



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

## **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Monday 13 December 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present	Councillor Danielle Stone (Chair) Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice-Chair) Councillor Sally Beardsworth Councillor Paul Clark Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere Councillor Mark Hughes Councillor Koulla Jolley Councillor Ian McCord Councillor Ken Pritchard Councillor Azizur Rahman Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz
Apologies for Absence:	Councillor Michael Brown Councillor Maggie Clubley Councillor Rupert Frost Councillor David James Councillor Colin Morgan Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms
Officers	Martin Henry, Executive Director - Finance (Section 151 Officer) Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager Richard Woods, Democratic Services Officer

### **29. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **30. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **31. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair made the following announcements:

1. That, despite the current Covid situation, all meetings of Committees established under the Local Government Act 1972 must continue to be held in-person. Covid

protocols such as masks, ventilation and sanitisation would continue to be followed for all in-person meetings.

2. That the Committee be reminded that it is the responsibility of individual Members to arrange a substitute via their own respective political groups should they be unable to attend a meeting of the Committee.
3. The Chair advised that she had recently attended a conference hosted by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, consisting of a number of workshops to share ideas from across Local Government, along with a presentation on "Scrutiny in Challenging Times" by Lord Kerslake. A summary of this conference had been circulated to Members of the Committee.

32. **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

33. **Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)**

The Committee received a presentation from a representative of the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) covering a range of topics, including the role of local Councils in delivering social value and community level economic outcomes, social value in outsourced contracts and reviewing the performance of contracts and the performance of services.

The Executive Director – Finance advised the Committee that a Social Value Task and Finish Group was to be set up amongst Officers from across the organisation, in order to develop a greater understanding of how Social Value links into contract reviews and reviews of service performance. Members of the Committee recommended that this Task and Finish Group, once set up, receive similar input on Social Value from APSE.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the presentation be noted.
- (2) That both Cabinet and any future Social Value Task and Finish Group be recommended to explore the possibility of receiving input from APSE on maximising Social Value across all of the Council's activities.

34. **Planning for Budget Scrutiny 2021-2022**

The Executive Director – Finance explained to Members that the Draft Budget was scheduled to be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 21 December 2021, and that a further update on the progress of the Draft Budget would be given to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the 12 January 2022 meeting of the Committee.

In response to questions from the Committee as to how to maximise the Committee's scrutiny activity surrounding the Draft Budget, the Deputy Democratic Services Manager advised that, in consultation with the Chair, two further meetings of the Committee be scheduled in late January and early February 2022 in order to consider the Draft Budget, with final dates to be circulated in due course.

Members of the Committee also discussed ways of maximising public participation in the budget-setting process, and agreed that a good way to achieve this was through clarity and transparency and requested that Cabinet, in deliberating the Draft Budget, produce a simple document for public information outlining key statutory expenditures in the budget, along with information on sources of income including council tax, business rates, fees and charges, and grants.

**Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet be requested to produce a fact sheet detailing the Council's incomes including council tax, business rates, fees and charges, and grants alongside expenditure on statutory services it is required to fund.

35. **Review of Committee Work Programme 2021-2022**

In considering the Committee Work Programme, Deputy Democratic Services Manager explained that the commencement of the proposed Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group would be delayed into 2022, as the expenses policy was yet to be finalised.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding a £1.2m contract recently awarded to Northampton Partnership Homes, the Executive Director – Finance advised that, at the request of Members, further information on the matter would be brought back to Committee in due course.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 7:23 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_