

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive

At 10.00 am on Thursday 14th July, 2022 in the Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby, NN17 1QG

Present:-

Members

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

Also in attendance – Councillors John McGhee, Lyn Buckingham, Dorothy Maxwell, David Jenney, Anne Lee and Mike Tebbutt

240 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of the following officers:

Adele Wylie (Director of Legal and Democratic)
David Watts (Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing)
John Ashton (Director of Public Health)
Janice Gotts (Executive Director of Finance)

241 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 16th June 2022

RESOLVED that: The Executive agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2022 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

242 Members' Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received.

243 Garden Waste: Future Service Provision - Item Deferral

The Chair, Councillor Jason Smithers, stated that the Executive had before it a report on the future provision of Green Waste Services in North Northamptonshire and proposed a decision on the matter be deferred to allow for additional engagement with residents and councillors so that all options could be further investigated and considered to obtain a better understanding of them and their impacts prior to a decision being made.

The deferral, if approved, would provide the opportunity to better understand the current and potential future impact of the service to ensure equity to all residents across North Northamptonshire including those in the East Northants area. Additional time in the decision-making process would also allow for the exploration of options to encourage residents to use other ways to manage green waste, including home composting and to use the information collated as a key part of any proposals and debate.

To support the review, the Council's Scrutiny Commission and Finance & Resources Scrutiny Committee would jointly meet to consider and discuss the options and their impact on the overall Council.

The Chair concluded by noting the importance of the Council's Garden Waste service and the need to ensure that any decisions made were taken after a wider debate and discussion, with a further report on the subject anticipated to be submitted to the Executive at its meeting on 15th September 2022.

RESOLVED: That the "Garden Waste: Future Service Provision" item be deferred for the reasons set out above.

244 Notifications of requests to address the meeting

The Chair reported that following the deferment of Item 6 – Garden Waste: Future Service Provision, there were seven requests to address the meeting as set out below:

Cllr John McGhee – Agenda Item 5
Cllr Anne Lee – Agenda Items 5, 13 and 18
Cllr Dorothy Maxwell – Agenda Items 5, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 13
Cllr Valerie Anslow – Agenda Item 10
Cllr Lyn Buckingham – Agenda Items 7 and 8
Cllr Clark Mitchell (Kettering Town Council) – Agenda Item 11
Dr David Brown (Friends of Kettering Art Gallery & Museum) – Agenda Item 13

Cllr Anslow was not in attendance and therefore did not speak on Item 10.

Cllr Maxwell withdrew from speaking on Items 5, 9 and 13

245 Performance Indicator Report 2022/23 (Period 2 - May 2022)

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers welcomed Cllr John McGhee to the meeting to address the Executive. Cllr McGhee welcomed the performance improvements relating to children in care but raised concerns regarding an increase in safeguarding complaints and the lack of detail regarding the spend on agency staff. Cllr McGhee requested that a light touch peer review be undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) to ensure the council continued in the right direction with regard to performance.

The Chair thanked Cllr McGhee for his attendance and stated that discussions had been held with the Chief Executive regarding an LGA Peer Review and an update would be provided regarding this in the near future.

Cllr Lee was welcomed to the meeting to address the Executive. Cllr Lee referred to an increase in the percentage of referrals to Children's Services noting that referral times often exceeded 18 months, resulting in some pupils having left school by the time they receive assistance. Cllr Lee requested the addition of a target to measure follow-up assistance.

The Chair 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 60% of performance indicators were currently on target or overperforming, with 16% within 5% of their respective targets. A total of 24% of indicators were underperforming and outside the 5% tolerance.

The Chair highlighted a number of underperforming indicators, breaking these down by directorate to provide additional clarity. It was noted that newly introduced Corporate Plan indicators were now being plotted against data from the previous year, allowing for greater comparison and the opportunity to identify seasonal trends.

Cllr Smithers concluded by noting that the Executive wished to better understand why specific indicators were underperforming and consequently what was being done to improve performance across the Council.

