

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive

At 2.00 pm on Thursday 5th August, 2021 in the Council Chamber, Cedar Drive, Thrapston, NN14 4LZ

Present:-

Members

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

Also in attendance – Councillors Leanne Buckingham, Lyn Buckingham, Jim Hakewill and Gill Mercer.

26 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor David Howes.

27 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 15th July 2021

RESOLVED that: The Executive agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 15th July as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

28 Notifications of requests to address the meeting

The Chair, Councillor Jason Smithers, reported that there were two requests to address the meeting, from Councillors Lyn Buckingham (Agenda Item 5 – Budget Forecast 2021/22 as at Period 3 and Agenda Item 9 – Oxford to Cambridge Arc – Environmental Principles) and Leanne Buckingham (Agenda Item 10 – Variation of School Admission Arrangements).

29 Members' Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received.

30 Budget Forecast 2021/22 as at Period 3

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, introduced a report of the Executive Director of Finance which set out the forecast outturn position for the Council based on the Period 3 monitoring forecasts for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted that:-

- i) The Council's budget currently faced a £59,000 overspend compared to the approved 2021/22 budget, however, it was very early in the financial year and further monitoring work would be undertaken to review this position
- ii) Adult Social Care was an area vulnerable to budgetary overspend and significant work was underway to ensure this service area was on a stable financial footing

The Chair welcomed Councillor Lyn Buckingham to the meeting to address the Executive. Cllr Buckingham welcomed the recent allocation of £17.6million of health funding with a hope that a proportion of this could be used to help "level-up" areas of North Northamptonshire suffering from health inequality. Cllr Buckingham further raised concerns regarding Council Tax and Business Rate collection rates as well as the RAG-rating of financial target monitoring.

The Chair thanked Cllr Buckingham for her comments.

Cllr Bunday confirmed that tranches of the health funding referred to by Cllr Buckingham would be used to assist areas suffering from health inequality. Cllr Bunday also explained that as the majority of residents and businesses chose to pay Council Tax and Business Rates on a monthly basis, current collection rates detailed in the officer report were at expected levels. With regards to the RAG rates for monitoring targets, it was heard that there was little data to compare these to given that it was very early in the existence of the Council in its first financial year.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

- a) The Council's forecast outturn position for 2021/22 and the associated risks and other considerations be noted.
- b) The assessment of the current deliverability of the 2021/22 saving proposals in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.
- c) The final allocation of the Local Covid Support Grant as set out in paragraph 6.14 of the report be noted.
- d) Approval be given to the inclusion of £178k of grant funding for the ex-offender's programme, as set out in paragraphs 6.36-6.37 of the report, within the budget, noting that it is anticipated that the spend profile for this will be £150.5k in 2021/22 and £27.5k in 2022/23.

(Reason for Decision – to note the forecast financial position for 2021/22 as at Period 3 and to consider the impact on this year and future years budgets.)

31 Capital Programme Update 2021/22

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, introduced a report of the Executive Director of Finance, the purpose of which was to request approval for capital schemes that had come forward for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted that approval of the changes to the capital programme would allow the three schemes detailed in the report to move forward to procurement and delivery.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

- a) That the new capital approval process, endorsed by Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 13th July 2021, be noted;
- b) That the following changes into the capital programme totalling £9.272m be approved:
 - i. Stanton Cross Primary School £9.064m two form entry school and children's centre funded from Section 106 (S106) contributions.
 - ii. Library Management System £161k funded from borrowing/discretionary funding.
 - iii. Bininfrastructure - £47k funded through external contributions

(Reasons for Decision:

- i. The local authority has a legal obligation to deliver S106 related works in accordance with the signed S106 agreement;*
- ii. The recommended course of action will allow the timely progression of capital works;*
- iii. The recommended course of action is required to support the sustainability of the library service including critically the support of the Community Library Programme;*
- iv. Utilisation of grant funding to support our environment through the provision of litter bins.)*

32 Housing Land Supply in North Northamptonshire

Councillor Steven North, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, introduced a report of the Executive Director of Place and Economy the purpose of which was to approve the Council measuring five-year supply against the Local Housing Need for

the North Northamptonshire Housing Market Area, calculated using the Standard Method, to be reviewed annually to take account of any changes in circumstances.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted that approval of the recommendations would offer a degree of protection for residents to ensure new housing was placed where it needed and not in areas with a lesser need or requiring protection.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That approval be given to:-

- a) the Council measuring five-year supply against the Local Housing Need (LHN) for the North Northamptonshire Housing Market Area (HMA), calculated using the Standard Method (as confirmed in Ministerial Statement dated 16th December 2020); and
- b) the approach set out in a) above being reviewed annually to take account of changes in circumstances, including progress on the North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan and any changes to the standard method by which Local Housing Need is calculated.

