

# West Northamptonshire Shadow Executive

23 March 2021

## Shadow Executive Members Present:

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

## Other Shadow Authority Members Present:

Johnnie Amos	Wendy Randall
Rufia Ashraf	Emma Roberts
Fiona Baker	Anjona Roy
Malcolm Longley	Danielle Stone
Peter Matten	

## Officers Present:

Cornelia Andrecut	Director of Children's Social Care, Northamptonshire Children's Trust
Joanne Barrett	Assistant Director of Wellbeing, SNC
George Candler	Chief Executive, NBC
Jane Carr	Transformation Director, West Northamptonshire Council
Anna Earnshaw	Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Council
Richard Ellis	Chief Executive, SNC
Colin Foster	Chief Executive, Northamptonshire Children's Trust
Andy Gratrix	Project Manager, Regulatory & Planning Development Services, PLACE Programme
Cathi Hadley	Executive Director of Children's Services, West Northamptonshire Council
Paul Hanson	Democratic Services Manager, NCC
Martin Henry	Chief Finance Officer, West Northamptonshire Council
Andrew Hunkin	Legal and Democratic Lead, Future Northants
Stuart Lackenby	Executive Director for Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, West Northamptonshire Council
Alex Melia	Democratic Services Officer, West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority (Minutes)
Rebecca Peck	Assistant Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Council
Kerry Purnell	Assistant Director, Corporate & Community Services, NCC
Chris Stopford	Private Sector Housing Manager, Northampton Borough Council
Andrew Tagg	Director of Finance & Resources, Northamptonshire Children's Trust
Maria Taylor	Head of Partnerships, Design & Strategy, Transformation Programme, West Northamptonshire Council
Fiona Unett	Head of Waste Management, NCC
Catherine Whitehead	Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Council
Julian Wooster	Chair, Northamptonshire Children's Trust

## Others Present:

The Chair opened the meeting by recognising the year anniversary of lockdown and other Covid-19 related restrictions and paid tribute to all involved in the effort over the previous year. The Chair also thanked the Director of Public Health and other senior officers for helping to keep over 95% of services running throughout the difficult circumstances.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE:**

None received.

#### **2. NOTIFICATION OF REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE MEETING:**

Miranda Wixon, Independent Chair, VCSE Assembly in Northamptonshire, requested to address the meeting on Items 18 & 19.

#### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

None received.

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2021**

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2021 as a true and accurate record.**

#### **5. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair wished make an announcement recognising all those who have contributed to the Local Government Reform Programme, with only eight days until the establishment of the new West Northamptonshire Council.

#### **6. TRANSFORMATION DIRECTORS UPDATE**

The Transformation Director, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- It was noted that the aim of the Transformation Programme is to create the two best performing authorities in the country.
- The Transformation Director highlighted data-splitting issues prior to Vesting Day for the Eclipse system within Adult Social Care, and advised that mitigation is in place with a finalised go-live date in place of 19 March.
- The Corporate Programme contains the highest amount of critical deliverables ahead of Vesting Day, and therefore carries the most risk areas.
- It was noted that the majority of issues are on track for Day One of the new authorities, and noted the aforementioned data-splitting issues that may cause issues of GDPR compliance. The Transformation Director emphasised that mitigation is in place.

Members of the Shadow Authority commented as follows:

- Councillor Danielle Stone noted the volume of work undertaken to this point, but queried whether there may be capacity issues to fully complete the work of the

programme. Councillor Stone also questioned whether there would be a danger of having fragmented data sets rather than an integrated approach.

The Transformation Director responded that:

- An officer has been appointed to focus on IT capacity. The need for stabilisation after 1 April has resulted in key skills being retained, with plans in place to upskill staff and resourcing where necessary.
- The Transformation Director also stressed the importance of an integrated approach to data, and noted that information from the outgoing district and borough councils is being brought together within the unitary authorities to provide services for residents.

The Chief Finance Officer, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the Financial Report and highlighted the salient points:

- Attention was drawn to the variance underspend of £454,000 against the costs associated with the programme to date.
- Primarily as a result of the impact of Covid-19, £1.342million of savings will be delivered in future years, rather than in 2020/21.
- The net impact of the two adjustments highlighted is an adverse variance of £888,000 for the current financial year.
- It was noted that the figures are similar to those within previous reports.

