

North Northamptonshire Council – Decisions taken by the Executive on Thursday 17 March 2022

Issued: 17th March 2022

The following decisions in this notice were made by the Executive on Thursday 17th March 2022.

Any decisions identified below as a **KEY DECISION** will come into force and may be implemented on 25th March 2022, unless the decision is subject to call-in, in accordance with section 18 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules within North Northamptonshire Council's Constitution.

Requests for Call-In

A request for call-in shall only be considered to be valid if signed by at least 8 members of the Council (10% of the total number of members) who are not members of the Executive. One of the requestors must identify themselves as the originator of the request and the request must specify the nature of the grounds relied upon. A call-in request must be in the form of a written notice submitted to the Monitoring Officer and received before the published deadline. Either one notice containing all required signatures or up to 8 separate e-mails (as appropriate) will be acceptable.

The notice must set out:-

- (a) the resolution or resolutions that the member(s) wish to call in;
- (b) the reasons why they wish the relevant Scrutiny committee to consider referring it back to the Executive, with particular reference to the principles of decision making set out elsewhere within this Constitution; and
- (c) the alternative course of action or recommendations that they wish to propose.

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Part A – Items considered in public

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| Item 5 | Performance Indicator Report - Period 10 (January 2022) | RESOLVED That the Executive: a) Noted the performance of the Council measured by the available indicators at Period 10 for 2021/22 as set out in the appendices to this report. |
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| | | <p>b) Noted the stance that is being taken to developing the Council’s approach to benchmarking, comparative data and revised Corporate Plan indicator set.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations – to better understand the Council’s performance as measured by performance indicators as at Period 10, 2021/22.</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 | Kettering Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Museum Project Update (Cornerstone) | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>It is recommended that the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted the positive progress to date with the Gallery, Library and Museum capital works programme and future business development. b) Noted the contingency uplift of £75,000 requested as part of the Capital Budget report for Executive, 17th March 2022 c) Endorsed the new name of Cornerstone and branding set out at paragraph 5.3 of the report d) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism, in conjunction with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities |

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| | | <p>and Wellbeing, to take the actions necessary to ensure successful completion of the capital programme, mobilisation of the site in readiness for re-opening, and further development of the business plan.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations: Approval for these recommendations will allow for officers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure successful completion of the capital programme • To develop a communications and marketing plan to promote the new offer on site and to deliver appropriate signage and wayfinding on site. <p>Alternative Options Considered: None as this is a progress update only.</p> |
| Item 7 | Voluntary Sector Grant Agreements and programme of work to define the future working arrangements with Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(KEY DECISION)</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the proposed programme of work to develop a Communities Strategy and framework which set out our future relationships and working arrangements with the VCSE. b) Approved the extension of current strategic grants for the financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24. |

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| | | <p>c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities, in liaison with the Executive Director, Adults, Community & Wellbeing, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to deliver the programme of work to develop the strategy and to deliver the strategic grants during 2022-23 and 2023-24.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <p>a) To provide funding with the current VCSE organisations as set out in Appendix A of the report, providing stability in the sector for the next two financial years.</p> <p>b) Sets out a clear approach to working with the VCSE and other public sector partners to develop a strategic approach and framework to commissioning projects in the voluntary sector.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: These are set out in paragraphs 5.10-5.18 of the report.</p> |
| Item 8 | Annual Inflationary Uplift Adult Care and Support 2022/23 | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(KEY DECISION)</p> <p>That the Executive approved the following proposed increases in fee levels for 2022-2023:</p> |

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| Provision Type | Recommendation | Current Annual Cost £ | Proposed Annual Cost £ | Net increase Cost £ |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| All Framework contracted provision | <p>A fee uplift of 6.5% to all Providers currently on a contract framework. This uplift accounts for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase in the National Living Wage • Market pressures in recruitment and retention • An incentivisation to continue to be party to the Council’s contract frameworks | £41,096m | £43,767m | £2,671m |
| Non-Framework ‘spot provision’ | <p>A fee uplift of 0% to all spot Providers. This uplift accounts for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continued higher fee levels already paid to spot providers • An incentive to join the Council’s contract | £56,073m | £56,073m | £0 |