Cllr Helen Harrison thanked Cllr McGhee for raising the issue of new safeguarding complaints, noting that a public campaign regarding safeguarding had highlighted the issue and resulted in an increase of reports. The Council continued to work with providers and partner agencies to make people more confident in raising issues which would likely result in a correlating rise in complaints registered.

Cllr Scott Edwards stated he would respond outside the meeting to Cllr Lee's concerns regarding referral times relating to Children's Services.

Cllr Harriet Pentland welcomed new performance indicators regarding e-scooter usage and associated carbon savings, noting the importance of people moving to more sustainable modes of transport.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive noted the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators at Period 2 (2022/23) as set out in the appendices to this report.

Reason for Recommendations: To better understand the Council's performance as measured by performance indicators as at Period 2, 2022/23.

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.

246 Garden Waste Future Service Provision

This item was deferred for the reasons outlined in minute number 243.

247 Homes for Ukraine Programme

The Chair welcomed Cllr Lyn Buckingham to the meeting to address the Executive. Cllr Buckingham welcomed the report but stated that the Council had been slow offer support to community endeavours currently assisting Ukrainian refugees and their host families. One of the biggest barriers faced was language, with additional support for English lessons required as relationship breakdown between some refugees and host families was becoming apparent.

The Chair thanked Cllr Buckingham for her contribution, noting the overwhelming generosity of the residents in North Northamptonshire in offering support and assistance to refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Cllr Dorothy Maxwell was then invited to address the meeting. Cllr Maxwell queried funding for educational requirements for refugees as well as the cost to administer caseloads.

Cllr Helen Harrison, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing then introduced a report that sought approval from the Executive for the proposed use of the Government's Homes for Ukraine Local Authority Funding to support families to rebuild their lives and to integrate into communities in North Northamptonshire.

Cllr Harrison responded to Cllr Maxwell's comments, noting that £10,500 was received from the Government per Ukrainian guest to allow the Council to support Ukrainian families to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities. Education funding was separate to that funding and was passported straight to schools. In addition, ringfenced funding for the 'thank you' payments of £350 per sponsoring household per month had been allocated.

Following on from Cllr Buckingham's comments, Cllr Harrison noted that local community groups had stepped up to carry out amazing work in helping the Council deliver Ukrainian integration in North Northamptonshire. The report before members would provide the capacity to undertake additional work with such groups as the Council sought to fulfil the wide array of responsibilities it had with regard to the refugees.

The meeting heard that to meet these responsibilities, it was proposed that the Council create a dedicated Refugee Resettlement Team, to provide wraparound support and technical guidance associated with refugee status, but to also provide employment, tenancy and immigration support. It was anticipated that this team would initially be in place for a fixed-term three-year period.

It was noted that without the Council having a clear approach as to how Government funding would be allocated there was a risk that funding could be allocated ad hoc and without appropriate management and monitoring. Additionally, there was the risk that without the appropriate support in place, refugees could lose their accommodation, be unable to access benefits and/or employment and experience health issues. Members noted that the introduction of the methodology outlined in the report would allow for a

consistent, structured and supportive approach to Ukrainian citizens across North Northamptonshire.

Cllr Harrison outlined the proposed timetable for the implementation of the proposals and noted the overwhelming support of the Health & Wellbeing and Vulnerable People Executive Advisory Panel.

The Chair spoke to acknowledge the support of the local and national population in supporting those fleeing the war in Ukraine and paid tribute to the hard work of officers to date in this regard, a stance echoed by Cllrs Howell and Pentland.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a. Approved the approach to funding as set out at paragraph 5.8 (Table One) of the report
- b. Noted that the use of the funding will ensure that the Council meets the obligations set out by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ensure adequate safeguarding and support is provided to sponsoring households and Ukrainian guests to enable the successful integration of Ukrainian refugees in North Northamptonshire.
- c. Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, in liaison with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to appropriately support both refugees and sponsors in North Northamptonshire.

