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Northamptonshire  
Council

## Minutes of a meeting of the Council

Held at 6.00 pm on Thursday 7th March, 2024 in the Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, NN17 1QG

### Present:-

#### Members

Councillor Barbara Jenney (Chair)	Councillor Lora Lawman
Councillor Jean Addison	Councillor Ian Jelley
Councillor Tim Allebone	Councillor Matt Keane
Councillor Ross Armour	Councillor King Lawal
Councillor Charlie Best	Councillor Graham Lawman
Councillor Matt Binley	Councillor Anne Lee
Councillor Jennie Bone	Councillor Richard Levell
Councillor David Brackenbury	Councillor Paul Marks
Councillor Wendy Brackenbury	Councillor Dorothy Maxwell
Councillor Scott Brown	Councillor John McGhee
Councillor Cedwien Brown	Councillor Andy Mercer
Councillor Leanne Buckingham	Councillor Gill Mercer
Councillor Lyn Buckingham	Councillor Macaulay Nichol
Councillor Lloyd Bunday	Councillor Jan O'Hara
Councillor Jon-Paul Carr	Councillor Dr Anup Pandey
Councillor Robin Carter	Councillor Tom Partridge-Underwood
Councillor Melanie Coleman	Councillor Mark Pengelly
Councillor William Colquhoun	Councillor Roger Powell
Councillor John Currall	Councillor Elliot Prentice
Councillor Alison Dalziel	Councillor Simon Rielly
Councillor Dez Dell	Councillor Russell Roberts
Councillor Emily Fedorowycz	Councillor Mark Rowley
Councillor Martin Griffiths	Councillor Geoff Shacklock
Councillor Jim Hakewill	Councillor Jason Smithers
Councillor Clive Hallam	Councillor Joseph John Smyth
Councillor Ken Harrington	Councillor Sarah Tubbs
Councillor Helen Harrison	Councillor Malcolm Ward
Councillor Larry Henson	Councillor Malcolm Waters
Councillor Helen Howell	Councillor Andrew Weatherill
Councillor David Howes	Councillor Keli Watts
Councillor Philip Irwin	Councillor Lee Wilkes
Councillor Bert Jackson	

#### Officers

Adele Wylie – Chief Executive  
Sanjit Sull – Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)  
Kamila Coulson-Patel – Chief Lawyer, Governance and Litigation  
Ben Smith – Head of Democratic Services

### **311 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Valerie Anslow, Paul Bell, Mark Dearing, Scott Edwards, Jonathan Ekins, Peter McEwan, Zoe McGhee, Steven North, Harriet Pentland, David Sims, Chris Smith-Haynes, and Kevin Watt.

### **312 Minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2024 and 22nd February 2024**

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and Budget Council meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 minutes being amended to reflect the correct spelling of Cllr Elliot Prentice's forename, and to reflect that at minute 309 it was Cllr Hakewill rather than Cllr Fedorowycz who moved the Green Alliance amendment to the motion.

### **313 Declarations of interest.**

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

No declarations were made.

### **314 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed members, officers and members of the public to the meeting, announcing that the civic role continued to be very busy with two notable events having taken place.

- Firstly, a royal visit from Princess Anne, the Princess Royal to Wellingborough to recognise the work carried out by the charity 'Off the Streets' which aimed to eradicate knife crime in Northamptonshire.
- Secondly, representing the Council at a service of installation and welcome of the Right Reverend Deborah Mary Selin as the 39<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Peterborough Cathedral.

Other notable events attended included:-

- Holocaust services in Kettering and Rushden;
- County swimming championships in Corby;
- Indian Republic Day hosted by the Hindu Association in Wellingborough.

The Chair also reported that the Vice Chair had also attended events in Corby, Stanford, Wellingborough, Raunds and thanked her for her continued support.

### **315 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader made a statement to Council, as follows:-

## **International Women's Day**

'As many of you know, tomorrow is International Women's Day. This day marks not only achievements and progress of women worldwide but also services as a pointed reminder of the road ahead in pursuing gender equality.

As Leader of the Council I wanted to address you ahead of this significant day. Gender equality is not merely a matter of social justice, it's a foundation upon which a fair, inclusive and prosperous society is built. Our commitment to gender equality reflects our dedication to upholding the principles of equality, equity and justice for all members of our community.

Throughout history, women have been the backbone of society's pioneering change and driving progress. Despite this the struggle for equal rights, opportunities and representation persists. As a father to Michaela and Holly my two daughters, and a beautiful granddaughter Ruby, it has always been important for me to instil an attitude that just because you are a girl, you can't or shouldn't do something. I have always encouraged them to feel no limitations to what is possible. They have grown up to be inspiring, intelligent and amazing young ladies of which I am incredibly proud, and I am sure so will Ruby as she journeys on into her life.

Tomorrow provides the opportunity to mark progress in breaking down the barriers that hinder women's full participation in all aspects of public life. I am proud that North Northamptonshire Council welcomed its first female chair of the Council last year. I am also proud that the Council appointed its first female Chief Executive earlier this year. It's also worth noting that they are joined at the top table by Councillor Lora Lawman, our vice-chair, and Sanjit Sull, our monitoring officer, and Kamila Coulson-Patel, our deputy monitoring officer.

This year's International Women's Day theme is Inspire Inclusion and I am sure everyone in this room and colleagues throughout North Northamptonshire Council will agree that greater female representation at all levels of local government is both good and right.