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| | | <table border="1" data-bbox="842 422 2045 571"> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 422 1050 497"></td> <td data-bbox="1050 422 1509 497">frameworks</td> <td data-bbox="1509 422 1677 497"></td> <td data-bbox="1677 422 1870 497"></td> <td data-bbox="1870 422 2045 497"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 497 1050 571">Totals</td> <td data-bbox="1050 497 1509 571"></td> <td data-bbox="1509 497 1677 571">£97,170m</td> <td data-bbox="1677 497 1870 571">£99,840m</td> <td data-bbox="1870 497 2045 571">£2,671m</td> </tr> </table> <p data-bbox="842 651 1285 683">Reasons for recommendations:</p> <ul data-bbox="891 727 2078 1394" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="891 727 2078 794">• The National Living Wage for 2022/23 is 6.6%. This compares to 2.2% in 2021/22 <li data-bbox="891 842 2078 986">• The care and support market in North Northamptonshire continues to experience difficulties with the recruitment and retention of care staff. This is caused by competition from other industries and the ongoing influence of Covid-19. The position in North Northamptonshire is in keeping with the national picture. <li data-bbox="891 1034 2078 1279">• In order to meet the council’s statutory responsibilities, there has been an increase in the numbers of packages of care individually commissioned using spot providers with a commensurate increase in spend. Spot provision is costly to the Council and the proposed uplift seeks to positively influence existing contract framework supply through retention and sustainability whilst also incentivising an increase in supply through leveraging better rates of pay and reward. <li data-bbox="891 1327 2078 1394">• The Executive is reminded of the uplift in 2021/22 as being 2.75% and 0% for older adult services and younger adult services, respectively. The uplift in | | frameworks | | | | Totals | | £97,170m | £99,840m | £2,671m |
| | frameworks | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Totals | | £97,170m | £99,840m | £2,671m | | | | | | | | |

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| | | <p>2021/22 has not been sufficient to stabilise the market during the pandemic and pressures in capacity and demand have increased.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: Several options have been considered in arriving at the proposal and recommendation contained within this report. The options considered include a 0% uplift, a 4.3% uplift to contracted suppliers only, a 4.3% uplift to both contracted and non-contracted suppliers and a 6.5% uplift to contracted suppliers only. The recommended option is made in order to strengthen the range and number of contracted suppliers whilst stimulating stability and account for market pressures that include the impact of Covid-19 as well as market inflation and the forthcoming changes to the National Living Wage.</p> |
| Item 9 | Corby Town Fund - Sixth Form College Summary Business Case Document | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(KEY DECISION)</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved the submission of a Business Case Summary Document for the Sixth Form College Corby Town Investment Plan project to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; b) Delegated to the Executive Director of Finance, in consultation with the Executive Director of Place and Economy, authority to prepare and submit the Summary Business Case for the Sixth Form Corby Town Fund project to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and |

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| | | <p align="center">Communities;</p> <p>c) Approved the drawdown of funding for the Sixth Form College project once released by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities;</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The submitted Business Case Summary Document, if approved by DLUHC will unlock the funding for this project to the sum of £9.5m. • Once funds are received, this project can commence. It is estimated this build will take 10/12 months to complete, opening in the Summer of 2023 for the 2023/24 academic intake. <p>Alternative Options Considered: The only alternative options would be to not submit the Business Case Summary Document and therefore not to drawdown the remaining funding of £9.5m (less the 5%, approx. £475k already received from DLUHC) which would mean that the Sixth Form College could not be delivered. As this project is a deliverable project which benefits Corby and the surrounding area by providing a high-quality education resource this is not a viable option.</p> |

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| Item 10 | Local Transport Plan – Integrated Transport Plan 2022-23 Funding Allocation and Capital Funding 2022-23 | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(KEY DECISION)</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Accepted the receipt of Government grants totalling £9.955m per annum in 2022/23 made up of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways Maintenance Block needs element - £3.735m • Highways Maintenance Block incentive element - £0.934m • Potholes Fund - £3.735m • Integrated Transport Block Funding - £1.551m b) Noted the allocation of a similar sum of funding for 2023/24 and 2024/25, except that the Highways Maintenance Block incentive element is indicative pending further engagement with local authorities. c) Agree that the grants accepted at para. 3.1(a) will be spent on maintaining and upgrading the highways network in line with the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan. <p>Reason for Recommendations: Utilisation of government grant to support and maintain the Council’s Highways infrastructure and transport network 3.3</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: The alternative is to spend only part or none of the</p> |