(Reason for Decision: To agree an approach that is compliant with national policy and guidance and will provide greatest protection from speculative development proposals for the whole of the Council's area.)

33 Integrated Care System Design Principles

Councillor Helen Harrison, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing introduced a report of the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing which sought to provide the Executive with an update on progress in developing a Northamptonshire Integrated Care System (ICS) and presented the ICS design principles for endorsement.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted that the outline design before members was the first step in the process towards implementation of the system in April 2022. The draft design principles had been considered and endorsed by the Health, Wellbeing and Vulnerable People Executive Advisory Panel prior to being submitted to the Executive. The panel had made a number of recommendations that would be taken forward into discussions with external partners.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the feedback received from the Health, Wellbeing, and Vulnerable People Executive Advisory Panel (EAP) be noted;

- b) That the design principles for the Northamptonshire ICS, as summarised in Appendix 1, slide 26 to the report, be endorsed.

(Reasons for Decision:-

- i. Some of the design principles are required following the publishing of the Health and Care White Paper. Other principles have been proposed following extensive stakeholder engagement with health and care delivery partners in Northamptonshire aiming to ensure that the design principles are not considered contentious.*
- ii. Significant work has been undertaken locally to reach the current set of design principles.*
- iii. The design principles formulate the start of the process of becoming an integrated care system and there will be more opportunities for councillors to play an important role in advising the executive on policy development around integrated approaches with health services in North Northamptonshire that have the potential to positively impact on the health and wellbeing of all residents.)*

34 Oxford to Cambridge Arc - Environmental Principles

Councillor Steven North, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, introduced a report of the Executive Director of Place and Economy the purpose of which was to seek endorsement of the shared environmental principles for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted that the draft principles had been submitted to both the Planning Policy Executive Panel and Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel with Members supporting the principles and recommending them for endorsement by the Executive.

Councillor Andy Mercer queried where the arc-wide Environment Principles sat in the hierarchy of policies in comparison to existing environmental regulations. Councillor North agreed to investigate this issue to provide further clarity.

The Chair again welcomed Councillor Lyn Buckingham to address the Executive. Councillor Buckingham welcomed the publication of the Environment Principles and stated that the Executive had the opportunity to be innovative in relation to the principles outlined in the publication and to tap into the opportunities offered by the arc.

The Chair thanked Cllr Buckingham for her comments.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the shared environmental principles, set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be endorsed; and
- b) That the development of an Arc Environment Strategy, which will provide further guidance on how the principles can be delivered, be supported.

(Reasons for Decision:

The principles are not formal policy but rather a shared statement of ambition for the Arc. They are intended to:

- i. support the environment policies emerging from the Arc Spatial Framework;*
- ii. allow use of the Arc as a place for DEFRA to test and apply its 25-year plan and funding through pilots and projects;*
- iii. support Local Planning Authorities with a frame of reference to further develop the principles through Local and Strategic Plans at a local and sub-regional level.)*

35 Variation of school admission arrangements for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 due to the requirements of the new 2021 School Admissions Code

Councillor Scott Edwards, Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills introduced a report of the Director of Children's Services which sought to inform members about the mandatory requirements of the new School Admissions Code from September 2021 and provided recommendations for how the School Admission arrangements may be varied to ensure compliance. The Executive was requested to approve these recommendations.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Leanne Buckingham to the meeting to address the Executive. Cllr Buckingham asked that the Executive make full use of the Executive Advisory Panels and noted that they were an important link between non-Executive Members and the decision-making process.

The Chair and Cllr Edwards thanked Cllr Buckingham for her comments.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the following variations to admission arrangements for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 be approved:-
 - i. Amendment of the first oversubscription criterion for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools to give the highest priority to: 'looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became

subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). All references to previously looked after children in this Code mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.'