The Chief Executive, Northampton Borough Council, provided an update on Day 1 Readiness:

- Ahead of Vesting Day, there are 61 critical deliverables to be completed, with 162 individual actions. This is on track with the trajectory of the data shown in the report.
- 81 of the 162 actions fall within the Corporate Programme, of which up to 40 are related to branding and will therefore be completed in the final days prior to 1 April.

The Transformation Director advised that the Change Management Plan is now in place to ensure that transformation continues beyond Day 1 of the new authority.

Shadow Executive Committee Members commented as follows:

- Councillor Richard Auger noted that Council staff will be critical to the success of the Programme after Vesting Day.
- In response, the Transformation Director commented that the Programme has aimed to connect with as many staff as possible, and noted some elements of concern as a result of the large-scale changes.
- The Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Council, highlighted the staff briefings that have provided the opportunity for engagement and feedback, and noted that around 1000 staff attended the previous briefing.
- Councillor Auger expressed concern that residents may not be received relevant communications about the new authorities and sought reassurance that the activities of the Transformation Programme are being realised.
- The Assistant Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Council, highlighted the Evaluating Day 1 Campaign along with the information sent to all households, and advised that there had been positive feedback from residents.
- Councillor Lizzy Bowen suggested that feedback and engagement with residents had increased within the previous three weeks.

There were no recommendations associated with this report.

## 7. PROGRAMME CHANGE REQUESTS - NSPORT

The Assistant Director, Corporate & Community Services, NCC, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- This report is intended to provide the granular detail of the NSport programme not included within the initial blueprint.
- It was noted that NCC has delivered the NSport service for many years, but the impact of Covid-19 has resulted in staff remaining as council employees, rather than undergoing a TUPE process to NSport.
- For 12 months, this service will be hosted by North Northamptonshire Council, before a final decision is made regarding disaggregation.
- The decision over statutory requirements for this service is taken by schools, but there is a need to provide the service to those that require it.

Councillor Matt Golby commented that he believes NSport to be an underutilised service and looked forward to the progress that will be made in the next year.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the changes to the Blueprint as outlined at Appendix A.**

## 8. WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PLACE POLICIES

The Transformation Director, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and highlighted that the report contains the main tranche of policies required for the Place service areas to be safe and legal on Day 1.

Councillor Phil Larratt introduced the Waste Management Policy for West Northants and highlighted the salient points:

- This policy has been drafted by officers from across all four sovereign councils, and is such is harmonised, aiming to level-up to the highest standards where possible.
- It was noted that not all aspects of the service have been harmonised due to existing contractual arrangements.
- Some issues, such as charges for Green Waste collection, are under review.
- Councillor Larratt emphasised the plans for a seamless transition after Day 1 to minimise the impact on residents.

Shadow Executive Committee Members commented as follows:

- Councillor Adam Brown suggested that the document is lacking in detail at present and does not clearly define expectations. Councillor Brown drew attention to specific wording, highlighting the use of the phrase “normally” in relation to the removal of fly-tipping, and expressed a desire for Scrutiny committees to oversee the documents and address these inequalities.
- In response, Councillor Larratt agreed that consistent service levels are required but noted the discrepancies between contracts that will require harmonisation, adding that the overall aim is to level-up. Councillor Larratt also highlighted that the fly-tipping of hazardous waste requires specialist attention and therefore adhering to an immovable service-level agreement may place excessive strain on services.

- In response to a question from Councillor Lizzy Bowen, Councillor Larratt confirmed that the opening hours for Sixfields Household Waste Recycling Centre have been extended as reported by local media outlets.

Councillor Richard Auger introduced the Enforcement Policy and noted that the base document is sufficient for safe and legal purposes but expressed a desire to build upon the policy further.

