

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive

At 10.00 am on Thursday 17th March, 2022 in the Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby, Northants, NN17 1QG

Present:-

Members

Councillor Jason Smithers (Leader of the Council) (Chair)	Councillor Helen Howell (Deputy Leader of the Council)
Councillor David Brackenbury	Councillor David Howes
Councillor Lloyd Bunday	Councillor Graham Lawman
Councillor Scott Edwards	Councillor Andy Mercer
Councillor Helen Harrison	Councillor Harriet Pentland

Also in attendance – Councillors Anne Lee, Lyn Buckingham, Mike Tebbutt, Wendy Brackenbury and Dorothy Maxwell

174 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllr David Jenney and Janice Gotts, Executive Director of Finance.

175 Minutes of the Meetings Held on 10th February 2022 and 22nd February 2022

RESOLVED that: The Executive agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 10th February 2022 and 22nd February 2022 as true and accurate records of the meetings.

176 Members' Declarations of Interest

Cllr Helen Howell declared an interest in Agenda Item 7 - Strategic Voluntary Sector Grant Agreements.

177 Notifications of requests to address the meeting

The Chair, Councillor Jason Smithers reported that there were five requests to address the meeting as set out below:

- Cllr Anne Lee – Agenda Items 5, 6, 7, 10 and 12
- Cllr Lyn Buckingham – Agenda Items 6, 7, 8 and 10
- Cllr Dorothy Maxwell – Agenda Items 7 and 10
- Monica Ozdemir (Kettering Civic Society) – Agenda Item 6
- David Brown (Chair - Friends of Alfred East Gallery and Manor House Museum) – Agenda Item 6

178 Performance Indicator Report - Period 10 (January 2022)

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers welcomed Cllr Anne Lee to the meeting to address the Executive. Cllr Lee welcomed the announcement that a revised set of indicators would soon be in place to measure progress with the delivery of the Council's priorities set out within the adopted Corporate Plan. Cllr Lee also raised concerns regarding indicators for housing repairs, the length of time taken to process Keyways housing applications and queried a specific indicator relating to stage 2 investigations for Children's Trust complaints. Further concerns were raised by Cllr Lee regarding the low figures for NHS Health Check offers.

Cllr Jason Smithers thanked Cllr Lee for her comments before introducing a report that sought to provide an update on the performance of the Council across a range of services as measured by performance indicators, as well as setting out the progress that was being made in the development of the Council's performance monitoring arrangements.

The Chair reported that 80% of performance indicators were currently on target or within 5% of target, with 20% not currently meeting targets. Details of indicators that had deteriorated since the last report were outlined to the meeting along with steps being taken to address the decline, as below:

- Individual Rights Requests – the Information Governance Team was working to understand delays and increase the response rate while undertaking staff training to enhance performance
- National Non-Domestic Rates – Covid had impacted collection rates, with the Council continuing to work to support businesses where it could
- Number of Rough Sleepers – Although this was a single night snapshot, a number of new rough sleepers had been identified with work underway to assist these individuals into accommodation with a clear action plan for each.
- Number of Looked After Children without a school place – Children's Services were working to understand and address the current position of nine children being outside the education system, an increase of two since the last report to Executive.

The Chair noted the improvement in the number of primary schools being rated "good or excellent" following Ofsted inspections and reaffirmed the Council's support for schools and their management structures.

Cllr Helen Harrison welcomed the comments from Cllr Lee regarding NHS Health Checks and offered assurances that this had been discussed with the Director of Public Health to ensure improvement moving forward.

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.

- b) Noted the stance that is being taken to developing the Council's approach to benchmarking, comparative data and revised Corporate Plan indicator set.

Reason for Recommendations – to better understand the Council's performance as measured by performance indicators as at Period 10, 2021/22.

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.

179 Kettering Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Museum Project Update (Cornerstone)

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers, invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee requested that the Executive consider deferring the recommendation to endorse the new project branding and Cornerstone name in order to seek consultation from a variety of stakeholders. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that it would not be considered reasonable to undertake a full consultation process in relation to the name of the project.

The Chair then invited Cllr Lyn Buckingham to address the meeting. Cllr Buckingham suggested that the Council should ensure that funding was in place to allow for completion of the relevant works to the museum in order that this element of the project was not left incomplete.

The Chair invited Monica Ozdemir to address the meeting on behalf of Kettering Civic Society. Ms Ozdemir congratulated the Council on the work that had been undertaken in regard to the project in a short timeframe and while facing some challenging circumstances. Concerns were raised regarding lack of engagement between the Council and the society in regard to the project name and branding. A review of the proposed decision was requested, with the society to be included in further discussions.

