

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive

At 2.00 pm on Thursday 30th September, 2021 in the Members' Room, 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 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 John McGhee, Clive Hallam and Dorothy Maxwell

62 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

63 Minutes of the meeting held on 26th August 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th August 2021 were approved as a correct record.

64 Notifications of requests to address the meeting

The Chair, Councillor Jason Smithers, reported that there were three requests to address the meeting: from Councillors John McGhee (Agenda Item 5), Clive Hallam (Agenda Item 8) and Isham Parish Councillor, Debbie Barber (Agenda Item 8).

65 Members' Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited those who wished to do so to declare interests in respect of items on the agenda.

No declarations were received.

66 Community Funding Policy - Grants up to £25,000

The Chair invited Cllr John McGhee to address the meeting. Cllr McGhee thanked Councillors and the Chief Executive who had recently undertaken a ward walkabout in Corby. He stated that membership of the proposed Community Funding Strategic Oversight Board would provide an opportunity for back-bench members to have a real

say within their communities. Cllr McGhee also queried the possibility of a Councillor Empowerment Fund in the future.

The Chair thanked Cllr McGhee for his contribution and stated that conversations had taken place with regard to Empowerment Funds and an announcement was anticipated in due course.

Councillor Andy Mercer, Executive Member for Housing and Community then presented a report that sought approval of the Community Funding Policy for Grants up to £25,000. The policy would cover the distribution of small grants to projects that were of benefit to community organisations and groups following the receipt of applications on a quarterly basis and having been assessed against the policy criteria.

Councillor Mercer stressed the importance of the report and the need to have the policy operational as soon as possible but raised concerns over certain minor aspects of the policy. Therefore, he proposed an amendment to the recommendation to include the following:-

"That a third recommendation be added to paragraph 3.1 to read:

c) Delegates authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Assistant Director, Housing & Communities, to make minor amendments to the Policy and in particular to amend the membership of the Community Funding Strategic Oversight Board."

The Executive unanimously agreed to include the additional recommendation to the resolution and following debate it was

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the Community Funding Policy – Grants up to £25,000 to support community activities.
- b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Assistant Director, Housing & Communities, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to implement this policy.
- c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Assistant Director, Housing & Communities, to make minor amendments to the Policy and in particular to amend the membership of the Community Funding Strategic Oversight Board

(Reasons for Decisions)

- *Approval will provide a consistent approach for the distribution of funding to support community activities.*
- *The Policy will resource external bodies to assist in the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives and priorities.*

67 Adoption of the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan

Councillor David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration introduced a report that sought Executive recommendation to Full Council that the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan be adopted in order to provide an up-to-date development plan for making planning decisions and to guide development in Kettering.

Councillor Brackenbury congratulated all those involved in contributing to the substantial planning document before members that would form a vital piece of planning policy to sit beneath the Joint Core Strategy. Councillor Brackenbury stated his disappointment that the Planning Inspector had deleted from the document a number of historical and visually important local green spaces, however, it was noted that many of these sites would be protected by other legislation or existing policies.

Members echoed the comments of Councillor Brackenbury and noted that although the green spaces referred to had been removed from the document, they were not rendered unimportant.

RESOLVED:-

The Executive recommended to Council:

- a) That the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (set out in **Appendix A** to the report), be adopted;
- b) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Director for Place and Economy, to make any further Additional Modifications to the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan or its accompanying Policies Map that relate exclusively to factual updates, grammatical corrections and formatting for the purposes of publishing the plan to presentation standard; and
- c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Director for Place and Economy, to prepare and publish the Adoption Statement (draft as **Appendix F** to the report) and the Sustainability Appraisal Statement and fulfil any other duties required under Regulation 26 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

(Reasons for Decisions)

- *The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area and a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental priorities.*
- *The Plan drawn up by Kettering Borough Council was subject to thorough examination and has been modified as a result of recommendations made by the Inspector, as set out at **Appendix C** to this report. The Council also made non-substantive modifications to the plan during the course of the examination, which are set out at **Appendix D** to this report. Corresponding changes to the policies map are set out in **Appendix E**.*

68 Cannock Road Housing Development - appointment of new contractor and budget amendment

Councillor Andy Mercer, Executive Member for Housing and Community presented a report that sought approval from Executive to appoint a new contractor and to amend the budget for the Cannock Road housing development following works on site being disrupted due to the original contractor going into administration.

Councillor Pentland commented positively on the affordable housing and renewable energy elements of the development, with Councillor Howes noting the wheelchair accessibility of two of the proposed dwellings.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the appointment of Jeakins Weir Ltd as the contractor to complete the Cannock Road housing development.
- b) Approved the amendment of the budget for this scheme to £1,036,107.
- c) Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities, in liaison with the Assistant Director, Housing & Communities, to take any further decisions and/or actions required to conclude this procurement and deliver this capital programme.