So as we mark International Women's Day tomorrow, this Council can continue its splendid work in inspiring future generations of inclusion through our policies, debate and action. Together we can forge women's equity, celebrate women's achievements, raise awareness about discrimination and take action to drive gender equivalence.

International Women's Day belongs to everyone everywhere in pursuit of equity, every day, thank you.

### **Former Lord Lieutenant David Lang, CBE**

I also wanted to take a few moments to say a few words about the former Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire David Lang who has sadly passed away. Mr Lang served as the Lord Lieutenant from 2014 to 2020 and many of you will know that he was recently acknowledged in the 2024 New Year's honours List where he was awarded the CBE by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne for his services to charity and philanthropy.

Without any doubt Mr Lang significantly and positively impacted the local area. He worked to support a wide array of charities and voluntary organisations and did a

tremendous amount of work to help promote enterprise and business in the area too. He played a vital role in establishing the Northamptonshire Community Foundation which has issued over £20m in grants to causes across the area. He also served as the County's High Sherriff and was Pro-Chancellor at the University of Northampton.

Mr Lane will be remembered at a private family service, but I understand there will be a public memorial service to be held later this year to celebrate his life. I propose that we hold a minute's silence as a mark of respect to David Lang, a remarkable person who was a force for good in the area and who will sadly be missed.

[Members, officers and the public stood in silent tribute to David Lang.]

### **Officer Terms and Conditions**

Chair, I do have one further announcement to make. Members will recall that we agreed our new terms and conditions back in August 2023. This was a fantastic achievement for this authority, and they were developed to support our ambitions of being an employer of choice. Those colleagues who have joined us since vesting day will have moved into new roles since April 2023, have had their jobs evaluated under the new scheme and are now moving onto NNC pay terms and conditions.

In addition, all new recruits are being appointed to our new pay arrangements and this is enabling us to attract talent that will help us drive this fantastic Council forward. However this has left us with feelings of inequality and unfairness from some of our employees who transferred in to NNC on their previous employers' terms and conditions.

To give an example, our social workers who are on TUPE protected County Council terms and conditions and who have given our Council and the previous County Council long service will now receive less pay in some cases and less favourable terms and conditions than a new social worker joining the organisation. That is because the NNC pay band for our social worker role is higher than it was at the County Council. The resulting pay differential is quite simply not fair. Why would you come to a job where you're doing the same job and being paid less, it just doesn't make sense.

The situation we are in is not of our own making. It is a hangover of the local government reform in Northamptonshire. But just because we did not create the inequalities it doesn't mean we shouldn't fix them. We need to fix them, and we need to make sure everyone feels valued. We have always said that we would not be able to unilaterally move all employees to new pay terms and conditions but if we are truly to stick to our word of wanting to be an employer of choice and if we want to support our staff in the way that we say we do we can longer sustain differences that make some of our staff feel less valued than others.

We will therefore be offering every employee the opportunity to voluntarily move onto the new North Northamptonshire terms and conditions. This will give those employees who would receive preferential pay terms and conditions if they were to move on to our terms the opportunity to do so. This will enable more fairness and it will move us closer to the 'one council' approach that we are striving for. This will support our ambition to be an employer of choice.

Clearly a significant amount of work was undertaken to achieve the implementation of the pay and grading and this will also be a huge undertaking. We need to manage expectations regarding the timeline for staff, how and when we start this implementation and relevant details will be communicated to staff by officers.

This is a fantastic piece of work from officers and I hugely applaud them for that. It will make our Council so much fairer for all grades within the authority.

Thank you.

### **316 Public Participation**

Two members of the Public were invited to speak before Council, having registered their interest under public participation procedure rules.

Martin Toms made a statement urging the Council to do as much as it could to preserve and enlarge the forest and other green spaces within North Northamptonshire to ensure that residents and other users would derive benefits well beyond the cost of maintaining them.

James Town also made a statement in favour of green spaces, stating that green spaces were essential for promoting community wellbeing and nurturing both physical and mental health. By investing in the creation and maintenance of green infrastructure, he stated that policymakers, urban planners, and communities could create vibrant, liveable environments that support the holistic well-being of individuals and enhance the quality of life for generations to come.

A public question to Council in accordance with meeting procedure rule 16 had also been received from Mr Nick Shaw, who was unable to attend the meeting in person. The question and answer received were therefore taken as read, having previously been circulated, a copy of which is attached to these minutes at Appendix A.

### **317 Executive Presentations**

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

### **318 Pay Policy Statement 2024/25**

Council considered a report seeking approval of the Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix A and which asked Council to note that a package of new pay, terms, and conditions of employment and associated pay and employment policies for North Northamptonshire Council were still to be agreed.

Cllr Jason Smithers moved and Cllr Lora Lawman seconded the recommendations in the report.

Following a short debate, the motion was voted on, with 59 councillors in favour, 2 abstaining and 0 against.

**Resolved:-**

That Council:-

- a) Approves the Pay Policy detailed in Appendix A of the report; and
- b) Delegates to the Chief Executive the making of any in-year amendments to the Pay Policy Statement that may be required to complete the Pay Data and Chief Executive Remuneration relative to other Council Employees after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, when the Green Book pay award is agreed.

