



North Northamptonshire Council

Full Council

North Northamptonshire Council

Thursday 24th November 2022

At 2:00 pm in the Council Chamber, The Cube, George Street, Corby.

Present: -

Members:

Councillors Larry Henson (Chair), Jean Addison, Tim Allebone, Valerie Anslow, Ross Armour, Paul Bell, Charlie Best, Matt Binley, David Brackenbury, Wendy Brackenbury, Scott Brown, Leanne Buckingham, Lyn Buckingham, Lloyd Bunday, Jon-Paul Carr, Robin Carter, William Colquhoun, John Currall, Alison Dalziel, Dez Dell, Scott Edwards, Jonathan Ekins, Martin Griffiths, Jim Hakewill, Clive Hallam, Ken Harrington, Helen Harrison, Kirk Harrison, Helen Howell, David Howes, Bert Jackson, Ian Jelley, Barbara Jenney, David Jenney, Matt Keane, King Lawal, Graham Lawman, Lora Lawman, Paul Marks, Dorothy Maxwell, Peter McEwan, John McGhee, Zoe McGhee, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Macaulay Nichol, Anup Pandey, Tom Partridge-Underwood, Mark Pengelly, Harriet Pentland, Roger Powell, Elliot Prentice, Russell Roberts, Geoff Shacklock, Jason Smithers, Chris Smith-Haynes, Mike Tebbutt, Sarah Tubbs, Michael Tye, Malcolm Ward, Andrew Weatherill, Lee Wilkes.

Officers in Attendance:

Rob Bridge (Chief Executive), Adele Wylie (Director of Customer and Governance/Monitoring Officer), Paul Goult (Interim Democratic Services Manager) and Ben Smith (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager).

Prior to commencing the formal business of the meeting, the Chair invited attendees to observe two minute's silence in memory of Councillor Kevin Thurland (NNC) who had recently passed away. Councillors John McGhee, Jason Smithers and Jim Hakewill made speeches of condolence.

166. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Rowley, E Fedorowycz, M Dearing, C Brown, A Lee, S North, D Sims, J Smyth, R Levell, J O'Hara, J Bone, S Rielly, P Irwin.

167. Minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2022

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 29th September 2022 had been circulated.

It was noted that Councillor B Jackson's name was omitted from the list of attendees at the meeting on 29th September 2022. This was noted and corrected.

Under paragraph 161. Councillor Learning and Development Policy, Councillor Carr requested a correction, in that both he and Councillor D Brackenbury had confirmed that joint training with town and parish councils had already been agreed; the minutes indicated that they “supported consideration of this.” This was noted and corrected.

Councillor Larry Henson MOVED the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2022 be agreed. Councillor Jim Hakewill SECONDED the motion.

RESOLVED that: -

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 29th September 2022 (as amended) be agreed.

168. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were registered.

169. Chair’s Announcements

Councillor Henson (Chair) drew Council’s attention to a concert being held by Kettering Symphony Orchestra on Saturday 26th November 2022. Tickets were still available and councillors encouraged to support the event.

170. Leader’s Announcements

There were no Leader’s Announcements on this occasion.

171. Public Participation

There were no public statements, questions or petitions on this occasion.

172. Executive Presentations

Councillor Matt Binley (Executive Member) provided a statement in relation to a motion passed by Full Council at its meeting on 29th September 2022, regarding arrangements made by the Council for the provision of temporary heating to housing tenants. It was noted that a full report on this matter would be tabled at Full Council on 26th January 2023.

173. Youth Justice Plan 2022/2023

The Youth Justice Plan covered performance for the period 2021/22 and provided service budgets, operational and strategic developments, partnership working, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan for 2022/23.

In accordance with statutory requirements, the Plan had been considered and approved by the Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service Management Board in August 2022.

The recommendation was MOVED by Councillor Scott Edwards and SECONDED by Councillor Ken Harrington.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The Youth Justice Plan be approved.

174. Appointment of Independent Person (Audit and Governance Committee)

The recommendation before Council sought ratification of the appointment of Mr Michael Whitworth as Independent Person on the Council’s Audit and Governance Committee. The

Chair of the Committee and the Chief Finance Officer had interviewed short listed candidates, following an external recruitment exercise.

