

Council

A meeting of the Council will be held at the The Great Hall at The Guildhall, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Thursday 30 November 2023 at 5.00 pm

Councillors are hereby summoned to attend

Agenda

1.	Apologies for Absence
2.	Declarations of Interest Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
3.	Minutes of Council (Pages 9 - 24) To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28 th September 2023.
4.	Chair's Announcements To receive communications from the Chairman of the Council.
5.	Public Participation (1) Receipt of Petitions (if any) from Local Government Electors for the District (2) Statements (if any) from the Public
6.	Opposition Priority Business Proposed by: Councillor Bob Purser Seconded by: Councillor Wendy Randall

This council's Corporate Plan states we have "the ambition for our residents to live in good housing in places which are clean and green. So that everyone has access to affordable, safe, quality, accommodation, and security of tenure"

A target was set of to produce 500 units of social housing during the lifetime of this Council. Current house building is not meeting the needs of those on our housing list. Developers repeatedly negotiate a reduction in social and affordable housing targets from the Council's policy, meaning the social housing target will likely be missed.

This council notes:

- there are currently 4,452 families on our housing register waiting list and a further 600 households currently in temporary accommodation, according to the latest Cabinet papers
- There are 1,950 homeless households and 5,850 households in overcrowded accommodation according to the Anti-poverty Strategy.
- Significant key brown field social housing projects, namely The Clock House and Avenue Campus, have recently been deemed not financially viable and significant funds have been returned to HM Treasury
- Around 4,000 homes across West Northamptonshire lie empty and unused, according to the latest data

The personal cost of living in overcrowded or temporary accommodation to family life is significant, including stress, depression, and child underdevelopment.

This council therefore calls on the Leader and Cabinet to:

- Request the Cabinet Members for Housing, Finance, and Planning to redouble their efforts to identify the requirements needed to create a pipeline for planned, affordable and deliverable housing
- Identify those houses that are unoccupied and explore what opportunities there are to work with owners to bring them back into use
- Consider using Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) powers granted by the Housing Act 2004 to take control of unoccupied properties and make them available for those in need of housing

7.	Cabinet Reports and Decision Records Taken by Cabinet (Pages 25 - 122)
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Items of Business	
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8.	Youth Justice Plan (Pages 123 - 194)
9.	Annual Report of Northamptonshire Children's Trust (Pages 195 - 536)
10.	Updates to the Constitution (Pages 537 - 562)
11.	Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024-2025 (Pages 563 - 566)
12.	Acquisition of Former Bus Depot (Pages 567 - 584)

Decision taken under urgency procedures

13. Motions

Motion 1

Proposed by: Councillor Cathrine Russell
Seconded by: Councillor Koulla Jolley

“The popularity of vapes (e-cigarettes) among young people has risen noticeably since the introduction of disposable vapes; one in nine underage children in the UK use them as of April 2023, compared to one in thirteen in 2021. In West Northamptonshire, 5% of school pupils reported using vapes (e-cigarettes) regularly last year, with almost half of year 10 girls admitting having tried them.

Vapes (e-cigarettes) were not designed for recreational use. Short term effects of vaping can include vomiting, sweating, dizziness, and difficulty breathing. But health experts warn that the excessive use of vapes (e-cigarettes) by children could be linked to lung collapse, lung bleeding and air leak. Last year, there were 15 hospitalisations of children aged under 10 due to vaping-related illnesses in the UK.

Trading Standards West Northamptonshire are working to capacity to tackle illicit sales of vapes (e-cigarettes) to children, including seizing over 5,000 disposable vapes since April. But they, and this council, are restricted in their powers of enforcement by the current lack of legislation.

This Council recognises:

- Youth vaping is becoming a national public health issue, with the extent of the damage to our Children’s health still unknown
- Current government plans to end youth vaping as part of its Smoke Free Generation, which includes the reduction in the number of appealing flavours available, regulating colourful and attractive eye-catching packaging, and moves to close legal loopholes around giving free vape (e-cigarette) samples to under 18s.
- The strenuous efforts of West Northamptonshire Trading Standards within existing legislation in combating illegal vape (e-cigarette) sales and
- West Northamptonshire Public Health in educating young people and families on the consequences of youth vaping

And resolves to invite:

- The encouragement of West Northants residents to take part in the government’s open consultation on its anti-smoking and youth vaping plans by the deadline of 6 December 2023
- The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the pressing need for tighter restrictions on the marketing of vape products, their availability to underage children, and for more powers to be given to local authorities to confront and issue on-the-spot fines for traders found selling to children
- Officers to increase communications to the public on the Council’s ongoing efforts, alongside Public Health and Trading Standards, to tackle underage use of vape products
- The Cabinet Members for Community Safety and Wellbeing to work with Public Health in accelerating and expanding current plans on educating young people and the wider public on the consequences of youth vaping.”

Motion 2

Proposed by: Cllr Sally Beardsworth

Seconded by: Cllr Rosie Humphreys

“Council Notes:

Four years ago, this government pledged to ban Section 21 no fault evictions. The Renters Reform Bill, promised in the Conservative 2019 election manifesto, was debated in the Commons for the first time last month. It has since been announced that the no fault ban will be indefinitely delayed until reforms to the justice system have been implemented.

Ministry of Justice data show no-fault evictions in England between April and June this year increased by 41%, compared with the same period in 2022. Due to high interest rates and mortgage reaching unaffordable rates many landlords with financial pressures are selling their properties. Others take advantage of the scarcity of rented housing and use a Section 21 notice to evict tenants and relet on a high rental return.