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| | | allocated funding. This option is not recommended as it would reduce the opportunity to invest in the highways network across North Northamptonshire. |
| Item 11 | War and War Widow(er)'s Pension disregard in Housing Benefit | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Executive recommended to Full Council that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) The Council re-affirms its decision to approve the disregard of War Pensions and War Widow(er)'s Pensions in full as income above the statutory £10.00 per week disregard in the calculation of Housing Benefit entitlement.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendation: to continue to support our Armed Forces community.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: Not re-affirming the disregard means that war pensioners and widowers would lose the discretionary disregard in their calculation of their Housing Benefit entitlement.</p> |
| Item 12 | Budget Forecast 2021/22 as at Period 10 | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(KEY DECISION)</p> <p>That the Executive:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) Noted the Council's forecast outturn position for 2021/22 as summarised in section 4 of the report, alongside the further analysis, risks and other</p> |

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| | | <p>considerations as set out from section 5 of the report onwards.</p> <p>b) Noted the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2021/22 savings proposals in Appendix A of the report.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations: to note the forecast financial position for 2021/22 as at Period 10 and consider the impact on this year and future years budgets.</p> |
| Item 13 | Capital Programme Update 2021/22 | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(KEY DECISION)</p> <p>That the Executive approved the following changes to the capital programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Kettering Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Museum Project - increase contingency budget by £75k, to be funded from borrowing b) Wellingborough Norse Fleet and Equipment – to increase budget by £0.630m for the provision of Waste and Street Cleaning fleet and equipment to be funded from capital receipts. Of this sum, £123k will be for the purchase of new equipment and will be recovered over time as a revenue contribution following the cessation of the Norse contract c) Revenue and Benefits single ICT system – to increase budget by £0.750m for the provision of single source revenue and benefits system, to be funding from borrowing |

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| | | <p>d) Kettering High Street Heritage Action Zone – to increase budget by £0.504m to be funded from additional grant from Historic England</p> <p>e) Highways Funding – to increase to the Capital Programme for 2022/23 by £9.955m in respect of the Department for Transport grant allocation announced on 28th February 2022, which covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Pothole Funding - £3.735m ii. LTP Maintenance - £3.735m iii. LTP Incentive for Maintenance - £0.934m iv. LTP Integrated Transport - £1.551m <p>f) To amend the Development Pool in light of the confirmation of the highways grant funding for 2022/23 and the indicative funding for 2023-25, which is as per the allocation at item (e) above, noting that the final allocation for these years will be subject to the results from the self-assessment of the existing highways maintenance incentive programme. The detail is set out in paragraphs 5.17 to 5.20 of this report.</p> <p>It was recommended that Council approves the borrowing proposals for the following schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Kettering Alfred East Art Galleries, Library and Museum - £75k. b. Revenues and Benefits single ICT system - £0.750m. |

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| | | <p>Reasons for Recommendation are set out in greater detail within section 5 of the report, but can be summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help mitigate any delays to the Kettering Gallery, Library and Museum project and ensure that funding deadlines are met recognising construction market conditions and fluctuating prices. • To procure fleet and equipment to ensure continued service provision to the Wellingborough area for Waste Management and Recycling, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance. • To deliver one single system for revenues and benefits across North Northamptonshire to improve service efficiency, reporting and consistency of practice. • To support continued investment and improvement in Kettering High Street recognising its history and heritage. • To ensure that the grant funding allocation for Highways maintenance and repair is included within the capital programme from 2022/23 to enable works to continue in line with annual plans. |
| Part B – Items considered in private | | |
| Item 14 | Transfer of Wellingborough Norse: Procurement of Fleet and Equipment | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(KEY DECISION)</p> <p>That the Executive approved a capital budget of £630,000 to purchase the necessary vehicles and equipment to implement the decision of the Executive on 18th November</p> |

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| | | <p>2021 to deliver waste collection, street cleaning and grounds maintenance services through an in-house model from 1st April 2022.</p> <p>Reason for Recommendations: To deliver the services in-house, appropriate vehicles and equipment are required for 1st April 2022, or shortly thereafter, and this option ensures it is available on-site by the time it is required, and the operatives know how to use it.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered: Due to the service go live date of 1st April 2022, there is insufficient time to procure all these items through a full, compliant, procurement exercise. Whilst this is the favoured option, the time constraints make it impossible to achieve and, as such, this option has had to be discounted on this occasion.</p> |