*Reasons for Decision: -*

- *It is a statutory requirement under the Localism Act 2011 for the Authority to approve and publish a Pay Policy Statement;*
- *Due regard has been given to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance issued or approved by the Secretary of State, in setting out this Pay Policy Statement.*

*Alternative Options Considered:-*

- *It is a statutory requirement that Council approves and publishes a Pay Policy Statement and therefore no alternative options were considered.*

**319 Political Balance on Council Committees**

Council considered an addendum report setting out a number of additional changes to Group appointments following the issuing of the original report on 28th February 2024. The addendum report encompassed both the contents of the original report and those changes notified to the Monitoring Officer since that date. A copy of the report is filed with the report at item 9 on the agenda for the meeting.

Cllr Jason Smithers moved and Cllr Matt Keane seconded the recommendations in the addendum report to Council.

It was noted that following recent changes to the political makeup of the Council, there were now four political groups, with the Conservative Group holding 52 seats, the Labour Group 17 seats, Green Alliance Group 4 seats and Independent Alliance Group 4 seats. One seat remained vacant.

Following the debate's conclusion, the motion was voted on, with 61 councillors in favour, 0 abstaining and 0 against.

**Resolved:-**

That Council:-

- a) Approves the revised distribution of seats across the political groups for ordinary committees and area committees, as set out in Addendum Appendix A, recommendations a) and b);
- b) Notes the following changes in the leadership arrangements of the recognised political groups for the municipal year 2023/24:-

- Deputy Leader of the Green Alliance Group – Councillor Charlie Best;
  - Leader of the Independent Alliance Group – Councillor Cedwien Brown;
  - Deputy Leader of the Independent Alliance Group – Councillor Jim Hakewill.
- c) Notes that in accordance with the Council’s Scheme of Delegation, any changes to places on committees arising from the new political balance will be made by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the leaders of the political groups represented on the Council.

*Reason for Decisions: –*

- *To ensure that the revised political balance of the Council is applied to the governance structure of the Council, in accordance with law and approved guidelines contained in the Council Constitution.*

*Alternative Options Considered:-*

- *None, as the revised political balance calculation is required to be reported to full Council under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.*

## **320 Motions on Notice**

### **Motion 1 – Green Spaces**

Cllr Emily Fedorowycz moved and Cllr Dez Dell seconded the following motion to Council.

*“This Council believes that every North Northants resident should have access to green spaces and recognises the importance of public access to these spaces for community well-being. This Council strives to achieve and advocate for “everyone to have access to green space or water within a 15-minute walk from their home as set out in the National Environmental Improvement Plan. This Council further acknowledges the benefits of green spaces for physical and mental health.*

*This Council resolves:*

- 1. To ensure all North Northants residents have easy access to quality green spaces*
- 2. Will take steps to protect and enhance our green infrastructure.*
- 3. To explore integration of access to green spaces as part of the development of the Urban Green Space Strategy*
- 4. That the relevant EAP is made aware of the opportunity to apply to be a new national forest, and consider if this aligns with our strategy for green spaces.”*

During debate, the importance of maintaining and improving access to green spaces was raised by all councillors speaking on the motion.

Following the debate’s conclusion, the motion was voted on, with 60 councillors in favour, 0 abstaining and 0 against.

## **Resolved:-**

This Council believes that every North Northants resident should have access to green spaces and recognises the importance of public access to these spaces for community well-being. This Council strives to achieve and advocate for "everyone to have access to green space or water within a 15-minute walk from their home as set out in the National Environmental Improvement Plan. This Council further acknowledges the benefits of green spaces for physical and mental health.

This Council resolves:

1. To ensure all North Northants residents have easy access to quality green spaces
2. Will take steps to protect and enhance our green infrastructure.
3. To explore integration of access to green spaces as part of the development of the Urban Green Space Strategy
4. That the relevant EAP is made aware of the opportunity to apply to be a new national forest, and consider if this aligns with our strategy for green spaces.

## **Motion 2 – Fostering**

Councillor Jim Hakewill moved and Cllr Charlie Best seconded the following motion to Council:-

*“This council welcomes the improvements achieved by Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Fostering Agency to being rated as “Good” following Ofsted’s January 2024 inspection.*

*As corporate parents it is reassuring that our friends and colleagues at the Trust are succeeding in protecting and enriching the lives of children and recognising the amazing role of Foster carers.*

*This Council calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the Chief Executive of the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust to reinforce the Councils commitment to supporting it in continuing to move forward positively.”*

During debate, councillors spoke about the benefits of fostering to improving the lives of looked after children and gave thanks to foster carers for their commitment to the children of North Northamptonshire was heard.

Following the debate’s conclusion, the motion was voted on, with 60 councillors in favour, 0 abstaining and 0 against.

## **Resolved:-**

This Council welcomes the improvements achieved by Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Fostering Agency to being rated as “Good” following Ofsted’s January 2024 inspection.

As corporate parents it is reassuring that our friends and colleagues at the Trust are succeeding in protecting and enriching the lives of children and recognising the amazing role of Foster carers.



This Council calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the Chief Executive of the Northamptonshire Children's Trust to reinforce the Councils commitment to supporting it in continuing to move forward positively.

**321 Councillor Questions**

The Chair noted that 18 councillor questions had been received for this meeting in accordance with meeting procedure rule 17.

Each of the 18 questions were asked 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 at Appendix B.**

**322 Close of Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, the Chair thanked members, officers and the public viewing the meeting both in person and online for their attendance and closed the meeting.

