

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 15 February 2024

Issued: 15th February 2024

The following decisions in this notice were made by the Executive on Thursday 15th February 2024.

Any decisions identified below as a **KEY DECISION** will come into force and may be implemented on Friday 23rd February, 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.

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Part A – Items considered in public

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| Item 5 | Performance Indicator Report 2023/24 (Period 9 - December 2023) | RESOLVED That the Executive noted the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 9 (December) 2023/24, set out in Appendix A to this 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 9 (December) 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 | Options Appraisal for Recommissioning Public Health Services | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <p>i) Approved a procurement process for the following services as set out in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 0-19 Health Visiting and School Nursing Service • Strong Start Service • Northamptonshire Integrated Sexual Health Service and HIV Service (NISHH) • Youth Counselling Offer (REACH) • Oral Health Promotion Service and • Dental Epidemiology Survey <p>ii) Granted delegated authority to the Executive Member for Adults, Health,</p> |

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| | | <p align="center">and Wellbeing to determine the model of delivery on a contract-by-contract basis.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations: Approval will ensure an open and robust process as to whether each contract should be provided internally or externally commissioned, and new services are in place by 1st April 2025.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: A report was taken to shared services joint committee on 17th January 2024, exploring to either continuing jointly or independently recommission the CYP and sexual health services, it was approved by both NNC and WNC executive members that these services should be disaggregated now from the joint arrangement and separately recommissioning these in order to fit the needs of local population. However, commissioners have now drafted a further option paper to engage with elected members around the option for internal vs external recommissioning.</p> |
| Item 7 | Determination of Admission Arrangements for Local Authority Maintained (Community and Voluntary Controlled) Schools in North Northamptonshire for the 2025 Intakes | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <p>i) Determined the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools as detailed in Appendix A, subject to the addition of Cransley, Little Cransley and Great Cransley as linked villages in the</p> |

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| | | <p align="center">admission criteria for Broughton Primary School</p> <p>ii) Agreed the two Co-ordinated Schemes for the 2025 intakes as detailed in Appendix B and Appendix C.</p> <p>iii) Approved the setting of the relevant area for schools in the authority.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All admission authorities must determine the admission arrangements for their schools annually. Consultation on reducing the PANs of some schools because of falling pupil numbers in the area of the schools. • It is the duty of local authorities to formulate and publish a co-ordinated scheme for the admission of pupils to all schools in the area. • The LA must review the relevant area every two years. <p>Alternative Options Considered: All the above are statutory requirements and, therefore, there are no alternative options available.</p> |
| Item 8 | Department for Transport Funding Allocations | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> |

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| | | <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted and accepted the receipt of the government grants totalling £9.768m made up of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways Maintenance Block needs element - £3.735m • Highways Maintenance Block incentive element (subject to confirmation) - £0.934m • Potholes Fund - £3.735m • Integrated Transport Block funding - £1.364m b) Agreed to spend the grants on maintaining and upgrading the highway network in line with the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan and to deliver the current priorities in the list of identified maintenance schemes. <p>Reason for Recommendations: Utilisation of government grant to support and maintain the Council's Highways infrastructure and transport network.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered – Options would include not spending the money and allowing DfT to recoup it. Alternatively, the Council could choose to spend the money on schemes that are not a priority in line with their Northamptonshire Transportation Plan. Neither option is recommended.</p> |
| Item 9 | Communities Strategy and Strategic Investment into the Voluntary, Community and Social | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> |

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| | Enterprise Sector | <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the Communities Strategy for adoption; b) Approved the proposed VCSE Strategic grants framework and the proposed VCSE Infrastructure support arrangements for the period 2024-2027. c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up, in consultation with the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing to procure the new VCSE Infrastructure support contract and undertake any activities required to deliver this strategy. <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The previous strategic VCSE grant arrangements inherited from sovereign councils end on 31st March 2024 (some have been in place since 2017, pre-Covid and pre-North Northamptonshire Council) and new arrangements are required; • The previous arrangements for VCSE infrastructure support also come to an end on 31st March 2024 and new, more robust, arrangements are required; • There has been a huge shift in the strategic context within which the Council and the VCSE are now working, largely due to the development of the Integrated Care System (ICS) and the new Place-based delivery models, including the |

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| | | <p>Council’s Levelling Up agendas for its ‘left behind’ neighbourhoods, all of which have already resulted in a strengthened collaboration and governance for the VCSE;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Place-based delivery models have also brought about emerging priorities from the new Community Wellbeing Forums and Local Area Partnerships (LAPs), and the emergence of the new VCSE-led, whole-system, early intervention service, Support North Northants (SNN), which is providing evidence of need on the ground in communities; • The work undertaken by the Northamptonshire County Association for Local Councils (NCALC) between 2021 and 2023 which reported on the relationship between Principal and Local Councils and included approaches to devolution of assets and services. • In summary a Communities Strategy is required to set out the Council’s approach to working with and investing in the VCSE within the context of these strategic contexts. <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The alternative option would be to not have a Communities Strategy. However, this would not be a recommended approach as the Strategy sets out how the Council wishes to work with the VCSE, as equal partners, recognising the valuable role the sector plays in supporting the communities of North Northamptonshire. • It also identifies the key themes for the new VCSE Infrastructure contract and lays the foundation for the Council’s new VCSE strategic grants programme, both of which are needed to replace legacy arrangements inherited by the Council in 2021. Without the Strategy the VCSE would not have reassurance about future funding opportunities, nor about the critical support it has stated it |