Councillor Lizzy Bowen introduced remaining policies at Appendices C-E and highlighted the salient points:

- The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy and Civil Penalties Policy for the Regulation of Housing Standards is an amalgamation of the policies in place at the sovereign councils to ensure a safe and legal status on Day 1 of the new authority.
- The Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy states that grants and adaptations will be provided by the Council using the money it receives from the Government's Better Care Fund.
- The Housing Allocation Policy shows a variance across the three existing schemes of the district and borough councils. Until the new WNC allocation schemes is prepared and the published the allocation schemes of DDC, NBC and SNC will be treated as if they have been prepared and published by West Northamptonshire Council.
- The only change currently in place is related to homelessness, as detailed in Appendix E.
- This is a mandatory policy and will be in effect from 1 April 2021.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive reviewed and agreed adoption of the policy documents set out in the Appendices to the report.**

## **9. EMERGENCY PLAN/CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN FOR WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

The Assistant Director, Corporate & Community Services, NCC, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- West Northamptonshire Council will be a Category 1 under the Civil Contingencies Act and is therefore required to set out the statutory duties as defined by this act.
- The plan has been created through the Future Northants Programme and emergency planning work stream, utilising the existing emergency plans of the sovereign councils.
- The policy sets out the details regarding the statutory duties on command and control, as well as how the plan is activated.
- It was noted that the emergency planning function will be hosted by North Northamptonshire Council for a period of one year whilst the Covid-19 response is managed, and therefore the importance of ensuring that the plan meets the requirements of WNC was stressed.
- Attention was drawn to some of the risk areas listed in the report, and it was noted that the leadership team are being trained in regards to their gold functions, with assistant directors assigned to the silver rota.

Shadow Executive Committee Members commented as follows:

- Councillor Richard Auger commended the work of the sovereign councils to establish an emergency plan over the previous year in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside other critical incidents such as flooding.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the Emergency Plan/Critical Incident Plan for West Northamptonshire and the officers delegated to declare an emergency/critical incident.**

## **10. BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT POLICY & STRATEGY**

The Assistant Director, Corporate & Community Services, NCC, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- This report, similarly to the previous item, relates to the Council's statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to set out business continuity arrangements.
- The proposed policy meets the industry standards for business continuity.

Councillor Ricard Auger expressed concern that the biggest test for business continuity will be when IT systems fail and questioned the impact of losing network connectivity.

In response, the Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Council, advised that the Eclipse system had been chosen for Adult Social Care because it is cloud-based, which should help to ameliorate the risk of data loss in the event of network problems.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive:**

- a) Approved the West Northamptonshire Council Business Continuity Management Policy and Strategy document as provided in Appendix A; and**
- b) Noted the areas within the policy that require further action and incorporation post Vesting Day.**

## **11. INTER-AUTHORITY ARRANGEMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- This report follows on from the report presented in February 2021 and seeks approval for the detailed framework.
- The report contains a suite of agreements signed off and the delegated powers that will be in operation subject to approval by the Shadow Executive.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive:**

- a) Approved the Inter Authority "Administrative Agreement" attached as Appendix A and delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any necessary amendments, finalise and execute the Agreement prior to 31st March 2021;**

- b) Approved the Governance Arrangements Agreement attached as Appendix B and delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any necessary amendments, finalise and execute the Agreement prior to 31st March 2021;**
- c) Noted the draft Service Schedules attached at Appendix C which will be included within the Inter Authority Agreement and approve the format of the Schedules; and**
- d) Delegated authority to the Chief Executive to finalise Service Schedules which shall be completed before 31st March 2021 Service Schedules.**

### **13. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST BUSINESS PLAN**

The Executive Director of Children's Services, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and advised that the current plan is for a one-year period and has been developed in conjunction with relevant partners, stakeholders and Members. This plan will be developed further into a three-year business plan for consideration later in 2021.

The Chief Executive, Northamptonshire Children's Trust, provided Members with a presentation on the business plan and highlighted the salient points:

- The one-year business plan has been agreed by both Northamptonshire County Council and the Department for Education, with long-term strategy also considered.
- The logo has been designed by young people to ensure meaning and represent the aims and ambitions of the Trust.
- It was advised that the strategic framework contains a commitment that has also been co-produced with children and young people.