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Chair

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Date

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

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## Public Questions and Responses – 7 March 2024

<b>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</b> Council – 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2024				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Received from</b>	<b>Executive Member</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1.	Nick Shaw	Cllr Matt Binley	‘Were any risk assessments carried out prior to the roll-out of LED streetlighting which has resulted in very dim lighting levels on Deeble Road in Kettering, leaving residents feeling unsafe and how much money has been saved since the lights were changed?’	<p>Once completed, the conversion of the Highways streetlights across the network to LED will result in an annual saving of over £1m in energy costs alone. With predictions in energy costs, this saving is expected to rise to £1.5m per year by 2032. The conversion is set to reduce the Council’s carbon footprint by 500 tonnes/year thus contributing towards the Council’s commitment to become net zero by 2030. Given the extent of the network, the Council does not calculate the costs of street lighting per individual street or road.</p> <p>Furthermore, the LED lights are much more controlled, so any private properties and non-highway areas currently impacted by older lights will get less nuisance light and the ‘warm light’ we have specified is less intrusive for local wildlife.</p> <p>The LED lighting meets the Council’s lighting standards, which have not changed. These standards are not a precise light level, but a range with upper and lower limits. Levels are affected by: the distance from the lamp; road layout; junctions; light spacing and height; vegetation and other obstructions; and what brightness we can set lights to.</p> <p>There is no set level of lighting required by law, so the Council decides on a discretionary basis: where to provide light; to</p>

				<p>what level; when and if they dim; whether they operate on a part-night basis. The Council provides higher standards of lighting in areas where there are more pedestrian movements such as pedestrian crossings and close to amenities. This enables the Council to assess the risks of potential conflict points and if appropriate and practical, amend the lighting accordingly.</p> <p>Given the lighting standards are not changing as a result of the LED roll-out, there is no need to carry out risk assessments in advance of the change. Since the switch to LED, the lighting standards along Deeble Road have been checked and the Council's contractor, Balfour Beatty, have confirmed that they meet those standards. Given new pedestrian crossings are due to be installed along Deeble Road, the lighting will be assessed again given the potential risk for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians at these locations. This will consider whether there are any particular risks that may arise as a result of insufficient lighting between vehicles and pedestrians at those crossings and consider whether enhanced lighting is feasible and necessary.</p> <p>The Leader has requested a review of the lighting standards along Deeble Road. An assessment is being carried out by the contractor, Balfour Beatty, to determine whether the lighting could be enhanced and how much it would cost to do so. I expect to receive this assessment later this month.</p>
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**End of Public Questions**

**Councillor Questions and Responses – 7 March 2024**

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
1.	Cllr Anne Lee	Cllr Jason Smithers	Which trips abroad by councillors have been funded by North Northants Council?	<p>In 2022 NNC funded a trip to the annual International Walking Association Conference. It was a requirement of the IML Walking Association that if the council wanted to continue as a member to enable it to host the Waendel Walk that a representative must attend. The conference was held in Norway.</p> <p>The relevant Executive Member was chosen to attend. Flights and transfers were booked on an officer’s government procurement card. In the end that Exec Member could not attend, and Councillor Graham Lawman attended instead.</p> <p>There was a budget allocated for this expenditure which NNC inherited from the former Wellingborough BC. The expenditure for the trip made on the government procurement card was £654.</p> <p>The Waendel Walk has since been transferred to Wellingborough Town Council so any costs associated for the 2023 event or conference have not been met by NNC.</p>
2.	Cllr Mark Pengelly	Cllr Lloyd Bunday	What were the Legal costs for past 12 months on fighting SEND cases by the council ?	The reported spend on Legal support for the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process up to period 10 was £42k. The full year budget for these costs for the 2023/24 financial year is £95k.

