



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED on Thursday 15 July 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Ann Addison (Chair)
 Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Rufia Ashraf
 Councillor Jamal Alwahabi
 Councillor Mohammed Azizur Rahman (Aziz)
 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 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 Fiona Cole
 Councillor Raymond Connolly
 Councillor Karen Cooper
 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 Matt Golby
 Councillor Andrew Grant
 Councillor Mike Hallam
 Councillor Enam Haque
 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 Sue Sharps
Councillor John Shephard
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

13. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Breese, Clubley, Cribbin, J Gilford, T Gilford, Frost, Sargeant, and Jolley.

14. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Aziz stated that his son was addressing Council on Motion 2.

15. **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

16. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman offered her condolences to Councillor Baker for the loss of her son. Members were informed that flowers had been sent on behalf of the Council.

Since the previous meeting, the Chairman attended Oak Apple Day celebrations, and the Armed Forces flag raising ceremony in Towcester.

Members were reminded that if their mobile phones rang, they would be fined £10 for her chosen charity, the Cynthia Spencer Hospice.

In light of the pandemic and to ensure that all could be heard, the Chairman asked that Members remain seated whilst speaking.

17. **Public Participation**

(1) The Chairman advised of 2 requests to present petitions.

Sally Pagano, on behalf of herself and Abington residents, addressed the Council in relation to a petition calling for more regulation for HMO properties.

Katie Moore, Northampton resident, presented a petition with 754 signatures, relating to the junction of Billing Road and Rushmere Road in Northampton.

Councillor Stone presented a hard copy of an e-petition with 596 signatures which called for more regulation for HMO properties.

(2) The Chairman advised of several requests to address the Council.

Daniel Soan of Northampton Town Council addressed the Council in relation to Item 16, Motion 3 (Junction of Billing Road and Rushmere Road in Northampton). He was pleased that the motion provided an opportunity for this important issue to be discussed but stated that it did not compel the Council to commit to any meaningful action.

Jane Wood of Climate Action West Northamptonshire addressed the Council and spoke in favour of the Council supporting Motion 1 (Re: Climate Emergency) as detailed on the agenda.

Goff Smith addressed the Council in relation to a petition calling for more regulation for HMO properties.

Arif Rahman, on behalf of the Northampton Islamic Association, addressed the Council and spoke in favour of the Council supporting Motion 2.

There were 4 written questions from members of the public. Written responses were circulated at the meeting.

No supplementary questions were asked.

18. Written Questions

23 questions had been received from Councillors and the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions and answers were given as tabled unless where stated, supplementary questions were asked as detailed below.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 1, Councillor Nunn stated that he would be happy to engage in further discussions with Councillor Beardsworth on the subject of libraries.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 5, Councillor Baker advised that Pupil Premium funding would come through, albeit late; the Council was looking to support affected schools in the meantime.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 11, Councillor Larratt advised that opening times for recycling centres were being monitored and its impact; unfortunately, funding to keep extended hours was running out.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 16, Councillor Nunn advised that he was happy to discuss the topic further with Councillor Randall outside of the meeting.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 18, Councillor Hallam stated that the Council would do everything possible to increase voter turnout at elections.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 19, Councillor Larratt advised that it was too early to give accurate costs with regard to a new highways contract; negotiations were currently ongoing, however, continual updates would be brought to Cabinet.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 21, Councillor Golby explained that an anti-poverty strategy was currently being worked on and encouraged Councillor Meredith to involve himself in its creation.

19. Announcements by the Leader of the Council

There were no announcements by the Leader on this occasion.

20. Cabinet Member Reports and Record of Decisions Taken by the Cabinet

Councillor Nunn presented his report as Leader of the Council and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, he advised that the 2pm start for the Strategic Planning Committee was a decision made by that committee; the Constitution allowed for times to change if necessary. He further advised that the Council were keen to push ahead with the Park and Ride scheme.

