

Annual Council

North Northamptonshire Council

Wednesday 26th May 2021

At 7:00 pm in Kettering Conference Centre, Thurston Drive, Kettering.

Members in Attendance:

Councillors Paul Bell (Chair), Larry Henson (Vice Chair), Jean Addison, Tim Allebone, Valerie Anslow, Ross Armour, Matt Binley, Jennie Bone, David Brackenbury, Wendy Brackenbury, Scott Brown, Cedwien Brown, Lyn Buckingham, Leanne Buckingham, Lloyd Bunday, Jon-Paul Carr, Robin Carter, William Colquhoun, John Currall, Alison Dalziel, Annabel de Capell Brooke, Mark Dearing, Dez Dell, Scott Edwards, Jonathan Ekins, Emily Fedorowycz, Jim Hakewill, Clive Hallam, Ken Harrington, Helen Harrison, Kirk Harrison, Helen Howell, David Howes, Phillip Irwin, Bert Jackson, Ian Jelley, Barbara Jenney, David Jenney, Matt Keane, King Lawal, Graham Lawman, Lora Lawman, Anne Lee, Richard Levell, Paul Marks, Dorothy Maxwell, Peter McEwan, John McGhee, Zoe McGhee, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Macaulay Nichol, Steven North, Anup Pandey, Mark Pengelly, Harriet Pentland, Roger Powell, Elliot Prentice, Simon Rielly, Russell Roberts, Mark Rowley, Geoff Shacklock, David Sims, Jason Smithers, Chris Smith-Haynes, Joseph Smyth, Mike Tebbutt, Kevin Thurland, Sarah Tubbs, Michael Tye, Malcolm Ward, Malcolm Waters, Kevin Watt, Andrew Weatherill, Lee Wilkes.

Officers in Attendance:

Rob Bridge (Chief Executive), Adele Wylie (Director of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer), Paul Goult (Interim Democratic Services Manager).

Also in Attendance:

James Saunders Watson (Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire).

Opening Address

Prior to the formal opening of the meeting, James Saunders Watson (Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire) addressed the meeting and offered the Council his sincere best wishes for the future.

1 Election of Chair of North Northamptonshire Council

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

The nomination of Councillor Paul Bell was duly **MOVED** by Councillor David Brackenbury and **SECONDED** by Councillor Andy Mercer. There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) Councillor Paul Bell be elected as Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

2 Appointment of Vice Chair of North Northamptonshire Council

Nominations were sought for the position of Vice Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

The nomination of Councillor Larry Henson was duly MOVED by Councillor Scott Edwards and SECONDED by Councillor Russell Roberts. There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) Councillor Larry Henson be appointed as Vice Chair of North Northamptonshire Council for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin Griffiths, Jan O'Hara and Tom Partridge-Underwood.

4 Declarations of Interest

Members were requested to declare whether they had any personal or pecuniary interest in any item to be considered by the meeting. No declarations of interest were made.

5 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair's Announcements on this occasion.

6 Political Group Leadership

Annual Council received a report detailing the leadership appointments made by the recognised political groups following the elections held on 6th May 2021.

Councillor Jason Smithers – Leader of the Conservative Group
Councillor Helen Howell – Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group
Councillor Jean Addison – Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor John McGhee – Deputy Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor Emily Fedorowycz – Leader of the Green Alliance Group
Councillor Dez Dell – Deputy Leader of the Green Alliance Group

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The leadership arrangements of the Conservative Group, the Labour Group and the Green Alliance Group for 2021/2022 as detailed within the report be noted.

7 Election of the Leader of the Council

Nominations were sought for the position of Leader of North Northamptonshire Council for the period up to the Annual meeting of Council in May 2025.

The nomination of Councillor Jason Smithers was duly **MOVED** by Councillor Lee Wilkes and **SECONDED** by Councillor Helen Harrison. There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) Councillor Jason Smithers be elected as Leader of North Northamptonshire Council for the period up to the Annual meeting of Council in May 2025.

The Leader addressed Council. In doing so, the Leader outlined some of the key challenges and objectives facing the Council over the coming years.

In addition, the Leader informed Council of the composition of his Executive and the specific portfolios allocated. These were –

Councillor Helen Howell	Deputy Leader of the Council / Sports, Leisure, Culture and Tourism.
Councillor Helen Harrison	Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Scott Edwards	Children, Families, Education and Skills
Councillor Harriet Pentland	Climate and Green Environment
Councillor Lloyd Bunday	Finance and Transformation
Councillor Steven North	Growth and Regeneration
Councillor Graham Lawman	Highways, Travel and Assets
Councillor Andy Mercer	Housing and Community
Councillor David Howes	Rural Communities and Localism

Councillor Jean Addison (Leader of the Labour Group) and Councillor Emily Fedorowycz (Leader of the Green Alliance Group) also addressed Council.