The Chair then invited David Brown, Chair of the Friends of Alfred East Gallery and Manor House Museum to address the meeting. Mr Brown stated that the proposed project name of Cornerstone was generic and provided a number of examples of its use in other settings. He further stated that he viewed the branding as unrepresentative and uninspiring. Mr Brown queried the research that had gone into production of the branding as well as the levels of consultation with stakeholders and noted that there were no firm strategic plans in place to address future funding of the museum element of the project.

The Chair thanked the speakers for their comments before Cllr Helen Howell, Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism introduced a report that sought to provide a progress update in relation to the Gallery, Library and Museum project including the progress of the capital development and current financial projections, the new branding, business plan development and planned activity for 2022.

Cllr Howell provided background details to the project, formerly referred to as GLaM, which aimed to revitalise the cultural services within the heart of Kettering Town

Centre, helping to unify the three sites including; Alfred East Art Gallery, Kettering Library and Kettering Museum, delivering significant improvements to the Alfred East Art Gallery and Kettering Library with a new two-storey extension to the rear of the Art Gallery.

Cllr Howell then provided a presentation which detailed the progress of the building works on site, with groundworks having been completed and the steel frame for the extension in place.

It was heard that, with regard to branding, Productive Designs had been appointed in October 2021 with a series of workshops held with the staff teams to consider a number of brand naming options. The preferred brand, Cornerstone, was agreed by Cllr Howell as Executive Member for Culture, Sport, Leisure and Tourism and had been informally presented to the Executive on 13th January 2022.

A number of key stakeholder engagement sessions, site tours and meetings were held late in 2021 with feedback received being very positive from each session. A communications plan was in the process of development to effectively promote the new brand over the coming months.

The meeting noted the proposed phased approach to opening, with the library set to fully open initially and a formal launch of the new site planned for September 2022, although there remained some dependencies that might affect this programme. The meeting also noted the ambition to undertake a second phase of the Cornerstone capital project in future, subject to securing the necessary funding, which would include a refurbished and extended Museum offer.

It was heard that the project was experiencing budget pressures due to the speed of the design process required to meet the funder's timelines. As a result of a projected overspend between £8,000 and £50,000, an uplift of £75,000 was proposed to ensure the project could be successfully completed without additional delays.

Cllrs Helen Harrison and David Brackenbury spoke to welcome the project update, noting the importance of the site to the local community and noted the considerable ongoing programme of regeneration in Kettering town centre.

RESOLVED:

It is recommended that the Executive:

- 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
- d) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism, in conjunction with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities 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.

Reasons for Recommendations: Approval for these recommendations will allow for officers to:

- 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.

Alternative Options Considered: None as this is a progress update only.

180 Voluntary Sector Grant Agreements and programme of work to define the future working arrangements with Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers, invited Cllr Lyn Buckingham to address the meeting. Cllr Buckingham welcomed the report and expressed her preference for Option 3, an extension to existing Voluntary Sector Grant Agreements which would offer the sector stability over the next two-year period.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Dorothy Maxwell to the meeting who referenced rural bus services. The Chair responded to note that this issue would be considered elsewhere on the agenda.

The Chair thanked both speakers for their contributions before Cllr Andy Mercer, Executive Member for Housing and Community introduced a report that sought approval to develop a new Communities Strategy to guide the Council's relationships and address future working arrangements with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector.

Cllr Mercer noted that the Council had inherited a number of relationships with the voluntary sector from its predecessor councils. Three options regarding the future of these arrangements were before members, one of which (Option 3) was to extend existing grants for period of two years in order to allow the Council time to develop and establish a robust Strategic Funding Framework as a result of the new Communities Strategy, for the awarding of funding in line with the Council's Corporate Plan.

Cllr Harriet Pentland offered her thanks to the voluntary sector for the vital work it undertook in the local communities and noted the importance of adopting Option 3 within the report to allow this work to continue.

Cllr Helen Harrison spoke to endorse Option 3, noting that it was a sensible move that would offer stability to the voluntary sector.

(Cllr Helen Howell withdrew from the meeting prior to the debate and decision being taken on this item due to her declaration of interest)

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- 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 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- b) Approved the extension of current strategic grants for the financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24.
- 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.

Reasons for Recommendations:

- 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.
- 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.

Alternative Options Considered: These are set out in paragraphs 5.10-5.18 of the report.

181 Annual Inflationary Uplift Adult Care and Support 2022/23

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers, invited Cllr Lyn Buckingham to address the meeting. Cllr Buckingham welcomed the report but asked for consideration to be given for a review of costs for contractors to ensure resilience in the sector in the light of ongoing financial pressures.

The Chair thanked Cllr Buckingham for her contribution before Cllr Helen Harrison, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing introduced a report that asked the Executive to consider and approve the proposed uplift in fees paid to adult social care providers in 2022/23 across the full range of community-based provision, including residential and nursing care, home care, day care, supported living and direct payments.

