

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SHADOW EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 21st July 2020

Shadow Executive Members Present:

Councillor Richard Auger
Councillor Elizabeth Bowen
Councillor Adam Brown

Councillor Matt Golby
Councillor Ian McCord (Leader and Chair)
Councillor Jonathan Nunn (Deputy Chair)

Other Shadow Council Members Present:

Councillor Fiona Baker
Councillor Pinder Chauhan
Councillor Stephen Dabbs

Councillor Malcolm Longley
Councillor Wendy Randall
Councillor Ken Ritchie

Officers Present:

Simon Bowers	Executive Director (Business), DDC
George Candler	Interim Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority
Paul Hanson	Democratic Services Manager, NCC
Paul Helsby	Programme Director, Northamptonshire Unitary Integrated Programme
Martin Henry	Interim Chief Finance Officer, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority
Alex Melia	Democratic Services Officer, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority (Minutes)
Louise Spolton	Communications & Engagement Enabler - Future Northants Programme
Audra Statham	Finance Enabler, Future Northants Programme
Ian Vincent	Chief Executive, DDC
Susan Zeiss	Interim Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Rebecca Breese and Councillor Phil Larratt.

2. NOTIFICATION OF REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE MEETING:

Cllr Wendy Randall (DDC), Cllr Stephen Dabbs (DDC), Simon Cox, Executive Headteacher, The Parker E-Act Academy and Roger Eadon, Headteacher, Danetre and Southbrook Learning Village requested to address the meeting on Item 08, Appendix 1.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None received.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23RD JUNE 2020

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2020 as a true and accurate record.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

6. PROGRAMME DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

The Programme Director, Northamptonshire Unitary Integrated Programme, introduced the report to the Shadow Executive and highlighted the salient points:

- The mobilisation phase of the programme was complete and reporting would cease on this phase. Work was now focussed on the implementation phase pending approval of the blueprint;
- The work reported at the previous Shadow Executive meeting to establish the critical path and day one assurance was undergoing valuation;
- Previously, the ICT Programme was rated "red" but had now progressed to an "amber" rating as many outstanding issues has been resolved;
- An early "soft-split" of Adult Social Care between the North and West Shadow authorities had been proposed for October, with a financial analysis run alongside this to identify potential impact to services; and
- Within the programme, indicative Shadow Executive portfolios had been drafted in order to inform a first cut of the blueprint for aligning people and resources to services. These were not in their final form and could change.

In response to questions from members, the Programme Director highlighted that the recruitment of Change Champions had been paused due to Covid-19, but there was good engagement amongst current Change Champions and the numbers should continue to rise. The Programme Director also highlighted the need to continue the positive engagement with Trade Unions, with an update proposed for a future Shadow Executive meeting. In response to a specific question about Trade Union engagement with the process, the Programme Director undertook to provide a response in writing. The Programme Director also stated that a post-Covid review was underway, assessing the readiness of the programme for the implementation phase, with a further update later in the year.

The Finance Enabler, Future Northants Programme, introduced the finance report to the Shadow Executive and highlighted the salient points:

- The effect of Covid-19 must be taken into account when analysing the financial report;
- Whilst there was a favourable variance against the Covid-19 projection for Future Northants, against the initial savings target budgeted in February there was a negative variance; and
- In the revised financial forecast, of the £84.448m savings target, nearly £50m of that will have been delivered by the end of this financial year.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded. Upon the vote being taken it was:

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive:

a) Noted and approved the completion of the mobilisation phase of the programme ready for implementation.

b) Noted the high level programme delivery status.

- c) Noted the update on change readiness and change champion recruitment.
- d) Noted the communication and engagement update.
- e) Noted the contents and progress on the development of the draft blueprint.
- f) Noted the Shadow Executive Portfolio structure.
- g) Noted and approved the finance monitoring report.

7. WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SHADOW AUTHORITY BRANDING REPORT

The Chair of the Communication and Engagements Task & Finish Group introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- Using in-house designers to incur zero charge, the Communications and Engagements Task & Finish Group has overseen the creation of an interim West Northants Shadow Authority brand to ensure clarity and authority; and
- Further work would be required and would commence soon to design branding for the full West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded. Upon the vote being taken it was:

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the interim brand for the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

8. ASSETS, CAPITAL SCHEMES AND RESERVES NOTIFICATION PROCESS – UPDATE REPORT

The Interim Chief Executive of the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- The Process had been adopted by the Shadow Executive at the previous meeting on the 23rd June 2020. Within this process, the *de minimis* level for financial proposals to trigger a notification was set at £100,000; and
- Under this process, Daventry District Council had notified the Interim Chief Executive of the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority of a number of proposals, , four of which would be going to the Full Daventry Council meeting on Thursday 23rd July 2020. As such, they were presented to the Shadow Executive under the recommendations detailed at Item 2.1 to the report.

Members of the public and Shadow Councillors made the following points:

- In relation to the proposal to dispose of land at Eastern Way, Daventry for the purposes of providing a new secondary school in Daventry, attention was drawn to the increased performance of the existing schools in Daventry;
- The suitability of the location of the proposed secondary school for Daventry was questioned;
- Due to the geography of the Daventry district, there was no evidence that a third school would encourage students to attend a school in the town of Daventry itself, as many villages within the district were also within the catchment area of Warwickshire schools;
- Concerns were raised over the potential impact on Daventry Council's environmental strategy, the traffic assessment and the potential impact on existing schools;

- The initial length of the consultation period for the proposals in Item 8, Appendix 1 was questioned, although this had now been extended;
- Attention was drawn to the logistical issues associated with the proposed site of the Secondary School for Daventry;
- The support of Northamptonshire County Council to the schools in Daventry was highlighted, along with the likely requirement for another school in Daventry to cope with increased house-building in the area; and
- As Local Education Authority, the County Council remained open to proposals for a new school in Daventry, but felt that alternatives to the proposed location in Item 8, Appendix 1 should be considered.

Members of the Shadow Executive made the following points:

- The Department for Education had stated that the proposed school was necessary for Daventry;
- The report suggests there were protections within the assets disposal process, therefore if construction of the school were not to go ahead, the asset would transfer back into local authority ownership, protecting the future interests of the West Northamptonshire Council;
- Further choice of high quality education for Daventry residents was positive, as the loss of high numbers of students to other schools in the area was unsustainable;
- There were valid concerns over the new school, however these concerns would be addressed during the planning process and not at the Shadow Executive meeting; and
- It was necessary to recognise the work of the existing schools in Daventry to raise educational standards and the proposed new school should aid, not impinge on this work.

In response to comments and questions, the following was confirmed:

- Daventry District Council had taken the position that it was responding to a request from the Secretary of State for Education who believed that the school was required; and
- The decision over local planning issues remained within the remit of the sovereign councils, with the Shadow Executive only to consider whether the proposals may have future implications for West Northamptonshire.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded. Upon the vote being taken it was:

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive, in accordance with the adopted Assets, Capital Schemes and Reserves Notification Process:

- a) Noted and endorsed the proposal for a New Secondary School for Daventry;**
- b) Noted and endorsed the plan for Daventry Local Community Centres;**
- c) Noted and endorsed the Leisure Facilities Covid-19 Situation;**
- d) Noted and endorsed plans for the Provision of Temporary Accommodation; and**
- e) Noted and endorsed the Proposed Purchase of a Property for Temporary Accommodation.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.14pm.