8 Committee Membership and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs of Committees

Following the election on 6th May 2021, 78 Members were elected to North Northamptonshire Council. The report set out the political balance of the Council. These were 60 Conservative Party, 14 Labour Party, 3 Green Party and 1 Independent.

Since the election it had been confirmed that the Green Members and the Independent Member had agreed to work within a “Green Alliance Group”. This was reflected in the proposals being considered by Council.

The report before Council confirmed the methodology applied to determine the political balance of the Authority. The report also included proposals for the apportionment of seats, following consultation with the recognised political groups, in accordance with the application of the calculations.

Nominations had been sought for both the committee seats allocated and for the relevant positions of Chair and Vice Chair where appropriate. These nominations had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer informed Council of amendments to nominations received from the Conservative Group since the agenda papers were circulated. These were noted. These included –

- Chair of Kettering Area Planning Committee – the nomination of Councillor Dearing as Chair be withdrawn, and the nomination of Councillor Mark Rowley submitted.
- Education, Skills and Employment Executive Advisory Panel membership – the nomination of Councillor Anup Pandey be withdrawn, and the nomination of Councillor Lee Wilkes be submitted.
- Employment Committee membership – the nomination of Councillor Lee Wilkes be withdrawn, and the nomination of Councillor Anup Pandey be submitted.
- Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) – the additional nomination of Councillor Anup Pandey was submitted.

During debate, an amendment to the proposed recommendations contained in the report was duly **MOVED** by Councillor Jim Hakewill and **SECONDED** by Councillor Valerie Anslow. The amendment read “That the position of Vice Chair of the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be offered to the opposition groups”. Under paragraph 20.3 of the approved Meeting Procedure Rules a recorded vote on the amendment was agreed.

Those **FOR** the amendment moved by Councillor Hakewill – Councillors Addison, Anslow, Armour, S Brown, Lyn Buckingham, Leanne Buckingham, Colquhoun, Dalziel, Dell, Fedorowycz, Hakewill, Keane, Lee, McEwan, J McGhee, Z McGhee, Pengelly, Rielly & Tubbs.

Those **AGAINST** the amendment moved by Councillor Hakewill – Councillors Allebone, Binley, D Brackenbury, W Brackenbury, C Brown, Bunday, Carr, Carter, Currall, de Capell Brooke, Dearing, Edwards, Ekins, Hallam, Harrington, H Harrison, K Harrison, L Henson, H Howell, D Howes, P Irwin, B Jackson, I Jelley, B Jenney, D Jenney, Lawal, G Lawman, L Lawman, Levell, Marks, Maxwell, A Mercer, G Mercer, Nichol, North, Pandey, Pentland, Powell, Prentice, Roberts, Rowley, Shacklock, Sims, Smithers, Smith-Haynes, Smyth, Tebbutt, Thurland, Tye, Ward, Waters, Watt, Wetherill & Wilkes.

Those who **ABSTAINED** on the amendment – Councillor Bell.

The Chair confirmed that the amendment had fallen.

During debate, an amendment to the proposed recommendations contained in the report was duly **MOVED** by Councillor John McGhee and **SECONDED** by Councillor Jean Addison. The amendment read “That the position of Chair and Vice Chair of the Corby Area Planning Committee be appointed by the Committee at its first meeting”. Under paragraph 20.3 of the approved Meeting Procedure Rules a recorded vote on the amendment was agreed.

Those **FOR** the amendment moved by Councillor J McGhee – Councillors Addison, Anslow, Armour, Lyn Buckingham, Leanne Buckingham, Colquhoun, Dalziel, Dell, Fedorowycz, Hakewill, Keane, Lee, McEwan, J McGhee, Z McGhee, Pengelly, Rielly & Tubbs.

Those **AGAINST** the amendment moved by Councillor J McGhee – Councillors Allebone, Binley, D Brackenbury, W Brackenbury, C Brown, S Brown, Bunday, Carr, Carter, Currall, de Capell Brooke, Dearing, Edwards, Ekins, Hallam, Harrington, H Harrison, K Harrison, L Henson, H Howell, D Howes, P Irwin, B Jackson, I Jelley, B Jenney, D Jenney, Lawal, G Lawman, L Lawman, Levell, Marks, Maxwell, A Mercer, G Mercer, Nichol, North, Pandey, Pentland, Powell, Prentice, Roberts, Rowley, Shacklock, Sims, Smithers, Smith-Haynes, Smyth, Tebbutt, Thurland, Tye, Ward, Waters, Watt, Wetherill & Wilkes.

Those who **ABSTAINED** on the amendment – Councillor Bell.

The Chair confirmed that the amendment had fallen.

