



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Great Hall, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Thursday 29 September 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Chairman)
Councillor John Shephard (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ann Addison
Councillor Rufia Ashraf
Councillor Jamal Alwahabi
Councillor Azizur Rahman
Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb
Councillor William Barter
Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Councillor Phil Bignell
Councillor Lizzy Bowen
Councillor Rebecca Breese
Councillor Adam Brown
Councillor Michael Brown
Councillor Muna Cali
Councillor Alan Chantler
Councillor Pinder Chauhan
Councillor Nazim Choudary
Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM
Councillor Paul Clark
Councillor Stephen Clarke
Councillor Maggie Clubley
Councillor Fiona Cole
Councillor Raymond Connolly
Councillor Karen Cooper
Councillor Daniel Cribbin
Councillor Julie Davenport
Councillor Paul Dyball
Councillor Gareth Eales
Councillor Penelope Flavell
Councillor Louisa Fowler
Councillor Rupert Frost
Councillor Jo Gilford
Councillor Terry Gilford
Councillor Matt Golby
Councillor Andrew Grant
Councillor Mike Hallam
Councillor Enam Haque
Councillor Cheryl Hawes
Councillor Rosie Herring
Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Councillor James Hill

Councillor Nigel Hinch
Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
Councillor Mark Hughes
Councillor Rosie Humphreys
Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift
Councillor David James
Councillor Koulla Jolley
Councillor Paul Joyce
Councillor Andrew Kilbride
Councillor Anna King
Councillor Jamie Lane
Councillor Phil Larratt
Councillor Daniel Lister
Councillor Malcolm Longley
Councillor Greg Lunn
Councillor Peter Matten
Councillor Ian McCord
Councillor Dennis Meredith
Councillor Colin Morgan
Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Councillor Kevin Parker
Councillor Suresh Patel
Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Bob Purser
Councillor Wendy Randall
Councillor Emma Roberts
Councillor Sam Rumens
Councillor Cathrine Russell
Councillor Lisa Samiotis
Councillor Brian Sargeant
Councillor David Smith
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms
Councillor Laura Stevenson
Councillor Danielle Stone
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex
Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz
Councillor Mike Warren

Apologies
for
Absence:

Councillor Fiona Baker
Councillor Dermot Bambridge
Councillor Harry Barrett
Councillor Janice Duffy
Councillor Terrie Eales
Councillor Alison Eastwood
Councillor Lauryn Harrington-Carter
Councillor Jonathan Harris
Councillor Charles Manners
Councillor Charles Morton
Councillor Jake Roberts
Councillor Sue Sharps

Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Winston Strachan

49. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Baker, Bambridge, Barrett, Duffy, T Eales, Eastwood, Harrington-Carter, Harris, Manners, Morton, J Roberts, Sharps, and Z Smith.

50. **Declarations of Interest**

None advised.

51. **Minutes of Council**

Councillor Stone noted that due to Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules, motions were withdrawn at the last meeting. She believed that there was a democratic deficit due to insufficient time to cover all the agenda items and suggested that more Council meetings may be needed to comfortably cover all of the Council's business.

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th June 2022 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

52. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman announced the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and noted the proclamation services that had taken place for her successor, King Charles III. The Chairman thanked WNC staff, the emergency services and voluntary organisations that were involved in the services and events that took place following the Queen's death.

The Chairman announced the sad passing of several former members of the predecessor authorities.

Former Northamptonshire County Councillor and Kettering Borough Councillor Mick Scrimshaw passed away on 27 July following a long illness. Mick was elected to Northamptonshire County Council in 2013 and served until 2021. He was the opposition spokesperson for finance and served as Chair of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Former Northamptonshire County Councillor Mark Bullock passed away on 30 June. Mark was elected to Northamptonshire County Council in 1997 and represented the Daventry West division, before representing Corby Central from 2001 to 2013. He served as Chair and Deputy Chair of various overview and scrutiny committees during his time as a councillor.