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
Page 14			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> Does the Executive Member agree with me that it doesn't sit right with parents and guardians that the Council has a budget of £95k to fight parents and guardians who are trying to get their children into school and of the £42k spent fighting how much of that was given in the parent's favour and how many cases did the parents win?</p>	<p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> I will pass the supplementary question on to Councillor Scott Edwards for a written response, who unfortunately is unable to attend this meeting.</p>
	Cllr Mark Pengelly	Cllr Mark Rowley	<p>How many children are now not in school or waiting to be allocated places in North Northants?</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> How many children have an allocated school place but are still not present in the school because</p>	<p>The total reported number of pupils without a school place at the end of January 2024 was 312. Of these, 150 are currently in the School Admissions process, 49 are excluded or absent from school and 113 are awaiting a specialist placement linked to an Education, Health and Care Plan or other identified SEND need. As a comparison, at the end of the summer term in July 2023, the equivalent figure was 291, so there has been a small increase over this period. This is linked to the increased demand, and limited supply, for specialist places locally. Council officers work closely with DFE colleagues on understanding changes in demand and developing plans to address any areas of challenge.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> I will pass the supplementary question on to Councillor Scott Edwards for a written response.</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
			<p>of its suitability and how is that reported as some parents and guardians are having to home educate whilst waiting to get their EHP place.? Does the Executive Member recognise that one child not in school is one too many?</p>	
<p>4.</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 15</p>	<p>Cllr Mark Pengelly</p>	<p>Cllr Jason Smithers</p>	<p>The Leader of the Tory Group says Kier are failing, can he say where he believes we need improvements and who is to blame for these failures?</p>	<p>Kier are contractually responsible for repairing our highways network in line with the Council's standards, which are laid out in the contract. A key indicator within the performance framework relates to the time taken to repair potholes. These standards are published on our website.</p> <p>Each month we report to Executive Kier's performance in relation to repairing potholes within the timeframes specified in the contract. Kier are currently performing ahead of those standards and have been for many months. It is important that our in-house contract team continue to push Kier to provide the highest standards possible so that we can get the best value for money for our residents.</p> <p>Whilst Kier carry out routine inspections of the highways network to assess for defects, we also encourage residents to report defects via our website using the reporting tool: Fix My Street. On some occasions, Kier have not provided updates in a timely manner on some of the cases that have been raised by residents. The contract team have raised this with Kier and an improvement plan has been put in place.</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
Page 16			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b>                      Does the Leader agree with people on this side of the Council also most our residents that kier wasn't fit for purpose in April 2020 when he proclaimed that Kier were the new contractor that were going to be working on behalf of NNC at the time, also 2022 when he said that we need a fit for purpose highways contractor that's essential in the delivery of services. Who is to blame for the failure of Kier, is it the previous Executive Member or Cabinet Member at the County Council who brought this in or is the present Executive Member?</p>	<p>I know how important the condition of our highways is to local residents and I shall continue to monitor Kier's performance to ensure they are delivering on their contractual commitments for the benefits of our residents.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b>                      I don't feel that the highways Authority is failing, I think it is doing the work we require of them. I think there is some attention we need on key performance indicators to bring them up to speed and let them understand the high expectations that all of these members here all of the members over there expect of our highways contractor. Apportioning blame to Executive Members – I do not think that is conducive to a good discussion in this chamber. I am happy to have an offline conversation with Councillor Pengelly.</p>



No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
5.	Cllr Lyn Buckingham	Cllr Matt Binley	<p>How many play parks does NNC have across the district and out of those NNC play parks how many have a provision for disabled children and where are these located?</p>	<p>There are 107 play areas managed directly by NNC in our open spaces and country parks. This does not include play parks within North Northants that are managed by Town and Parish Councils on sites they own. All parks within NNC management are inspected by qualified inspectors on a cyclical basis to comply with the relevant legislation, defects and repairs are carried out by suitably qualified persons. All parks are designed to cater for a range of ages and abilities, including relevant disability access legislation and inclusive equipment.</p>
Page 17			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> Will NNC be consulting with specialist disability groups and SEND groups on what sort of equipment or play areas are needed in the future?</p>	<p>The Council is also consulting on the development of an Urban Green Space strategy, backed by £1.5 million from the Government’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund. We are actively looking for feedback on how our urban green space can be enhanced, including improvements to accessibility.</p>
			<p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> With regard to people with SEND needs there are already designs that are in existence such as the sensory domes which are the types of equipment that are used. I certainly know of one that is due to be delivered this year in North Northamptonshire.</p>	<p>It is not so much about consulting about what type of equipment is needed and wanted in an area because of course that type of thing is already known about so that it caters for</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
				individuals who have a whole spectrum of different needs, it's more about where those are best situated.
6.	Cllr Lyn Buckingham	Cllr Mark Rowley	<p>How many tenants are waiting to downsize under the council's Fresh start (for Corby) and other similar scheme for Kettering, if they have a downsizing scheme (please let us know if there is one for Kettering)</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> Would Cllr Rielly look into the speed of people being able to downsize because we are hearing that it can still take up to two years so we have a lot of tenants who are</p>	<p>There are 163 active applications on Keyways for North Northamptonshire Council tenants requiring to downsize as of 04 March 2024. Housing currently have two schemes and provide one-to-one support throughout the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh Start in Corby</li> <li>• Home Moves in Kettering</li> </ul> <p>Both schemes can help tenants to downsize to a smaller, more suitable accommodation and free up much needed larger accommodation. Housing Officers/ Financial Inclusion and Support Officers promote both schemes in particular under occupied properties, people struggling with affordability due to “bedroom tax” or with heating/decorating and maintaining their home or if the property no longer meets the needs of the tenant due to medical issues or specific succession cases.</p> <p>Housing Options also advise and support transfer applications about the schemes.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> Yes, happy to look into that and see what we can do.</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer								
			waiting to move up into two or three bedroom properties who are unable to do so due to the blockage.									
7.	Cllr Lyn Buckingham	Cllr Mark Rowley	Please could you let us know if the backlog of housing repairs (for which NNC put in £900K) has been completed in both Corby and Kettering if not what is still outstanding?	<p>The Backlog Repairs' Project was approved in 2023 to complete the backlog repairs that had accrued during the pandemic and to run for one year from May 2023 and conclude in May 2024.</p> <p>The project was allocated an additional budget of £900,000 across both neighbourhood accounts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In May 2023 there were 5,352 outstanding/backlog repairs.</li> <li>• As of the 28th February 2024, there are 1,124 outstanding repairs.</li> </ul> <p>The project is now in month nine of the programme and on target for the final quarter.</p> <p>As such, we have hit 79.0% of the Repairs Backlog against an agreed target of 79.5%.</p> <p>The table below shows the budget allocation for this project and current spend:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1182 1251 2078 1390"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1189 1256 1429 1390"><i>Neighbourhood Area</i></th> <th data-bbox="1435 1256 1653 1390"><i>Initial Allocation</i></th> <th data-bbox="1659 1256 1845 1390"><i>Spend to date (28/02/24)</i></th> <th data-bbox="1852 1256 2072 1390"><i>Budget remaining</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Neighbourhood Area</i>	<i>Initial Allocation</i>	<i>Spend to date (28/02/24)</i>	<i>Budget remaining</i>				
<i>Neighbourhood Area</i>	<i>Initial Allocation</i>	<i>Spend to date (28/02/24)</i>	<i>Budget remaining</i>									