Reasons for Recommendations: By approving these recommendations, Council Officers will be able to set a clear approach for how the Local Authority funding will be effectively used to support and help the integration of Ukrainian Refugees into their local communities.

Alternative Options considered: The alternative is not to set out a clear approach for how the Tariff will be applied in North Northamptonshire.

248 Housing Income Management Policy

The Chair invited Cllr Lyn Buckingham to address the meeting. Cllr Buckingham welcomed the report and the need for harmonisation of policies across housing but queried the removal of the rent cap in relation to Corby rents, stating that it had never been in place since 2020.

Cllr Matt Binley, Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up thanked Cllr Buckingham for her comments before introducing a report that sought

approval to adopt a harmonised Income Management Policy for North Northamptonshire Council.

Cllr Binley stated that the policy would provide the necessary clarity required for setting, collecting and enforcement in relation to income derived from the Council's housing stock. The Council would adopt a supportive approach to its tenants and leaseholder, with the key aim of the policy being debt prevention, while also looking to maximise income through collection. It was noted that the Council's Tenant Advisory Panel had unanimously supported the adoption of the policy.

In response to Cllr Buckingham's comments, Cllr Binley noted that the rent cap in Corby currently affected 14% of the town's housing stock and had prevented re-letting of homes at target rents. The policy, if adopted, would remove this cap resulting in all new tenancies will being offered at target rent, based on Government formula.

Cllr David Brackenbury welcomed the report and the proposed early intervention work that would prevent tenants from accruing rent-related debts.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the Income Management Policy at **Appendix A** of the report.
- b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up, in liaison with the Executive Director, Adults, Communities and Wellbeing to take any further decisions and/or actions required to implement these policy documents. This includes making minor amendments.

Reasons for Recommendation:

- A harmonised policy will offer one consistent approach to the income management and income collection parts of the tenancy and landlord services.
- A harmonised policy will avoid current issues of risk presented by two different approaches in the management and collection of council housing debts.

Alternative Options Considered: The only other options are to do nothing or to delay the harmonisation of working practices across the two teams.

These are not options that can continue to be maintained effectively over time. The best option is to harmonise working practices as soon as possible to ensure consistency of service, reduce the risk of challenge, and most importantly make improvements to the service.

249 Procurement of Vehicle Contract Hire for Adult Social Care

Councillor Graham Lawman, Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets presented a report that sought approval to commence procurement of a new contract for the provision of minibuses and wheelchair accessible minibuses for the Adult Social Care Service.

Cllr Lawman noted that the existing contract for the provision of highly specialised vehicles intended to support the transportation needs of the service users was due to expire at the end of November 2022 and required re-procurement. Cllr Lawman stated that a contract hire arrangement rather than an outright purchase was recommended to allow flexibility to suit service needs in terms of vehicle type and capacity.

Cllrs Pentland and Harrison welcomed the report; Cllr Pentland noting the support of the Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel and Cllr Harrison anticipating a seamless service as a result of re-procurement.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive;

- a) Authorised the commencement of procurement for specialised vehicle hire to support transportation needs within Adult Social Care in North Northamptonshire
- b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Assistant Director for Assets & Environment to take any further decisions and /or actions required to conclude the procurement, contract award and implementation of the provision of vehicles for the Adult Social Care.

Reason for Recommendation: The recommended course of action is the most cost-effective and enables the Council to make informed decisions regarding its medium-term financial planning. It ensures the authority complies with its obligations under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and has a legally procured, compliant contract which demonstrates best value in respect of the provision of specialist vehicles.

Alternative options considered: Do nothing – however; this leaves the Council open to challenge and increases the risk that the Council will be left without the provision to fulfil its transport responsibilities within the service area. As the contract will expire in November, this could put the Council at risk of exploitation by the current supplier and from challenge from potential bidders who have not been given the opportunity to bid for the services.

