

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive

At 10.00 am on Thursday 16th December, 2021 in the Council Chamber, Swanspool House, Doddington Road, Wellingborough, NN8 1BP

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 Helen Harrison	Councillor Andy Mercer

Also in attendance – Councillors Valerie Anslow, Wendy Brackenbury, David Jenney Anne Lee, Elliot Prentice and Mike Tebbutt

117 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Scott Edwards and Councillor Harriet Pentland.

118 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18th November 2021

RESOLVED that: The Executive agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2021 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

119 Members' Declarations of Interest

Councillors Bunday, Howes, Lawman and Mercer declared personal interests in Agenda Item 5 – Local Economic Recovery and Growth as members of town councils in North Northamptonshire

120 Notifications of requests to address the meeting

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

- Cllr Mark Pengelly – Items 6 and 10
- Cllr Anne Lee – Item 6 and 7
- Cllr Valerie Anslow – Item 8

Councillor Pengelly was not in attendance at the meeting and therefore did not speak in relation to the items listed above.

121 Local Economic Recovery and Growth

Cllr David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration introduced a report that detailed the main activities the Council was currently undertaking to support economic recovery and growth in North Northamptonshire. The report outlined successful funding bids and provided details of how these funds would be allocated as well as providing an update on the Construction Skills 2 project. Members were also asked to agree plans to produce an Economic Prospectus for the area.

Cllr Brackenbury highlighted the Community Renewal Fund and Welcome Back Fund, noting that a significant proportion of the latter would be devolved to the 12 town councils in North Northamptonshire to enable them to develop and deliver events and activities alongside the Council.

Cllr Brackenbury referenced the Additional Restrictions Grant programme, noting a new sector Hardship Support grant for the Hospitality and Tourism Industry at a time when the sector was being impacted by the new Omicron Covid-19 variant.

The meeting received details of the Levelling-Up Fund, noting that the Council had the opportunity to bid up to three times for funding to a maximum of £20m in each funding round. A project plan had been developed to allow the Council a strong basis for submission of bids in future funding rounds.

The Executive was asked to approve the preparation of an Economic Prospectus for the area that was anticipated to give value to North Northamptonshire as a whole.

Councillors Lawman and Harrison welcomed all elements of the secured funding detailed above and noted that it would provide the opportunity to build on former district and borough projects that had been in the pipeline prior to the formation of North Northamptonshire Council. Cllr Harrison also welcomed plans for the Economic Prospectus that would be an important document in allowing those outside the local area to understand what North Northamptonshire stood for and detailed its offer.

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers also welcomed the funding and offered thanks to officers for their work in securing successful bids.

Cllr David Howes abstained on voting in relation to this item as a result of the personal interest declared under Agenda Item 3.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:

- a) Endorsed the activities being undertaken to support economic recovery and business growth across North Northamptonshire
- b) Approved receipt of Community Renewal Funding to the value set out in paragraph 4.7 of the report

- c) Agreed that the Council entered into grant funding agreements with the lead bodies for the Community Renewal Fund projects listed in paragraph 4.9
- d) Agreed that Additional Restrictions Grant continues to be focused on the four priorities and associated schemes set out in paragraph 4.13 including making amendments to eligibility criteria and running further funding rounds to maximise impact in consultation with the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration and the Assistant Director for Growth and Regeneration
- e) Supported the work to develop a pipeline of projects which could form the basis for future bids to the Levelling Up Fund or similar programmes
- f) Agreed that work commences on the preparation of a new Economic Prospectus for the area

Reason for Decision: To endorse current activities, agree to progress agreements and other activities relating to the Community Renewal Fund, ensure continued support through the Additional Restrictions Grant, and support plans to produce a new Economic Prospectus for the area

122 Procurement of Shared Parts and Materials Suppliers, Housing Property Services

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee offered her support for the report, noting the importance of working to replace windows and doors across the housing stock, where necessary, to place less of a strain on heating systems.

The Chair thanked Cllr Lee for her contribution.

Cllr Andy Mercer, Executive Member for Housing and Communities then introduced a report that sought approval from the Executive for the procurement of the supply of parts and materials for the Corby and Kettering Housing Property Services. In addition, delegation of authority was sought from the Executive to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Executive Director for Adult, Communities and Wellbeing to take any further decisions or action required to appoint a framework provider and enter into contract with suppliers.

Cllr Mercer stated that local housing authorities had a statutory duty to operate a ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funding maintenance and operation of an authority's housing stock. Currently, the Council had two HRAs in place, having been given dispensation from government to merge these over a period of time following the move to becoming a unitary authority.

The systems currently in place for the procurement of parts and materials across the Kettering and Corby housing stock were substantially different, so the report before members sought Executive approval for their merger enabling economies of scale and improved stock control using a single set of suppliers.