Former Northamptonshire County Councillor Ron Sawbridge also passed away recently. Ron was elected to the County Council in 2001 and served until 2013. He

undertook a range of roles, including Chairing the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for four years. He served as Chairman of the Council in 2011-12. He and his wife were well known as long-term foster carers and cared for many children.

Members offered their condolences to the families of former councillors and the Chairman led Council in a minute's applause in honour of former Councillors Scrimshaw, Bullock, and Sawbridge.

53. Public Participation

(1) The Chairman advised of 2 requests to submit a petition.

Eamonn Fitzpatrick presented a petition relating to the proposed redevelopment of Northampton Market Square.

Councillor Lister, as the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Town Centre Regeneration and Growth, stated that town centre footfall had decreased and would continue to do so unless the Market Square was regenerated. He advised that the project would benefit all local businesses, residents, and customers.

Lynne Micallef presented a petition relating to the use of glyphosate weed killer by the Council.

Nick Mole addressed Council in relation to the petition presented by Ms Micallef.

Councillor Larratt, as the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste, thanked Ms Micallef and Mr Mole for their contributions and advised that he would issue a response in due course.

(2) The Chairman advised of 5 requests to make statements.

Alexina Cassidy, of Climate Action West Northamptonshire, addressed Council in relation to item 8. She urged the Council to take priority actions to reduce living costs and energy usage, including increased support for residents; retro fitting solar panels and loft insulation, etc., further investment for low cost and low carbon transport, and promotion of food growing and production initiatives. She urged the Council to support the Electricity Bill and amendments to the Energy Bill that was currently passing through the House of Lords.

Blessing Idris addressed Council in relation to item 7 (j) and spoke about her experience at the L2L youth club's summer programme. She praised the club for helping young people to be more confident, to improve their English and help to overcome their trauma.

Maryam Al Rufaye addressed Council in relation to item 7 (j) and spoke about her experience working during the L2L summer programme during which she help teach young people English, as well as helping young people to develop other skills and settle into their new lives.

Setara Haidari addressed Council in relation to item 7 (j) and spoke about her experience at the L2L youth club's summer programme. She explained that transport was provided for all young people each day and highlighted the activities and workshops that were organised during the programme. Ms Haidari expressed her thanks for the opportunities and the support that the programme had provided.

Jayne West addressed Council in relation to item 6 and highlighted the issues that central Northampton faced with waste and flytipping. She said it was affecting economic development and the wellbeing of local residents. The behaviours of flytippers, as well as some landlords and shopkeepers were unacceptable. Ms West believed that there was a cultural problem at the front face of service and that it needed fresh eyes and a zero-tolerance approach.

54. **Priority Opposition Motion**

Councillor Purser proposed and Councillor Randall seconded:

"The level of street rubbish, fly tipping, overflowing waste bins, and bags of refuse waiting to be collected on the streets of Northampton, for example the Wellingborough Road, is shocking and out of control, as is fly tipping in rural areas, bringing West Northamptonshire into disrepute.

We recognise the efforts of staff to collect rubbish and keep our streets clean, the work of neighbourhood wardens and the efforts of many voluntary groups including the Litter Wombles and local Councillors.

The causes of this are multiple. Nonetheless the current situation is unacceptable, and solutions are urgently needed.

We call on West Northamptonshire Council as a contribution to its aim to be 'clean and green' to support all who want a clean and tidy town and convene a summit of all interested and concerned parties including the Town and Parish Councils to

- Identify the location of rubbish, fly tipping, overflowing waste bins, and bags of refuse and causes of fly-tipping and Identify litter hotspots
- Develop an education plan for the public especially for areas of high-density housing
- Enforce schedule four of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 where it is active in the footprint of the former Northampton Borough Council and address the ability to widen its coverage to include the whole of West Northants, enabling the Council to seize and remove abandoned trolleys and then charge the owners for their return.
- Promote the use of cameras and legal and other action enforcement action available to tackle it.
- Review the Council's bulk waste and enforcement of fly tipping regulations in both urban and rural settings
- Improve integration of Council services with that of contractors
- Review the collection of commercial and domestic rubbish e.g. shops and flats putting out bags on the streets, progress in the introduction of recycling bins.
- Review street cleaning services and its schedule of priority areas.