The meeting heard that the Council had a duty of care to ensure a sustainable market of care in their area. Annual fee uplifts took into consideration market pressures and market sustainability, including the market's ability to maintain adequate capacity and supply, whilst adhering to regulatory and quality requirements within the general and commercial environment in which the market operated. The fee uplifts also took into

consideration central government's annual position on setting the National Living Wage.

It was noted that the Council had a range of contract frameworks in place to deliver care and support services with specified fee levels set against the different types of care arrangements. This allowed the Council to assert control over the cost of care and the standards and quality of care delivered. It was proposed that an uplift of 6.5% be given to contracted framework providers, with a 0% uplift to spot providers. It was anticipated that the uplift would positively influence recruitment and retention in the sector while reducing the need for use of spot providers.

(Prior to member debate, the meeting held a minute silence for the Social Care Day of Remembrance and Reflection)

Cllrs Pentland, Brackenbury and Mercer welcomed the report, noting the hard work of those employed in the social care sector as well as the challenges the sector faced and endorsed the fee uplift recommendation before them.

Cllr Harrison noted that the review of fees took place on an annual basis with positive relationships developing between the Council and the social care sector.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive approved the following proposed increases in fee levels for 2022-2023:

Provision Type	Recommendation	Current Annual Cost £	Proposed Annual Cost £	Net increase Cost £
All Framework contracted provision	A fee uplift of 6.5% to all Providers currently on a contract framework. This uplift accounts for: <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'	A fee uplift of 0% to all spot Providers. This uplift accounts for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continued higher fee levels already paid to spot providers 	£56,073m	£56,073m	£0

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An incentive to join the Council's contract frameworks 			
Totals		£97,170m	£99,840m	£2,671m

Reasons for recommendations:

- The National Living Wage for 2022/23 is 6.6%. This compares to 2.2% in 2021/22
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 2021/22 has not been sufficient to stabilise the market during the pandemic and pressures in capacity and demand have increased.

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.

182 Corby Town Fund - Sixth Form College Summary Business Case Document

Cllr David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration presented a report that sought approval to submit a Business Case Summary Document for the Sixth Form College, one of the four projects of the Corby Town Fund, to the Department of Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUHC). If approved by DLUHC, the £9.5m of allocated funds for this project would be available for drawdown and the project could commence.

It was heard that this project continued the programme of regeneration for Corby as part of the Town Investment Plan whereby £20m of funding had been allocated for the town by DLUHC. The Sixth Form College project was being expedited due to the

advanced stage of the project and due to the planned intake of students to take place at the start of the 2023/24 academic year.

Cllrs Edwards and Pentland welcomed the report noting that the sooner the regeneration began, the sooner the environmentally friendly facility could be brought into use.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- 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 Communities;
- c) Approved the drawdown of funding for the Sixth Form College project once released by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities;

Reasons for Recommendations:

- 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.

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.

183 Local Transport Plan – Integrated Transport Plan 2022-23 Funding Allocation and Capital Funding 2022-23

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers, invited Cllr Lyn Buckingham to address the Executive. Cllr Buckingham referenced the omission from previous iterations of the Local

Transport Plan of banning parking on pavements due to the obstruction it caused for a wide range of people, including those on mobility scooters.

The Chair then invited Cllr Dorothy Maxwell to address the meeting. Cllr Maxwell spoke to reference issues with a specific Corby roundabout and noted that infrastructure needed to be considered as part of new developments, not as an afterthought. Cllr Maxwell also called for a 40mph limit to be enacted between Ringstead and Denford.

The Chair thanked both speakers for their comments before Cllr Graham Lawman, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets introduced a report that sought to inform the Executive of the grants received from the Department for Transport (DfT) for infrastructure improvements and the intention to spend these amounts on the highways network. Cllr Lawman also noted that the Council had submitted a bid to government for Wellingborough to be the headquarters of Great British Railways.

Cllr Lawman responded to the comments made by the speakers, noting that the current Transport Plan required updating and would require the involvement of the new highways contractor, once appointed. It was heard that officers would be looking at a mechanism to ban pavement parking, although this was quite an involved undertaking. In response to Cllr Maxwell's issues, officers would be requested to assess the roundabout in question to see whether it could be added to the list for improvement and that all requests for speed limit alterations would need to be considered by the Road Safety Panel.

Cllr Lawman stated that the annual funding allocations of £9.955m provided by the government offered certainty until 2025 and that the Highways Maintenance Block incentive element was indicative pending further engagement with local authorities. The funding would allow the Council to:

- Maintain existing highways infrastructure assets
- Invest in and improve the highways infrastructure
- Improve access by cycle and foot, including safety improvements
- Improve safety and traffic flows by upgrading traffic signals.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- a) Accepted the receipt of Government grants totalling £9.955m per annum in 2022/23 made up of the following:
 - 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.