Cllr Harrison and Lawman spoke in support of the report, noting the involvement of the Health and Wellbeing and Vulnerable People Executive Advisory Panel (EAP) in the

process and the need to offer an effective and efficient service to tenants. Cllr Lawman also stated that he was pleased to see an emphasis to move towards using local suppliers.

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smith also acknowledged the input of the EAP in the development process of the report.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive delegated authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, to procure, negotiate, award, and enter into a contract to provide shared parts and materials to Council owned housing properties, by means of a Framework Agreement.

Reasons for Decision:-

- To closely align with local government reform and transformation outcomes, through the use of shared suppliers within the two Housing Property Services teams.
- To procure the new contracts in the most efficient and timely manner to ensure a fully compliant procurement process is in place for the supply of parts and materials.
- To provide better value for money to the Council.
- To ensure tenants benefit from a standard parts and materials service across North Northamptonshire.

123 Procurement of Catering Services at Kettering Library and Alfred East Gallery (GLaM project)

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers invited Cllr Anne Lee to address the meeting. Cllr Lee referenced the Blitz Tea Rooms and its relevance to the report before members. Cllr Lee also queried the cost and reasoning behind the commissioning of an options appraisal via Turpin Smale, an external catering consultant. Cllr Lee also questioned communication links between the Council, Blitz Tea Rooms and the Friends of Kettering Art Gallery and Museum.

The Chair thanked Cllr Lee for her attendance and contributions.

Cllr Helen Howell, Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism was then invited to present a report that sought Executive consideration regarding the procurement of catering services at Kettering Library and Alfred East Gallery as part of the "GLaM" development. The Executive was requested to delegate authority to the Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism in consultation with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing to take any further decisions or actions required to conclude the procurement.

Cllr Howell stated that the Blitz Tea Rooms did not form part of the development but had received support from the Council prior to and during the ongoing works and was welcome to submit a bid to be the concessionaire at the new facility.

It was noted that Turpin Smale had assessed the site alongside local and national considerations and had recommended that the café be operated as a concession model by a local supplier. The kitchen capacity was limited, impacting on the type of operators that might be interested, although no significant investment would be required by the operator as kitchen infrastructure would be provided as part of the capital programme.

Cllr Howell noted that the procurement process was anticipated to take approximately 9-months, with a view to securing an experienced, local provider to operate the café offer. Stakeholders wishing to view the ongoing works were invited to contact Cllr Howell to arrange a tour of the site.

Cllr Bunday and Brackenbury spoke in support of the concession model, with Cllr Bunday noting the rich variety of catering facilities in the surrounding area including the Blitz Tea Rooms, with Cllr Brackenbury stating that the GLaM project was part of a wider ongoing regeneration of Kettering Town Centre.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive delegated authority to the Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism in consultation with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing to procure, negotiate, award, and enter into a contract to provide catering services at GLaM

Reasons for Decision:

- The recommended course of action will be the most cost-effective way of providing a café within 'GLaM' as set out in the Turpin Smale report.
- Customers within the facility will receive a catering service that meets their needs.
- Option to provide event catering to complement the new commercial spaces within the buildings and create a 'destination venue' would be fulfilled.
- Maintaining a café and catering service in this facility adds to the offer available for the community and supports events including those run by the Library, Gallery and Museum as well as new income derived from commercial hires.
- A Local operator with passion and drive for the site and the local community achieves the original aspirations for the project.

124 Euro Hotel - Temporary Accommodation Proposal

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers invited Cllr Valerie Anslow to address the meeting. Cllr Anslow welcomed the decision to utilise the empty Euro Hotel in Wellingborough for temporary accommodation for single homeless households, especially given the lack of existing provision for the homeless in Wellingborough. Cllr Anslow stated the need for kitchen and eating space in the property as part of the refurbishment and also called for the creation of a Homeless Forum to allow partnership work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that residents of the accommodation had the support required to move to more permanent accommodation.

The Chair, Cllr Jason Smithers thanked Cllr Anslow for her words and support of the scheme and stated that the proposed remodelling of the property would allow for the catering facilities referenced by Cllr Anslow.

Cllr Andy Mercer, Executive Member for Housing and Communities then introduced a report that requested the Executive note the decision made under special urgency powers to approve the former Euro Hotel being brought back into use for emergency temporary accommodation. The Executive also noted the decision taken to delegate authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities, in liaison with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing to progress and enter into a contract with the property owners to block book rooms to allow for temporary accommodation use.

Cllr Mercer stated that the advent of Covid-19 required an alternative to the use of night shelters, with the approval of the proposal before members providing such an alternative. The facility was proposed to become available by 20th December 2021, a position that would not have been possible without the decision being taken under urgency provisions.