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| | | <p>requires moving forward, to help the sector to grow, become more sustainable and to attract more inward investment into North Northamptonshire, for the benefit of our communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of options were considered as part of the Council’s budget setting for 2024-25, in relation to the future funding envelope for the VCSE Strategic grants from 1st April 2024. This included removing all funding and ceasing the programme, to a variety of proposals which might result in the funding being reduced to a greater or lesser extent. Ultimately the Council’s Executive are committed to retaining the funding at the same levels as before, £671,771, whilst recognising that new grant arrangements would be required to replace those that are expiring on 31st March 2024. • In summary, not having a Communities Strategy could result in missed opportunities for VCSE organisations to collaborate effectively with one another to share knowledge, expertise and resource, and for the Council to work in effective strategic and operational partnerships with the hundreds of VCSE organisations which operate locally and add so much economic and social value to the North Northamptonshire economy and social fabric. |
| Item 10 | Levelling Up in North Northamptonshire Plan 2024 - Progress Report | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <p>a) Noted the progress against the Levelling Up Plan in North</p> |

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| | | <p align="center">Northamptonshire.</p> <p>b) Requested the Scrutiny Management Board to consider if the report should be received and considered by any of its scrutiny committees.</p> <p>c) Recommended to Full Council that the progress report is received by Full Council in quarter one of the 2024 – 2025 municipal year, as set out in the governance for the plan in Appendix A, following consideration by the relevant Scrutiny committees, as determined by the Scrutiny Management Board.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations:</p> <p>i) The levelling up agenda is both a national and local priority and of importance to council members. The scrutiny review was undertaken because of an amended motion and discussion at Full Council.</p> <p>ii) The recommendations seek approval from the Executive to progress the update through the governance set out in Appendix A (Page 4).</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered:</p> <p>i) Do not follow the governance set out in the Levelling Up plan, and transfer reporting activity to Business as Usual activity.</p> <p>ii) Whilst it would be expected that this activity will eventually transfer into business as usual activity and be subsumed into the corporate plan</p> |

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| | | <p>priorities, it is felt that there should be 1 – 2 full reporting cycles including scrutiny and Full Council prior to transferring this activity to business as usual.</p> |
| Item 11 | Corby Business Academy SEND Provision | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>KEY DECISION</p> |

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| | | <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the proposed Capital Project of Corby Business Academy SEND provision. b) Noted the scheme will be funded primarily by Higher Needs Funding. c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families and Education, in consultation with the Executive Director of Children’s Services and the Executive Director of Place and Economy, to authorise all necessary legal, property and financial agreements to ensure effective delivery of the scheme. <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corby Business Academy has enough physical space that can be utilised to support the severe shortage of specialist spaces in North Northamptonshire as result of falling rolls. • This project provides NNC the support to increase sufficiency of SEND places by creating 28 SEND places within the school. • School place planning duties (s13-14 Education Act 1996) The Council as an education authority has a duty to promote high standards of education and fair access to education. It also has a general duty to secure sufficient schools in their area, and to consider the need to secure provision for children with SEN. This includes a duty to respond to parents’ |

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| | | <p>representations about school provision. These are referred to as the school place planning duties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we do not provide the Corby Business Academy SEND provision, out of necessity we may need to seek SEND places in the independent sector which will have significant budget implications. • There would also be implications on home to school transport costs if the pupils are placed out of county or out of area because of not creating these places. <p>Alternative Options Considered: The other option was to do nothing; this would not support the Council's school place planning duties.</p> |
| Item 12 | Capital Outturn Report 2023/24 at Period 9 | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Noted the draft capital outturn position as at period 9 for the General Fund (GF) Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme for 2023/24. b. Noted the new schemes that have been approved since 1st April 2023. <p>Reason for Recommendations: This is in line with the Council's constitution and financial regulations in relation to governance.</p> |

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| | | Alternative Options Considered: This report is on the forecasted out-turn and therefore alternative options are not proposed. |
| 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Manor School, Raunds SEND Provision - budget approval for £145k in 2024/25, to be funded from external grant. b. Corby Business Academy SEND Provision - budget approval for £544k, £2k in 2023/24, £542k in 2024/25, to be funded from external grant. c. End User Devices – virement of £441k from completed existing ICT schemes to End User Devices scheme, funding to remain as approved from capital receipts. d. Community Orchards – budget approval for 16K in 2023/24, to be funded from external grant. e. Mirco Woodlands – budget approval for £27.7k in 2023/24, to be funded from external grant. |

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| | | <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: 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |
| Item 14 | Budget Forecast Update 2023-24 - Period 9 | <p>RESOLVED</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. |

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| | | <p align="center">b) Noted the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2023/24 savings proposals in Appendix A.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2023/24 as at Period 9 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> |