Outright purchase of vehicles. This was not the recommended option due to the nature of the service demands fluctuating, resulting in the need for a greater or reduced number of vehicles at any one time, and user requirements impacting the specification of the minibus.

250 Rough Sleeping Initiative Programme 2022-2025

The Chair invited Cllr Dorothy Maxwell to address the meeting. Cllr Maxwell welcomed the award of over £2m in Government funding to assist the Council in its work regarding rough sleeping but called for additional training for staff in assisting homeless people to understand their rights and access advice.

Cllr Matt Binley, Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up thanked Cllr Maxwell for her comments and, in the absence of Cllr Valerie Anslow, noted her support for the contents of the report.

Cllr Binley then introduced a report that sought to brief the Executive on the Rough Sleeping Initiative 2022-2025 (RSI5) grant award as well as seeking approval to deliver the programme of activities detailed in the original funding bid.

It was heard that the Council had made significant progress in 2021/22 in reducing levels of rough sleeping by offering support and accommodation to those in need as well as through the hard work and dedication of officers. It was noted that as part of the funding application process, several partner organisations were consulted as part of the Council's self-assessment to ensure a comprehensive and balanced submission that captured the views and experiences of a wide variety of stakeholders. This process had identified that the weakest aspect of the Council's work across four key objectives was in relation to prevention, and therefore this would be a focus for proposed RSI5 activities.

The Council had been successful in its funding bid, being awarded £2.185m for a three-year period covering 2022-25. Alongside a £115,000 Rough Sleeper Intervention Fund to allow for creative resolutions to rough sleeping, the funding would be utilised to continue and increase staff capacity dedicated to supporting rough sleepers to access and sustain accommodation and related support (£1,368,015). In addition, funding would be used to ensure the continued financial viability, and potential expansion through recommissioning of the delivery of supported accommodation options for rough sleepers (£702,070).

The meeting noted that this funding formed part of the Government's strategy to eliminate rough sleeping by 2024, with the Council's rough sleeping team continuing to build on success in this regard despite facing significant external challenges.

Cllr Binley concluded by noting the support of the Health, Wellbeing and Vulnerable People Executive Advisory Panel (EAP), with the Chair acknowledging the impact of cross-party EAPs.

Cllrs Harrison, Brackenbury and Lawman all spoke to welcome the report and funding award, noting the opportunity to improve the Council's prevention objective.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the allocated spend of the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2022-2025 as detailed in paragraph 4.21 (figure 8) of the report
- b) Noted the detail of how the allocated funding will be spent as set out from 4.22 to 4.36 of the report
- c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up, in liaison with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, to take any further decisions and actions required to enable delivery of the Rough Sleeping Initiative programme

Reasons for Recommendations:

- To ensure that the Council and its partners can sustain and build upon the success to date in reducing rough sleeping and supporting individuals experiencing rough sleeping
- To safeguard this vulnerable cohort of adults who are often experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness

Alternative Options Considered:

- To not submit a funding application to the Rough Sleeping Initiative programme 2022-2025
- To submit a funding application to the Rough Sleeping Initiative programme 2022-2025 that included a different schedule of activities and proposals

251 Extension of the Public Spaces Protection Order - Kettering Town Centre

The Chair welcomed Cllr Clark Mitchell from Kettering Town Council to address the Executive. Cllr Mitchell spoke in support of the proposed new wording in the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Kettering Town Centre that removed perceived discrimination relating to minors and skateboarders, referencing the support of the public and town council following the consultation process.

The Chair thanked Cllr Mitchell for his comments before inviting Cllr Dorothy Maxwell to address the meeting. Cllr Maxwell spoke in support of PSPOs in protecting town centres from anti-social behaviour and queried whether such an order could be imposed in towns in the former East Northants area.

