

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 17 August 2023

Issued: 17th August 2023

The following decisions in this notice were made by the Executive on Thursday 17 August 2023.

Any decisions identified below as a **KEY DECISION** will come into force and may be implemented on Friday, 25th August 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.

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Part A – Items considered in public

Item 5	Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 3 - June 2023)	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive noted the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 3 (June) 2023/24 as set out in the appendices to this report.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations – to better understand the Council’s performance as</p>
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		<p>measured by Key Performance Indicators as at Period 3 (June) 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	Education Case Management System Procurement and Implementation Business Case	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the commencement of the procurement process to purchase and implement an ECMS for NNC b) Recommended to Full Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approval of the use of the Transformation Reserve to fund the one-off implementation costs of £1.362m. • The approval of the inclusion of the ongoing annual revenue costs (£131k in 24/25 and £142.5k in 25/26) for the new Education Case Management System to be included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills, in consultation with the Executive Director of Children's Services, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to

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		<p>conclude this procurement, implement the system and deliver this project, including but not limited to awarding and entering into a contract for an ECMS.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expiry of the incumbent contracts – the current system contracts expire in April 2024. • NNC will gain significant benefits from an ECMS. Levels of service to Children, Young People, parents and carers will be improved, and process efficiencies implemented. <p>Alternative Options Considered –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do nothing. • Apply for a variation with the current supplier, subject to this option being available under the current contract and such modification satisfying the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. • Reprocure the current system through a direct award • Build a bespoke system for the Education Service <p>All of the alternative options shown above have been discounted as they do not provide an effective solution, for reasons set out in section 5 of this report.</p>

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Item 7	Re-procurement of the NHS Health Checks Programme for North Northamptonshire Council	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive delegated authority to the Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing in consultation with the Director of Public Health & Wellbeing to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reprocure the NHS Health Checks programme for the residents of North Northamptonshire. ii. Award a 3-year contract (comprising of an initial term of 1 year, with options to extend in increments of twelve months). <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed option accords with the Local Authority’s responsibility under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to provide the Health Check Assessment to eligible individuals in a local authority’s area. • The proposed option delivers on a ‘Key Area’ NNC’s Transformation Strategy to ‘review, design and deliver splitting of West/North hosted/shared services’ by North and West Northamptonshire procuring NHS Health Checks separately for their respective residents. • The recommendation maintains consistency with previous decisions to re-procure the NHS Health Check programme. • The recommended action is cost-effective, while maximising benefit to eligible patients in the North Northamptonshire area.

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		<p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option to not re-procure the NHS Health Checks programme was considered but rejected on the grounds that it would have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of the residents of North Northamptonshire and the Council would not be fulfilling its legal obligations. • The option to re-commission the NHS Health Checks programme jointly with West Northamptonshire Council was considered but rejected on the grounds that the proposal would not align with North Northamptonshire Council's Transformation Strategy.
Item 8	North Northamptonshire's SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26 and Co Production Charter	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive approved the co-produced SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26 as well as the Co-production Charter.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the Council and its partners to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. • To support the Council through the delivery of both the SEND and Inclusion Strategy and the Co-production Charter in delivering its Equality Duties and meeting the requirements of SEND law and guidance.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure an effective and consistent offer of support to children with SEND and their families across North Northamptonshire. <p>Alternative Option Considered: The alternative option would be to not have a SEND and Inclusion Strategy in place. However, this would not be a recommended approach as the Strategy clearly outlines what the priorities are for North Northamptonshire in delivering a better, brighter future for children and young people with Special Educational Needs an/or Disabilities.</p>
Item 9	Northamptonshire Youth Justice Plan 2023-24	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the content of the Youth Justice Plan 2023/24. b) Noted Northamptonshire’s Youth Offending Service priorities for 2023/24 as set out in the plan. <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To accord with the constitution of the Council where the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Policy Framework that is decided by Full Council. To provide strategic direction to the Youth Offending Service that is delivered by Northamptonshire Children’s Trust.

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		<p>Alternative Options Considered: As well as being a requirement of statute, the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council’s Policy Framework and approval by the Council is therefore required.</p>
Item 10	Section 106 Funding Uplift to the Schools Minor Works Budget	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the proposal to uplift of the school's minor works budget in 2023/24 by £807,999 from S106 development funding. b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families and Education in consultation with the Executive Director of Children’s Services, and the Executive Director of Finance and Performance, to authorise all necessary financial arrangements to ensure expended use of S106 Development Funding.