Councillor Brown presented his report as Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Leisure and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, he explained that housing strategy was a priority for the Council; he had recently met with Andrew Lewer MP who was undertaking a piece of work to assess the market position and economic needs of West Northamptonshire and ensure that it would be built into an interim housing strategy at the earliest opportunity. He advised that work was ongoing to ensure that all meetings were accessible to those that were unable to attend in person.

Councillor Baker presented her report as Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, she stated that she would give details of the SEND Board membership and its scope in her next report to Council. She further stated that Ofsted would be in the building the following week for a fortnight; this was a monitoring visit and should give an indication of how the Trust was performing. A recruitment campaign was ongoing, and Councillor Baker was very happy with its trajectory, agency staff numbers were down and in some areas there were no agency staff being used at all.

Councillor Nunn presented a report on behalf of Councillor Breese, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Built Environment & Rural Affairs, and highlighted the salient points. In response to questions, he advised that the Call-In procedure would be as strong as it had been at predecessor authorities.

Councillor Golby presented his report as Cabinet Member Adult Social Care and Public Health and highlighted the salient points. He noted an error within the report; a briefing on Covid-19 for Members would take place on the 29th July, not the 19th as stated, and he urged Members to attend. In response to questions, Councillor Golby advised that a roadmap with dates relating to the Anti-Poverty Strategy would be provided to Councillor Roberts. Further ways in which to assist those suffering with long Covid would be looked into. The Council's whistleblowing policy would be circulated amongst Members following a request.

In relation to a question around vaccine hesitancy in the BAME community, Councillor Hill advised that this had been the subject of extensive discussion at the Diverse Communities Forum and encouraged Members to attend.

Councillor Hallam presented his report as Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services and highlighted the salient points.

At this point the Chairman advised that the 45 minutes allocated for this item had expired.

21. Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2020/2021

The Chairman advised that Professor Nick Petford, former Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board would be presenting this report to Council.

Professor Petford presented the report which provided a summary of the work overseen by the Board during April 2020/March 2021, including information on how the Board had met its statutory duties, such as approval of the Northamptonshire Better Care Fund 2020/2021, publication of the Director of Public Health Annual Report, overseeing work on the refreshed pharmaceutical Needs Assessment, as well as additions to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment made throughout the year.

Councillor Golby proposed the item and thanked Professor Petford for his Chairmanship over the past several years.

Councillor Nunn seconded the proposition.

Councillor Roberts welcomed the report but questioned why the Disabled Facilities grant seemed to be under-utilized in Northampton compared to other areas within West Northamptonshire. She hoped that the Better Care fund would retain the underspend into the Disabled Facilities grant and that residents that could not be reached due to Covid-19 would be seen to as soon as possible.

Councillor Golby confirmed that any grant underspend could, and would be, rolled over to the next financial year, and those not yet reached regarding the Disabled Facilities grant were being contacted. Councillor Golby further advised that he would be contacting the Labour Group in due course with details of Board meetings.

Councillor Beardsworth welcomed the report and commented that it was important that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had sight of it. She questioned whether there was sufficient support for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS).

Councillor Golby agreed that it was important for Overview & Scrutiny to have sight of the report and assured Members that next year's report would be seen by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Professor Petford confirmed that the data behind the report was extensive (in relation to CAHMS) and that the data would be available for Members' perusal.

Councillor Davenport stated that information regarding grants should be made more widely available. She stated her concern regarding a drop in the Disabled Facilities grant in the Medium-Term Budget for the following year by approximately 50%.

Councillor Golby advised that he would raise this issue with the Director for Housing.

In relation to Councillor Beardsworth's comments around CAHMS, the Chief Executive stated that NHFT had seen a 130% increase in child referrals in the last year; they had done great work with additional funding.

RESOLVED:

Council noted the report.

22. Appointments to Outside Bodies

Councillor Hallam presented a report which sought the endorsement of Cabinet (for bodies with executive functions) and Council (for bodies with non-executive functions) for the appointment of Members to the outside bodies listed in Appendix A of the report.

Councillor Hinch seconded the report.