The recommendation was MOVED by Councillor Andrew Weatherill and SECONDED by Councillor Kirk Harrison.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The appointment of Mr Michael Whitworth as an Independent Person on the Audit and Governance Committee be ratified, for a term of 4-years from 24th November 2022 to 30th November 2026.

175. Northamptonshire Children's Trust Annual Report

Council were being requested to note the Trust's Annual Report.

The Annual Review process and subsequent Annual Report provided a procedure through which the Council could review the Service Delivery Contract and Northamptonshire Children's Trust performance in delivering its functions.

It also provided an opportunity to make changes to the Service Delivery Contract after the expected Ofsted inspection allowing any changes to be considered in the context of the outcome of this inspection and any recommendations from Ofsted. It also gave all elected members an insight into the work of Northamptonshire Children's Trust and support the discharge of their Corporate Parenting duties.

The recommendations were MOVED by Councillor Scott Edwards and SECONDED by Councillor Dorothy Maxwell.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The content of the Annual Report, completed by Northamptonshire Children's Trust in line with the service delivery contract requirements, be noted;
- (ii) The proposal to further discuss and agree any amendments to the Service Delivery Contract following the Ofsted Inspection of the Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) following publication of the Ofsted findings on 25th November 2022, be noted; and
- (iii) That the gaps in sources of assurance as debated at the Audit and Governance Committee on 5th September 2022 be noted and that the Committee was seeking actions from the NCT to review their control processes and assurance framework and report back to the Committee.

176. Council Tax Base 2023/2024

The purpose of the report before Council was to set the Council Tax Base for 2023/24 as required by statute.

A Council Tax Base calculation for the whole of North Northamptonshire Council's (NNC) area for the year 2023/24 had been undertaken with data as at the relevant date, i.e. 1st October 2021 to 30th September 2022.

The calculation had taken account of the number of new properties likely to be completed and banded for Council Tax purposes during the period October 2022 to March 2024 and the anticipated level of occupation. In addition, the predicted discounts and premiums, including those within the NNC Local Council Tax Support Scheme, have been applied as these have an impact on the Tax Base figure.

The resulting calculation equated to a Band D equivalent Tax Base of 116,019 properties before applying the expected collection rate. The Tax Base was reduced by a percentage which, in the Council's opinion, represented the likely level of collection. This collection rate had been assumed to be 98.5%, based on current collection levels which was unchanged from the previous year.

The recommendations were **MOVED** by Councillor Lloyd Bunday and **SECONDED** by Councillor David Jenney.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulation 1992 (as amended) approve the amount calculated as the Band D equivalent Council Tax Base for the North Northamptonshire area 2023/24 shall be 114,279 as detailed in the report and appendices. This was an increase of 1,232 over the 2022/2023 Tax Base, a 1.1% increase; and
- (ii) That a Council Tax Collection rate assumption of 98.5% for 2023/2024 be noted.

177. Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/2024

From April 2013 each Local Authority had been required to determine a Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS), which replaced the national Council Tax Benefit Scheme.

The Scheme applied to working age claimants only as the government prescribed the scheme for pensioner claimants.

Local discretion related to the maximum level of support available to working age claimants, and therefore the minimum percentage of the Council Tax bill they were expected to meet. There was also local discretion in relation to eligibility criteria.

Due to the formation of the new Unitary Authority from 1st April 2021 a single LCTSS was consulted on and implemented for North Northamptonshire from 2021/22, this included a review of the four separate sovereign District and Borough LCTS Schemes and resulted in a scheme where all working age claimants were required to pay a minimum of 25% towards their Council Tax liability.

The LCTSS was reviewed for 2022/23 and it was decided when Full Council met on 1st December 2021, that the scheme for 2022/23 would remain unchanged from 2021/22 (minimum 25% payment), with the exception of changes to be made for the annual uprating of allowances and premiums and statutory base legislation changes which were required to be made to the Scheme.

