

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 14th September 2023

Issued: 14th September 2023

The following decisions in this notice were made by the Executive on Thursday 14th September 2023.

Any decisions identified below as a **KEY DECISION** will come into force and may be implemented on Friday, 22nd September 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
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Part A – Items considered in public

Item 5	Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 4 - July 2023)	RESOLVED That the Executive: a) Noted the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 4 (July) 2023/24, set out in the appendix to the report.
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		<p>Reason for Recommendations: to better understand the Council's performance as measured by Key Performance Indicators as at Period 4 (July) 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	Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP+) Funding	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the allocation of £569,412 of Bus Service Improvement Plan plus funding for each of the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25; b) Noted that the allocation of future funding including the Bus Service Improvement Plan plus funding for 2024/25 is dependent on the Council's overall bus budget (comprising the bus subsidy budget of £275,000 and concessionary fares budget of £2,907,320) not being reduced. c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director of Place & Economy to take any actions needed to award the local bus service contracts and any further decisions/actions relating to expenditure of the BSIP+ funding.

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		<p>Reason for Recommendations – To spend the external funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered – The Council could choose not to accept the external funding or to spend it in ways which were inconsistent with the terms and conditions of the grant. This would not be in the best interest of the community and would jeopardise future funding allocations. Launching new services in areas with limited demand for bus travel is unlikely to represent value for money in achieving the objectives of the funding, and not appropriate with no long-term funding certainty.</p>
Item 7	Kettering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the findings of the public consultation analysis for the Kettering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which forms Appendix C of this report; b) Approved and adopted the Draft Kettering LCWIP which forms Appendix A of this report as a Council policy document; c) Agreed that the prioritisation of routes within the Kettering LCWIP should form the basis of work to develop preliminary designs for the routes within existing budgets to form the basis of future funding bids. Any further

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		<p align="center">external funding secured as a result will form the basis of future report(s) to Executive.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations – Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are the recommended Department for Transport approach for planning and co-ordinating provision for active travel modes. They provide a strategic and planned approach for short and long term provision for cycling and walking within the local area.</p> <p>The Kettering LCWIP has been developed to enable NNC to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify prioritised cycling and walking infrastructure improvements for future investment; • Ensure that consideration is given to cycling and walking within both local planning and transport policies and strategies; and • Make the case for future funding for walking and cycling infrastructure. <p>Alternative Options Considered – While it would be possible to develop an LCWIP based on a different methodology to that contained in Government guidance on LCWIPs, this is not recommended as it would mean that the Council was less likely to secure Government funding. However, should alternative funding (such as S106) become available for particular corridors, it would be possible to progress lower priority schemes on that basis.</p>
Item 8	Hackney Carriage De-zoning,	RESOLVED

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	Hackney Carriage Byelaws and Hackney Carriage Number Limits	<p>That the Executive;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Approved commencement of a consultation process on the potential removal of the current four hackney carriage zones and replacement with one NNC zone; ii) Approved that the current Hackney Carriage Byelaws are reviewed. <p>Reason for Recommendation: Following the alignment of the hackney carriage tariff of fares and implementation of one Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy covering the whole of NNC’s area implemented on 1st April 2023, it is appropriate to consider the retention of four separate zones for hackney carriage licencing. The review of the zones necessitates a review of the byelaws which govern hackney carriage licencing.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered in relation to the zones;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To take no action and retain the current four hackney carriage zones. ii) Determine that this matter requires further consideration, but now is not the correct time to consider this matter and defer consultation to a later date. <p>Alternative Option Considered in relation to the byelaws;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To take no action and retain the current Hackney Carriage Byelaws.
Item 9	North Northamptonshire Greenway Strategy	RESOLVED

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		<p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>It is recommended that the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the Greenway Strategic Masterplan for public consultation; b) Approved the Feasibility Study for the proposed Rushden to Wellingborough Greenway for public consultation; and c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism, in consultation with the Director of Public Health to make any amendments to the documents as a result of the public consultation, ahead of them being brought back to the Executive for adoption. <p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the Council and its partners to prioritise future routes for the Greenway and to inform future feasibility studies which will assist the Council to secure developer contributions and other external funding to deliver the programme. • To allow for public consultation on the draft strategy and Rushden to Wellingborough Greenway Feasibility Study. <p>Alternative Options Considered: The alternative option would be to not have a Greenway Strategic Masterplan. However, this would not be a recommended approach as the strategy clearly outlines what the priority routes are for North</p>