Councillor Randall requested an end-of-year report to give Council a better understanding of the relevant outside bodies, specifically Future Housing.

Councillor Hallam commented that he would look into Councillor Randall's request but recommended that in the first instance to get in touch with Members listed as appointees.

Councillor Meredith asked for an update on the Corporate Parenting Board.

Councillor Hallam advised that this was not an outside body or an area that fell under his remit and suggested that Councillor Meredith contact the relevant Cabinet Member who would be happy to advise.

In relation to Councillor Randall's question around Future Housing, Councillor Brown advised that she may also wish to contact him, as the relevant Cabinet Member, as well as Councillor Cribbin who was the appointee to the body.

Regarding Councillor Meredith's question in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board, Councillor Baker stated that the Board served both West and North Northamptonshire Councils made up of 5 Members from the West and 5 from the North. Members had their first training session this week.

Councillor Meredith expressed disappointment that the Liberal Democrat group had not been included in the Board's membership.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet and Council:

- a) Noted and endorsed the appointments to outside bodies set out at Appendix A of the report

- b) Noted that further work would be required in relation to a small number of outside bodies and agreed that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader(s) of any group to whom a place on an outside body has been allocated, to make such appointments in due course.

23. **Appointment of Political Assistants**

Councillor Nunn presented a report which sought the views of members on the appointment of political assistants for the Leading Groups of the Council in accordance with the opportunity afforded by the provisions in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 set out at Appendix A of the report.

Councillor Harris stated that he could not support the report; Political Assistants had not been budgeted for, according to the report, however in response to a question earlier on the agenda, it was stated that they had been. Councillor Harris asked for clarification around this. He suggested that there were other things to spend the money on that would be of bigger benefit to residents.

Councillor Nunn stated that Political Assistant support was necessary and whilst it was a shame that it would not be a benefit to all parties, he urged Council to approve the recommendations within the report.

Councillor Harris stated that the Liberal Democrat group were not against Political Assistants, however the timing was not right, and a question remained around budgeting.

Councillor Meredith reiterated that he was not against Political Assistants, but that they should not be employed full-time. He also disagreed with the requirement that a group had a minimum of 10% membership to qualify for one.

Councillor Nunn advised that the 10% rule was a legal requirement and not set by the Council.

Councillor G Eales seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Agrees to the appointment of political assistants under the terms of the Local Government Act 1989 with effect from this Annual Council until to be reviewed at the next Annual Council meeting and subject to a maximum renewal to the Annual Council following the elections in 2025.
- b) Agrees that in accordance with the qualifying criteria posts are allocated to the Conservative and Labour Groups.

- c) Requests that the Leaders of the Conservative and Labour Groups advise the Director of Legal and Democratic Services of the wishes of their Groups on the filling of those posts.

24. Changes to Polling Places

Councillor Patel presented a report which sought Council's approval for a change to polling stations for the byelection in Talavera Ward of Northampton Town Council which was due to take place on 2 September 2021. It also sought approval for the Democracy and Standards Committee which has responsibility for the conduct of polling station reviews to make changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations as required for operational purposes and to recommend a statutory polling station review to Council and finally to grant the Electoral Registration Officer delegated power, when not practicable to seek Member Approval, to make changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations as required for operational purposes.

Councillor Hibbert seconded the report and advised that he was a Member of Northampton Town Council.

RESOLVED:

Council:

1. Agreed the change to the polling place that will be used in the Talavera Ward – Polling District NSTV6 for the by-election on 2nd September 2021.
2. Delegated to the Democracy and Standards Committee the ability to make changes to polling places outside a review.
3. Delegated to the Electoral Registration Officer the ability to make changes where it would not be practicable to seek Committee approval for a change in a polling place in time for an election in consultation with Ward Members and Group Leaders.

25. Changes to Political Balance and Committee Places

Councillor Hallam presented a report which sought invites Council to review the changes to the political balance of the Council and approve changes to membership of the Committees.