Members of the Shadow Authority commented as follows:

- Councillor Danielle Stone expressed concerns over a potentially top-heavy staff structure, as well as concerns over the dangers of losing contact with young people in their transition from Children's to Adult's services.
- In response, the Chief Executive, NCT, advised that leadership of the Trust makes up just under 10% of the total workforce and are all permanent appointments, which accrues a lower cost than interim appointments. The Eclipse system was also noted as a key network feature for hosting data between Adult's and Children's services.
- The Assistant Chief Executive, NCT, confirmed that a framework is in place to address the challenge, seen nationally, of ensuring appropriate housing for care-leavers.
- Councillor Fiona Baker noted that the DfE has considered the business plan as exemplary because the focus remains on children and people. Councillor Baker commented further that Children's Services in Northamptonshire have been ineffective previously and strong senior leadership is required to improve this.

At the Chair's request, the meeting was briefly adjourned at 19:59. The meeting reconvened at 20:10.

- Councillor Anjona Roy stated that the number and duration of unregulated placements may be an issue.

- In response, the Assistant Chief Executive, NCT, advised that any unregulated placements are not routine and advised of a law change in September 2020 rendering such placements illegal.

The Chair, Northamptonshire Children's Trust, thanked Members for their support and confirmed that Members will continue to oversee the work of the Children's Trust moving forward.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Business Plan.**

#### **14. EQUALITIES, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FRAMEWORK**

Councillor Phil Larratt introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- This report represents the outcomes of the Equalities Task & Finish Group, and allows West Northamptonshire Council to fulfil its duties as per the Equality Act 2010.
- The framework includes a commitment to protect nine characteristics under the act, which are listed at page two of the report, with any incomplete data to be filled following the publication of the recent census results.
- Councillor Larratt also highlighted that the discrepancies made between sex and gender within the report, and the accompanying reasons, are listed within the report.

Councillor Anjona Roy suggested that the objectives of the framework may not be measurable within the strategy outlined, and expressed a desire to emphasise young people and the issues related to them.

In response, Councillor Larratt advised that objectives will follow after the full data required has been made available, and confirmed that the category of young people is not an aspect that to be considered as part of the strategy.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive:**

- a) Approved and adopted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Appendix A) for West Northamptonshire Council subject to any amendments requested by the Shadow Executive.**
- b) Approved and adopted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (Appendix B) for West Northamptonshire Council subject to any amendments requested by the Shadow Executive; and**
- c) Delegated authority to the Director of Legal and Democratic to make any amendments requested and any other minor amendments required in consultation with the Chair of the Equalities Task and Finish Group.**



## **15. TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EVENTS AND FESTIVITIES TO NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL**

Councillor Jonathan Nunn introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- This item addresses the anomaly that until recently there has not been a Northampton Town Council, and Northampton residents have paid NBC to deliver the events and festivities listed in the report. It is recommended that Northampton Town Council take on responsibility for these events moving forward.
- The proposal is for WNC to provide a grant to the Town Council to facilitate the provision of these activities. In 2021/22 this grant equates to the current budget for such events, estimated at c.£343,000, which will decrease in subsequent years with the remainder of the funding raised through the Northampton Town Council precept.

Members of the Shadow Executive commented as follows:

- Councillor Richard Auger offered support to the proposals which enhance the role of Town and Parish Councils within the new unitary authority.

The Chair noted that Councillor Jane Birch, Chair of Northampton Town Council, had suggested the taper for funding outlined in the report. The Chair also emphasised that the arrangements are designed to prevent current NBC residents from being charged twice for the £343,000 cost which has been built into the NBC budget that will transfer to WNC on 1 April 2021.

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

### **RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive:**

- a) Approved the transfer of responsibility for the events and festivities set out in the report to Northampton Town Council; and**
- b) Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to finalise the arrangements for the funding transfer and scope covered by this funding.**

## **16. REPORT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST REGARDING NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL'S LOANS TO NORTHAMPTON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB**

The Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- This report was received by NBC in January 2021 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in relation to accounts in the year ending 2016.
- The Monitoring Officer clarified that when a report is received from an auditor during a transitional period, the receiving council must consult the successor council under the transition regulations.
- As the successor council, WNC is responsible for completing the work identified in the draft action plan.
- Subject to consultation, NBC will sign off on the draft action plan at its cabinet meeting on 24 March 2021.