Cllr Matt Binley, Executive Member for Housing, Communities and Levelling Up then introduced a report that requested the Executive consider and approve the extension of a Public Spaces Protection Order covering the town centre of Kettering. In response to Cllr Maxwell's comments, Cllr Binley was noted that PSPOs could only be made based on significant evidence of anti-social behaviour and undergo a significant public consultation period before they could be made.

The meeting heard that the PSPO covering Kettering town centre had initially been made in July 2016, with an extension approved in 2019. The purpose of the PSPO

was to impact specific types of anti-social behaviour that affected the defined area covered by the order.

The current terms of the PSPO had been reviewed and widely consulted upon, with a revised list of prohibitions recommended in line with the consultation outcomes, specifically the removal of the blanket skateboarding prohibition and the requirements for under 18-year-olds to leave the prohibited area between the hours of 11pm and 6am. Skateboarders, cyclists and other wheeled conveyance were still covered in the PSPO if used in a manner likely to cause nuisance, alarm or distress. It was anticipated that these alterations would offer the best possible outcomes for residents and town centre users.

Due to the need to make minor corrective amendments to the PSPO document before implementation, an additional recommendation was proposed, as set out at resolution b) below.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Approved an extension to the Public Spaces Protection Act (PSPO) for Kettering town centre, with the draft order set out at **Appendix A** of the report.
- b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member Housing, Communities and Levelling-Up in liaison with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, to make any further amendments required to implement the Public Spaces Protection Order for Kettering town centre

Reason for Recommendations: To give authorised officers the ability to continue to use enforcement powers under the PSPO to respond to anti-social behaviour within Kettering town centre. Additional recommendation (b) will allow the Executive Member and Executive Director to make minor amendments to wording of the order to ensure it accurately reflects approved prohibitions.

Alternative Options Considered:

- a) Discontinue with the PSPO – this would have a negative impact on the ability to tackle activities in a public place that causes nuisance, crime and anti-social behaviour.
- b) Extend the PSPO based on no changes to the current prohibitions – this would effectively ignore the issues and comments raised by the public and partner agencies as part of the consultation.

252 Software Licence Procurement

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation introduced a report that sought approval to undertake the procurement process for the re-procurement of North Northamptonshire Council's software licence agreement which included productivity suite and infrastructure.

Cllr Bunday noted that the Council had inherited licensing models from the former sovereign councils which were now due to expire, thus providing the opportunity for the Council to procure its software licensing for the next three years under a single contract.

It was heard that the work undertaken by the Council to review its licence estate as well as the new procurement process could deliver savings in excess of 5% compared with the previous contract.

Cllr Pentland spoke to welcome the report and the potential for reducing the Council's carbon footprint following the procurement of the new licence agreement.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Authorised commencement of procurement for productivity and infrastructure software licences for North Northamptonshire Council
- b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation in consultation with the Director of Transformation, to take any further decisions and /or actions required to conclude the procurement, contract award and implementation of the Council's software licensing.

Reasons for Recommendations:

- a) To unify all of our legacy software agreements into a single North Northamptonshire Council contract
- b) To enable the service to employ the most effective and compliant route to renew the Council's license agreements
- c) To allow the organisation to continue its business day to day running through its use of the productivity and infrastructure licencing.

Alternative Options Considered: The option to do nothing and continue without a contract was considered but discounted as not a viable option. The current contract for software licences will end in August 2022, thereby leaving the Council without service and liable to challenge unless procured through a compliant route

253 Kettering Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Museum Capital Project and Financial Update (Cornerstone)

The Chair welcomed Dr David Brown, Chair of the Friends of Kettering Art Gallery and Museum to address the meeting. Dr Brown criticized a perceived lack of transparency and communication regarding the Kettering Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Museum (Cornerstone) Capital Project, noting several issues that had engendered public protest including tree-felling at the site, re-branding and the impact of the development on the Blitz café that he believed could have been avoided with enhanced public engagement. Dr Brown did note that his organisation supported the allocation of additional funding required to complete the project as well as the recommissioning of the Manor House museum.