Councillor Bowen seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Reviewed the representation of different political groups on the Council;

- b) Determined the allocation of seats on committees to the different political groups as listed in Section 4.4 of the report
- c) Appointed members to the committees listed in Section 4.5 of the report to give effect to the wishes expressed by the political groups to which the seats were allocated.

26. **Integrated Care Across Northamptonshire (ICAN)**

Councillor Golby presented a report which sought Council's consideration on the report considered by Cabinet on Integrated Care Across Northamptonshire that was considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2021. He advised that the report would also go before the Overview & Scrutiny Committee next week.

Councillor Cooper seconded the report.

Councillor Randall welcomed the report and looked forward to it being presented at Overview & Scrutiny.

Councillor Roberts stated that a roadmap for the report through Scrutiny should be agreed for all funds detailed within the report.

Responding to a query from Councillor Davenport, Councillor Golby confirmed that savings in health would come from growth and reduced demand rather than cuts to services.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Approved one-off revenue funding of up to £1m to be agreed from general fund balances to contribute to the iCAN programme, subject to satisfactory evidence of a likelihood of a positive return on the investment.
- b) Delegated to the Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with his Portfolio Holder, the Executive Director of Finance (S151 officer), and the Portfolio holder for Finance the power to determine whether there is satisfactory evidence of a likelihood of a return on the investment.

27. **MHCLG's Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme Funding**

Councillor Brown presented a report which sought Council's consideration on the report on the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme that was considered by Cabinet on 13 July 2021.

Councillor Hughes seconded the report.

Councillor Roberts questioned whether the Council had a "Plan B" if funding was not forthcoming and asked for a detailed update following the 4th August deadline. She

asked if the Council were working with partners in Daventry and Towcester regarding homeless provision.

Councillor Brown advised that the Council were working to a wider strategy in relation to rough sleepers and that it was looking to expand that strategy. He was confident that the funding bid would be successful. Work with partners outside of Northampton was going well; data showed that there was only 1 rough sleeper in the Daventry/Towcester areas, but this was no reason for complacency.

Councillor Beardsworth welcomed the report and queried whether the flats would all be located in one block, and if the work undertaken was a replication of work done by Homes First.

Councillor Brown advised that the report built on the principles behind Homes First but went further in terms of additional support provided to service users. He confirmed that the flats would be located as close to each other as possible; he was aware of the challenges that came with housing residents with additional needs, however the benefits in terms of provision of care and oversight were numerous.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Agreed the increase in the HRA Capital programme of £1.32m to purchase and refurbish ten 1- bedroom properties through the HRA, in order to accommodate and support people who have been sleeping rough or are threatened with sleeping rough, funded by MHCLG/Homes England RSAP grant and HRA borrowing.

28. Motions

- 1) Councillor Nunn proposed and Councillor Hallam seconded:

"This Council notes that both Daventry District Council and Northampton Borough Council, along with over 2/3 of local Councils across the country have now declared a climate emergency. This Council re-affirms its commitment to tackling the climate emergency and agrees to hold a wide-ranging climate conference to listen to views of residents, businesses and community groups to contribute to plans already in place to achieve a carbon neutral West Northamptonshire by 2030".

Councillor Harris proposed and Councillor Humphreys seconded an amendment.

Amended motion to read:

"This Council notes that both Daventry District Council, and Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council, along with over 2/3 of local Councils across the country have now declared a climate emergency. It notes that South Northants District Council implemented a Climate Action Plan.

This Council will build on their examples by declaring a climate emergency and reaffirming its commitment to achieve Net Zero Carbon for the council's operations and estate by 2030.

By the end of 2021 this Council will hold a wide-ranging climate conference to listen to views of residents, businesses and community groups, and will regularly and openly engage with these groups going forward. This Council will also set and publicly report on key performance indicators to measure delivery of actions to tackle the climate emergency. Immediate actions will include:

- In Q3 2021 - publish its detailed actions to address causes and impacts of climate change; actions to be baselined by the end of Q4 2021
- In Q4 2021 set key performance indicators to measure delivery of actions to tackle the climate emergency, to be reported on monthly
- In Q1 2022 set up a quarterly climate forum including representation from residents, businesses and community groups

Furthermore, this council recognises that it cannot achieve this on its own and will therefore sign the UK100 Net Zero Pledge (see appendix 1)"

Council debated the amendment.