Members of the Shadow Executive commented as follows:

- Councillor Jonathan Nunn emphasised that signification corrections have been put in place to ameliorate historic mistakes.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved that the draft action plan (Appendix C) is developed with more detail such as timings, and then brought back to a future meeting of WNC's Cabinet for final approval.**

## **17. A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

The Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- The draft constitution went through to the Shadow Executive in February 2021 with some incomplete elements, before being considered at the full Shadow Authority meeting later that month when finalised.
- This report is being considered at this meeting as the Scheme of Delegation and Joint Committees article require approval by the Shadow Executive.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive approved the Executive elements of the Constitution relating to the Joint Committees for Shared Services and Children's Trust and the Exceptions to the Scheme of Delegation.**

## **18. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR WENDY RANDALL**

Miranda Wixon, Independent Chair, VCSE Assembly in Northamptonshire, addressed the meeting and made the following points:

- It was suggested that the events of 2020 have changed our relationship with food.
- Following the first lockdown, there were over 100 individual community groups in Northamptonshire working to address food supply issues.
- A network of over 500 volunteers has been developed, which has helped to identify over 2000 people in need of support with food poverty across the County.
- Miranda Wixon warned against relying on short-term solutions designed to deal with a crisis and argued that a united strategy across all councils is required to consider the core reasons behind food poverty.
- Members were urged to not only consider the papers issued by Northampton Borough Council, but to address the needs of residents across West Northants
- In summary, it was suggested than an anti-poverty strategy could help to underpin the UN's sustainable development goal of zero hunger.

The Chair thanked Miranda Wixon and the organisations named for helping with food distribution over the previous year.

Councillor Emma Roberts addressed the meeting and the made the following points:

- It was noted that there are several models of food provision across Northants.
- Councillor Roberts suggested that the pandemic has heightened a food poverty crisis, rather than creating one, as well as highlighting food inequality.

- It was emphasised that the voluntary sector should not be solely responsible to meet demand, and Councillor Roberts noted that the motion being discussed states that West Northamptonshire Council will work to help communities.
- Councillor Roberts also stated that poverty needs to be looked at as a collective issue, which an anti-poverty strategy would help to do.
- Concern was expressed that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme may be insufficient to address the issues that an anti-poverty strategy can.

Shadow Executive Committee Members commented as follows:

- Councillor Lizzy Bowen noted the powerful words expressed on this issue and asked for further data to provide context to the issues highlighted.
- Councillor Richard Auger thanked the voluntary sector for their hard work and stated a desire to establish a group to discuss the issues highlighted, whilst also aiming to avoid duplicating resources by utilising a multi-agency strategy.
- Councillor Jonathan Nunn noted that all speakers have made broadly similar suggestions, and argued that a clearly defined strategy is required, with the motion as referred providing a base to build upon.

The Chair recommended amending the motion, stating a desire to avoid pre-judging the outcome of any working groups tasked with discussing the issues.

Councillor Adam Brown supported the amendment and expressed concern that motions may not be the best way of implementing strategy, arguing that the full scrutiny process should take place before a policy is adopted.

The Chair proposed an amendment to the motion, stating his desire to avoid pre-judging the outcome of any working groups tasked with discussing the issues.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive amended the motion as referred. The motion now to read:**

**The Shadow Executive resolves to develop an anti-poverty strategy that is worked through all service areas. This will include the recommendations from the Food Poverty working group passed at the NBC Cabinet meeting, and others to co-design the strategy with the voluntary mutual aid community and social enterprises.**

## **19. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ANJONA ROY**

Councillor Anjona Roy addressed the meeting and made the following points:

- Speakers on the previous agenda item were thanked for their comments and input, highlighting the work of NBC as a foundation to build upon across West Northamptonshire.
- Members were referred to the NBC full Council meeting, where a presentation highlighted that in some divisions less than 50% of residents entitled to the Government's Healthy Start Scheme have taken up the offer.
- Councillor Roy concluded by thanking the individuals and grass-roots organisations who have endeavoured to help alleviate poverty.