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		<p>Northamptonshire, based on comprehensive data and evidence, will inform future feasibility studies, which are required to secure external funding and developer contributions to enable the expansion of the Greenway across North Northamptonshire. It will also ensure a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of the Greenway.</p>
Item 10	Kettering Artificial Pitch	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the proposal to develop the Council’s relationship with the Northamptonshire Football Association (NFA) by way of a concession contract together with an ancillary long-term peppercorn lease for a 30-year period, to include an agreement for continued use for Harriers Athletics club. b) Noted that the grant of the lease will require the NFA to have financial repairing responsibilities for the site including business rates and insurance, the agreement will include a net profit share. The agreement will be a secure business tenancy but will not have an automatic right of renewal. c) Approved the proposal for a contract variation for the Freedom Leisure contract to remove the facilities from the existing Leisure contract and end the lease with Harriers Athletics club. d) Noted the development of the Football Foundation funding application for the site, by North Northamptonshire Council in collaboration with the NFA.

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		<p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The artificial pitch, pavilion and athletics track all need investment. The NFA are a credible organisation intent on providing football opportunities for the community. The proposed way forward will enable increased funding opportunities, redevelopment of the site and development of a delivery programme, supporting existing and future users. • Match funding from the Council of £150k has already been identified within existing Leisure Services Capital budgets, the earmarking of this budget has been discussed and agreed at Strategic Capital Board in April 2022. This would attract maximum return from the Football Foundation with the NFA support. • The Community will see an increase in quality of the facilities and services on offer in Kettering. • The NFA will create a sinking fund for redevelopment in future years to comply with Football Foundation funding requirements which will secure investment in future years. • To have increased opportunities of success to redevelop the areas needed, to ensure that the whole scheme is delivered to support the sports on the site and to achieve maximum leverage of funding from the Council's £150k capital investment, the NFA is the only organisation who will be able to achieve this from the Football Foundation as they are the National Governing body for Football and also have the staff resource to manage

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		<p>the site and deliver the sports development programmes.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continuation of scheme by the Council and no NFA involvement</i> - The Council continue to develop and submit the funding application to the Football Foundation on its own to redevelop the artificial pitch. This would limit the opportunities for success as the Council would not be able to leverage the percentage funding needed for the site and could result in just a resurface of the pitch. This in isolation would potentially be deemed insufficient by the Football Foundation to demonstrate viable security of payback of investment. The level of staffing resource to manage the site and future delivery of the sport development programme would put extreme pressure on the in-house leisure team and restrict other areas of work for the Leisure Services. • <i>Freedom Leisure</i> - continue with the leisure operator managing the site as part of one of the Kettering Leisure Contracts. The associated revenue and capital investment costs required for the site will put increased cost pressures onto the leisure contractor. The escalating costs of this type of project significantly reduce the viability for leisure providers. The requirement for match funding and the future ability to leverage further funding would be as limited as if the Council were to lead the project, and so could result in the project being just a pitch resurface and deemed insufficient for the Football Foundation funding application. It is fair to assume that there would also be further demands on NNC Leisure to provide expert support in ensuring the funding criteria is met, at a time when workforce demand is at capacity. Under the Football Foundation

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		<p>grant terms and conditions, a sinking fund must be established to ensure £20k/£30k is annually ringfenced for 10 years, to make end of warranty, surface replacement possible. It would be incumbent on Freedom Leisure to ensure that there is enough income generated to cover this and NNC to maintain budgets throughout the lifecycle. There is only 5 years left on the Freedom Leisure contract which makes any investment of resource unattractive to the contractor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community Asset Transfer</i> to Northamptonshire Football Association – the asset would be transferred in perpetuity; this would not allow time to fully develop and embed a relationship with the NFA. The delay that this process would entail could undermine the timing of an expert third party seeking an opportunity to deliver from this type of site and may mean they explore a similar alternative elsewhere. There has already been a lengthy delay in re-establishing the provision at the pitch and what this means for the local community who want to see this site back in action as soon as possible. • <i>Do nothing on the site and to not invest in the facilities</i> - this would be of detriment to football and athletics offer for Kettering and North Northamptonshire. The Council is committed to supporting the community to be active and provide quality facilities and opportunities for its residents. The local community, football clubs and development opportunities have been limited and restricted since the pitch was closed for use. The community have been keen to see the pitch resurfaced and opened for use, they have been successful in raising funds for football in the area. The funding contributed towards some goals being installed in the local park so young people could have access to informal football whilst the