Upon a vote, the amendment fell.

Council debated the original motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

II) Councillor Hallam proposed and Councillor Morgan seconded:

"Council agrees that planting trees has a significant benefit to health, well-being, the environment and to helping tackle climate change. This Council agrees to fully embrace "The Queen's Green Canopy Scheme" launched to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Council agrees to develop an action plan to work with Schools, Colleges and Community Groups alongside the Woodland Trust to co-ordinate a campaign across West Northamptonshire to apply for the free saplings available as part of the Scheme and to encourage tree planting between Oct 2021 to the end of 2022."

Councillor Roberts proposed and Councillor Joyce seconded an amendment.

Amended motion to read:

"Council agrees that planting trees has a significant benefit to health, well-being, the environment and to helping tackle climate change.

"There is a negative bias that over-emphasises the challenges and conflicts without enough content about the benefits or solutions that would lead to improvement of our urban forests and community engagement around them.

We call on this Council to:

1. Note the significant role trees play in enhancing accessible green spaces, improving air quality, restoring and protecting soil health, creating wildlife habitat, mitigating flood risk and benefiting public health;
2. Recognise the contribution trees make to the environment in our towns including shading and cooling pollution and noise mitigation, as well speeding up floodwater drainage and improving the quality of our street scene.
3. Call for a review of current policies on, and attitude towards, the planting of trees in our urban area with a view to introducing a more proactive policy, which looks to increase the number and regularity of trees planted in our town and residential streets and parks and other open spaces;
4. Call for a new strategy to include providing opportunities to educate children in understanding the benefits of trees and to get involved in tree planting;
5. Recommends closer partnership working with the, and landowners seeking sites for new tree planting
6. Recommends a Tree Summit bringing together the Local Councils, Park Rangers, Landowners and partners responsible for land maintenance, the Woodland Trust and members of the public to work out how to plant more trees in our town, residential streets and in our parks and other open spaces.
7. To fully embrace “The Queen’s Green Canopy Scheme” launched to mark Her Majesty the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.
8. To work with Schools, Colleges and Community Groups alongside the Woodland Trust to co-ordinate a campaign across West Northamptonshire to apply for the free saplings available as part of the Scheme and to encourage tree planting
9. this action into a working Tree Policy that includes but is not exhaustive of the following;
 - To allow for ‘replacement in situ’ of valuable urban trees.
 - For a regular maintenance plan to be outlined.
 - There should be a mapping exercise. This is not just for existing trees, but for planting opportunities.
 - Stronger tree policies that informs infrastructure design and prevents conflicts.
 - Arboricultural Officer (s) at the heart of plans
 - Parameters agreed on what residents can and can’t do to trees.
 - A clear inclusion of the responsibilities for Trees on Council owned/NPH run land, taking account of the tree size and maintenance requirements
 - More information on tree benefits.”

Council debated the amendment.

Upon a vote, the amendment fell.

Council debated the original motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

III) Councillor Davenport proposed and Councillor Sharps seconded:

“As a Public Authority we have a duty to ensure our residents’ safety, and this includes on our roads. Hundreds of students and vulnerable residents have had no

choice but to cross the very busy, unsafe junction of the Billing Road and Rushmere Road in Northampton. The junction does not have any safe pedestrian crossing points. This Council assures residents that this Council will explore ways of making the Rushmere Road and Billing Road traffic light junction a safe place for our children, adults and vulnerable residents to cross.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

IV) Councillor Beardsworth proposed and Councillor G Eales seconded:

““The Structural Change Order that led to the creation of West Northamptonshire Council dictated that the Shadow Authority and the council elected this May should operate under the Leader and Cabinet Model.

We believe that it is now time for the Councillors and local people to determine themselves on ways of working and democratic oversight that will better serve the interests of the different communities we represent. We should also consider the potential devolution of services to localities.

To this aim we call for the council to enable the Democracy & Standards Committee to set up a cross party working group, based on the scrutiny model with officer support, to evaluate the potential replacement of the Leader and Cabinet system by a new Committee System of governance. There should also be a full and open piece of public consultation.

This process should be thorough and well thought out. Therefore, the target commencement of any new governance model to come into operation would be May 2023.

The first step will be the Democracy & Standards Committee working group establish a term of reference based on the above at its first meeting, which should be no later than September 2021.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion Fell.

V) Councillor G Eales proposed and Councillor Brown seconded:

“This council recognises:

The importance of motions passed within the previous four authorities in the West Northants catchment area.

That it is crucial to ensure any democratic decisions are retained and flow through into the present day thinking of WNC.

That adopting an exercise to preserve the above will not only efficiently capture all approved motions into one report, it also will reaffirm the importance of local democratic decision making.

This council resolves:

- To instruct the Democracy & Standards Committee to collate any motions passed in the last six years within the previous authorities.
- That once collated, these motions will be forwarded to the relevant Scrutiny Committee to pass comment on.
- That once this process is completed, a report containing all legacy matters will be brought to the earliest possible full council, with the target of December 2021's meeting. The report will lay out all motions which should be voted on individually for acceptance or any minor modifications. Such changes must not seek to alter the fundamental principles previously passed."

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

VI) Councillor Roberts proposed and Councillor Stone seconded:

Over 1 million people working in the public sector are paid less than the real Living Wage. As a result, more workers than ever are struggling to keep their heads above water on wages that don't meet the basic costs and pressures of everyday life;

That low pay is a leading cause of poverty, with most people living in poverty now being in working households;

That foodbank providers within the West Northants footprint have seen usage increase threefold as a result of the pandemic and ensuring a real living wage is available to as many as possible is essential to any Covid 19 Recovery Plan;

Research in 2018 found that the extra wages paid by local authorities accredited as Living Wage Employers are inevitably invested back into the local economy;

As a Council who has committed to producing an anti-poverty strategy taking steps to seek living wage accreditation would cement that commitment;

Through accreditation, this local authority would be making a commitment to tackle in-work poverty in our communities. Accreditation also means the authority can use the Living Wage Employer Mark to publicly demonstrate this commitment to the real Living Wage;

This will support a commitment to all staff and their quality of life. Raises the profile of the Living Wage campaign locally. Sets it stall out as a model employer and demonstrates visible leadership on tackling poverty pay, inspiring others to do the same;

Beyond being the right thing to do and an investment in both workers and the

community, paying the real Living Wage has distinct benefits for local authorities as employers;

This Council resolves:

- To commit to becoming a Living Wage Employer and seeking Living Wage Foundation Accreditation
- To ensure all directly employed staff are paid at least the real Living Wage
- To enquire with the Living Wage Foundation to begin the process and receive guidance
- To nominate an individual to be lead officer on the real Living Wage to liaise with the Living Wage Foundation and document progress
- To initiate an internal working group to plan and manage the Living Wage on an ongoing basis.
- To identify all relevant contracts that need the Living Wage embedded, with target dates for implementation
- To build Living Wage into all terms and conditions, pre-qualification questionnaires and future supplier communications
- To plan how this will be managed and reported annually to the Living Wage Foundation
- To report on the plan with dates for implementation at the Council's AGM"

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion Fell.

VII) Councillor Harris proposed and Councillor Humphreys seconded:

"In June 2021 West Northamptonshire Council ran a training event on the subject of equality. The aim of this training was to explain to councillors that the new council must offer equality of access to all our residents. In a report in 2019, The Office of National Statistics, highlighted the fact that more than 5 million people have never used the internet in the UK, with the vast majority of this offline minority being older people, and 79% of the total aged 65 or over.

Often, our residents are directed to 'online form filling' or asked to deal with issues that they may have using the council's website. Based on the data shown above, there is a high probability that we are alienating too many residents in our local wards. There are a number of instances where little or no thought has been given to those without internet access. A recent example is the green bin/garden waste renewal service in the Daventry area. This provided residents with a slip detailing the website to go to in order to renew their services, and no other apparent method of renewing. We are discriminating against many residents, simply by ignoring the fact that they do not either have access to or use the internet.

To rectify this, this council resolves to:

- review all of its service access points to ensure that individuals without internet access are not being discriminated against.

- ensure that there are always alternate means of access, in addition to online access, to services and/or renewal information, and these are readily available and communicated to our residents.
- retrain all of its workforce on equality matters, to ensure that all groups are always considered regarding communications and access to services.”

Councillor Gonzalez De Savage proposed and Councillor Nunn seconded an amendment.

Amended motion to read:

“In June 2021 West Northamptonshire Council ran a training event on the subject of equality. The aim of this training was to explain to councillors that the new council must offer equality of access to all our residents. In a report in 2019, The Office of National Statistics, highlighted the fact that more than 5 million people have never used the internet in the UK, with the vast majority of this offline minority being older people, and 79% of the total aged 65 or over.

Often, our residents are directed to ‘online form filling’ or asked to deal with issues that they may have using the council’s website. Based on the data shown above, there is a high probability that we are alienating too many residents in our local wards. There are a number of instances where little or no thought has been given to those without internet access. A recent example is the green bin/garden waste renewal service in the Daventry area. This provided residents with a slip detailing the website to go to in order to renew their services, and no other apparent method of renewing. We are discriminating against many residents, simply by ignoring the fact that they do not either have access to or use the internet.

To rectify this, this council resolves to:

- review all of its service access points to ensure that individuals without internet access are not being discriminated against.
- ensure that there are always alternate means of access, in addition to online access, to services and/or renewal information, and these are readily available and communicated to our residents.
- Ensure that all staff are trained on equality matters, to ensure that all groups are always considered regarding communications and access to services.”

Council debated the amendment.

Upon a vote, the amendment was agreed and the amended motion became the substantive motion.

Council debated the substantive motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

VIII) Councillor Roberts proposed and Councillor Randall seconded:

“We understand that interim appointments to senior officer roles via recruitment agencies are occasionally made by the council. These must be fully transparent.

Recent information reported shows this transparency was not as would be expected. It would appear that these appointments should be captured by the pay policy and pay policy statement approved by Full Council earlier this year. It is clear that the policy and the Localism Act 2011 and relevant sections should apply to such appointment and remuneration information.

The pay policy provides a definition for Chief and Deputy Chief Officers and it is clear therefore that the remuneration package of those officers and all other statutory and non-statutory officers was expected to be detailed within that policy and any subsequent policy.

The Pay policy statement confirms: "Where an appointment proposes a remuneration package greater than £100,000, approval will be sought from Full Council". No such referral to full Council currently occurs prior to senior interim agency appointments.

Section 39(4) of the Localism Act 2011 allows "A relevant authority may by resolution amend its pay policy statement (including after the beginning of the financial year to which it relates)".

There cannot be any doubt that a fundamental reason for having such a pay policy is to inform and provide openness and accountability. If our policy provides any doubt around what is expected, whether a position is temporary or not and of what needs to be brought before Full Council, then that policy cannot be fit. Ambiguity cannot be allowed.

This Council resolves to:

1. Amend the pay policy statement for approval at the next full Council to ensure interim agency appointments are covered.
2. Amend the pay policy statement for approval at the next full Council to ensure complete clarity that any appointment that proposes a remuneration package that could reach £100,000 must have approval of full Council
3. Review all positions to ensure no other ambiguity remains.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was Carried.

29. **Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman)**

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 10.25 pm

Chair: _____

Council - 15 July 2021

Date: _____