the Executive. One of the requestors must identify themselves as the originator of the request and the request must specify the nature of the grounds relied upon. A call-in request must be in the form of a written notice submitted to the Monitoring Officer and received before the published deadline. Either one notice containing all required signatures or up to 8 separate e-mails (as appropriate) will be acceptable.

The notice must set out:-

- (a) the resolution or resolutions that the member(s) wish to call in;
- (b) the reasons why they wish the relevant Scrutiny committee to consider referring it back to the Executive, with particular reference to the principles of decision making set out elsewhere within this Constitution; and
- (c) the alternative course of action or recommendations that they wish to propose.

Agenda Item No	Subject	Decision
----------------	---------	----------

Part A – Items considered in public

Item 5	Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 2 - May 2023)	RESOLVED That the Executive: a) Noted the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 2 (May) 2023/24, set out in the appendix to this report.
--------	--	--

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>Reason for Recommendations – to better understand the Council’s performance as measured by Key Performance Indicators as at Period 2 (May) 2023/24.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: Reporting performance data on a less frequent basis is an option but monthly reporting is considered useful at this stage of the Council’s existence, reporting alongside budget information</p>
Item 6	Home to School Transport - Policy Revisions for Statutory School Age Pupils 2024/25	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Updated the format and wording of the policy to make it easier to understand. ii) Retained the discretionary service provision for all age groups subject to the following changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The guaranteed discretionary seat for early applicants to be withdrawn from all <i>new</i> applications for transport for September 2024 onwards. In doing so, discretionary seats will only be available on a first-come-first-served basis if there is spare capacity on

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p align="center">transport arranged for pupils eligible for free transport.</p> <p>b) From September 2024, increase the fare contribution to £760/seat/year to reduce the subsidy provided by the Council, funded from general taxation. This will apply to existing passengers as well as new applicants.</p> <p>iii) Reviewed the fare annually in line with the Council's fees and charge's structure.</p> <p>iv) Ceased to provide free transport to linked schools unless it is the nearest suitable school with places. This would only affect <i>new</i> applications from September 2024 onwards.</p> <p>v) Delegated authority for the approval of the final draft of the policy to the Executive Member of Highways, Travel and Assets in consultation with the Executive Director for Place and Economy.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Home to School Transport Budget was overspent by £4m in 2022/23. Although the budget has been increased for 2023/24, there are still pressures on the budget due to a combination of factors including inflation, changes in employment legislation (minimum wage and living wage regulations) and the increase in demand. There is a need to take action to control spend. • The current service is more than the statutory minimum required. The proposals and recommendations in this report focus on the few areas of the Council's

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>discretionary powers where any financial savings may be obtained from change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revisions to the Policy are part of a larger package of measures to control costs, including improved management data, and exploration of alternative ways to meet our statutory obligations. • The demand for transport (both entitled and discretionary and including Post 16) is in some geographical areas bordering on commercial service levels and there is therefore potential to work with operators and other stakeholders to move responsibility for provision of this service to the commercial market rather than relying on the Council. This would also benefit other residents in the same areas by providing an increased public service for other users. This is in line with the aims of the Corporate Plan to develop sustainable transport and improve accessibility across the North Northamptonshire. • The current service is subsidised by the Council, which is using funds provided from general taxation to benefit those families who are not eligible for free transport and who choose to use the Council’s home to school transport service. These families are not legally entitled to this service and yet the Council is providing a significant subsidy for their use of it. • Our current fare and provision of discretionary transport is undercutting the commercial market, which in turn may be inhibiting potential commercial growth. • The current fare for discretionary transport has not been reviewed or increased for 10 years. In that period costs for travel provision have increased substantially. If the discretionary fare had been increased by 3% year for the last ten years, it would be approximately £800. • Providing discretionary transport to pupils enables them to travel from home to school on shared transport rather than encouraging the use of cars and therefore where spare capacity exists, it is helpful to offer it for use. • The Government currently has a capped fare scheme in place with fares capped at £2 per journey. This would equate to £760 for a home and return journey for

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>the 190 days of school each year. An increase in fares to this level would therefore be bringing the fares back in line with current commercial fares, and would be a reasonable compromise between the need to off-set costs and the consultation response.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered –</p> <p>All options considered fall within the discretionary powers of the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make no changes to the policy. This would ensure no disruption to pupils and their families but would not address the Council’s financial position and continues with the significant subsidy towards the service, which is funded by general taxation. • Reduce entitlement to free transport to those between 5 and 16 (statutory school age) only i.e., withdraw entitlement for those under 5 who are attending school in reception class. This change would result in minimal savings for a disproportionately negative impact on those not yet of statutory school age and may discourage parents from starting their child at school until they are 5 years old. • Enforce the need to change schools for those changing address in year 11 (exam year) where a place is available at a nearer school rather than provide transport. This change is – expected to produce minimal savings and creates disruption to those in their exam year. • Impose increased statutory walking distance in the term following a pupil’s 8th birthday; this is expected to produce minimal savings for the Council. • Retain linked schools only where link is created by the Local Authority Admissions Board. Remove link where it is created by other Admissions Board