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		<p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NNC has a responsibility to ensure that the S106 Development Funding is invested in a timely and efficient way to ensure it meets the S106 funding criteria and delivers the most strategic impact in the areas and the schools it is intended to support. • Provision of appropriate management of the existing school estate and provides an opportunity to meet our statutory responsibilities to provide sufficiency of school places in NNC. <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <p>The funding is nearing expiry date and needs to be expended appropriately and in a timely way, the alternative is that it would expire without being spent to the benefit of residents.</p>
Item 11	The Avenue Infants School Extension	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the proposed Capital Project to add an extension to The Avenue Infants School.

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		<p>b) Noted the scheme will be funded primarily by the SEND Grant, also S106 development Funding.</p> <p>c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families and Education in consultation with the Executive Director of Children’s Services, and the Executive Director of Place and Economy, to authorise all necessary legal, property and financial agreements to ensure effective delivery of the scheme.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create additional SEND teaching and ancillary space to meet increasing demand for SEND provision including physical requirements. • The Council has a statutory obligation to provide school buildings that are safe and fit for purpose and conducive to teaching and learning. If the Council cannot provide safe school buildings in its maintained provision in North Northamptonshire, then it could be subject to health and safety breaches. <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 - Extending into the playground - The School has very limited outside space which is the children’s only playground space and is undersized for the size of school. • Option 2 - Extending / converting loft space - architects assessed this

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		<p>would be far more costly due to the complicated roof heights and level changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 3 - Purchasing additional land - there is no available land adjacent to the school site. To the front of the school is the road, to the rear is a private access lane, on either side are residential homes.
Item 12	Great Doddington Primary School Mobile Replacement	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the proposed Capital Project to replace the double mobile classroom with permanent classrooms which will return an area of the playground back to the school. b) Noted the scheme will be funded by Basic Needs Grant funding. c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families and Education in consultation with Executive Director of Children’s Services, and the Executive Director of Place and Economy, to authorise all necessary legal, property and financial agreements to ensure effective delivery of the scheme.

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		<p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current double classroom mobile on site has reached the end of its design life. • The Council has a statutory obligation to provide school buildings that are safe and fit for purpose and conducive to teaching and learning. If the Council cannot provide safe school buildings in its maintained provision in North Northants, then it could be subject to health and safety breaches. <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1: Replace the mobile with a similar sized building in the same location. This was dismissed as the loss of facilities during construction would present too many issues. • Option 2: Build a new block at the front of the school. There is space and the layout works except for one aspect. To gain access you must walk externally or through another Classroom 27 which is not ideal. Inserting a Corridor through Classroom 27 makes a room deficient in the required floor area. • Option 3: Construct a replacement at the top of the site on playground area and link back to the main building. The lost playground would be regained in the mobile location. This is the preferred option.

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Item 13	Framework Agreement for Assistive Technology Equipment	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the commencement of a procurement process to establish a framework agreement for the supply of AT equipment. b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing in consultation with the Executive Director of Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing to take any further decisions and/or actions required to procure, award and enter into a framework agreement for the supply of AT equipment. <p>Reason for Recommendation: The current contract for the supply of AT equipment expires on 31st March 2024. The recommended course of action enables the procurement of AT equipment so that the service can continue to purchase equipment which supports people to live more independently and reduces the need for higher cost care packages.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To request that WNC include NNC as a named contracting authority capable of accessing the proposed framework agreement being set-up

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		<p align="center">by WNC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To not have a framework agreement for the supply of AT equipment. <p>Neither of those options are recommended. The first option may constrain future NNC service development and flexibility. The second option, having no framework agreement, will lead to the service not being able to provide services to the vulnerable people of North Northamptonshire.</p>
Item 14	Local Authority Housing Fund – Round 2 Funding	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved that the Council enters into an agreement with the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to acquire 11 homes during 2023-2024 to deliver additional housing for families in temporary accommodation and Afghan resettlement schemes. b) Approved the proposal to accelerate the capital programme from 2024/25 and 2025/26 into 2023/24 for the homelessness prevention capital programme, to enable North Northamptonshire Council to provide the required match funding against the central government grant for this programme. c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up in consultation with the Executive Director for Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing to take any decisions and actions

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		<p align="center">necessary to complete the programme.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide sustainable housing to those on Afghan resettlement schemes at risk of homelessness so that they can build new lives in the UK, find employment and integrate into communities. • Reduce local housing pressures beyond those on Afghan resettlement schemes by providing better quality temporary accommodation to families owed homelessness duties by the Council. • Reduce emergency, temporary and bridging accommodation costs. • Reduce impacts on the existing housing and homelessness systems and those waiting for social housing. • To increase the overall supply of affordable rented housing available in North Northamptonshire, which meets the corporate objective of enabling safe and thriving places. <p>Alternative Options Considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do nothing – if the Council does not participate in this programme, it will not receive the funding allocation and the challenge of finding onward settled accommodation for refugees will remain. This

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		<p>challenge is already putting pressure on stretched homelessness services. Those refugees who present as homeless are still owed a statutory homelessness duty by the Council and need to be placed in costly nightly paid temporary accommodation and then progressed through Keyways on to the housing register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to delivering a smaller number of homes – whilst this may be easier to achieve, the government grant allocation will reduce proportionately and less homes will be acquired into our temporary accommodation stock. Ultimately fewer additional homes will be available to the Council to use as affordable housing for our residents in the longer term.
Item 15	Designating Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Agreed that ‘care experience’ will be treated as if it were a Protected Characteristic under the Equalities Act 2010 so that decisions on future services and policies made and adopted by the council are assessed and consider the impact on people with care experience. ii) Approved the amendment of North Northamptonshire Council’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and its Equality Strategy 2021-2025 to reflect ‘care experience’ being treated as if it were a protected characteristic.

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		<p>Reasons for Recommendations – The rationale behind this recommendation is that it will help to further embed ways of working within the local authority that specifically take the needs of people with care experience into account. In doing so the Council will be strengthening its role as a corporate parent.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered - the alternative option would be not to adopt care experience as a protected characteristic. This is not recommended as it will not further the needs of people with care experience or address the underlying stigma and discrimination that they can face in society.</p>
Item 16	Capital Outturn 2023/24 as at Period 3	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Noted the draft forecast capital outturn position as at period 3 for the General Fund Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme for 2023/24. b. Noted the new schemes that have been approved since 1st April 2023. c. Approved the amendments to capital carry forwards from 2022/23 into 2023/24 for the General Fund as detailed in table 2 below. <p>Reason for Recommendations: This is in line with the Council's constitution and financial regulations in relation to governance.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: This report is on the forecasted out-turn and therefore alternative options are not proposed.</p>

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Item 17	Capital Programme Update - 2023/24	<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. The Avenue Infants School SEND Provision – budget approval for £860k, £727k in 2023/24 and £133k in 2024/25 which is to be funded £838k from SEND Capital Grant and £22k from S106 contributions. b. Great Doddington Primary School mobile replacement – budget approval for £997k, £897k in 2023/24 and £100k in 2024/25 which is to be funded from Basic Needs Capital Grant. c. Weavers Academy bulge places - budget approval for £412k, £367k in 2023/24 and £45k in 2024/25 which is to be funded from Basic Needs Capital Grant. d. Schools Minor Works budget uplift - budget approval for £808k in 2023/24 which is to be funded from S106 contributions. e. Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) grants passported to Maintained Schools – budget approval for £262k in 2023/24, to be funded by the DFC grant. f. Spinney Road, Weldon Play Area – budget approval of £35k in 2023/24 which is to be funded from S106 Contributions.

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		<p>g. Desborough Green Space – budget approval of £20k in 2023/24 to be funded by S106 contributions.</p> <p>h. Well Lane Recreation Ground, Rothwell – budget approval of £12k in 2023/24 which is to be funded from S106 contributions.</p> <p>i. Higham Ferrers Library Provision – budget approval of £23k in 2023/24 which is to be funded from S106 contributions.</p> <p>j. Phase 2 Refugee Resettlement Scheme – approve a budget of £3.298m for phase 2 of the Refugee Resettlement Scheme funded through £1.298m from the Local Authority Housing Grant and a virement of £2m from the Housing and Homelessness prevention capital programme to the Resettlement capital programme to meet the match funding requirement for the grant.</p> <p>ii) Recommend to Council to approve a funding virement of £2m for match funding in respect of the Phase 2 Refugee Resettlement Scheme as set out in the report. This is in accordance with the Council’s Constitution as the virement request exceeds £0.5m.</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 support the statutory delivery of school places and SEND school places across North Northamptonshire. • To meet corporate plan objectives, for instance in leading in improving the local environment

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		<p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The funding for the schemes in this report are in accordance with the requirements of the grant or S106 agreements, so there are no alternative options proposed in this report. • Where individual schemes are over £500k, separate reports are included elsewhere on this agenda which set out the wider options that were considered before reaching the proposals put forward.
Item 18	Budget Forecast Update 2023-24 - Period 3	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul 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 an increase in the gross budget of £984k to support the delivery of the government’s wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK to be funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) grant of £984k as set out in paragraph 5.69. d) Approved an increase in the gross budget of £1.919m to provide additional support

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		<p align="center">to adult social care, to be funded from the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund as set out in paragraph 5.70.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2023/24 as at Period 3 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>