(Reasons for Decisions)

- *To reduce health and safety risks associated with leaving an unfinished building site vacant.*
- *To meet our commitment to increase the number of affordable homes to help address the shortage of affordable homes in North Northamptonshire.*
- *To use available Right to Buy funds for 40% of the scheme cost and to avoid paying these funds back to the Government with interest.*
- *To increase the availability of homes with wheelchair access.*
- *To improve the area by regenerating a derelict commercial building.*

69 Isham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Chair welcomed Councillor Clive Hallam and Isham Parish Councillor Debbie Barber to the meeting.

Councillor Hallam stated that he was broadly supportive of the plan and thanked officers for progressing the report. He raised concerns regarding parking and requested that the Council work closely with the Isham community to identify and improve parking close the conservation area. In addition, Councillor Hallam referenced

additional planning controls relating to boundary walls and planning enforcement within the conservation area.

Councillor Barber thanked officers for revisiting the plan in relation to car-parking and stated that the lack of available parking in the village caused issues for residents. Councillor Barber also referenced boundary walls, noting that removal of a boundary wall to create off-road parking could be beneficial for the village as a whole. A request was made for clear communication with residents in the conservation area regarding tree maintenance.

The Chair thanked both councillors for their contributions.

Councillor David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration then introduced a report which requested the Executive consider representations received in response to a consultation on the draft Isham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan. In addition, the Executive was asked to consider a proposed amendment to the conservation area boundary and to determine whether to adopt a revised version.

Councillor Brackenbury thanked the speakers for their attendance and noted their comments, confirming that a dialogue would take place with officers to see what solutions could be found to the issues of parking and boundary walls. Future communication regarding enforcement would also be forthcoming.

Councillor Graham Lawman stated that he would be happy to meet with Isham Parish Council alongside community liaison officers to discuss highway issues involving parking.

RESOLVED:-

The Executive recommended to Council:

- a) That the Revised Isham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, as set out in **Appendix A** to this report, be adopted; and
- b) To revise the Isham Conservation Area Boundary, as set out in **Appendix B** to this report

(Reason for Decision)

- *To accord with the Council's duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and then to actively manage their protection and physical improvement.*

70 Residential Annexes: Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Parishes of the former East Northamptonshire part of North Northamptonshire Council

Councillor David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration introduced a report which sought approval for the adoption of the Residential Annexes Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), to be used in assessing future planning applications, where relevant, within the former East Northamptonshire District towns

and parishes, of the new unitary authority of North Northamptonshire Council. The report also requested that officers consider the development of a wider Supplementary Planning Document to cover the whole of North Northamptonshire.

Councillor Brackenbury stated that the report before members formed a legacy piece of work agreed by East Northamptonshire Council prior to vesting day. A significant level of work had gone into the document that could be extended to the rest of North Northamptonshire by means of Supplementary Planning Document, although this would require extensive work, evidence gathering and consultation.

Members noted the importance of the document and echoed the need to harmonise planning policies across the whole North Northamptonshire area.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- a) Reviewed the consultation representations and resultant revisions to the draft document;
- b) Approved the final draft document for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document; and
- c) Asked that officers consider the preparation of a further Supplementary Planning Document to cover the whole of the North Northamptonshire area.

(Reasons for Decisions)

- *To supplement the Development Plan.*
- *To accord with the planning policy of the Council.*
- *To prepare a longer-term raft of consistent planning advice and guidance.*

71 Capital Programme Update 2021/22

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, introduced a report of the Executive Director for Finance, which 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.

Councillor Bunday noted the uplift in cost of £189,000 for the Cannock Road development in Corby due to the cessation of trading of the contractor involved. The report also sought approval of £163,000 for the refurbishment of the Council Chamber in Corby to accommodate Full Council meetings with meeting streaming capabilities.

The meeting also noted the request to Council to approve an increase in the budget of £0.666m for the Cheltenham Road HRA New Build. Council approval was required

due to the value of the virement from the New Build HRA Programme budget exceeding £500,000.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the following changes into the capital programme totalling £0.352m:
 - i) Cannock Road HRA New Build – increase in budget of £0.189m to £1.036m funded from a combination of Right to Buy Receipts 40% and borrowing under the HRA Programme of 60%. The funding will be made available through a virement from the approved overall New Build HRA Programme.
 - ii) Council Chamber – purchase of furniture and audio-visual equipment to facilitate full council meetings requiring a budget of £163k to be financed through a virement from the budget for Municipal Offices which is currently not committed.
- b) Noted the request to Council to approve an increase in the budget of £0.666m for the Cheltenham Road HRA New Build to £3.861m funded from a combination of Right to Buy Receipts 40% and borrowing under the HRA Programme of 60%. Council approval is required due to the value of the virement from the New Build HRA Programme budget exceeding £500k.

