



**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 Tuesday 15 March 2022 at 6.00 pm.

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

48. Declarations of Interest

The Chair declared a personal interest as the Chair of Northampton Town of Sanctuary which have previously worked with Jay Baughan and the Changemaker Incubator.

49. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 February 2022 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

50. Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared that at a previous meeting, training for Overview and Scrutiny was requested and this was currently being arranged and would be circulated to all non-Executives when finalised as the draft training programme was being reviewed by the Monitoring Officer. Once confirmed a

date would be set and an email to inform all Overview and Scrutiny councillors would be circulated.

51. **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

52. **Social Values Act 2013**

The Chair introduced the agenda item and explained that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had received a presentation on Social Value at previous meetings from the Director of Corporate, and the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) and introduced Jay Baughan from the University of Northampton who would be delivering a presentation on the Social Values Framework.

At the Chair's invitation, Jay shared that he attended the previous meeting and had since designed a framework to support and fund the voluntary, charity and social enterprise sectors and extract social impact research. He explained that it was a collaborative exercise that included the NHS, Police, and other organisations to secure procurement, which would benefit these underfunded and under resourced charity and funding groups.

Jay Baughan delivered the presentation on Providing a County Framework which Defines, Sustains and Measures Socioeconomic Development within Northamptonshire.

The Chair thanked Jay for his presentation and invited members to ask any questions. Members requested more information on how the initiative would work and how income would be generated. Jay responded that to some extent there was an element of buy-in as there was a business membership fee that was required but money would be split between the four thematic pots and shared amongst the community. In terms of generating income, Jay explained that many businesses had a requirement in their contract to deliver a contribution to social value, and the initiative honed in on this requirement by managing this in the procurement stage of contact agreement and helped to reengineer and channel this money to the right place. Members asked if the Changemaker Incubator had charity status and Jay confirmed that they did obtain charity status.

The Chair emphasised the positives of the social value approach as it created more investment in the community and encouraged businesses to deliver greater social good and the Changemaker Incubator helped drive the alignment of funds to where it was needed in the community.

Members expressed concerns that if businesses were allocating a percentage of profits to the social sector then they may raise prices to customers so residents would be paying more to cover the cost. Members were also concerned that local businesses would miss out if they could not cover the cost of the business membership.

Members asked when the meetings relating to social value would take place and who was invited. Jay responded that meetings would take place at the University of Northampton and there was an open invitation for organisations in the voluntary, charity and social enterprise sector to attend, and the purpose of the meetings was to ensure that suppliers were informed and increase transparency regarding social value spending. Access to the social value framework was available for everyone.

Members felt that the social value concept could be better explained as it is not a new concept, as it reimagines the idea of people coming together to give a little for the greater good.

The Executive Director of Finance asked how the four thematic pots would be funded and how contributors would benefit. Jay responded that each supplier would commit to an amount of money for the lifespan of their contract. The Executive Director asked a supplementary question on how the framework would harvest the money contributed and how they made sure that businesses put in. Jay answered that they allowed businesses to present their case, and they would inform the Council on the amount of money received and commitments would be detailed in their statement of social value.

Jay confirmed that we allow them to present that back to you – amount of money we receive, statement of social value. As for benefits, he shared that this was already a part of their business contract as part of their social value commitment in the procurement process. Businesses would also receive data such as metrics to demonstrate their social value commitment as well as marketing and PR benefits from publicity.

The Chair thanked Jay for attending the meetings and Members for their contributions. The Chair concluded the discussion and informed Members there were no recommendations, and the presentation was for information only.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee received and noted the presentation on Providing a County Framework which Defines, Sustains and Measures Socioeconomic Development within Northamptonshire.**

53. Treasury Management

The Chair explained that a Task and Finish Group that would have the remit of Treasury Management, with a focus on ethical investments efficiencies looking forward would be convened and the inaugural meeting would take place in June 2022.

The Chair asked Members to indicate if they wished to form part of the Task and Finish Group and explained that the scope of the Treasury Management working group would be presented for approval to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that:

- 1) A Task and Finish Group of this Committee is set up to investigate Treasury Management. The Task and Finish Group would be Chaired by Councillor Danielle Stone and Councillors Beardsworth, Holland-Delamere, McCord and Solesbury-Timms would join the Task and Finish Group membership.**
- 2) The Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee would contact all non-Executives inviting those with an interest in the topic to join the Task and Finish Group. Membership of the Task and Finish Group would be limited to two non-Executives**

54. Modernising Systems

The Chair explained that in the work programme there was suggestion for a Scrutiny Inquiry day to investigate systems in place at the council for members to consider their effectiveness and value for money which would look at HR, IT, Legal services, customer services and pay roll.

The Chair opened the discussion and asked Members to consider if they preferred an intensive session or to have a few hours over multiple sessions to investigate modernising systems.

Members discussed and agreed that a two-day exercise would be beneficial, and members could be tasked to review different areas over breakout areas on zoom.

The Chair confirmed that as agreed by Members there would be two evening sessions starting at 5pm, and there would be a lead member for each breakout room over zoom that would summarise the discussion and report back to the main group. The Deputy Democratic Services Manager would contact Members to find out which topics Members would prefer to discuss and then would be assigned to the various breakout rooms.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Members agreed the Modernising Systems sessions would take place over two days starting at 5pm**

55. Review of Committee Work Plan

The Chair introduced the agenda item and asked Members for their suggestions. Members suggested that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the Children's Trust and the budget in line with corporate plan. The Executive Director of Finance shared that quarterly budgets could also be brought to the committee and the budget would be brought to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee much earlier next year, around October. The Chair suggested that a deep dive of contracts by APSE could be recommended to Cabinet for example areas such as Highways or Waste. Members suggested we could look at the current contracts the

predecessor Councils had before the new WNC contracts were signed to give scrutiny on lessons learned for the new procurement process.

The Chair shared that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been requested to provide their scrutiny input on the People Strategy that had been received by Cabinet. The Deputy Democratic Services Manager would circulate this document to members before the meeting in May/June for members feedback before the next committee meeting.

The Chair shared that information regarding Asset Management would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting prior to any Scrutiny activity work being set up and the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group had been delayed and further information would be provided as soon as it was available to be scheduled. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and concluded the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That members noted that the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group had been delayed and will commence in 2022. As soon as further information is available this Task and Finish group can be rescheduled.**

The meeting closed at 7.24 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____