

**Summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the
Cabinet held on Tuesday 21 December 2021**

1. Date of publication of this summary: 21st December 2021
2. Deadline for requests for call-in (detailing reasons for doing so): 28th December 2021
3. Earliest date for implementation of decisions: 29th December 2021
4. Urgent decisions taken and not subject to the call-in procedure: 22nd December 2021

Agenda Item and Recommendations	Decision
<p>Agenda Item 6 Period 7 Revenue Monitoring Report for the Financial Year 2021-22</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>a) Noted the forecast outturn position for 2021-22 and associated risks;</p> <p>b) Noted the deliverability assessment of West Northamptonshire Council savings requirement for 2021-22 and 2022-23 in Appendix B.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: To ensure that the Authority complied with its financial regulations.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7 Capital Monitoring Period 7 2021-22</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>a) Noted the latest capital monitoring position for the GF and HRA</p> <p>b) Noted the new schemes that have been approved since the Q1 Capital Report which was presented to Cabinet in September 2021.</p> <p>c) Noted the virements that have been approved since the last report</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: In order to ensure sound management of the council's finances.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p>

	None
Agenda Item 8 Treasury Management Quarter 2 2021-22	<p>RESOLVED AND REASONS RESOLVED: That Cabinet note the report and the treasury activity for the first half of the 2021-22 financial year and forward it to full council for consideration.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
Agenda Item 9 Draft Budget 2022-23 and Medium Term Financial Plan	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approved for consultation the 2022-23 Draft Budget, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) an estimated net revenue budget of £733.8m (£336.4m excluding Dedicated Schools Grant) as set out in Appendix A. ii) an average Band D Council tax of £1,613.23 for West Northamptonshire Council, which represents an increase of 2.99%. (1.99% increase in 'core' Council Tax and 1% Adult Social Care Precept). iii) proposed Fees and Charges as detailed in Appendix C iv) provisional dedicated schools grant budget of £397.4m as detailed in Appendix D v) the draft Capital Programme additions as set out in Appendix E b) Set the tax base for West Northamptonshire at 139,604 Band D equivalents, as set out in paragraph 6.63 c) For the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Noted the provisional allocations and planned usage of the DSG for 2022-23 pending the final DSG settlement, and ii) Following consultation with the Schools Forum, delegated authority to the Executive Director for Children's Services to determine the DSG 2022-23 schools funding formula, high needs funding

	<p>arrangements and the Early Years Funding Formula in line with Department for Education guidance.</p> <p>d) Endorsed and supported the review of reserves that has taken place as set out in 6.90 to 6.105.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED: To ensure that the Council complied with its Constitution and all other relevant requirements in setting the budget for West Northamptonshire Council.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 10 Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022-23</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet;</p> <p>a) Approved for consultation the draft HRA budget as detailed in appendices 1 and 4 for public consultation.</p> <p>b) Approved for consultation the 4.1% (£3.84) increase in average rents from £93.66 to £97.50 per week in accordance with the government's Rent Standard with effect from the 4th April 2022.</p> <p>c) Approved for consultation the draft HRA Capital Programme and financing, as detailed in appendix 2 and notes the forecast programme from 2023/24 to 2026/27.</p> <p>d) Approved for consultation the 3.1% increase in tenants and leaseholder service charges with effect from the 4th April 2022 as set out in Appendix 3.</p> <p>e) Noted the draft Total Fees proposed for NPH in appendix 4 to deliver the services in scope.</p> <p>f) Note the bid that the Council has made in partnership with NPH for the Wave 1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund for £6.08m and approved delegated authority to the Executive Director of Finance to enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) if successful in the</p>

	<p>bid process.</p> <p>REASONS RESOLVED:</p> <p>The HRA reflected the statutory requirement under Section 74 of the Housing and Local Government Act 1989 to account separately for local housing services. It is a ring-fenced account which records the cost of managing the Council's housing stock.</p> <p>These costs are offset by tenants' rents, tenants/leaseholders' services charges and other contributions. The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced HRA and avoid going into deficit.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Agenda Item 11 Northampton North West Relief Road - progress and funding update</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That the West Northamptonshire Council Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Noted continued progress to deliver the Northampton North West Relief Road; b) Continued to support the capital investment required to complete this scheme as set out in Section 7.1 of this report and required to proceed to construction including forward funding against future S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy payments; c) Agreed that in light of not receiving Levelling Up Funding, under the urgency procedure, to commit £20 million to the project to make up the funding shortfall to enable the scheme to progress to site; <p>URGENCY;</p> <p>Please note that part c) of the resolution constitutes an urgent decision outside the Budget and Policy Framework. The consent of the Chair of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee was sought and obtained in accordance with the requirements of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. It was not practical or safe to convene a quorate meeting of the Council to take this decision in the timeframe. This was because there</p>

was a need to review the business case for the project in the light of the funding decision, which has caused delay. The current procurement price will expire on 8th January 2021 and further delay will lead to increased costs.