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		<p>pitch is out of action. This shows the level of feeling in the community and how important the pitch is to the local area. Not investing in this scheme was not considered an option for local sport or the local community, it would also have a longer term financial and staff resource implication for the Council as there would be a need to upgrade and bring the facility back into use at a later date.</p>
Item 11	Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive agreed to the consultation of the Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy for six weeks from 14th September to 26th October 2023.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations: The consultation of the Strategy allows for the community and in particular the school community to comment on the strategy whilst complying with the requirements to have an updated strategy by the required deadline of 19 September.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To adopt the Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy and engage with the community through its delivery. • Not update the Northamptonshire Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy.

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		None of these options are recommended.
Item 12	The Chief Principal Social Worker's Annual Report	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive accepted and noted the Chief Principal Social Worker's Annual Report and agrees the priorities for the forthcoming year.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendation- These priorities are ones which have been identified through the Chief Principal Social Worker's work, through work with the Senior Leadership Team and with front line workers, and they align with Adult Social Care's priorities to provide an excellent service for the people of North Northamptonshire.</p> <p>Further priorities may be identified during the year and work picked up. The Chief Principal Social Worker's work includes wider themes and priorities will continuously be monitored and reviewed.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: The Chief Principal Social Worker is responsible for completing an annual report to highlight work undertaken, priorities for the forthcoming year and the Chief PSW's view of the Council's Adult Social Care Services. As such it is important the Executive is provided with the same report that has been presented to Corporate Leadership Team; not to do so would leave Executive without information that has been presented to CLT and that is provided within an annual report from a postholder within a role which sits within statute.</p>
Item 13	Energy Procurement Contract	RESOLVED

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		<p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the requirement to progress the procurement of a new energy contract to take effect from 1st October 2024 b) Approved the procurement of Energy Supplies via a Public Buying Organisation, noting the proposed use of a Flexible Purchase in Advance (PIA) option, subject to the rates received. c) Approved the purchase of a Fully Managed Service (FMS) including a bureau service. d) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Assistant Director Assets & Environment to procure and award the contract following conclusion of the Council procurement process.

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		<p>Reason for Recommendations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accord with the Council’s procurement requirements. • To support the Council’s carbon management plan, and target to be carbon neutral by 2030. • The recommended approach allows the Council to be supported by energy expertise and corporate landlord monitoring. • The recommended approach supports budget forecasting by mitigating the risks of having supplies out of contract. <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council currently does not have the expertise or resources available to undertake an individual procurement for energy supply, as the sovereign councils, like most Local Authorities, utilised public buying organisations. • Do Nothing – this is not an option as it would not comply with procurement legislation or the Council’s procurement policy. Additional costs would arise as any supplies not part of an agreed contract would be liable for ‘out of contract’ penalty rates. Moreover, there will be high uncertainty around utility costs as their prices are directly affected by market volatility.
Item 14	The Establishment of a North	RESOLVED

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	<p>Northamptonshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education</p>	<p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive approved the establishment of a North Northamptonshire SACRE.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the best outcomes for all children in North Northamptonshire for Religious Education (RE) and collective worship, and access to a high quality RE curriculum. • To ensure that the following SACRE duties are met for North Northamptonshire Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advise the local authority (LA) on matters related to agreed syllabus Religious Education (RE) and collective worship; - Publish an Annual Report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups; - Monitor the provision and quality of Agreed Syllabus RE and of collective worship in order to provide targeted advice and support on teaching Agreed Syllabus RE; - Advise the LA on the provision of training of teachers; - Consider complaints about RE and collective worship referred to them by their LA; - Consider whether changes need to be made to the Agreed Syllabus, in partnership with the LA; - Offer advice to the LA in respect of the Agreed Syllabus and its implementation.

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		<p>Alternative Options Considered: There are no alternative options as legally each local authority must have its own SACRE according to Section 390 of the Education Act 1996. There is no reason why North Northamptonshire SACRE cannot work collaboratively with West Northamptonshire SACRE once they are both established in the future should this be agreeable.</p>
<p>Item 15</p>	<p>Budget Forecast Update 2023-24 - Period 4</p>	<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 £471k to be funded from the Homelessness Prevention Grant for Ukraine as set out in paragraph 5.71. <p>Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2023/24 as at Period 4 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</p>

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		budgetary position as such there are no specific choices within the report.