

West Northamptonshire Shadow Executive

27th October 2020

Shadow Executive Members Present:

Councillor Richard Auger	Councillor Matt Golby
Councillor Lizzy Bowen	Councillor Phil Larratt
Councillor Rebecca Breese	Councillor Ian McCord (Chair)
Councillor Adam Brown	Councillor Jonathan Nunn

Other Shadow Authority Members Present:

Councillor Fiona Baker	Councillor Peter Rawlinson
Councillor Danielle Stone	

Officers Present:

George Candler	Chief Executive, Northampton Borough Council
Jane Carr	Transformation Director, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority
Anna Earnshaw	Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority
Richard Ellis	Chief Executive, SNC
Theresa Grant	Chief Executive, NCC and Strategic Delivery Director, Northamptonshire LGR Programme
Belinda Green	Operations Director, South Northamptonshire Council
Paul Hanson	Democratic Services Manager, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority (Minutes)
Paul Helsby	Programme Director, Northants Unitary Integrated Programme
Martin Henry	Chief Finance Officer, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority
Andrew Hunkin	Interim Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority
Katie Jones	Programme Manager, Communications & Digital, Future Northants Programme
Ian Vincent	Chief Executive, DDC
Lucy Wightman	Director of Public Health, NCC

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE:

None received.

2. NOTIFICATION OF REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE MEETING:

There were none.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None received.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22nd SEPTEMBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 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:

- There had been no significant changes to the programme RAG rating since the last report.
- The Northamptonshire Children's Trust remained on-track to go live on Monday 2nd November 2020, but the rating remained Amber due to the impact of COVID.
- The new operating model for adult services was live. The implementation had been successful and feedback from trade unions had been positive.
- Of the West Northamptonshire Unitary Critical Products, ICT IC11 (Business Systems) was at red status. A data sharing agreement was being prepared to resolve the issues highlighted.
- Resource was being put into ensuring contract novation would be a smooth process.
- In terms of change management, engagement with Chief Executives remained good. There had been a positive increase in the number of change champions.
- Under the 'What's coming' slide, he explained a support pack for managers regarding TUPE was being prepared. Office 365 was also being rolled out in Daventry, with the learning from this work being applied to all other authorities.
- On communications and engagement, the Shadow Executive were advised that the focus would be increasingly on residents as vesting day approaches.
- In terms of the financial update, there had been a slight improvement in benefits realisation. There were no other significant variances to appraise members of.

In response to questions, the Programme Director explained that there would be more work to do with services to ensure readiness for day 1.

The Shadow Executive placed on record their thanks to the Programme Director, who would be retiring at the end of the month.

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

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive:

- a) Noted the high level programme delivery status;**
- b) Noted the update on change readiness and change champion recruitment;**
- c) Noted the communication and engagement update; and**
- d) Noted and approved the finance monitoring report.**

7. CONSULTATION ON LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2021-2022

Councillor Rebecca Breese introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- The Council Tax task and finish group had explored various options, bearing in mind both the impact on the future authority's budget and the impact on citizens.
- The proposal was subject to consultation, with a final decision being made at a future meeting.

Councillor Brown stated the outcome of the consultation would be considered very carefully. In response to a question from Councillor Bowen, Councillor Breese advised around 1900 households in South Northamptonshire were in receipt of council tax reduction

Councillor Rawlinson addressed the Shadow Executive and made the following points:

- The minimum contribution rate in South Northamptonshire was 8.5%. The changes proposed could see those bills triple.
- Over half of the areas within South Northamptonshire had some form of deprivation and there had been an increase in requests for help due to COVID.
- The effect of write-offs could result in a lower overall receipt.

The Chair suggested that these points should also be fed into the consultation. The Shadow Executive was advised that phasing in of the proposals was being looked at, but may not be possible depending on advice received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

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

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved, for consultation purposes only, the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme outlined in this report for West Northamptonshire for the year 2021-2022.

8. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Chief Executive introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- The report proposed separate boards for the North and West Councils;
- This recommendation had been made due to the different nature and needs of the populations in these areas.

Members of the Shadow Executive made the following points:

- It was important that the progress made by the Health and Wellbeing Board in recent years was maintained.
- The relationship between the Board and the local forums was also important.

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

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive endorsed the establishment of two HWBBs, one to serve West Northamptonshire and the second to serve North Northamptonshire, ensuring each new unitary authority can deliver against the statutory duties charged to HWBBs with a place based focus.

9. COVID-19 RESPONSE OPERATING MODEL

The Chief Executive introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- The report sought approval from the Shadow Executive to alter the future delivery model for Public Health and Emergency Planning to a hosted model for a period of time.
- This would minimise disruption to the county's COVID response. The services would disaggregate at a later date.

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

RESOLVED: that the Shadow Executive endorsed the recommendations:

- a) To adopt a hosted model for Public Health and Emergency Planning services for a one-year period.**
- b) For a wider review of service disaggregation and resource requirements to take place during 2021/22.**

10. WEST NORTHANTS CUSTOMER SERVICES OPENING HOURS

The Chief Executive, South Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report. In response to questions from the Shadow Executive, he raised the following points:

- This report covered the customer service opening times for telephone and face-to-face enquiries.

- Services would shift to online where possible, in line with consumer trends.
- A consultation had been conducted and core demands across the week had also been assessed.
- Consultation had also been conducted with staff and trade unions.

Members of the Shadow Executive made the following points:

- More flexible opening hours, such as 8am to 8pm would be preferred.
- Weekend opening should also be reviewed.

In response to the points raised, the Programme Manager, Communications & Digital, Future Northants Programme explained the proposal would ensure safe and legal operation from Day 1. Alternative arrangements could be reviewed in the future. She also confirmed that partners who currently operate co-located services had been consulted.

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

RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved West Northamptonshire Customer Services opening hours from vesting day to become 9am to 5pm.

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

The Chief Executive, Northampton Borough Council introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- The proposal would enable the construction or acquisition of new housing stock, amongst other benefits.
- Each scheme would be subject to robust approval processes via Northampton Borough Council's Cabinet.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn made the following points:

- There were significant opportunities and challenges involved, including a housing waiting list in excess of 3,500 and homelessness.
- The proposal was consistent with the Council's ambitions. 150 homes had been completed and another 400-500 were under construction or in the planning stages.
- The Housing Revenue Account was ring-fenced. There would be no impact on the general fund other than via savings delivered by the proposals.
- Northampton Borough Council was in the process of acquiring property for temporary and key worker accommodation, as well as purchasing former council houses.

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 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme Budget**

URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

EXEMPT ITEMS

There were none.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19.24.