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer								
Page 20			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> Are there any current backlogs of repairs occurring because of work that's gone on? Have we been able to keep up with day to day repairs, not just the backlog?</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="1184 325 2080 453"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1184 325 1435 384">Corby</td> <td data-bbox="1435 325 1659 384">£500,000</td> <td data-bbox="1659 325 1850 384">£229,146</td> <td data-bbox="1850 325 2080 384">£270,854</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1184 384 1435 453">Kettering</td> <td data-bbox="1435 384 1659 453">£400,000</td> <td data-bbox="1659 384 1850 453">£157,265</td> <td data-bbox="1850 384 2080 453">£242,735</td> </tr> </table> <p data-bbox="1184 453 2080 564">We have employed an additional contractor to undertake fencing works and remain on track to complete the backlog project on time and to budget.</p> <p data-bbox="1184 596 2080 788"><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> There are two teams actually working on this I believe, one doing the old backlog that's highlighted in your supplementary and the ongoing repairs undertaken by another team. So there is a backlog but they are working on it.</p>	Corby	£500,000	£229,146	£270,854	Kettering	£400,000	£157,265	£242,735
	Corby	£500,000	£229,146	£270,854								
Kettering	£400,000	£157,265	£242,735									
8.	Cllr Anne Lee	Cllr Helen Howell	<p>What is being done to safeguard the accreditation of Kettering's museum?</p>	<p data-bbox="1184 863 2080 1082">Officers are preparing to embark on a comprehensive North Northamptonshire Heritage Masterplan. This initiative, supported by funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, will provide strategic direction for the restoration of the museum and the optimal storage and care of collections across North Northamptonshire.</p> <p data-bbox="1184 1118 2080 1342">All archaeological archives under the care of North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire will be housed in the ARC, ensuring their safety and preservation. These archives will be made available to local museums, including our own, as and when required. This will include those that are currently housed in Kettering.</p>								

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Page 21			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b>                      Since most of the collections of Kettering Museum that are in storage are social history items rather than archaeological items, do we have the Executive Member's assurance that those collections in storage are being looked after properly and regularly visited to check for signs of woodworm etc?</p>	<p>Upon completion of the heritage masterplan, officers will collaborate with the National Lottery Heritage Fund to commence the restoration and eventual reopening of the museum. In the meantime the Gallery and Museum collections are being managed and officer are in regular liaison with our regional contact for Museum accreditation. The accreditation remains in place but reaccreditation is currently paused.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b>                      The answer to that is yes.</p>
9.	Cllr Ross Armour	Cllr Helen Howell	<p>When will a condition survey take place for the disused sports pavilion at Lake Avenue in Kettering so it can be brought back to life for the community to use?</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b></p>	<p>A condition survey has been completed for the pavilion at Lake Avenue. This, along with condition survey data on the wider Leisure estate, will feed into the development of the Council's Leisure Strategy, which will consider future investment need and their prioritisation. In the meantime, the property remains in use.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b></p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
			I was a little bit confused by the latter part of this answer because my findings are that the pavilion is essentially desolate at the present time, so can I simply ask who is using it?	It is in use and is being used by the Kettering Harriers so I am not too sure what you mean by desolate. I have been assured by officers it is in use.
10.	Cllr Ross Armour	Cllr David Brackenbury	Will the leader review and change as a matter of urgency the current taxi licensing policy that states taxi replacement vehicles need to be no older than 4 years?	It was the intention to review the policy two years after introduction. However, the Department for Transport released updated best practice guidance for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles to licensing authorities in November 2023. In light of that, the Authority will be reviewing the North Northamptonshire Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy during 2024. However, no commitment can be made to the outcomes of that review at this time. The Authority's policy will need to reflect the best practice guidance and maintain its commitments to the Authority's climate change agenda.
11.	Cllr Simon Rielly	Cllr Matt Binley	<p>The government allocated NNC additional Highways money to repair our road network, fix streetlights, repairs road signs and make our roads safer.</p> <p>Can the Leader reassure the chamber how the money will be used and will our current road network that is in desperate need of repair take priority?</p>	<p>We welcome the additional funding provided by the Government to repair and maintain our highways network. We will ensure this funding is used in the most cost-effective way so that we can make the very most of the additional funding for the benefit of our residents and road users.</p> <p>The additional funding follows the annual allocation of the Government funding that totals £9.768m for 2024/25 and was accepted by the Executive on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024. This funding will be used to maintain the highway network to a safe standard and improve access for residents and visitors across North Northamptonshire in accordance with the</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
Page 23				<p>Northamptonshire Asset Management Plan, Local Transport Plan and Network Management Plan.</p> <p>The Government have provided a further £2.1m (£1.069m per year) to be spent during 2023/24 and 2024/25. This funding is part of the Government’s eleven-year plan to invest in road maintenance and arises from the cancellation of the Northern HS2 line. We have already published a programme of works which have been enabled by this funding. This money will be spent on resurfacing roads, cycleways and footways and maintaining bridges, as well as preventing potholes and other road defects. We looked at the annual condition surveys of the highway network and used our highways asset management strategy to prioritise work based on the condition of the road, while considering other local factors such as: road importance; number of defects; number of customer complaints. This programme consists of additional road treatment schemes which will improve road surface and prolong the life of the road surface. <a href="https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/network-north-funding">Network North funding   North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>Furthermore, the Council has allocated £9m within its own capital programme to boost our maintenance highways budget for the next three years. In total, as part of the Capital programme for 2024 – 2028 the Council agreed at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February to spend approximately £49.1m over the next four financial years on highways projects, the largest investment the council has made towards highways to date.</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
Page 24				<p>Most recently, the Government have announced a further £149m which will be provided to North Northamptonshire over the 7 years from 2025/26. This is to be spent on the Council's overall priorities for highway improvements, not just maintenance. Whilst the Government have confirmed the overall funding package, we are waiting to hear how the funding will be profiled over the 7 years, although it is clear that the majority of the funding will be in later years. The in-house highways team are now working to devise a programme of works which will seek to get the best value from this funding. Once that programme is complete, we will publish it on the Council's website.</p> <p>The full programme for maintenance and preventative works during 2024/ 25 will be outlined in the Highways Annual Plan, which we expect to finalise in early April; an Executive Summary of which will be circulated to all Members. These funding streams do not include the further funding confirmed by the Government for the Isham bypass, which is subject to the successful submission of the necessary business cases as well as planning permission, nor the work to dual the section of the A43 between Holcot and Sywell roundabouts. Work on both of these projects is progressing well.</p>