Cllr Mercer referenced the planned support available to residents of the property and requested that Cllr Anslow contact him outside the meeting regarding the possibilities of convening a Homeless Forum.

Councillors Brackenbury, Harrison and Lawman spoke in support of both the decision that had been made and the use of urgency provisions to enable the recommissioning of a disused building in a timely manner.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive noted the decision taken on behalf of the Executive, made under special urgency powers, to:

- (a) Approve the proposal to work with The Housing Network to bring the former Euro Hotel back into use as emergency accommodation.
- (b) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Housing and Communities, in liaison with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, to procure, negotiate, award and enter into a contract with the property owners to block book rooms to provide Temporary Accommodation to the Council for Rough Sleepers and those at risk of homelessness

Reason for Decisions:-

- The use of urgency powers was necessary in order to enable The Housing Network to refurbish the property to make it available as emergency accommodation for single homeless households by 20th December in order for the Council to discharge the requirement to provide emergency accommodation provision for those experiencing rough sleeping as well as those individuals to whom the Council owes a statutory temporary accommodation duty

125 Capital Programme Update 2021-22

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

One scheme was highlighted as per the report and recommendation below.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

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

- a. Cyber security and disaster recovery – to increase the budget by £0.2m to support investment in improving cyber security and disaster recovery. The budget will be resourced from additional grant funding allocated by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Reason for Decision:-

- To allow grant allocations to be recognised and utilised to support the review of the current IT infrastructure and related provision within North Northamptonshire Council, and in response to potential disruption relating to its core infrastructure because of natural disaster, power failure, infrastructure failure or cyber threat.

126 Urgent Items

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

127 Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

RESOLVED:-

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

- Item 10 – Extension of Current Contract for the Treatment and Disposal of Residual Waste
- Item 11 – Extension of Current Contract for the Dry Recycling Disposal Services Contract (Wellingborough)

128 Extension of Current Contract for the Treatment and Disposal of Residual Waste

Cllr Graham Lawman, Executive Member for Highways, Travel, and Assets introduced a report that sought approval from the Executive to extend the current contract for the treatment and disposal of residual waste beyond March 2023.

The meeting heard that the current contract was due to expire in March 2023; the decision to extend the contract to 2025 would allow additional time for the formulation of a full Waste Strategy and would add to the harmonisation programme as well as securing treatment facility capacity while continuing with existing terms and conditions.

Cllrs Lloyd Bunday and Andy Mercer both spoke in support of the proposal.

RESOLVED:

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive:-

- a. Noted the requirement to make arrangements for the treatment and disposal of residual waste in North Northamptonshire Council; and
- b. Agreed to the proposed extension of the contract for the Treatment and Disposal of Residual Waste (Lot 3) 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2025; and
- c. Delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director for Place & Economy (Deputy Chief Executive) and the Executive Member for Finance to take decisions necessary to implement the decision and enter into the legal agreements related to the extension in order to ensure continued service provision.

Reasons for Decisions:-

- The option proposed aligns most closely with local government reform and transformation outcomes noting that residual waste requiring treatment and disposal is a statutory function. The Lot 3 residual waste contract accepts waste from all North Northamptonshire Council waste collection areas (Kettering/Corby, East Northamptonshire and Wellingborough) along with the residual waste generated from all nine HWRCs; and
- The recommended course of action is considered to be the most cost-effective; and
- Extension of the residual waste contract allows for the accord with current legislation and allows the Council to evaluate and agree its future waste strategy and infrastructure requirements prior to the procurement of new residual waste contracts; and
- Consistency with previous contractual extension decisions

129 Extension of Current Contract for the Dry Recycling Disposal Services Contract (Wellingborough)

Cllr Graham Lawman, Executive Member for Highways, Travel, and Assets introduced a report that requested the Executive note the decision made under special urgency powers to approve the extension of the Dry Recycling Disposal Services (Contract) Wellingborough for 12-months until 30th November 2022.

It was noted that approval of the extension allowed time for a full procurement exercise to be undertaken for the council-wide collection and recycling of dry mixed recycling material. Again, it was noted that it was important to secure recycling capacity given the pressures the industry faced in this regard.

RESOLVED:-

(KEY DECISION)

That the Executive noted the decision made under urgency powers, to approve the extension of the Dry Recycling Disposal Services Contract (Wellingborough) for 12 months until 30th November 2022.

Reason for Decision:

- The use of urgency powers was necessary in order to secure the recycling arrangements for Wellingborough before the end of the existing contract to avoid disruption to the service.
- The decision was made in order to secure recycling arrangements for recycling material collected in the Wellingborough area.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 10.57 am