



Cabinet

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Council Chamber, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Jonathan Nunn (Chair)
Councillor Adam Brown (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Fiona Baker
Councillor Matt Golby
Councillor Mike Hallam
Councillor Phil Larratt
Councillor Daniel Lister
Councillor Malcolm Longley
Councillor David Smith

Also Present:

Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift
Councillor Bob Purser
Councillor Carl Squires
Councillor Wendy Randall

Officers:

Anna Earnshaw, Chief Executive
Martin Henry, Executive Director - Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Catherine Whitehead, Director of Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)
Paul Hanson, Head of Democratic & Elections
Sofia Neal-Gonzalez
Jane Carr, Director of Communities & Opportunities
Stuart Lackenby, Executive Director - People Services & Deputy Chief Executive
Sarah Reed, Executive Director - Corporate Services
Stuart Timmiss, Executive Director - Place, Economy and Environment
Becky Hutson, Head of Communications
Adrian Ward
Josh West, Political Assistant to the Labour Group

130. **Apologies**

Apologies received from Councillor Rebecca Breese

131. **Declarations of Interest**

None

132. **Minutes**

The minutes from the Cabinet meeting of 13th February 2024 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

133. **Chair's Announcements**

None

134. **Urgent Business**

None

135. **Report of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Review of the VOI E-Scooter Trial**

At the Chair's invitation Councillor Andre Gonzalez de Savage and Councillor Alison Eastwood as Chair of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chair of the Task and Finish group respectively, presented the report, copies of which had been previously circulated. Cabinet were made aware of the various recommendations put forward by the committee. The committee had been impressed by the response from VOI and their willingness to work with WNC on the concerns raised.

Councillors made the following comments.

- There had been concerns raised by members of the public with regards the safety of pedestrians, especially the elderly.
- It was acknowledged that they were useful tool for some residents.
- Restrictions imposed needed to be monitored closely.
- Would the findings of the scrutiny committee make any real difference to how the scooters are used?
- It was important to take all of the issues raised into account before the contract is renewed.

Councillor Phil Larratt noted that VOI were aware of the concerns raised in the report and were working to address them but had requested a timeline from WNC.

RESOLVED: Cabinet noted the report and considered the recommendations proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the VOI E-Scooter Trial scrutiny review and associated actions as set out within paragraph 5.1 of this report.

136. **Corporate Plan – Quarterly Performance Report**

The Chair presented the report, copies of which had been previously circulated. Members were then invited to give an update on their various portfolios.

Councillors made the following comments.

- It was queried whether the scrutiny committee could be used to look at more complex issues.
- The museums exhibits were a credit to the county, it was important to make residents more aware of them.
- Could there be another indicator added in relation to waste to landfill?
- Littering fixed penalty notices had increased this quarter, could the town centre figures be provided separately.

Councillor Adam Brown advised that the Museum consultation was still open and that providing residents with good value for money was important.

Councillor Phil Larratt advised that a member event would be scheduled, its aim would be to inform councillors of the diverse ways in which road repairs are dealt with. It was hoped this would help answer any future questions.

RESOLVED: Cabinet noted the content of the appendix detailing performance against the metrics covering the second quarter of 2023-24.

137. **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-27**

At the Chair's invitation Councillor Adam Brown presented the report, copies of which had been previously circulated. Members were advised that this was a statutory obligation. Four key themes were mentioned in the report each one underpinned by an objective with further information due to be provided by the plan due in May.

Councillors made the following comments.

- Maintaining affordable rents for people was important.
- The elevated levels of people in temporary accommodation were noted.
- Homelessness is dynamic, it was important for WNC to be able notice trends.
- Would there be a monitoring or review of the strategy?

Councillor Adam Brown made the following comments.

- Every theme mentioned in the report also had a 'what we will do' section.
- The council had a legal obligation to house people
- It was advised that there was a 12-month delivery plan in place, this information could be found in the appendix.

RESOLVED: Cabinet.

a) Approved the West Northamptonshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2024- 2027)

b) Noted that a robust Delivery Action Plan, aligned to the objectives and priorities set out in the strategy, will be produced with partners and will be presented to Cabinet in May 2024.

138. **WNC Communications & Engagement Strategy 2024-27**

The Chair presented the report, copies of which had been previously circulated. Members were advised that this strategy had been developed over the last 3 years and had also been sold to external partners. There had already been various engagement strategies, most recently 'never bin batteries'.

A Councillor asked whether committee meeting dates could be promoted more to ensure continued public engagement.

RESOLVED: Cabinet approved the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2024-27 and supports its implementation across the organisation.

139. **The Establishment of West Northamptonshire Local Access Forum**

At the Chair's invitation Councillor Phil Larratt presented the report, copies of which had been previously circulated.

Councillors made the following comments

- Correct and up to date signposts would be welcomed.
- Well managed footpaths and cycle paths would help with trespassing issues.
- This could help with improvement of relationships with local voluntary groups.

Councillor Phil Larratt agreed on the importance of correct signposting.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- a) Agreed that West Northamptonshire should withdraw from Northamptonshire Local Access Forum - the previous joint arrangement with North Northamptonshire.
- b) Agreed to establish the West Northamptonshire Local Access Forum.
- c) Agreed the proposed Terms of Reference for the West Northamptonshire Local Access Forum

140. **Risk Management Strategy and Strategic Risk Register**

At the Chair's invitation the Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee presented the main points of the report. Members were advised that the committee had wanted an agile and dynamic risk register which would inform both the internal and external auditors. The committee felt that it would be productive for the Chief Internal Auditor to attend EPB meetings.

Councillors made the following comments.

- Could climate change be added as a risk?
- Financial sustainability was an issue, how would WNC manage extra demands on its resources.
- It was acknowledged that many mitigations were out of the council's control.
- It was queried what the worst-case scenario would be should the inter authority agreement not be reached.

Councillor Malcolm Longley advised that this was a living document and is reviewed on a regular basis.

RESOLVED: Cabinet;

- a) Approved the updated Risk Management Strategy (Appendix A).
- b) Endorsed the updated Strategic Risk Register (Appendix B).
- c) Noted that the Audit & Governance Committee will monitor the Strategic Risk Register and the mitigating actions contained within it on an ongoing basis and report any significant concerns back to Cabinet.

The meeting closed at 8.07 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____