No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
12.	Cllr John McGhee	Cllr David Brackenbury	<p>Corby has a resident who has stolen land behind people's houses. The land is being turned into a hard stand and fires are being lit as well as rubbish being left there.</p> <p>As well stealing land neighbours are so upset with the constant disturbances and fires at their back gates. Why have we not in 2 years dealt with this? Is it a lack of resources?</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> Does Councillor Brackenbury agree with me that if we do not deal with this as soon as possible we will encourage others to do the same thing on our green land and on our green spaces?</p>	<p>Officers are aware of this particular case. Planning Enforcement, Environmental Health and Street scene teams are due to discuss the recent nuisance factors due to the nature of the complaints.</p> <p>We are aware of the encroachment into the amenity land at the rear, but the adverse possession of land is not within the enforcement remit of the authority. The council is aware who owns the land but all attempts to contact them, including several emails and calls have elicited no response. As this is ultimately a civil matter between the two landowners the Council would usually ask the landowner to deal with the encroachment, as it is their land, but as that has been fruitless the council has sought to help.</p> <p>Based on a further site visit this week, officers are now considering more formal enforcement action and will ensure the local ward members are kept up to date as this progresses.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> It is a bit complicated because the adverse possession of land as I explained in the answer is in fact a civil matter and it is not within the competence of the Council. However, I do know there is a lot of unpleasant environmental effects going on and we are taking a more proactive approach to work with enforcement to try and make the situation as clear as possible. I can also talk to you offline and am more than happy to keep an interest in this.</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
13.	Cllr Emily Fedorowycz	Cllr Helen Howell	<p>What is the full budgeted cost of implementing the temporary Kettering library facility and when will the permanent building be reopened?</p>	<p>The additional cost to the service for the relocation to the temporary library facility in Kettering was £120 for external directional signage and £200 for a fire risk assessment to take place, (£320 in total). Everything else related to the move was managed in-house by the library team apart from the IT cabling, which cost £853 and has been covered within the allocated IT Services budget.</p> <p>The Replacement Roof project has been mobilised. It remains the intention to move the library back to its permanent home once the library roof is watertight, so long as it is safe to do so from a health and safety perspective. Project timelines at this stage indicate the earliest that might be is Spring 2025, but this is subject to change.</p>
			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> Knowing that the library roof has been a known issue for over half a decade, how has it not been budgeted for and actioned before it has reached a critical point, and what will the Council be doing to make up for the fact that the library cannot celebrate its 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary in May 2024 with an open facility?</p>	<p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> I cannot answer on issues that happened prior to vesting day as the library was the responsibility of the County Council and the extension part of the library was also part of Kettering Borough Council's work as they went out for the funding.</p> <p>As for the celebrations, unfortunately there's not a great deal we can do about the library as the roof is needing replacement and I think that it is really critical that we ensure we protect that building for future generations. As soon as the library can be opened it will be.</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
14.	Cllr Emily Fedorowycz	Cllr Harriet Pentland	<p>What is the aim and impact of the council’s Climate Conferences? Has it impacted Net Zero and Carbon Footprint targets and actions?</p>	<p>The NN climate conference has now run for three consecutive years, with 32 speakers covering a diverse range of climate topics from climate-friendly farming, sustainable food production, nature recovery, sustainable tourism, renewable energy, and sustainable travel, to name just a few.</p> <p>The aim of the climate conference is to raise knowledge and awareness of sustainable initiatives and opportunities and foster collective action and build a sustainable future for the local community in the face of climate change challenges. We have seen our own carbon footprint targets influenced by these initiatives, as evidenced by the rollout of the carbon management plan in areas such as procurement, ICT, fleet, environment, and in Council owned buildings. A report updating on the Council’s carbon management plan progress and areas of focus will be presented to Executive in April.</p> <p>However, it is important to recognise the Council’s role in influencing carbon emissions in the area, with the Council being responsible for approximately 2% of carbon emissions within North Northants, but able to influence over 33% of all emissions across North Northants.</p> <p>Therefore, we play a crucial role in influencing carbon emissions in the local area by implementing policies, programs, and initiatives that promote sustainability and mitigate climate change impacts. Through initiatives such as the NN climate conference we can demonstrate both proactive leadership and community engagement on the importance of</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
Page 28			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> Regarding fostering collective action, how is a public broadcast anything more than a talking shop and how are we actually encouraging people to be engaged and generate collective action with our residents and our businesses?</p>	<p>sustainability now, and call on the convening power of the Council to draw sustainability partners together, support our Big 50 vision of giving the best life for all, and create a more environmentally sustainable future for North Northamptonshire.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer by Cllr Smithers on behalf of Cllr Pentland:-</b> The Climate Conference is a really useful tool to getting people engaged locally about understanding what this authority is doing to reduce our carbon footprint. I think that the engagement that comes out of the online discussions that go on to YouTube is watched by quite a few people and it probably inspires some young individuals to think about their impact on the climate. We're progressively moving forward finding the baseline position here at the Council and we will continue to do so. We will continue to engage and I encourage the climate conference to continue throughout the coming years. It is a great tool to use to advertise hat we are doing.</p>
15.	Cllr Emily Fedorowycz	Cllr Helen Howell	<p>When will the consultant's business plan for the Kettering Leisure Village be available for the community to comment on, as well as a formal scrutiny committee agenda item to debate the options, as promised at full council in June 2023?</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b></p>	<p>The options review undertaken by a specialist Leisure management consultant is now finalised, and a report is being prepared to present to the Place &amp; Environment Scrutiny Committee at the end of March. The report and feedback from the Scrutiny Panel meeting will subsequently be considered by Executive.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b></p>