Councillor Emma Roberts made the following points:

- It was emphasised that the contributing factors to poverty need to be addressed.
- Members attention was drawn to the NBC Overview & Scrutiny report on poverty which includes more detailed facts and figures.
- Councillor Roberts suggested that this work needs to be extended across the whole of West Northamptonshire and stressed the importance of council involvement in projects moving forward.

Miranda Wixon, Independent Chair, VCSE Assembly in Northamptonshire, noted the extent of information available and pointed to SNC's strategy as an example, whilst also emphasising the need for transparency in the funding of any future projects.

Councillor Fiona Baker noted that the efforts made during the pandemic are unsustainable and noted the will of Members to address poverty issues, highlighting that NCC was one of the first authorities to continue the free school meal provision during school holidays.

Shadow Executive Committee Members commented as follows:

- Members suggested that the content of the motion amended at Item 18 covers much of the current item.
- Councillor Fiona Baker reiterated the importance of tackling all aspects of poverty and stated that the WNC budget is focussed on supporting families, with the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme a signal of such intent.

The Chair proposed an amendment, to align the terms of this motion with the amended motion at Item 18.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive amended the motion as referred. The motion now to read:**

**The Shadow Executive resolves to ask the anti-Poverty Group to help develop further understanding of the Council's role around food supply, resilience and insecurity.**

## **20. CHILDREN'S TRUST JOINT ARRANGEMENTS**

The Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Council, introduced the report and highlighted the salient points:

- The Department for Education issued a statutory direction to NCC to secure timings for the establishment of a Children's Trust.
- The relationship of WNC and the Children's Trust is set out in a contract, with the DfE setting out the composition of the committees and boards, as well as how oversight of the Children's Trust is managed.
- This oversight is split into three key areas:
  - Performance Management Framework
  - Service Delivery Contract
  - Support Services Agreement
- The contract also sets out the governance arrangements for the Children's Trust, with the Strategic Group the main governance area on which lead Members will sit. Membership of the Strategic and Operational Groups is dictated by the terms of the contract and set out by the DfE.

- This report focusses on the Joint Committee, which will be a Council board and sets out the arrangements and relationships between West Northamptonshire Council, North Northamptonshire Council, and the Children's Trust, in relation only to the Support Services Agreement.
- Member oversight of the Children's Trust is set out in the contract under Democratic meetings, which is described as the Cabinet, Scrutiny and other relevant committees where attendance is agreed.
- It was noted that the two unitary authorities are able to call the Children's Trust to one of the meetings listed up to three times in any one year.

The Monitoring Officer, West Northamptonshire Council, noted that the Children's Trust was set up in the name of Northamptonshire County Council, and therefore as part of the transition, this report sets out the arrangements for establishing two safe and legal successor authorities. The Monitoring Officer also advised that the recommendations do not affect the substantive arrangements put in place in November 2020 in relation to the Children's Trust.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Shadow Executive:**

- a) **Noted the Children's Trust Governance Arrangements which became operational on 1st November 2021;**
- b) **Agreed the structure of the joint arrangements between North and West Northamptonshire including:**
  - **Joint Committee**
  - **Joint Officer Board**
  - **Support Service Agreement and SLAs**
  - **The Interface Agreement**
  - **The other documents necessary to enable the transition to the two new Councils including the Deed of Variation for the existing Service Delivery Contract between the Children's Trust and Northamptonshire County Council; and**
- c) **Delegated to the Director of Children's Services power to finalise the Supports Services Agreement, the Interface Agreement and any other documents necessary to give effect to the Children's Trust Governance arrangements prior to 1st April 2021 and make any necessary minor operational changes to enable the transition to the two Councils of North and West Northamptonshire.**

**URGENT ITEMS:**

There were none.

**EXEMPT ITEMS:**

Appendix C to Item 20 was exempt from publication but this item was resolved without the need for a private session.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 21:32.