

Minutes of a meeting of the full Council

Held at 6.00 pm on Thursday 22nd June, 2023 in the Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, NN17 1QG

Present:-

Members

Councillor Barbara Jenney (Chair)

Councillor Jean Addison

Councillor Tim Allebone

Councillor Valerie Anslow

Councillor Ross Armour

Councillor Matt Binley

Councillor Jennie Bone

Councillor David Brackenbury

Councillor Wendy Brackenbury

Councillor Scott Brown

Councillor Cedwien Brown

Councillor Leanne Buckingham

Councillor Lyn Buckingham

Councillor Lloyd Bunday

Councillor Robin Carter

Councillor Melanie Coleman

Councillor William Colquhoun

Councillor John Currall

Councillor Alison Dalziel

Councillor Dez Dell

Councillor Emily Fedorowycz

Councillor Martin Griffiths

Councillor Jim Hakewill

Councillor Clive Hallam

Councillor Helen Harrison

Councillor Helen Howell

Councillor David Howes

Councillor Philip Irwin

Councillor Ian Jelley

Councillor Matt Keane

Councillor King Lawal

Councillor Graham Lawman

Councillor Anne Lee

Councillor Paul Marks

Councillor Dorothy Maxwell

Councillor Peter McEwan

Councillor John McGhee

Councillor Andy Mercer

Councillor Gill Mercer

Councillor Jan O'Hara

Councillor Dr Anup Pandey

Councillor Harriet Pentland

Councillor Roger Powell

Councillor Elliot Prentice

Councillor Mark Rowley

Councillor Geoff Shacklock

Councillor Jason Smithers

Councillor Mike Tebbutt

Councillor Michael Tye

Councillor Malcolm Ward

Councillor Andrew Weatherill

Councillor Keli Watts

Councillor Kevin Watt

Councillor Lee Wilkes

Officers in attendance:

George Candler (Chief Executive (Interim)), Adele Wylie (Executive Director of Customer and Governance and Monitoring Officer/Deputy Chief Executive (Interim)), and Ben Smith (Head of Democratic Services).

240 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Paul Bell, Charlie Best, Jon-Paul Carr, Mark Dearing, Scott Edwards, Jonathan Ekins, Ken Harrington, Kirk Harrison, Larry Henson, Bert Jackson, Lora Lawman, Richard Levell, Zoe McGhee, Macaulay Nichol, Steven North, Tom Partridge-Underwood, Mark Pengelly, Simon

Rielly, Russell Roberts, David Sims, Chris Smith-Haynes, Joseph Smyth, Sarah Tubbs, and Malcolm Waters.

241 Minutes of the meeting held on 25th May 2023

The minutes of the annual meeting of the Council held on 25th May 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

242 Declarations of interest.

The Chair asked those members who wished to do so to declare any interests in respect of items on the agenda.

The following interests were declared:-

Name of Councillor	Minute Number	Interest	Reason for Declaration
Cllr Jim Hakewill	247 Motion 2 (Kettering Leisure Village (KLV))	Personal Interest	Provision of support/advice to KLV users, but confirming the retention of an open mind in respect of all eventualities relating to what could happen to KLV in terms of decisions to be made.
Cllr Keli Watts	247 Motion 2 (Kettering Leisure Village (KLV))	Personal Interest	Member of Balance Gym at KLV and having been a supporter of the Support Group.
Cllr Lloyd Bunday	247 Motion 2 (Kettering Leisure Village (KLV))	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	As KLV was a customer of the councillor's so undertook to leave the room at the commencement of the debate, and to not take part in either the debate or vote.
Cllr Cedwien Brown	247 Motion 2 (Kettering Leisure Village (KLV))	Personal Interest	Member of Balance Gym at KLV and remained open minded in respect of any decision to be taken.
Cllr Tim Allebone	247 Motion 1	Personal Interest	As a farmer.
Cllr John McGhee	247 Motion 2 (Kettering Leisure Village (KLV))	Personal Interest	Player of squash at KLV.
Cllr Anup Pandey	247 Motion 2 (Kettering Leisure Village (KLV))	Personal Interest	Member of Balance Gym at KLV.

243 Chair's Announcements

The Chair made the following announcements:-

Vice-Chair

That Cllr Lora Lawman was not able to attend the meeting and that the Council's best wishes be sent for a full and speedy recovery from her operation.

Engagements Undertaken

There had been a busy calendar of events over the last four weeks, with engagements inside and outside of the North Northants area, including:-

- A poignant flag raising ceremony in Kettering to recognise the start of Armed Forces Week.
- An open day for a community run library in Raunds, with many representatives of the groups and organisations active within the library.
- The 2023 University of Northampton Changemaker awards, with congratulations to be extended to all the nominees and award winners, particularly a local group, 'Off the Street North Northamptonshire, which was the winner of the community ward to stamp out knife crime.

Future Engagements

- During the forthcoming weekend, the Chair would be honoured to represent North Northamptonshire Council at the Armed Forces Day parade held in Rushden, including the fly past.
- Finally, whilst already having dates in the diary through to February 2024, the Chair would be delighted to receive invitations from groups and organisations around the area hosting events in the coming weeks and months.