And to draw up an integrated action plan to clean up West Northamptonshire.”

Councillor Larratt responded and noted that the Council recognised the problem and that it was taking action; 123 FPNs had been issued in 2022 and 31 active prosecutions were ongoing. Talks were also underway with CCTV providers. He thanked the Neighbourhood Wardens for their work in reporting instances of fly-tipping and encouraged members of the public to do so.

Councillor Randall stated that the Council's approach was not working; a summit was needed to get on top of the issue.

Upon requisition of a vote, the motion fell.

55. **Cabinet Reports and Record of Decisions Taken by the Cabinet**

Cabinet Members each highlighted the salient points of their reports. Members made comments and asked questions and the following points were raised:

- Nobody could have predicted the cost-of-living crisis; the Council was fortunate to have a contingency, and it was noted that at the time of the budget, opposition Members commented that it was not needed.
- New schools were being built to accommodate the increasing number of children in West Northamptonshire.
- Progress was being made with the Children's Trust and the Council was awaiting the Ofsted report.
- Civic events (including the proclamation of King Charles III) were open to all WNC Members.
- There was currently no completion date for the Dallington social housing project.
- The Billing Road cycle scheme was off the agenda; alternative schemes were being looked into.
- The Flood Team was undergoing recruitment.
- There was a new Highways Team, although it was currently experiencing staffing pressures.
- Work on the Waste Strategy would commence before the end of the year.
- It was suggested that a new bus operator in the town was needed.

RESOLVED:

Council noted the Cabinet Member Reports and the decision records from 12th July 2022 and 13th September 2022.

56. **Cost of Living increase: How West Northamptonshire Council is supporting residents**

Councillor Hallam presented and proposed the report which provided Council with an overview of the national drivers and impact of the cost-of-living

increases experienced across Europe and the UK on residents of West Northamptonshire, and the actions taken by the Council to support the most vulnerable residents as well as opportunities for future actions.

Councillor Golby seconded the report.

Members made comments as follows:

- It was felt by some Members that it was unnecessary for people to queue at a post office; it would be simpler for money to be deposited into bank accounts.
- Members questioned whether the Council would be matching the increased living wage.
- it was suggested WNC follow the example of other LAs and provide services, like free bus passes, to key workers.
- Members questioned how results from the council's actions would be monitored.
- Members welcomed the report and looked forward to seeing positive results.
- The government stipulated how funds were allocated, direct payments to bank accounts were not permitted.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- (a) Noted the contents of the report
- (b) Tasked the all-party Anti-Poverty Working Group to oversee the actions planned for the next year and support the development of other interventions that responded to local need.

57. Annual Report from the Pensions Committee

Councillor Meredith declared an interest in the item as an NCC pension holder.

Councillor Longley presented and proposed the report which sought to report on the work of the Pension Fund Committee over the previous year.

Councillor Bignell seconded the report.

Councillors made comments as follows:

- It was hoped that staff pensions remained in safe hands.
- It was noted that the report would be seen by the Audit Committee following the Pension Board.

RESOLVED:

Council noted the contents of the report.

58. Annual Report from the Local Pension Board

Councillor Longley presented and proposed the report which report provided a summary of the work of the Board over the past year. Council was asked to note the Annual Report and raise any comments accordingly. The report had been published on the Council's website and the Pension Fund website.

Councillor Pritchard seconded the report.

Councillors made comments as follows:

- The Local Pension Board was a "critical friend" and would deal with any matters of consequence as they arose.

RESOLVED:

Council noted the contents of the report.

59. Updates to the Constitution

Councillor Grant presented and proposed the report which sought to provide an update on behalf of the Democracy & Standards Committee on a number of minor updates to the Constitution made by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority, including to propose revised arrangements for Priority Opposition Motions set out at Paragraph 26 of the Council Procedure Rules.

Councillor Irving-Swift seconded the report.