The recommendations contained in the report were duly **MOVED** by Councillor Steven North and **SECONDED** by Councillor Paul Marks. These included the amendments to nominations made by the Conservative Group.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The allocation of seats for the committees set out in Appendix A to the recognised political groups in accordance with the proportionality provisions in the Constitution be approved;
- (ii) The appointments proposed by the recognised political groups to the governance structure as detailed in Appendix B (as amended) be confirmed;
- (iii) The nominees detailed in Appendix C (as amended) to the positions of Chair and Vice Chair be approved;
- (iv) The Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised, in consultation with the relevant group leader, to determine any required adjustment to individual committee allocations in accordance with sections 15 and 16 of the 1989 Act;
- (v) A Special Responsibility Allowance of £13,500 be approved to be allocated to the Chair of the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Members Allowance Scheme; and
- (vi) It be noted that the Chair of Sub Committees shall be appointed at each meeting by those members who are appointed to the Sub Committee.

9 Calendar of Meetings 2021/2022

Council received a report which included a draft calendar of meetings for the Municipal Year 2021/2022. Council were being requested to approve the draft calendar set out in Appendix A.

The recommendation contained in the report was duly **MOVED** by Councillor Barbara Jenney and **SECONDED** by Councillor Wendy Brackenbury.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The calendar of meetings 2021/2022 (as set out in Appendix A) be approved.

10 Constitutional Amendments

The report before Council detailed amendments made to the Constitution under delegated authority by the Monitoring Officer since the Constitution's adoption. It contained further proposals where Council's agreement was required.

Amendments made by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority were detailed in the report and included addition of the Director of Public Health to the Areas of Responsibility section of the Scheme of Delegation, and amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules.

There had been some legislative changes since the Constitution's adoption, and these were reflected in the current version. This included the cessation of the Interim Arrangements from 10th May 2021 included in the original version of the Constitution. Further amendments being proposed in the report for Council's agreement fell into two categories: -

Joint Arrangement Agreements

Agreements had been inherited or developed which set out shared arrangements which required delegations under s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

(i) LGSS Partnership

Northamptonshire County Council entered into a revised agreement shortly before Vesting Day which abolished the previous Joint Committee and put in place partnership arrangements. The agreement revised the delegations required by partner authorities to enable them to act on the councils' behalf.

These partnerships required constitutional changes to enable delegations to be in place. These delegations were not recorded in the Northamptonshire County Council Constitution at the time the North Northamptonshire Council Constitution was drafted and were therefore not incorporated. Delegations needed to be included within this council's Constitution to give effect to this agreement.

(ii) West Northamptonshire Council

The Council had agreed the Inter Authority Agreements through the Shadow Executive in March 2021, however some of the arrangements for the delivery of services, in particular those relating to highways, required delegation to be included within the Constitution; these had been agreed by the Executive but required non-Executive approval.

Delegated authority was therefore being requested by the Monitoring Officer to draft delegations to senior officers to give effect to the existing agreements with LGSS and West Northamptonshire Council as necessary and ensure that appropriate authority allowed officers to act in an effective way.

Delegated Powers to the Monitoring Officer

(i) Sealing of Contracts

The Constitution included a power to enable the Monitoring Officer to seal contracts more than £1 million but land deeds required sealing and there was no separate specific power for the Monitoring Officer to attest deeds for land and property.

The proposed delegation was – *“To attest the seal of the Council (and to authorise any other Solicitor of the Council to attest the seal) and hold a book kept for the purpose that contains a consecutively numbered entry of every sealing initialled by the person who has attested the seal”*.

(ii) Inquorate Councils

Council noted that parish councils who have insufficient Members were unable to meet. The Council had a power to appoint Members to a parish council on a temporary basis in order that those councils could conduct lawful quorate meetings. The power was contained within s.91 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

It was proposed that this power be granted to the Monitoring Officer so that a decision to appoint Members could be made as necessary, both prior to annual meetings of parish councils and at other times of the year should in quoracy arise - *“Under s.92 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) to appoint by Order persons to fill vacancies in the office of parish or community councillor”*.

The recommendations contained in the report were duly MOVED by Councillor Harriet Pentland and SECONDED by Councillor Mike Tebbutt.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The proposed changes to the Constitution set out in paragraph 5 of the report be approved; and
- (ii) Delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution to give effect to the agreements with LGSS (Cambridgeshire, Bedford, Milton Keynes) and West Northamptonshire Council.

11 Appointments to Outside Bodies and Working Groups

The report before Council sought approval of appointments to key strategic outside bodies and sought approval of a review into all other outside bodies requiring Council appointment.

The key appointments being sought by Annual Council (as detailed in Appendix A) were for –

Local Government Association General Assembly (LGA Representatives)

The Leader of the Council and three other Executive members to be appointed by the Leader.

East Midlands Councils (Executive Board Representative)

The Leader of the Council.

The recommendations contained in the report were duly MOVED by Councillor Macaulay Nichol and SECONDED by Councillor Graham Lawman.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) Appointments to outside bodies as detailed in Appendix A be approved; and
- (ii) That it be noted a review will be undertaken as detailed in paragraph 5.4 and would be considered by Council at its next meeting.

12 Urgent Business

The Chair informed Council there was no urgent business on this occasion.

13 Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 8:45pm.

Chair

Date