244 Leader's Announcements

The Leader confirmed he had no announcements to make on this occasion.

245 Public Participation

The following members of the public made statements to Council in accordance with meeting procedure rule 15:-

- i) Cllr Clark Mitchell, Kettering Town Council – in support of saving Kettering Leisure Village to support the people of Kettering and North Northamptonshire.
- ii) Miss Janie Simper – a teacher in support of the continuation of school sporting events, as well as representing the views of Anderson School of Dance's desiring to continue use as performance venue, at Kettering Leisure Village.
- iii) Mr Alex Kingsley – as a sports user of Kettering Leisure Village, called upon the council to step in and keep KLV open whilst a sustainable, long-term, future was secured, for their benefit and the wider economy of North Northamptonshire.
- iv) Ms Hawkes – As a user of KLV, wishing to keep Kettering Leisure Village open and the venue to be marketed to its full potential to bring more revenue and ensure residents retained a fantastic venue to enjoy their leisure time.

In respect of the final speaker, although not a resident of North Northamptonshire, the Chair exercised her discretion to allow him to speak due to the importance of Kettering and the surrounding area to wheelchair rugby.

- v) Mr Gerry McCrory – As captain of the Northampton Saints Wiltshire Rugby Team emphasised KLV's importance to disabled users as it was the only venue in Northamptonshire that met all its accessibility requirements as a club, together with being an important hub to provide fitness, wellbeing, social interactions, and friendships.

A copy of the public statements submitted to Council are filed with these minutes, as Appendix A.

The following member of the public asked a question to Council in accordance with meeting procedure rule 16.

Ms Ryzna Garner - asked the Council to ensure that all food and drink provided and promoted at future internal events were those with the lowest impact on the climate and environment.

Cllr Harriet Pentland responded that the Council was committed to being carbon neutral by 2030 and would consider all opportunities to reduce its carbon footprint. Whilst it was rare for the Council to provide food and drink at Council events all viable opportunities to reduce its environmental impacts would be made, whilst considering local producers, catering business and providing for dietary needs.

A full copy of the question and response is filed with these minutes, as Appendix B.

246 Executive Presentations

The Leader confirmed that there were no Executive presentations to be made on this occasion.

247 Motions on Notice

The Chair confirmed that three motions on notice had been received. With the consent of Council, the Chair re-ordered the item of business to allow for motion 2 to be considered prior to motion 1, noting the keen public interest.

Cllr Lloyd Bunday, having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Motion 2 on the agenda, left the room at the commencement of the debate, and did not take part in either the debate or voting on the matter.

Motion 2 – Kettering Leisure Village

Cllr Jim Hakewill moved and Cllr Keli Watts seconded the motion to Council, as set on the agenda for the meeting.

In debating the motion, all councillors were in favour of keeping KLV open, but the manner in which this was achieved was the subject of varying viewpoints.

An amendment to the motion was proposed by Cllr Helen Howell and seconded by Cllr Anup Pandey to delete the final sentence **which had stated ‘A viable business case needs to be urgently created and a budget agreed, prior to the advised closure date of the 3rd July 2023. [additional wording to that which was originally published, approved by Council meeting of 31 August 2023]** in its entirety and replace it as follows:-

“A business and legal case which considers the viability of stepping in needs to be urgently created and scrutinised through the formal scrutiny process before being considered by the Executive. Following which (if required) a budget should be agreed by the 3rd July 2023.”

The meeting was adjourned for a short period prior to debate on the amendment, in order to allow it to be displayed on screen.

During the debate on the amendment the suggested involvement of Scrutiny and the Executive was welcomed, although some concern was expressed that the amendment would no longer require a budget to be agreed. Clarification was provided that the meaning of a budget may or may not being required was contingent on the outcome of discussions between the Council and KLV operators, but the clear intent of the amendment was to provide for a viable deal.

At the end of the amendment debate a recorded vote was requested and accepted, which was as follows:-

In favour (32)

Cllrs Matt Binley, Jennie Bone, David Brackenbury, Wendy Brackenbury, Cedwien Brown, Scott Brown, Lyn Buckingham, Robin Carter, Melanie Coleman, John Currall, David Howes, Helen Harrison, Kevin Watt, Philip Irwin, Ian Jelley, King Lawal, Clive Hallam, Helen Howell, Graham Lawman, Dorothy Maxwell, Paul Marks, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Anup Pandey, Harriet Pentland, Eliot Prentice, Mark Rowley, Geoff Shacklock, Jason Smithers, Mike Tebbutt, Malcolm Ward, and Lee Wilkes.

Against (15)

Cllrs Jean Addison, Valerie Anslow, Ross Armour, Leanne Buckingham, William Colquhoun, Alison Dalziel, Emily Fedorowycz, Dez Dell, Martin Griffiths, Matt Keane, Jim Hakewill, Anne Lee, Peter McEwan, John McGhee, and Keli Watts.