Councillors made comments as follows:

- Democratic features were being removed from the Constitution and it was suggested that the change to Opposition Group Business should be voted against.
- There should be more time to debate motions.
- There was little value in Opposition Group Business since there was no debate permitted.
- Motions should be at the start of the agenda.
- The Constitution was a living document and would come back for review in due course.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Noted and approved the updates to the Constitution as set out in Section 5;
- b) Approved the revised arrangements for Priority Opposition Motions, also set out in Section 5;
- c) Delegated to the Monitoring Officer the power to make these amendments and any consequential amendments that may be necessary; and
- d) Noted that these changes would come into effect following the conclusion of the meeting at which they were agreed.

60. Annual Reports from Overview and Scrutiny

Councillor Hallam presented and proposed the report presented to Council the Annual Reports of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Corporate, People and Place) for 2021/2022. The report noted the work undertaken by the Committees over their first year.

Councillor Herring seconded the report.

Councillors made comments as follows:

- Opposition Councillors should be Overview and Scrutiny Chairs.
- There needed to be a bigger focus on pre-decision scrutiny.
- It was noted that the Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee was an opposition Councillor.

RESOLVED:

Council noted the Annual Reports 2021/2022 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees – Corporate, People and Place.

61. **Proposal to establish a new 250 place, ‘all-through’ Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) School for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) at Tiffield St John’s site, Tiffield**

Councillor Fowler presented and proposed the report which set out the Council’s procurement process for selecting an academy trust to run the new SEND school and the estimated capital costs for procuring and funding the building works. The report followed the Cabinet report of 13th September 2022, which highlighted the current and predicted demand for SEND places across West Northants in the coming academic years. Cabinet approved progressing the new special school under the free schools presumption

Process with a planned opening date of September 2024. The school would cater for pupils on the autistic spectrum continuum (ASC), with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and with severe learning difficulties (SLD).

Councillor A Brown seconded the report.

Councillors made comments as follows:

- Members asked whether the new school would cater to non-cognitive impaired children.
- Members thanked all those who were involved in the project; West Northamptonshire’s most vulnerable children would benefit immensely, and Members felt reassured that any issues would be resolved.
- The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education was aware that this was “job started” and not “job done”.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Noted that the selection process for the new school involved the Council putting forward a recommendation to the DfE for the preferred trust, following a rigorous selection process.
- b) Noted the linked paper considered by Cabinet on 13th September 2022, 'St John Tiffield property arrangements' on the use of the St John's Tiffield Site, St. John's Road, Tiffield, NN12 8AA for the new school.
- c) Agreed in principle borrowing of approximately £10,000,000 would be required to make up the shortfall for the cost of building the new school, which was expected to be £23m, with delegated authority to the s151 officer to amend the capital programme once full feasibility works are completed.
- d) Noted that the remaining cost of the build would be met through capital grant funding received by the Council.

62. Exclusion of Press and Public

Due to the sensitive nature of the following item, Council moved to private session and the Chairman made the following announcement:

"That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information."

63. Death management and related services

This item was considered during private session.

64. Motions

At 21:45 the Chairman drew Council's attention to Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules:

10 Extension of the meeting

- 10.1 *If the business of a Council meeting has not been concluded by 9.45 pm, the Chair will draw the attention of the meeting to the time and to this Rule.*
- 10.2 *In the case of any motions or recommendations on the agenda that have not been dealt with by 9.45 pm the Chair will decide whether to end the meeting or to deal with the outstanding matters provided that those matters can reasonably be dealt with by 10.00pm.*
- 10.3 *Where the outstanding matters cannot be dealt with by that time each item will be put to the vote without further debate and a vote will be taken on whether the item should be accepted, rejected, referred, deferred or withdrawn.*

Motion 1

Councillor Beardsworth requested that Motion 1 be withdrawn.

The Chairman accepted the request, and the motion was withdrawn.

Motion 2

Upon a vote, the motion fell.

65. **Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman)**

None advised.

The meeting closed at Time Not Specified

Chair: _____

Date: _____