The recommendation was **MOVED** by Councillor Lloyd Bunday and **SECONDED** by Councillor Lee Wilkes.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The information set out in the report be noted and approved the proposed 2023/2024 Local Council Tax Support Scheme which maintained the current 2022/2023 scheme of minimum 25% payment, allowing for the changes required to reflect the annual uprating of allowances and premiums and any statutory base legislation changes which were required to be made to the scheme.

(Councillor Shacklock joined the meeting at this point.)

178. Children's Social Care Case Management System

The report before Council was seeking approval to proceed with the replacement of the Case Management System for Children's Social Care across Northamptonshire, which will be operated by Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) through a contribution by North Northamptonshire Council (NNC).

During 2019 the previous Northamptonshire County Council awarded a contract with OLM Eclipse for the provision of Children's and Adult Social Care Case Management System and associated finance modules. Implementation commenced with Adult Social Care, which went live ahead of the vesting day of the new Councils.

Between the contract being awarded in 2019 and the planned implementation of the new system, Children's Social Care Services in Northamptonshire were transferred into an independent organisation, Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT), following a direction from the Secretary of State for Education. Northamptonshire County Council was also disbanded and replaced by the two new Unitary Councils.

The relationship between the Councils and NCT was governed by a set of contractual agreements. Under the terms of these agreements, NCT was responsible for the delivery of children's social care. However, the Councils retained responsibility for the provision of a database (case management system) that allowed NCT to deliver services. This was one of the key contractual dependencies on the Councils in the contractual agreements.

Post-vesting day, the OLM Eclipse implementation programme was transferred to joint responsibility between the Councils and NCT. The Eclipse Implementation programme team undertook an implementation readiness review and identified concerns with the application of the system to Children's Social Care. Whilst the supplier OLM worked with the Councils to rectify these the timescales for fixes implied that the solution would be implemented in the last 12 months of the OLM contract.

A previous capital bid for funding of the procurement and implementation costs associated with a Children's Social Care Case Management System was submitted to Strategic Capital Board in June 2022.

However, following the NNC Capital Board and further due diligence this was now being confirmed as a revenue bid for a decision on finance of the programme of work, as it was deemed that an asset would not be created and cannot therefore, be funded from capital resources.

On the 10th November 2022 the Executive agreed to proceed with the replacement of the Case Management System for the Children's Social Care across Northamptonshire and delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families, Education and Skills, in liaison with the Executive Director for Children's Services, to take any further decisions and actions required to implement the Case Management System and award contracts in relation to this.

The recommendation was **MOVED** by Councillor Scott Edwards and **SECONDED** by Councillor Paul Marks.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) Authority be delegated to the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Performance, to access

and utilise revenue reserves to fund the Case Management System for Children's Social Care.

179. Capital Programme Update 2022/2023

The purpose of the report before Council was to request approval for borrowing and virements for capital schemes which were in excess of £0.5m. This was in accordance with the Council's Constitution, where new borrowing and virements in excess of £0.5m on capital schemes must be approved by Council.

Approval of the funding would allow the schemes to move forward to procurement and delivery. The Executive considered these items at its meeting on 15th September 2022 and 10th November 2022 respectively and recommended that Full Council grant approval for the funding requests as outlined in the report.

The recommendation was **MOVED** by Councillor Lloyd Bunday and **SECONDED** by Councillor Graham Lawman.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The changes to the capital programme be approved:
 - (a) Cannock Road Housing Development – total virement of £0.643m made up of the most recent virement request of £0.454m in addition to a previous approved transfer of £0.189m. The virement is funded from existing capital budget within the HRA capital programme;
 - (b) Street lighting LED upgrade project, increase of £6.170m to the capital programme; £3.033m in 2022/23, £2.157m in 2023/24 and £0.980m in 2024/25, to be funded from borrowing; and
 - (c) Children's Residential Home provision – increase of £0.762m to the capital programme to be funded from borrowing.

180. Full Council Meeting Start Time

Council was requested to consider the appropriate start time for full Council meetings. The choice of a start time for full Council meetings was a matter of local choice. It was acknowledged that whatever start time was chosen there may be apologies submitted for each meeting due to a range of circumstances and factors.