- ii. That North Northamptonshire Council's new in-year scheme be included in the admission arrangements and delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families, Education and Skills in consultation with the Executive Director of Children's Services to approve the scheme.
- b) That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families, Education and Skills in consultation with the Executive Director of Children's Services to approve the Fair Access Protocol, following consultation with schools in North Northamptonshire;
- c) That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families, Education and Skills in consultation with the Executive Director of Children's Services to make any changes necessary to the admissions policies where required to give effect to any Acts, Regulations or revised School Admissions or School Admission Appeals Code or binding Schools Adjudicator, Court or Ombudsman decisions whenever they arise.

(Reason for Decision:

The variations are necessary to comply with the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code (2021). It is the duty of all admission authorities to act in accordance with the Code.)

36 Performance Indicator Report 2021/22 (Quarter One)

The Chair, Councillor Jason Smithers introduced a report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Guy Holloway, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the performance of the Council across a range of services as measured by performance indicators and to set out the approach being taken for the development of the Council's performance monitoring and management arrangements.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted as being of great importance that the Council had a method of measuring its performance and progress. Performance indicators would become of greater value as more data become available with which to make comparisons.

Councillor Harriet Pentland, Executive Member for Climate and Green Environment highlighted the importance of indicators in relation to climate impact.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the performance of the Council as measured by the available indicators as at Period 3 (Quarter 1) for the 2021/22 financial year be noted.
- b) That the approach being taken to develop the Council's performance monitoring and management arrangements, as set out in the report, be noted.

(Reason for Decision:

To better understand the performance of the Council as measured by performance indicators as at period 3, 2021/22.)

37 Rough Sleeping Initiative

Councillor Andy Mercer, Executive Member for Housing and Community introduced a report of the Director of Housing and Communities, which sought Executive endorsement of the approach being taken to reduce the number of people sleeping rough across North Northamptonshire and to brief members on the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) allocation for 2021/22 and the programme of activities that are being delivered under the initiative.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted that government funding streams were not always guaranteed in the long-term and there was a need to ensure that the Council could continue to deliver services in this regard should government funding cease.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the approach being taken to reduce the number of people sleeping rough across North Northamptonshire be endorsed, and the associated spend be approved;
- b) That the MHCLG allocation for 2021/22 and the programme of activities that are being delivered under the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative across North Northamptonshire.

(Reason for Decision:

To ensure a robust and multi-disciplinary service that is designed around the needs of the individual.)

38 Shire Lodge Cemetery Extension

Councillor Steven North, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration presented a report of the Executive Director of Place and Economy which requested that Executive decide whether or not to accept the winning tender for the extension of the Shire Lodge Cemetery in Corby. Delegation of authority was also sought from the Executive to the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with Assistant

Director of Regulatory Services to take the appropriate steps required to deliver the project.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 13', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

- a) That approval be given to the acceptance of the winning tender, Bidder 3 and delegate authority to the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Assistant Director of Regulatory Services to take the appropriate steps required to deliver the; and
- b) That the decisions made by the predecessor authority, Corby Borough Council, endorsed by the Shadow Executive of North Northamptonshire Council, to progress the project to extend the cemetery at Shire Lodge be confirmed.

Reason for Decision:

To progress the works and to accept the most economically advantageous bid for the work.)

39 OPUS Governance and Delivery

The Chair, Councillor Jason Smithers introduced a report of the Director of Legal and Democratic that set out the previous arrangements in place between Northamptonshire County Council and Opus People Solutions (OPUS), an agreed part of the North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Blueprints that had now become operational and sought endorsement for a revised model of shareholding and services agreement in the authorities and Children's Trust.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 14', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to:

- a) the shareholding arrangements as set out in paragraph 4.12 of the report;
- b) the proposed amendments to the Dividend Policy as set out in paragraph 4.15 of the report;
- c) the extension of the Service Agreement until 8th January 2027; and

That endorsement be given to:

- d) the administrative amendments required to ensure the necessary agreements are in place for the joint venture between OPUS and North Northamptonshire

Council, West Northamptonshire Council and the Northamptonshire Children's Trust.