Reason for Recommendations: Utilisation of government grant to support and maintain the Council's Highways infrastructure and transport network 3.3

Alternative Options Considered: The alternative is to spend only part or none of the allocated funding. This option is not recommended as it would reduce the opportunity to invest in the highways network across North Northamptonshire.

184 War and War Widow(er)'s Pension disregard in Housing Benefit

Cllr Lloyd Bunday presented a report that sought approval for the continuing disregard of War Pensions (WP) and War Widow(er)'s Pensions (WWP) in calculating Housing Benefit entitlement.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive recommended to Full Council that:

- 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.

Reason for Recommendation: to continue to support our Armed Forces community.

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.

185 Budget Forecast 2021/22 as at Period 10

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers, invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee queried a forecast £1.5m underspend in relation to Specialist and Complex Mental Health care and whether this underspend would be ringfenced for future use.

The Chair thanked Cllr Lee for her attendance before Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation introduced a report that set out the forecast outturn position for the Council based on the Period 10 monitoring forecasts for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

It was noted that there was current a forecast underspend against the General Fund budget of £949,000, a positive movement of £69,000 and budget variances for directorates were outlined to the meeting.

Cllr Bunday noted that budgets for Children's and Education Services were currently balanced, a position being kept under review by undertaking regular meetings

between the Director of Finance for the trust and senior finance officers of the Council. The Children's Trust, at the end of Period 10, was showing a pressure of £3.461m (across the County). This could, in part, be mitigated through bids for Covid-related funding totalling £2.631m. Should the bids be successful, then the overspend would reduce to £830k, which would be met through the use of the carry forward reserve within the Trust.

Cllr Bunday referred to budgetary pressures affecting Growth and Regeneration and car parking income, noting that a degree of harmonisation was required for the latter, although a "one size fits all" approach may not be appropriate.

Facilities management had seen a positive budgetary movement of £76k, with pressures mitigated by underspends to elements such as repair and maintenance.

Cllr Bunday stated that areas of risk and uncertainty going forward included Adult Social Care as a demand led service, with a need to ensure disaggregation care packages were up to date and correctly aligned.

Cllrs Brackenbury and Harrison spoke to acknowledge the work of the finance team in keeping a tight rein on the Council's finances. In addition, Cllr Harrison responded to Cllr Lee's query regarding funding for Specialist and Complex Mental Health Care, noting its place in the budget for 2022/23.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- 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 considerations as set out from section 5 of the report onwards.
- b) Noted the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2021/22 savings proposals in Appendix A of the report.

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.

186 Capital Programme Update 2021/22

Cllr Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation introduced the report that requested approval for capital schemes that had come forward for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme. Approval of the funding would allow the schemes to move forward to procurement and delivery.

Six schemes were highlighted as per the report and recommendation below, with Council recommended to approve the borrowing proposals for:

- Kettering Alfred East Art Galleries, Library and Museum - £75k
- Revenues and Benefits single ICT system - £0.750m

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive approved the following changes to the capital programme:

- 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
- d) Kettering High Street Heritage Action Zone – to increase budget by £0.504m to be funded from additional grant from Historic England
- 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:
 - i. Pothole Funding - £3.735m
 - ii. LTP Maintenance - £3.735m
 - iii. LTP Incentive for Maintenance - £0.934m
 - iv. LTP Integrated Transport - £1.551m
- 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.

It was recommended that Council approves the borrowing proposals for the following schemes:

- a. Kettering Alfred East Art Galleries, Library and Museum - £75k.
- b. Revenues and Benefits single ICT system - £0.750m.

Reasons for Recommendation are set out in greater detail within section 5 of the report, but can be summarised as:

- 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.

187 Urgent Items

It was reported that there were no urgent items of business to be transacted.

188 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers, informed members of the press and public that the remaining business for the meeting would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information and he was therefore proposing that the press and public now be excluded in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

RESOLVED:-

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting in order that consideration could be given to the following items of business which were exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:-

- Item 14 – Transfer of Wellingborough Norse: Procurement of Fleet and Equipment

189 Transfer of Wellingborough Norse: Procurement of Fleet and Equipment

Cllr Graham Lawman, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets introduced a report that sought approval for the necessary capital budget to purchase vehicles and equipment directly from Norse Commercial Services (Norse), other items directly from the open market and if necessary, directly from the leasing company currently providing vehicles to Norse.

It was noted that this request had arisen as a result of the agreement to transfer the services currently provided by WNorse back to the Council to directly manage in-house at the meeting of Executive held on 18th November 2021. In order for the Council to deliver these services, the required fleet and equipment was required to be in place prior to service delivery commencing on 1st April 2022.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

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 2021 to deliver waste collection, street cleaning and grounds maintenance services through an in-house model from 1st April 2022.

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.

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.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 11.40 am