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			<p>What engagement with the KLV campaign group has taken place to get their input on this report and ongoing plan and have they been made aware of these meetings and this time frame so they can come and speak if they wish to?</p>	<p>The KLV support group has not been in contact with this Council at all. The paper is in its readiness now to go scrutiny as it states, which is a public meeting and they are able to attend and speak at that meeting should they wish to.</p> <p>The consultation paper was undertaken by an external consultant so it is their findings that we have received and are now assessing. By all means we would love the support group to come to scrutiny and then the Executive, they are more than welcome.</p>
<p>Page 29</p>	<p>Cllr Jim Hakewill</p>	<p>Cllr Helen Howell</p>	<p>What is the present position regarding the proposed disaggregation of the Library service between north and west and when will the next steps take place?</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> When will the proposals to be considered by the Joint Shared Service Committee be subject to scrutiny? My understanding is the Shared Services Committee is just six councillors.</p>	<p>Officers from both Councils have developed an options appraisal and impact assessment relating to further disaggregation of the library service, which is already 85% disaggregated. Currently there is no agreed position on disaggregation between NNC and WNC. If and when this is achieved the proposals will be taken through the Joint Shared Services Committee.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> At this time there are no proposals coming forward so until we know what is coming and when, at that point there will then be an opportunity for members to call it in following the decision.</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>Cllr Jim Hakewill</p>	<p>Cllr Matt Binley</p>	<p>How many £20 Green Waste rebates were issued to residents of</p>	<p>We were pleased to offer a rebate to those existing garden waste subscribers in the East Northants area who had loyally</p>

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
Page 30			<p>the former East Northamptonshire District Council and how much did it cost to distribute them?</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> By my reckoning the residents of East Northamptonshire received £230k back as a rebate. Residents of Kettering, Wellingborough and Corby still pay for their green waste to be collected. Within the harmonised North Northamptonshire Council tax when will residents of Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough get our rebate?</p>	<p>subscribed to the service. We welcomed a total of 11,498 returning customers who all benefitted from the £20 rebate. The team worked hard to ensure the renewing process was as easy as possible for our customers. There were no additional costs to administer the rebates as the changes to the rate were applied as part of the online renewal process.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> It's important to note that I think people are confusing the harmonisation in the fact of who was paying what, where and when. I think we have to look at this in the fact that over 85% of councils in the UK are charging for the collection of green waste so we are not doing anything unusual. I would also add that we are one of the cheapest councils for charging for green waste.</p> <p>There are councils that are charging over £100 for the collection of green waste and we are nowhere near that so I think we have done this in a very fair and very reasonable manner to not overly burden any of the residents in North Northamptonshire. I also think it was right and proper to do what we did with regards to those loyal customers in East Northamptonshire.</p>
18.	Cllr Jim Hakewill	Cllr Jason Smithers	When do we expect an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge team to be on site at NNC to give valuable external scrutiny on the Council's journey from April 2021?	The Leader and Chief Executive has already spoken with the LGA about a Peer Review as we welcome the opportunity for external peers to learn about our council, provide feedback and give recommendations to ensure continuous improvement.

No.	Received from	Executive Member	Question	Answer
			<p><b>Supplementary Question:-</b> When do we expect an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge team to be on site?</p>	<p>A meeting has been scheduled with the Local Government Association to schedule a date in late summer.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Answer:-</b> We will be having a conversation late summer and we will update you as soon as we know what the date is and as soon as the LGA fit us in.</p>

**End of Cllr Questions**

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