(Reasons for Decision

- i. In relation to the shareholding arrangements, there have been negotiations with partners in the joint venture to reflect the Local Government Review in Northamptonshire, new customer bases and the transition from LGSS. The recommendations will increase shareholding for the Council and therefore is considered to be a good option for the Council.*
- ii. In relation to the dividend policy, the recommended changes will be beneficial to the Council as this will recognise its contribution in terms of spend in the joint venture.*
- iii. Alternative options are not to agree to the changes however the default shareholding would be less than the recommended change. The Council could choose not to agree the recommended changes to the dividend policy however this is not considered to represent best value compared to the proposed policy.)*

40 Kettering High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ)

Councillor Steven North, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration presented a report of the Executive Director of Place and Economy which sought:

- Endorsement of a previous agreement made between Kettering Borough Council and Historic England to part fund and deliver a series of High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) projects in Kettering town centre
- Agreement to receive and deliver on an additional £150,000 grant from Historic England to relay the cobbled street in West Street, Kettering
- That the Executive select Member representation to sit on the Kettering HSHAZ Board.
- Sought delegation of authority from the Executive to the Executive member for Growth and Regeneration, in liaison with the Executive Director for Place and Economy, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to conclude any procurement and deliver this project.

A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 15', was provided as part of the agenda document pack provided to members prior to the meeting.

It was noted that the Executive representatives on the HSHAZ Board would be Cllr Steven North and Cllr Helen Howell with an invitation extended to Kettering Town Council to nominate a Member to sit on the Board.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

- a) That the predecessor authority Kettering Borough Council's agreement with Historic England to invest funding in delivering HSHAZ schemes in Kettering town centre, be endorsed;

- b) That the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) scheme approved carry forward budget for this year of £3,448,000 be noted;
- c) That it be agreed to receive an additional £150,000 of Historic England funding, and to invest that funding to relay cobbles and improve the pavement environment in West Street; and
- d) That approval be given for the following councillors to sit on the HSHAZ Board:
 - i. the Executive Member for Growth & Regeneration; and
 - ii. the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture & Tourism; and
 - iii. invite a representative from Kettering Town Council to join the Board; and
- e) That authority be delegated to the Executive Member for Growth & Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Director for Place & Economy, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to conclude any procurement and deliver this project.

(Reasons for Decision:-

- i. To provide consistency with previous Council decisions.*
- ii. To provide certainty to the Kettering HSHAZ project.*
- iii. To formally accept the additional £150,000 grant offer by Historic England and confirm it will be invested on the specific project for which it was granted.*
- iv. To provide appropriate governance of the overall HSHAZ project, to ensure the public and their views are represented.*
- v. To work to optimise the investment for the longer-term benefit of Kettering town centre and its environment.*
- vi. To enable further decisions to be made, within the remit of the agreed project, without bringing about further delays, thereby keeping delivery of the project on track.)*

41 New two Form of Entry Primary School on the Stanton Cross Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) development

Prior to consideration of this item, the Chair, Councillor Jason Smithers announced that this item was no longer considered to be exempt and would therefore be discussed in the public part of the meeting.

Councillor Scott Edwards, Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills presented a report of the Joint Director of Children's Services that sought approval of Section 106 expenditure of £9.66 million to fund the new two form of entry primary school, located at Stanton Cross, Wellingborough.

Councillor Graham Lawman sought assurances that there was sufficient time to build, recruit and run admissions for the new school prior to the beginning of the new school year in September 2022. Councillor Edwards confirmed that the school would be operational by that date.

It was noted as being of great importance that services and facilities were delivered alongside new housing developments such as Stanton Cross.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

- a) That the Section 106 expenditure of £9.66 million to fund the new 2FE primary school, located on Stanton Cross, SUE, be approved;
- b) That the inclusion in the Council's capital programme of a new two form entry primary school situated on the new SUE at Stanton Cross, Wellingborough be noted;
- c) That the necessary contract awards for Stanton Cross, following the procurement process and proceed with the construction on the new school, with a proposed opening date of September 2022, be authorised;
- d) That the financial and governance arrangements associated with the capital scheme be approved;
- e) That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education in consultation with the Director of Children's Services to authorise all necessary contract awards to deliver the new school;
- f) That it be noted that the process to appoint an Academy Sponsor to run the new school, in accordance with the 'Free School Presumption' regulations, stipulated by the Department for Education, will commence.

(Reasons for Decision:

- *The Local Authority has a legal obligation to deliver the primary school, in accordance with the signed section 106 agreement;*
- *The recommended course of action will allow the timely progression of capital works to build the new primary school at Stanton Cross SUE;*
- *The recommended course of action will benefit students and families who will reside within the development, by providing local school places for local school children;*
- *North Northamptonshire Council (or customers) will receive the maximum benefit from the option proposed.)*

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 3.08 pm