Cllr Anne Lee was then provided an opportunity to address the meeting. Cllr Lee also raised concerns regarding communications relating to the project while supporting the recommendation of additional funding.

Cllr Helen Howell, Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism then introduced a report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for a budget increase for the capital programme at the Cornerstone site to bring the project to a successful conclusion in the summer of 2022.

Cllr Howell thanked the speakers for their endorsement of the additional funding requirements, but refuted the assertion regarding lack of communications, noting that a timeline and copies of communications were available, with quarterly update reports being sent to stakeholders and site visits held in November 2021 and March 2022. An Operations Manager would increase this level of engagement once in post.

It was heard that due to the tight timescales involved in the project to allow funding deadlines to be met, plus the impact of the Covid19 pandemic, costs relating to the project had increased. A further uplift to the capital budget of £412,000 to cover the worst-case scenario and risks was now requested in order to ensure there was sufficient budget to successfully complete the build in a timely fashion. Any underspend would revert back to the capital programme.

Cllr Lloyd Bunday spoke to register his disappointment at the criticism levelled at the project given the success of obtaining a funding award under very tight timescales, noting that other suggested uses for the funding did not meet eligibility criteria.

Cllr Scott Edwards noted that at the outset of the project no-one could foresee a global pandemic that would impact the finances and timescales involved. He further noted that the development was a fantastic opportunity for Kettering, especially in relation to education, history and the arts and it was now a case of getting the project across the finishing line.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the content of the report which sets out the current budget challenges for the capital programme, what has changed since March 2022, and the comparison with other projects of this nature.
- b) Approved the uplift to the capital budget of £412,000 to cover the worst-case scenarios and risks, in order to ensure there is sufficient budget to successfully complete the build in a timely fashion
- c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Leisure, Sport, 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 project.

Reasons for Recommendations: Approval of the recommendations will allow the Council to ensure the capital project is successfully delivered in a timely manner and do so without exceeding approved budget whilst achieving best value.

Alternative Options Considered: The capital programme cannot be completed without a further budget uplift. The alternative would be to act within current budget which would mean the site would not be fully complete and may be unable to open to the public until it is complete. This will have huge reputational impact and will also mean that the Council will not be able to deliver some of the outcomes set by the external funders, which might expose the Council to the risk of not being able to draw down final claims or having to pay some of the funding back.

Furthermore, identified risks would not be mitigated and instructions to the contractors for variations would be hampered, as Officers have to instruct variations to mitigate risks within the approved budget. Officers cannot instruct if the budget approval is not in place. This would mean that the project would be further delayed, potentially subjecting the Council to more Extension of Time claims which would be in excess of the amount requested in this report for the budget uplift.

254 Treasury Management Outturn Report - 2021/22

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation introduced a report that updated the Executive on the Council's treasury management and prudential indicators, including the position following progress on the disaggregation of the assets and liabilities that were previously held by the former Northamptonshire County Council. The report also provided an update on the Council's treasury management activities and performance for the financial year 2012/22 in accordance with the CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management which requires that members be are informed of treasury management activities at least twice a year.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the treasury management outturn report detailing the activity undertaken during the financial year ended 31st March 2022 and the performance achieved set out in **Appendix A** to this report; and
- b) Noted that all treasury activities were undertaken in line with the approved Treasury Management Strategy/Annual Investment Strategy

Reason for Recommendations: The Council's TMSS is underpinned by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management ("the Code") which requires that members are informed of treasury management activities at least twice a year. Full Council has delegated the formulation and monitoring of the Council's treasury management strategy, policy, and activity to the Executive Committee.