Abstentions (0)

The amendment was carried.

At the conclusion of debate on the now substantive motion, a recorded vote was requested and accepted, as follows:-

In favour (36)

Cllrs Tim Allebone, Ross Armour, Matt Binley, Jennie Bone, David Brackenbury, Wendy Brackenbury, Cedwien Brown, Scott Brown, Robin Carter, Melanie Coleman, John Currall, Clive Hallam, David Howes, Helen Harrison, Kevin Watt, Philip Irwin, Ian Jelley, King Lawal, Emily Fedorowycz, Dez Dell, Matt Keane, Helen Howell, Graham Lawman, Dorothy Maxwell, Paul Marks, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Anup Pandey, Harriet Pentland, Elliot Prentice, Mark Rowley, Geoff Shacklock, Jason Smithers, Mike Tebbutt, Malcolm Ward, and Lee Wilkes.

Against (11)

Cllrs Jean Addison, Valerie Anslow, Leanne Buckingham, William Colquhoun, Alison Dalziel, Martin Griffiths, Jim Hakewill, Anne Lee, Peter McEwan, John McGhee, and Keli Watts.

Abstentions (0)

The substantive motion was **APPROVED**, as follows:-

“This Council values all the opportunities provided, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of residents’ health and well-being across North Northamptonshire. In particular this council welcomes the economic benefits for Kettering and the wider regional area of having a premier national conference centre, combined with public sporting and theatrical venues (commonly known as the Kettering Leisure Village, the KLV).

The KLV’s continued public and private availability on a long-term, sustainable, basis is critical to the well-being of all residents along with the wider economic prosperity of North Northamptonshire.

A business and legal case which considers the viability of stepping in needs to be urgently created and scrutinised through the formal scrutiny process before being considered by the Executive. Following which (if required) a budget should be agreed by the 3rd July 2023.”

Cllr Lloyd Bunday returned to the meeting.

Motion 1 – Supporting Local Farmers

Cllr Scott Brown moved and Cllr Elliot Prentice seconded the motion to Council, as set out on the agenda.

Before debate commenced on the motion, the Chair notified councillors that one amendment had been received prior to the meeting. The amendment was proposed by Cllr Emily Fedorowycz and seconded by Cllr Dez Dell in the following terms:-

‘To delete the following words in the fourth line of the first paragraph ‘...*ensure their ability to enhance our magnificent countryside*’, replacing them with the words

‘support, promote, and encourage their move towards creating more sustainable produce...’

... to delete the following words in the first line of the second paragraph *‘Elected members will be vocal in opposing excessive regulation by central government enabling them to prosper.’*

... and to delete the fourth and fifth line of the second paragraph:- *‘...both plant and meat based...’.*

During debate on the amendment, a guillotine motion was moved by Cllr Matt Keane and seconded by Cllr Helen Harrison that the business of the meeting be continued to a conclusion.

The guillotine motion was carried, 31 councillors voting in favour and 17 against, with no abstentions.

During the debate, all councillors participating spoke in support of engaging and working in partnership with arable and livestock farmers. A number of councillors spoke both in favour of and against the amendment in respect of adding an emphasis on more sustainable produce.

The amendment was voted upon and lost, with 14 councillors voting in favour, 34 against and 1 abstention.

The original motion was then voted upon, with 35 councillors voting in favour, 9 against and 2 abstentions.

The motion was duly **APPROVED**, as follows:-

“North Northants Council is committed to supporting local farmers. Britain has some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world and N.N.C should engage and work in partnership with our arable and livestock farmers to ensure their ability to enhance our magnificent countryside. We need to strive to support them by being sympathetic to diversification opportunities, including the promotion of local produce.

Elected Members will be vocal in opposing excessive regulation by central government, enabling them to prosper. Keeping in mind our commitment to the climate emergency, NNC should, wherever possible, encourage people to shop locally, taking advantage of home-grown, affordable and nutritious food, both plant and meat based, thus reducing the “food miles” on our plates.”

Motion 3 – Housing and Homelessness

It was proposed by Cllr Valerie Anslow and seconded by Cllr Lyn Buckingham that to allow for a full debate on the motion, noting that the meeting had now passed three and a half hours in duration, that it be deferred for consideration until the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

The motion to defer consideration was voted upon, with 42 councillors voting in favour, 4 against and 1 abstention.

The motion was duly **APPROVED**, as follows:-

“That consideration of the motion be deferred until the next ordinary meeting of Council, where it will be placed on the agenda as the first motion on notice for consideration.”

248 Councillor Questions

The Chair noted that two questions had been carried over from the meeting of 30 March 2023 at the request of the councillors, with 12 questions submitted to this meeting.

All 14 questions were received and responded to, as well as supplementary questions and answers where requested.

A full copy of the questions and responses made, as well as any supplementary questions and responses, are filed with these minutes, as Appendix C.

249 Close of Meeting

There being no urgent items of business, the Chair declared the meeting closed, thanking councillors and officers for their contributions and attendance.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 21:54