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>e.g., Academy, Foundation, etc. This would result in complex administration for the Council costing more in back-office resources or reducing the level of customer service provided to residents using the home to school service.</p>
Item 7	<p>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report 2021/22</p>	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive Advisory Panel received and noted the SACRE annual report for 2021-2022</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendation: To ensure that the following SACRE duties are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To publish an annual report of its work; ▪ To advise the local authority on the provision of training for teachers in RE; ▪ To consider complaints about the provision and delivery of religious education and collective worship referred to it by the local authority. <p>Alternative Options Considered: SACRE has a legal duty to publish an annual report. This report ensures that it complies with that duty and therefore to not present it is not considered to be an alternative option. No alternative options are therefore proposed</p>
Item 8	<p>Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model</p>	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p>

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>That the Executive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Agreed to work in partnership with West Northamptonshire Council to update and rebuild the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model b) Agreed to West Northamptonshire Council being the lead procuring authority c) Agreed £78,000 of existing model fee income towards the development of the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model, alongside the £400k already set aside by both councils. d) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets, in consultation with the Executive Director for Place & Economy, Executive Director for Finance and the Executive Member for Finance, to take any further decisions and/or actions required in connection with the procurement and award of the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model contract, without the need to return to the Executive e) Noted North Northamptonshire Council will retain ownership and ongoing management of its own independent version of the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model <p>Reason for Recommendations – Unlike the other options considered, the joint revalidation of the NSTM produces financial, time and resource efficiencies whilst allowing each authority to retain future exclusive use of the model. There is a fair distribution of the costs and maintain individual approaches to the ongoing use of the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model.</p>

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For one council to validate the model completely at its cost whilst the other pays for access. • For each council to construct separate models. • Not update the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model <p>None of these options are recommended.</p>
Item 9	North Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan Development Timetable	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive adopted the timetable for producing the North Northamptonshire’s Local Transport Plan as set out in Section 5.9.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations – The timetable provides flexibility in allowing for the preparation of baseline information ahead of the anticipated revised DfT guidance. The timetable proposed a series of engagement opportunities to support community ownership of the plan and its preparation.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p>

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake formal consultation only. • To pause preparation of the LTP until the Department for Transport release guidance. <p>Neither of these options are recommended because this would delay the start, and continuation of, the preparation of the LTP.</p>
Item 10	Budget Forecast Update 2023/24 - Period 2	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the Council's forecast outturn position for 2023/24 as summarised in Section 4, alongside the further analysis, risks and other considerations as set out in Section 5 to Section 7 of the report. b) Noted the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2023/24 savings proposals in Appendix A. c) Approved the inclusion of £482k from the Climate Reserve to support the development and operation of climate change projects and initiatives as set out in paragraph 5.49 of the report. d) Approved an increase in the gross budget of £4.931m to provide support for families and individuals in specific financial hardship to be funded from the Household Support Fund 4 grant of £4.931m as reported to Executive in April. See paragraph 5.69 of the report.

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2023/24 as at Period 2 and consider the impact on this year and future years’ budgets.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: The report focuses on the forecast revenue outturn against budget for 2023/24 and makes recommendations for the Executive to note the current budgetary position as such there are no specific choices within the report.</p>
Item 11	Capital Programme Update	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Approved the following changes into the capital programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. UK Shared Prosperity Fund - £190k in 2023/24 and £1,060k in 2024/25 which is to be funded from the Core UK Shared Prosperity Fund grant transferred from the development pool. b. Kettering High Street Heritage Action Zone – increase in existing budget of £371.4k in 2023/24 which is to be funded from the following sources: £93.9k from external grants, £132.5k from S106 contributions and £145k of virements from schemes already approved within the capital programme as set out in the report. c. Warren Bridge Flood Defence - £303k in 2023/24 which is to be funded from the following sources: £213k from external grants and £90k from

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Wednesday 12 July 2023

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p align="center">resident contributions.</p> <p>d. Environmental Services grounds maintenance equipment - £445k in 2023/24 (£400k brought forward from the development pool in 2024/25) which is to be funded from borrowing.</p> <p>ii) Recommended to Council to approve the borrowing proposals for:</p> <p>a. Environmental Services grounds maintenance equipment - £445k</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations: These are set out in greater detail within section 5 of the report, but can be summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet corporate plan objectives, for instance in leading in improving the local environment <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <p>Items 3.1 a-c above are grant funded/ from S106 contributions and the use of the funding is in line with the agreements, so there are no alternative options proposed. For item 3.1 d, external grants were explored but are not available for plant equipment. The option of leasing new equipment was considered, but not deemed to represent value for money and therefore borrowing is the most cost-effective funding source. The other alternative option would be to not approve this scheme. However, this would have an adverse impact on meeting service needs and the achievement of NNC’s corporate objectives.</p>