(Reasons for Decisions)

- *Utilisation of right to buy receipts, which if not spent within four years have to be returned to the Government with interest.*
- *To help address the housing need for affordable homes for residents who may not be able to afford private rented homes*
- *Provide facilities to enable Council meetings to be broadcast and accommodate the potential number of attendees for each meeting.*

72 Budget Forecast 2021/22 as at Period 5

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, then introduced a report of the Executive Director for Finance setting out the forecast out-turn position for the Council based on the period 5 monitoring forecasts for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

Councillor Bunday noted that the forecast outturn position was based on comparatively early indications of spend for the new Council. A number of areas were impacting the forecast out-turn, notably lead host charging arrangements between North and West Northamptonshire Councils, with services remaining forecast in the budget while work was undertaken to confirm charges. The balance of reserves would not be completed until the out-turn position of predecessor Councils was known.

It was noted that there was current a forecast overspend against the budget of £73,000, an adverse movement of £339,000 and budget variances were outlined to the meeting.

The Chair noted that the Children's Trust had no projected overspend but would be challenged to provide additional engagement with the Executive in terms of its budget position. An invitation to a future Executive meeting would be extended in this regard.

RESOLVED:-

That the Executive:

- a) Noted the Council's forecast outturn position for 2021/22 and the associated risks and other considerations.
- b) Noted the assessment of the current deliverability of the 2021/22 saving proposals in **Appendix A** to this report.

(Reason for Decision)

- *To note the forecast financial position for 2021/22 as at Period 5 and consider the impact on this year and future years budgets*

73 Internal Audit - Bringing the Internal Audit Service In-house

Councillor Lloyd Bunday, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation presented a report that provided an overview of the current Internal Audit Service and sought endorsement from Executive for the future service delivery to be structured around an in-house service delivered directly by the Council. This in-house service would replace the current arrangement whereby Milton Keynes Council was leading on the provision of this service.

Councillor Bunday stated that internal audit was critical to any organisation to support effective management, governance and administration. The proposal before members would streamline and strengthen arrangements with a dedicated in-house service comprising a qualified and experienced team to report to the Executive Director for Finance.

Members commended the proposal to bring a coordinated internal audit service in-house.

RESOLVED:-

That the Executive:

- a) Approved the option to bring the Internal Audit Service in-house as set out in the report.
- b) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Finance and Transformation in consultation with the Executive Director for Finance to take the steps necessary

to implement the in-house provision of internal audit services including the continuation of services to Councils that were previously supported through the Welland Partnership and other lead authority arrangements.

(Reason for Decisions)

- *To enable the implementation of a single operating model for Internal Audit Services in order to streamline service provision and become a more efficient arrangement which incorporates best practice wherever possible. This should lead to improved service focussed on the needs of the Council.*

74 Urgent Items

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

75 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair, Councillor 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 13 – Lease at Arkwright/Baird Road, Corby
- Item 14 – Stanton Cross – South Hill Farm, Finedon

76 Lease at Arkwright/Baird Road, Corby

Councillor Graham Lawman, Executive member for Highways, Travel and Assets introduced a report which requested that the Executive consider granting the existing site occupier, a single 15-year lease of Sites B1 & B2 Arkwright Road and Site C Baird Road, Corby at a market rent.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- a) Granted the site occupier a single, unbroken lease of 15 years on terms outlined in the report.

- b) Delegated authority to agree the lease terms to the Executive Member for Highways Travel and Assets, in consultation with the Assistant Director Assets and Environment.

(Reason for Decisions)

- *This recommendation will provide the Council with the maximum benefit from the land, relative to the constraints outlined in the report.*

77 Stanton Cross - South Hill Farm, Finedon

Councillor Graham Lawman, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets introduced a report which sought Executive consideration in relation to obtaining an early surrender of the farm tenancy at South Hill Farm, Finedon

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive accepted the early surrender of South Hill Farm on terms outlined in **Appendix B** of the report.

(Reason for Decision)

- *The recommended course of action is the most cost-effective available and will enable to the Council to meet its contractual and legal obligations in respect of Stanton Cross Landowners Group. Further, it will facilitate ongoing development at the site and ensure that the Council receives future capital receipts from the development of Stanton Cross.*

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm