

**Summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the
Cabinet held on Tuesday 13 September 2022**

1. Date of publication of this summary: 13 September 2022
2. Deadline for requests for call-in (detailing reasons for doing so): 20th September 2022
3. Earliest date for implementation of decisions: 21st September 2022
4. Urgent decisions taken and not subject to the call-in procedure: 13 September 2022

Agenda Item and Recommendations	Decision
<p>Agenda Item 6 Recommendations submitted by Overview and Scrutiny Committees</p>	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The consultation process for Levelling Up - Round 3 was reviewed in order that early in the consultation process all ward Members and the voluntary sector are included as consultees (recommendation from Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee). b) Cabinet recognised the need to improve performance from the current position of 47% of children in care receiving an initial health assessment within 28 days of entering care (recommendation from People Overview and Scrutiny Committee). c) Cabinet looked into issues arising from the change of use of Riverside House from office space to housing that have affected its continued suitability as a site for outpatient renal dialysis, in order to support effective partnership working (recommendation from People Overview and Scrutiny Committee). <p>REASONS RESOLVED: The recommendations sought to bring to the attention of the Cabinet issues identified by the Council's overview and</p>

	<p>scrutiny committees arising from recent scrutiny work.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7 Youth Justice Plan 22/23</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet recommended to Council the approval of the Youth Justice Plan 2022-23.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: As well as being a requirement of statute, the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework and approval by the Council is therefore required.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023-24</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet.</p> <p>a) Noted the contents of this report b) Approved the proposed LCTRS for 2023-24 as outlined in the report. c) Recommended to Council a no change LCTRS for 2023-24.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: To enable a Council Tax Reduction Scheme to be agreed for West Northants Council for the financial year 2023-24 and be approved by Council and in place by 31 January 2023.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling has been carried out to show the financial impact of retaining the current scheme as shown in the table below. A 1% increase in the minimum payment would result in a reduction in expenditure of £142,521 (compared to £155,00 in 2022-2023). • In light of the on-going impacts from the COVID pandemic and the current economic climate members may wish to retain the current level of 20% minimum contribution and recommend to Council a no change LCTRS for 2023-2024. LCTRS Regulations for pensioners must be increased in line with uprating

	<p>announced by DLUHC and the working age Regulations updated in line with those announced by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).</p>
<p>Agenda Item 9 Establishing a new 250 place, 'all-through' special educational needs and disability (SEND) School for pupils with autistic spectrum condition (ASC), with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and severe learning difficulties (SLD) at Tiffield St John's site, Tiffield, West Northamptonshire.</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted that the selection process for the new school involves the Council putting forward a recommendation to the DfE for the preferred trust, following a rigorous selection process. b) Note the linked paper, 'St John Tiffield property arrangements' on the use of the St John's Tiffield Site, St. John's Road, Tiffield, NN12 8AA for the new school. c) Agreed in principle borrowing up to £10,000,000 to make up the shortfall for the cost of building the new school, which is up to £23m, with delegated authority to the s151 officer to amend the capital programme once full feasibility works are completed. Note that the remaining cost of the build will be met through capital grant funding received by the Council. <p>Note: the estimated building and capital required is subject to construction cost inflation. This had been estimated at one per cent per month currently. Compounded, this could be as much as 13-14 per cent a year. Delay in construction work will lead to further risk of cost rises.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposed new school will help to ensure that the council is able to fulfil its statutory obligation of providing a sufficiency of ASC, SLCN and SLD SEND places within West Northamptonshire in future years. It will also provide new learners with access to excellent specialist provision that will significantly improve future lifelong outcomes. 2. The establishment of a new 'all-

through' special school can also be considered a benefit to all of West Northamptonshire's mainstream primary and secondary schools. It will reduce placements at a mainstream school setting where a child's needs can only be appropriately met at a special school.

3. The new school will also reduce pressure on the high needs block (HNB) element of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) via a reduction in the number of children being required to be placed in out of county and independent provisions to meet their individual needs. The average cost of an independent placement is £61,000 whilst the average cost at a non-independent school is £25,000 – a reduction on average of £36,000 per place.
4. Based on previous placements, around 50 per cent of the expected new school intake, would have been placed at an independent placement due to the lack of state-sector funded special schools or resourced provisions. Placements at the new school will result in approximate net cost avoidance of £4,000,000 once the school is full. A reduction in spend against the revenue general fund is also expected to be secured through reduced home to school transport costs as a result of fewer further away placements being made.

Note: cost avoidance is NOT the same as a cost-saving. It is not cashable as the council will be spending more money each year on the extra costs of pupils who have significant additional needs. For example, 100 pupils with the level of need requiring a place at the new free special school will cost approximately £2,500,000. This was an extra cost to the high needs budget. However, if these places are not available, independent schools places will be required, at a cost of

£6,100,000. While this enables a large cost avoidance of £3,600,000, it is still additional expenditure.

1. The new free school will enable the Council to make savings where a child is currently placed in an independent or out of county school and the parent agrees to a transfer of their child to a state-funded special school. For every 10 who do this, a cost **saving** of £360,000 will be made (independent cost of £610,000 becomes a £250,000 cost in a state-funded special school).
2. The new free school should reduce the number of appeals lodged to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) by families in WNC requesting a special school place. In turn, this will reduce the cost of defending appeals.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. If the capital funding required to fund and build the school is not approved: this option would result in the failure of WNC fulfilling its statutory obligation of providing a sufficiency of ASC, SLCN and SLD SEND places in West Northamptonshire in future years. It would result in the requirement to utilise places in increasingly distant and more expensive places within the independent sector, which would place a further strain on the HNB of the DSG and the home to school transport budget, which is a strain on the general fund. If WNC cannot demonstrate that it is able to manage its DSG allocation in a balanced position (or have plans to do so) this would result in intervention by the DfE. This will prevent WNC from addressing issues relating to the timely provision of places in an appropriate setting for pupils in receipt of an education, health and care (EHC)

	<p>plan. This option was discounted for these reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. It might be possible to site the school elsewhere. However, this is likely to be a more expensive option - potentially several million pounds – as there will be a significant capital cost attached to any alternative land. The St John’s Tiffield site will be run on a 125 year lease with no capital costs incurred through a site purchase.
<p>Agenda Item 10 Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Tariff Fare Increase</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet considered the proposed WNC Hackney Carriage Tariff table of fares as shown in Appendix B and resolved to vary the three existing hackney carriage tariff fare tables currently in force in the WNC taxi licensing area accordingly.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The option proposed aligns all existing hackney carriage tariff fare tables to create a consistent set of fares for all hackney carriage journeys undertaken across the WNC area, providing consistency for members of the public whilst benefiting the licensed trade. Due to the rising cost of fuel and in order for the licensing trade to make a sufficient income, it is essential a review of fares is undertaken. 2. The increase proposed took into consideration a % increase in the cost of taxi journeys that strikes a balance between an increase in income for the trade and the impact of increased taxi fares upon members of the public. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet can resolve to vary the three existing WNC Hackney Carriage tariff table of fares in line with the document at Appendix B, as recommended in the report. 2. Cabinet can resolve not to vary the three existing WNC Hackney Carriage tariff table of fares in line with the document at Appendix B

	<p>and instead resolve to recommend whatever tariff table of fares it decides is more appropriate. However, Cabinet should be mindful that any increase in fares, especially one higher than proposed at Appendix B, will be passed onto those using public transport and for this reason this option is not recommended.</p> <p>3. Cabinet can resolve not to recommend any variation of the three existing WNC Hackney Carriage tariff table of fares. This option is not recommended, for the reasons set out in report.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 11 Award of Transitional Contract for Highway Professional Services</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet agreed to award a transition contract to WSP via an appropriate framework to mitigate the financial and reputational risks to the Council and potential delays. The value of the proposed contract would be above £500,000.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: To mitigate the financial and reputational risks to the Council and potential delays associated with ongoing activity and projects that are currently being delivered by KierWSP utilising WSP resources that would not TUPE to kier at the end of the current contract.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As is normal at the point of one contract ending and another beginning there are a number of significant projects and activities that WSP are engaged in delivering that will not be completed or at the end of a design stage. 2. The Council has a number of options regarding how to manage these projects namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing them onto the new Highways Services supplier, Kier, to pick up the remaining work and continue it until it is completed. • Procuring a new supplier to pick up the remaining work and continue it until it is completed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procuring a contract with WSP Ltd to continue with the work until it is completed or at a suitable stage to hand over to another supplier. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Either of the first two options would result in additional risks and cost to the Council. This is because a new supplier who had not previously worked on the project would need to satisfy themselves as to the adequacy of any previous work undertaken by others prior to taking on liability for that design – if indeed they were willing to do so. 2. They would also result in delays to projects while this process took place and furthermore whilst the new supplier became acquainted with the project. 3. The third option awarding a contract to WSP to continue the projects and activities would not result in these risks.
<p>Agenda Item 12 Decision taken by the Leader of the Council under urgency procedures: Renewal of Microsoft 365 licences</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted the decisions taken by the Leader of the Council set out at Appendix A.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where decisions that would otherwise be taken by the Leader and Cabinet have been taken by the Leader alone, in the interests of transparency, the decision is reported to the next available meeting of the Cabinet. 2. The decision taken provided the authority for the Council to renew our Microsoft 365 licences, which are critical to the functioning of council systems. 3. Full reasons for the decision taken are set out in the decision records appended to this report. <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>

<p>Agenda Item 13 Cost of Living increase: How West Northamptonshire Council is supporting residents</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Cabinet noted the contents of the report and tasked the all-party Anti-Poverty Working Group to oversee the actions planned for the next year and support the development of other interventions that respond to local need.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: West Northants Council is committed to ensuring that children, young people and adults will be supported to live their best lives through delivery of a number of aims. Some of these will be negatively impacted if no action is taken to mitigate the impact of the financial hardship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people are supported to get the best start in life with high aspirations promoted for everyone • When people ask for help, we help them get back on track and regain independence • Reduced poverty with more help for people in a crisis and greater access to education and employment • People have access to information and support to help them stay well and make positive choices • We support families to thrive and provide early help when they face crisis. <p>This is also underpinned by the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy aims and approach.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 15 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Risk Based Verification</p>	<p>RESOLVED: The recommendations as set out in the report, which was exempt from publication, were approved'</p>
<p>Agenda Item 16 Budgets for death management and related services</p>	<p>RESOLVED: The recommendations as set out in the report, which was exempt from publication, were approved,</p>

Agenda Item 17 Management of St John's Tiffield site	RESOLVED: The recommendations as set out in the report, which was exempt from publication, were approved.
Agenda Item 18 Towns Fund: Four Waterside and Marefair Business Case and Delivery Strategy	RESOLVED: The recommendations as set out in the report, which was exempt from publication, were approved.