

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

Issued: 21st December 2023

The following decisions in this notice were made by the Executive on Thursday 21st December 2023.

Any decisions identified below as a **KEY DECISION** will come into force and may be implemented on Wednesday 3rd January 2024, 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 Scrutiny Management Board 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

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| Item 5 | Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 7 - October 2023) | RESOLVED That the Executive noted the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 7 (October) 2023/24, set out in Appendix A to this report. |
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North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 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 7 (October) 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 | Amendment to Adult Social Care Charging Policy | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive approved the proposal to remove reference to Department of Work and Pensions DS1500 Certificates from the Adult Social Care Fees and Charges Policy and not extend the exemption to charging to the SR1 Form.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendation: This recommendation is the preferred option as it provides an equitable policy on charging for all people with an eligible need for community-based services, in line with charging regulations and statutory guidance.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: Other options have been considered;</p> <p>a) Do nothing – this would mean that NNC’s Adult Social Care Charging policy does not reflect current practice in relation to Department Work and Pensions assessments and provision for extending benefits to people assessed as approaching the end of their life.</p> |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| | | Extend the exemption on charges to the SR1 form - this option is not recommended as it would result in inequitable financial contributions for people in receipt of community-based care and support. |
| Item 7 | Travellers Temporary Stopping Site Land at Junction 3 of the A14, Rothwell | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recommended to Full Council the approval of the project being added to the 2024/25 Capital Programme to deliver the Travellers Temporary Stopping site and establish a budget of £1,300,000 to be funded through borrowing. b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Rural Communities and Localism in consultation with the Executive Director for Place and Economy to submit an application for planning permission for the project and procure the necessary works to provide the Travellers Temporary Stopping site, and undertake any other actions required to deliver the project within the approved financial envelope. |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|-------|--|
| | | <p>Reason for Recommendations :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To procure and undertake the required works in line with the Council’s constitution and financial regulations in relation to governance. • There is a strategic need to make provision for temporary stopping places to serve the North Northamptonshire area, as demonstrated by the 2019 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). • Currently there are no temporary stopping places for transient travellers passing through the NNC area to use which would provide safe and secure places to stop with suitable facilities. • Provision of a temporary stopping place within the Council’s area would enable the Council and the Police to better manage UEs within the Council’s area and limit the adverse impacts of UEs on settled communities. <p>Alternative Options Considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only other option available is to do nothing, however this would not address the strategic need for a temporary stopping place within the Council area, which provides a safe and secure place to stop with suitable facilities and would not allow the Council and the Police working together to exercise ‘direction’ powers available to them in law to better manage UEs and their impact on settled communities. • Alternative locations for temporary stopping places on land in the ownership of the Council were considered prior to submitting the |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|---|--|
| | | DHLUC Traveller Site Fund bid and disregarded as being unsuitable. |
| Item 8 | Approval of Department for Transport (DfT) Additional Highway Maintenance Funding 2023/24 and 2024/25 | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive accepted and noted the addition of £1.069m of new funding from the Department for Transport to the capital programme for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to be used to deliver the current priorities in the list of identified maintenance schemes.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendation: This additional funding will add to the existing capital budgets for highway maintenance and enable more maintenance schemes to be completed.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: The Council could choose to not accept the additional funding from government which would result in a real terms reduction in funding for highway maintenance as current allocations for this year and next year make no provision for inflation.</p> |
| Item 9 | Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022-23 | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive received the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report 2022-23 attached as Appendix A to this report and noted the findings.</p> |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|---|--|
| | | <p>Reason for Recommendations – To accord with legislation or the policy of the Council; under the statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018’, the five key strategic lead agencies are accountable for safeguarding children and young people, including the Local Authority, who in turn are required to publish an annual report. (see Section 8 of the report Background papers)</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: There is a requirement to publish this annual report, as such there are not alternative options available.</p> |
| Item 10 | Draft Budget 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved for consultation the 2024-25 Draft Revenue Budget, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. an estimated net revenue budget of £371.5m (£759.6m including the Dedicated Schools Grant) as set out in Appendix A, noting that this is subject to further update and change following the publication of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. ii. a Band D Equivalent Council Tax of £1,740.22 for North Northamptonshire Council, representing an increase of 2.99% in the ‘core’ Council Tax and a further 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept. |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|-------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. pressures of £53.4m, including adjustments for the reversal of one-off funding in 2023-24, and savings, efficiencies and income proposals of £18.5m as detailed in Appendix B. iv. the provisional Dedicated Schools Grant budget of £388.1m for 2024-25, pending the final settlement, as detailed in Appendix C. v. the draft planned use of, contribution to, and movement in, reserves as identified in paragraph 5.52, section 9 and Appendix D of the report, noting the reserves will be reviewed again after the Finance Settlement and prior to the final budget proposals, to consider the risk applying at that time. vi. corporate budget requirements as set out in paragraph 8.1, including a contingency sum of £4.1m as set out in paragraph 8.2. <p>b) For the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Noted the provisional allocations of the funding for the Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and the Central School Services Block. ii. Following consultation with the Schools Forum, delegated authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, Executive Director for Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing (and Children’s Services – Interim), and the Executive Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) to determine the |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|-------|---|
| | | <p align="center">DSG 2024-25 schools funding formula, high needs funding arrangements and the early years funding formula in line with Department for Education guidance.</p> <p>c) Noted the decision making principles of the Transformation and Efficiency Board for Children’s Services (Northamptonshire Children’s Trust) as set out in paragraphs 7.17 to 7.20 and delegates authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, the Executive Director for Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing (and Children’s Services - Interim) and the Executive Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) to approve allocations from the Transformation and Efficiency funding held within the Children’s Trust budget in support of change programmes. Investment decisions will be subject to approval following the submission of detailed business cases.</p> <p>d) Endorsed the budget consultation process as outlined at paragraphs 13.16 to 13.20 which commences following the approval of the recommendations in this report.</p> <p>e) Noted that the funding allocations are estimates only at this stage and will not be confirmed until the publication of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.</p> <p>f) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) to amend the draft budget following the publication of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.</p> |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|---|---|
| | | <p>The Executive also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the changes to the draft budget arising from the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. b) Approved the use of the Budget Delivery Smoothing Reserve to meet the net shortfall in funding of £0.748m arising, predominantly, from a reduction to the Services Grant. Noting that further work will now be undertaken to look at options to meet this shortfall on a recurring basis. <p>Reason for Recommendations: To ensure that the Council complies with its Constitution and legislative requirements in setting the budget for North Northamptonshire Council from 2024-25.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered – This is the start of the formal budget consultation for the General Fund and any comments from the consultation, together with any changes from the Finance Settlement, will be considered as part of this process to inform the need for alternative options.</p> |
| Item 11 | Housing Revenue Account Draft Budget 2024-25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan Proposals | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| | | <p>a. Noted the draft 2024/25 Housing Revenue Account Budgets consisting of the Corby Neighbourhood Account and the Kettering Neighbourhood Account as set out in Appendix A, which will be consulted upon with Tenants, which includes:</p> <p>i) an increase in dwelling rents for 2024/25 of 7.7% which adheres to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) rent setting formula.</p> <p>b. Noted the draft Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Plan beyond 2024/25 consisting of the Corby Neighbourhood Account and the Kettering Neighbourhood Account, for 2025/26 to 2028/29 as set out in Appendix B.</p> <p>c. Noted the forecast reserves for the Corby Neighbourhood Account and the Kettering Neighbourhood Account up to 2028/29 as set out in Appendix C.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations: To ensure that the Council complies with its Constitution in setting the budget for North Northamptonshire.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered – This is the start of the formal budget consultation for the HRA and any comments from the consultation will be considered as part of this process.</p> |
| Item 12 | Draft Capital Programme 2024-28 | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| | | <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved for consultation the General Fund Capital Programme 2024-28 and HRA Capital Programme 2024-28. b) Noted the Development Pool 2024-28 and that schemes within the pool will be subject to further approval prior to inclusion in the programme. <p>Reason for Recommendations: To ensure that the Council complies with its Constitution and legislative requirements in setting the budget for North Northamptonshire Council for 2024-25.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered - This is the start of the formal budget consultation for the Capital Programme and any comments from the consultation will be considered as part of this process.</p> |
| Item 13 | 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: |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|-------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF) – budget approval for £261.5k which will be profiled as £96.5k in 2023/24, £55k in 2024/25, £55k in 2025/26 and £55k in 2026/27. The scheme is to be funded from external grant. b. Burton Latimer Multi Wheeled Sports Facility – budget approval for £46.3k in 2023/24, £41.8k to be funded from external grant and £4.5k to be funded from S106 contributions/a virement from the Property Minor Works Budget. c. Local Highways Maintenance additional funding – budget approval for an increase in the capital programme of £2.138m, £1.069m in 2023/24 and £1.069m in 2024/25, to be funded from Department for Transport (DfT) grant. ii) Noted the following change of purpose to an existing capital programme scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Montsaye Academy – amendment of scope of the approved scheme with £135k originally approved for yard and lift improvements to be re-purposed to fund a multi-use games area. iii) Noted the following budget virement approved by Council on 7th December: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Isham Bypass – virement of budget of £0.790m from Integrated Transport Block to facilitate the next stage of the planning application process approved on 27th November by the Leader of the Council, in |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|---|--|
| | | <p align="center">consultation with the Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations: These are set out in greater detail within section 5 of the report, but can be summarised as helping to meet the Council’s corporate plan objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active, fulfilled lives - Safe and Thriving Places - Green sustainable environment - Connected Communities <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those schemes which are grant funded, they are undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the grant conditions and, therefore, there is no alternative option proposed in this report. • The budget virement in support of the ICT equipment could have been released, however, the replacement of end user devices is an important element of ensuring that the Council has the appropriate equipment to support and deliver services and further investment is required in this area. • Where individual schemes are over £0.5m, separate reports are included elsewhere on this agenda, and these set out the wider options that were considered before reaching the proposals put forward. |
| Item 14 | Budget Forecast Update 2023-24 - Period 7 | RESOLVED |

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 21 December 2023

| Agenda Item No | Topic | Decision |
|----------------|-------|--|
| | | <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 release of the contingency budget, totalling £2.222m, to fund the pay award pressures. c) Noted the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2023/24 savings proposals in Appendix A. <p>Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2023/24 as at Period 7 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> |