Alternative Options Considered: There are no alternative options to be considered for this report, which is for noting only

255 Revenue Budget Draft Outturn Forecast 2021/22

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation introduced a report that set out the draft outturn position for 2021/22 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

It was noted that the monitoring report set out the material financial issues identified since the 2021/22 budget was set in February 2021 and was based on the draft outturn for 2021/22 which indicated a forecast underspend for the General Fund of £1.77m against the approved budget. The Housing Revenue Account had a forecast underspend of £538,000 against budget

The Chair thanked Cllr Bunday for his report, stating that although the Council had faced challenges in its first year of existence, it had demonstrated good financial management enabling it to manage emerging pressures in 2022/23. Cllr Smithers further stated that he was conscious of the fact that the Council's finances were taxpayer's money, and it was important that investments were made in important areas for residents and communities.

The Chair noted that, for residents, improvements to highways was an important element of the Council's work and therefore proposed that £1.5m of the identified underspend be set aside in reserve to enable repairs to pot-holes, white line painting and road sign cleaning, in addition to the Council's existing commitments. An addition to recommendation b) was provided as follows:

"In addition, a further £1.5m is to be transferred to the Transformation Reserve to enable investment into the Council's Highway's function to improve important elements of the Highways across North Northamptonshire"

Cllrs Lawman, Harrison and Howell welcomed the extra investment in an area that would impact every resident in North Northamptonshire. Cllr David Howes noted that it was extremely positive news that an authority in its first year of existence could be so well-run financially that it was in a position to make such an investment in an area that was of great importance to residents.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the Council's draft outturn position for the General Fund 2021/22 which is an underspend of £1.771m and the Housing Revenue Account 2021/22 which is an underspend of £0.538m as summarised in section 4, alongside the further analysis which is set out in Section 5 and Section 6 of this report.
- b) Approved the following transfers to reserves which are reflected in the draft outturn position.

Transfer to reserves included within individual Directorates:

- Homelessness (Section 5.30) - £228k
- General Risk Reserve (Leisure – Section 5.36) - £0.556m
- Planning Reserve (JPU – Section 5.47) - £224k
- Capital General Fund (MRP – Section 5.98) - £1.494m

Transfer to Earmarked Reserves from Available Resources:

- Smoothing Reserve – Home to School Transport £2.500m
- Smoothing Reserve – Knuston Hall - £0.600m
- Smoothing Reserve – NORSE - £1.100m
- Budget Delivery Reserve - £0.750m
- Members Empowerment Fund - £78k

In addition, a further £1.5m is to be transferred to the Transformation Reserve to enable investment into the Council's Highway's function to improve important elements of the Highways across North Northamptonshire

- c) Noted the assessment of the 2021/22 savings as shown in Appendix A.

Reason for Recommendations – to note the draft outturn position for 2021/22, approve the transfer to reserves and consider the impact on this year and future years budgets.

256 Capital Outturn 2021/22 - Draft Outturn as at Period 12

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation presented a report that:

- Set out the provisional capital outturn position for 2021/22 for the Council, and the subsequent carry forward requests due to the rephasing of scheme expenditure profiles.
- Included requests to approve schemes, which during the process of closing the year end for 2021/22, had been identified as capital expenditure and needed to be reclassified and included within the Council's Capital Programme.

- Detailed the latest revised capital budgets (2021/22) for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, including new schemes which had been approved since 1st April 2021

It was noted that the final outturn position may be affected by any changes arising from the outstanding audits for the legacy authorities and that the Council would continue to assess and refine its capital profiling as part of the capital monitoring for 2022/23.

Virements for both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account to align budgets were outlined to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive:

- a. Noted the draft capital outturn position for the General Fund (GF) Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme for 2021/22.
- b. Approved the proposed capital carry forwards for the GF and HRA capital programmes as detailed in Appendices A and B of the report.
- c. Approved year end budget adjustments for the GF as shown in paragraph 5.7 and Appendix A of the report.
- d. Approved virements over £100k in line with the Council's constitution as set out in paragraph 5.8 for the General Fund and paragraph 5.13 for the HRA.

Reasons for Recommendations: This is in line with the Council's constitution and financial regulations in relation to governance.