The appendices attached to the report provided some data associated with attendance and participation at full Council meetings.

The Democracy and Standards Committee at its meeting of 10th October 2022 considered this report. Following discussion the Committee agreed to recommend to full Council a start time for ordinary meetings of 5:00 pm.

The recommendation was **MOVED** by Councillor Lora Lawman and **SECONDED** by Councillor Tim Allebone.

Councillor Paul Bell **MOVED** that the recommendation before Council be amended to read normally a 6:00 pm start for ordinary meetings. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Matt Keane.

The meeting debated the merits of moving the start time to 6:00 pm, acknowledging the difficulties that those employed full-time incurred in attending daytime meetings. It was also suggested that there would be greater public attendance and participation for evening meetings.

It was also acknowledged that travel-time for some members was a factor to be considered, particularly if travelling during peak periods. Concerns were also presented regarding travelling distance late in the evening should the meeting exceed 3-hours, particularly during Winter months.

Following debate, the amendment was put to a vote.

RESOLVED that: -

The start time of ordinary Full Council meetings would normally commence at 6:00 pm.

Following concluding remarks from Councillor Lawman, Council moved to the vote on the substantive motion.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The normal start time of future meetings, with the exception of the Budget meeting and Special (Extraordinary) meetings, be 6:00 pm.

181. Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2021/2022

The report before Council, presented the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adult Board (NSAB) Annual Report 2021/22. The report outlined the Board's and statutory partners achievements during the year. The report had been reviewed and approved by the NSAB's Strategic Board on 6th October 2022.

The recommendations were MOVED by Councillor Helen Harrison and SECONDED by Councillor Geoff Shacklock.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The NSAB Annual Report 2021-2022 as approved by the NSAB Strategic Board on 6th October 2022 (Appendix A) be noted; and
- (ii) The contribution that North Northamptonshire Council has made in supporting NSAB's achievements in keeping adults safe from harm be acknowledged.

182. Motions on Notice

Motion 1

Council had received the following motion –

“This council resolves to scrutinise the current options for residents to choose a green burial in North Northamptonshire. Further, to develop a Green Burial Ground policy to enable appropriate guidance to be given to interested operators with potential areas identified.”

The motion was MOVED by Councillor Jim Hakewill and SECONDED by Councillor Charlie Best.

Council noted that there were a few existing sites in the local area, although few in North Northamptonshire, that catered for Green Burials, and Councillor Hakewill suggested that there was likely to be increasing interest and demand for sites in the future.

Councillor Hakewill was proposing that the Council, through its scrutiny process, seek to investigate in consultation with partners and the wider public whether any extension of existing facilities and creation of new facilities should be considered by the Council.

(Councillor M Tye left the meeting at this point.)

A proposed amendment to the substantive motion was rejected on the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

Prior to completion of debate on the motion, a Motion Without Notice was MOVED by Councillor Jason Smithers and SECONDED by Councillor Helen Howell, to extend the guillotine to allow for the completion of determination of Motion 1.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The guillotine be extended to allow for the debate and determination of Motion 1 to be completed to be followed immediately by the close of the meeting.

(A recorded vote on the Motion Without Notice was taken. Those voting for the motion – Councillors Wilkes, Binley, D Brackenbury, W Brackenbury, Weatherill, Bunday, Carter, Currall, Howes, Jackson, K Harrison, H Harrison, D Jenney, Ekins, Edwards, Hallam, B Jenney, Howell, G Lawman, L Lawman, Marks, G Mercer, Nichol, Allebone, Pandey, Partridge-Underwood, Pentland, Roberts, Shacklock, Smithers, Henson.

Those voting against the motion – Councillors Best, S Brown, Lyn Buckingham, Leanne Buckingham, Carr, Colquhoun, Dalziel, Jelley, Dell, Keane, Hakewill, Addison, Maxwell, McEwan, J McGhee, Z McGhee, Pengelly, Smith-Haynes, Tubbs, Anslow, Armour.

Abstentions – Councillors Bell, Watt, A Mercer, Powell, Ward).

Councillor Hakewill concluded the debate on the substantive motion.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) The motion be agreed.

183. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 5:02 pm.