According to the Ministry of Justice between April and June 2023 2,228 households were evicted by bailiffs through no fault of their own following a Section 21 notice. No fault evictions have made the prospect of a stable home impossible for England’s 11 million private renters and the uncertainty and disruption is causing misery and hardship to families. This Council, like most, is reporting significant pressures to find alternative accommodation. Pressure on its temporary accommodation budget is another direct consequence of our local housing crisis, where demand for decent, affordable housing completely overwhelms available supply.

The 16th Housing Minister since 2010 has recently been appointed, six of which were appointed in 2022 alone. Such a high turnover cannot contribute to solving this nation’s housing emergency.

Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Housing Minister to express concern that banning no fault evictions have been delayed indefinitely.
2. Write to local MPs requesting that they raise concerns with the Housing Minister as to this indefinite delay.
3. Commission an urgent review, either via a task and finish group or officer led, to quantify the impact that no fault evictions is having in West Northants in order to make recommendations to mitigate the problem.

Motion 3

Proposed by: Councillor Paul Joyce

Seconded by: Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere

“Our parks in West Northamptonshire are amongst the best maintained in the country. We recognise the positive affect that our green spaces have on our mental health and wellbeing and the benefits of access to a stress-free environment. We would like to commend and acknowledge the contribution that Friends of park groups, park rangers and volunteers have had, also highlighting ongoing voluntary work which has proved invaluable in maintaining our parks. With the predicted rise in global warming the

trees and plants of parks cool the air and control the temperature and absorb carbon dioxide and other harmful gases reducing air pollution.

We believe that now is the time to preserve them for today and future generations for the benefit of local communities and ensure that their existing boundaries are defined and free from any future developments or changes.

This council therefore recognises:

- The protection of our Parks and green spaces for today's and future generations as a priority.
- The positive support of Friends of parks groups, park rangers and volunteers in maintaining our parks and thanks them for their service to our communities.

And resolves to request the Cabinet:

- Aim to ensure all parks in the WNC area continue to be maintained at current levels and, where possible, improved.
- Aims to ensure our parks will not be redeveloped on beyond their current purpose.
- Finalise and publish the council's Parks Development Strategy as soon as possible.
- Proceed with all haste the recruitment of the Tree Protection Officer and Nature Recovery Strategy Officer.
- Request the above officers, once in position, conduct a survey of our parks and green spaces to identify areas for improvement in biodiversity and public use.

14.	Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman) The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.
15.	Exclusion of Press and Public In respect of the following items the Chairman may move the resolution set out below, on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information (information regarded as private for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972) would be disclosed to them: The Committee is requested to resolve: "That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act of the descriptions against each item would be disclosed to them"

Council Members:

Councillor John Shephard (Chair)

Councillor Jo Gilford (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Ann Addison

Councillor Rufia Ashraf

Councillor Jamal Alwahabi

Councillor Azizur Rahman

Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb

Councillor Fiona Baker

Councillor Dermot Bambridge

Councillor Harry Barrett

Councillor William Barter

Councillor Sally Beardsworth

Councillor Phil Bignell

Councillor Lizzy Bowen

Councillor Rebecca Breese

Councillor Adam Brown

Councillor Michael Brown

Councillor Muna Cali

Councillor Alan Chantler

Councillor Pinder Chauhan

Councillor Nazim Choudary

Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM

Councillor Paul Clark

Councillor Stephen Clarke

Councillor Maggie Clubley

Councillor Fiona Cole

Councillor Raymond Connolly

Councillor Karen Cooper

Councillor Daniel Cribbin

Councillor Julie Davenport

Councillor Janice Duffy

Councillor Paul Dyball

Councillor Gareth Eales

Councillor Terrie Eales

Councillor Alison Eastwood

Councillor Penelope Flavell

Councillor Louisa Fowler

Councillor Rupert Frost

Councillor Terry Gilford

Councillor Matt Golby

Councillor André González De Savage

Councillor Andrew Grant

Councillor Mike Hallam

Councillor Enam Haque

Councillor Lauryn Harrington-Carter

Councillor Jonathan Harris

Councillor Cheryl Hawes

Councillor Rosie Herring

Councillor Stephen Hibbert

Councillor James Hill

Councillor Nigel Hinch

Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere

Councillor Mark Hughes

Councillor Rosie Humphreys

Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift

Councillor David James

Councillor Koulla Jolley

Councillor Paul Joyce

Councillor Andrew Kilbride

Councillor Anna King

Councillor Jamie Lane

Councillor Phil Larratt

Councillor Daniel Lister

Councillor Malcolm Longley

Councillor Greg Lunn

Councillor Charles Manners

Councillor Peter Matten

Councillor Ian McCord

Councillor Dennis Meredith

Councillor Colin Morgan

Councillor Charles Morton	Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Councillor Kevin Parker	Councillor Suresh Patel
Councillor Ken Pritchard	Councillor Bob Purser
Councillor Wendy Randall	Councillor Emma Roberts
Councillor Jake Roberts	Councillor Sam Rumens
Councillor Cathrine Russell	Councillor Lisa Samiotis
Councillor Brian Sargeant	Councillor Sue Sharps
Councillor David Smith	Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms	Councillor Laura Stevenson
Councillor Danielle Stone	Councillor Winston Strachan
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex	Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz
Councillor Mike Warren	

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Evacuation Procedure

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

If you have any queries about this agenda please contact Democratic Services via the following:

Email: democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk

Or by writing to:

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