Alternative Options Considered: By not approving these recommendations there would be an adverse impact on service provision in North Northamptonshire.

257 Capital Programme Update

Cllr Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation introduced a 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.

Two schemes were highlighted as per the report and recommendation below.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

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

- a) Corby Town Investment Plan, Train Station to Town Centre - Link Road (via Oakley Road) & Smart and Connected Corby (combined) – increase capital programme for 2022/23 by £8.055m, which is to be funded from the Towns Fund Grant.
- b) Kettering Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Museum (Cornerstone), increase budget by £0.412m, to be funded from capital reserves.

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

- To implement phases 3 and 4 of Corby's Town Investment Plan in relation to the £19.9m awarded from the Towns Fund in June 2021.
- To help mitigate any delays to the Cornerstone project to meet funding deadlines and the current construction market conditions, with fluctuating prices.

Alternative Options Considered:

- Use of the funding is in line with the agreement, there is no alternative option proposed.
- By not approving these recommendations there would be an adverse impact on service provision and the completion of projects in North Northamptonshire.

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The Chair invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee spoke to welcome Summer School Holiday Food Vouchers but queried the use of funding from the Public Health Reserve to cover the cost. Cllr Lee also referenced the Right to Buy scheme and queried when a report on the building of new social housing would be brought forward, having previously been on the published Executive Forward Plan.

The Chair thanked Cllr Lee for her attendance and confirmed that utilising the Public Health Reserve was a legitimate method of funding holiday food vouchers as outlined above.

Cllr Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation then introduced a report that set out the forecast outturn position for the Council based on the Period 2 monitoring forecasts for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Cllr Bunday noted that although it was early in the financial year the overall outturn forecast for the General Fund for 2022/23, as at Period 2 was a forecast overspend of £237,000 against the approved budget of £295.9m.

Cllr Bunday referenced the forecast underspend for Children's Services of £1.085m as well as the volatility of Adult Social Care, Safeguarding and Wellbeing and Commissioning and Performance Services. A pressure of £398,000 was forecast for the Assets and Environment Service to be mitigated by the use of reserves which

would also be used to meet a forecast pressure of £666,000 for the Highways and Waste Service.

It was reported that for the HRA, there was a forecast underspend of £267,000 against the approved budget of £36.270m.

RESOLVED:

KEY DECISION

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the Council's forecast outturn position for 2022/23 as summarised in Section 4, 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 2022/23 savings proposals in Appendix A of the report.
- c) Approved the inclusion of a grant and associated expenditure of £98k in respect of support for developing the Council's approach to Social Care Reforms. See paragraph 5.23.
- d) Approved the use of earmarked reserves totalling £3.938m to mitigate in year pressures relating to Home to School Transport, short-term vehicle leasing costs, commercial income for grounds maintenance and facilities management from the previous Wellingborough NORSE contract, and Knuston Hall as referenced in paragraphs 5.33 and 5.37 respectively.
- e) Approved an increase in the gross budget of £2.696m to provide support for families and individuals in specific financial hardship to be funded from the Household Support Fund 2 grant of £2.466m as reported to Executive in June and a further contribution of £230k from the Public Health Reserve to underwrite the potential shortfall in the School Holiday Food Voucher Scheme over the Summer break. See paragraphs 5.49 and 5.50.
- f) Noted the use of £650k of the contingency budget to support the Maintained Nurseries as previously agreed by Council.
- g) Noted the use of £1.150m of the contingency budget to fund a salary increment for all eligible employees in 2022/23. This will include staff not at the top of their grade where their protected TUPE terms and conditions of employment have no contractual entitlement to incremental progression as agreed by the Employment Committee at meeting on 28th June 2022, alongside staff with a contractual entitlement to increments. See paragraph 5.53.

Reason for Recommendations – to note the forecast financial position for 2022/23 as at Period 2 and consider the impact on this year and future years budgets.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 12.02pm