REASONS RESOLVED:

- (i) The scheme was identified within the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy as being required to support anticipated additional growth, much of which is already consented requiring the additional highway capacity the scheme provides to mitigate their impacts.
- (ii) Since 2016 the North West Relief Road had been an important planning consideration in the determination of a number of developments including Buckton Fields and the Strategic Urban Extension at Dallington Grange, with some of this development having since commenced. Should the North West Relief Road not proceed then this consented development may either not happen due to viability concerns or could take place without effective mitigation of the traffic impacts. Either scenario would have negative implications for the Authority and the local area.
- (iii) As currently planned, the scheme offers the required traffic benefits to facilitate planned growth in the area. A reduced scheme would not offer the same traffic benefits in terms of reducing congestion and journey times and would result in a delay to delivery which will increase costs and result in the scheme facing an increased funding gap to deliver a project with a less beneficial business case.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS;

Option 1 – Do not proceed with the Scheme

- Not proceeding with the scheme could impact on the viability of existing consented developments resulting in

land not being developed or existing developments not being fully built out.

- Alternatively, if consented developments continued to be built out then the traffic impact of allowing significant development whilst not building the North West Relief Road would be significant.
- The future delivery of the Northampton Northern Orbital (currently proposed route options) would be compromised as these route options would require the North West Relief Road to connect to the highway network at its western end
- £7.93 million of SEMLEP Growth Deal funding would be lost with possible reputational damage to the Authority with funding bodies
- S106 and CIL money had been committed to the project. Depending on how these agreements were written the money may not be able to be spent on other projects and so some or all of this money could be lost to the Authority.
- Existing capital expenditure to date of circa £6.5 million could have to be written off to the revenue account thereby creating a revenue pressure.

Option 2 – Redesign the Scheme to reduce costs

- This would require significant redesign of the proposed scheme along with new traffic modelling to assess the impacts of removing the causeway as the current design would not connect to the Welford Road.
- The redesign would require a new planning application based on the revised layout and modelling which we anticipate will show reduced benefits in terms of capacity and journey time improvements. The outcome of the planning application for a scheme with reduced benefits cannot be guaranteed.
- The redesign and planning processes would delay works on site by at least two years with additional costs of undertaking this extra work as well as

inflationary costs to the construction elements.

- The current land negotiations would be void and the Authority would have to start again with some new landowners at the northern end. A new Compulsory Purchase Order will be necessary following a successful outcome to the revised planning process.
- It is anticipated that the revised modelling would indicate that substantial capacity improvements would be required to the Welford Road, Brampton Lane junction and the existing Causeway due to traffic growth regardless of the new causeway being removed.
- As with Option 1, the £7.93 million Growth Deal funding administered by SEMLEP would be lost.
- Whilst there is a predicted saving of £8.93 million by not constructing the causeway, this saving must be measured against the costs associated with the need to redesign the scheme, go back through the planning process, the improvements expected to be required to the existing Causeway and Brampton Lane / Welford Road junction, the loss of the Growth Deal funding and inflationary increases to construction costs over a minimum two year period of delay. The cost increases would outweigh any potential savings and result in a scheme which it is estimated would cost around £3 million more to deliver overall whilst having a less favourable business case due to reduced benefits. If the reduced scheme was to be delivered, in addition to costing £3 million more, the Authority would lose the current approved £7.93 million of Growth Deal funding meaning the Authority would therefore be required to borrow approximately £11 million more than at present to deliver a scheme which performs less favourably in traffic terms.

Option 3 – Continue with the scheme to proposed design and programme

- Continuing with the scheme in accordance with the current design and programme would require the Authority to meet the funding shortfall by borrowing £20 million.
- This would enable the Authority to retain the SEMLEP Growth Deal funding of £7.93 million and the committed Section 106 and CIL monies.
- The project remains deliverable within the forecast budget cost of £54.533 million.