



Democratic Services  
County Hall  
Northampton  
NN1 1DN

## CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2017 at 2:00pm

Venue: The Blue Room, County Hall, Northampton (Meeting held in public)

### PRESENT (FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING):

#### Cabinet Member

Councillor Heather Smith	Leader of the Council
Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage	Deputy Leader & Public Protection
Councillor Robin Brown	Finance
Councillor Matthew Golby	Children's Services
Councillor Sylvia Hughes	Public Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Ian Morris	Transport, Highways & Environment
Councillor Bill Parker	Adult Care Delivery

#### Portfolio

### OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT (FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING):

Councillor Sally Beardsworth	Councillor Julie Brookfield
Councillor Mary Butcher	Councillor Eileen Hales
Councillor Dudley Hughes	Councillor Graham Lawman
Councillor Chris Lofts	Councillor Malcolm Longley
Councillor Bob Scott	Councillor Mick Scrimshaw
Councillor Danielle Stone	Councillor Allen Walker

### ALSO PRESENT (FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING):

Officer	Role
Dr Paul Blantern	Chief Executive
Tony Ciaburro	Corporate Director for Place Commissioning
Barbel Gale	Democracy Officer (Minutes)
Laurie Gould	Monitoring Officer
Lesley Hagger	Director of Children, Families and Education
Paul Hanson	Democratic Services Manager
Dr Carolyn Kus	Director of Adult Social Services & Managing Director of Olympos Care Services Ltd
Damon Lawrenson	NCC Director of Finance

There were 4 members of the press and public in attendance.

#### 01/17 Apologies for non attendance

Apologies were received from Councillor Suresh Patel, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Corporate Parenting.

## 02/17 Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting

There were none.

## 03/17 Minutes of the meeting held in public on 13 December 2016

**RESOLVED: The minutes of meeting held in public on 13 December 2016 was agreed and signed as a true record.**

## 04/17 Declarations of Interest by Councillors

Item	Councillor	Type	Nature
7	Gonzalez de Savage	Discloseable non-pecuniary interest.	School Governor at Simon De Senlis Primary School
12	Parker	Discloseable non-pecuniary interest.	A local Councillors in that area.

## 05/17 Announcements

The Chairman explained that following discussions at last months Cabinet meeting regarding Shaw day care centres, Shaw had ensured that the centres would have the required amount of staff available who were trained appropriately.

## 06/17 Monthly Financial Report as at the end of October for the financial year ending 31 March 2017 including review of Budget Delivery Proposals

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, Councillor Brown, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and made the following points:

- There had been a reduction in the current pressure which was now shown at £9.9m;
- The Council would live within its means and use any measures necessary to ensure that services were available and the most vulnerable had access;
- Corporate Services were reporting an underspend of £23m; and
- He was happy to approve the release of the balances as detailed in section 6.3 of the main report.

Councillors made the following points:

- It was felt that the content of the report was very similar to previous months where overspends were listed and reserves were used to address the balance;
- There was concern that the overspend in Children, Families and Education and Adult Social Care had increased again this month;
- The 2017/18 draft budget had a structural deficit proposal listed in Adult Social Care therefore it was queried if there was flexibility in this years budget to address the demand;
- It was proposed to write off an aspect of aged debt because there was not enforcement document available therefore it was queried if there was a system in place to ensure that it didn't happen again;

- It was noted that more children were coming into care and that there were certain times of the year when families were in crisis and it was queried if the Council tried to manage that spike in demand;
- It was felt that with good preventative services the amount of funding required for children coming into care would reduce;
- Further information on how the Council was predicting future demand and if the new living trends were being taking into account in Children, Families and Education was sought; and
- It was noted in the report that the area of savings targeted around brokerage and direct payments was high risk because the team had only just been formed and it was queried how it would affect service.

The Chairman explained that as the county grew then pressure on services would increase.

Councillor Parker explained that the Debt Review Board reviewed all debt including the aged debt and direct debit payments were introduced to stop debt occurring and there was not always the historic information available to push recovery of the debt however he was confident that the situation would improve.

Councillor Golby promoted the scrutiny workshop session being arranged on 26 January 2017 to discuss the Children's Trust.

Councillor Brown explained that the Council was always open about how it's finances were managed and it developed plans and used every available opportunity throughout the year to achieve the budget.

The Chief Executive explained that a brokerage team had been put in place in Adult Social Care to ensure that clients were placed in the right area with the right packages tailored to their needs.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- I. **Noted the Council's financial position.**
- II. **Approved drawdown of earmarked reserves – see section 7.1.3.**
- III. **Approved write off of debts – See section 6.3.**

07/17 Monthly Capital Report (MCR) as at the end of October 2016 (Period 7) for the financial year ending 31 March 2017

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, Councillor Brown, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and made the following points:

- There had been a £10m movement during the month which due to slippage and movement on the schemes;
- The following scheme report changes:
  - A45 Daventry Development Link road, there had been a delay to the scheme starting therefore £9m expenditure had been re-profiled to the 2017/18 budget;
  - The A431b Northampton to Kettering, there had been a delay to the scheme with expenditure being re-profiled into the 2017/18 budget;
  - The Tresham College Local Growth Fund Scheme has not been activated during the year;

- The Overstone Primary School extension works have been delayed; and
- He was comfortable with the decrease in forecast and understood that it wouldn't impact services.

Councillors made the following points:

- It was understood that the Superfast Broadband scheme was being funded by grant money however it was noted that the report proposed £2m of innovative capital funding being invested in the project; and
- The report noted that capital receipts being used for transformation however it was felt that caution should be applied to how that funding was used.

Councillor Morris explained that the Council had invested in the Superfast Broadband however funding was sought from all areas.

Councillor Brown offered his support to the use of in year capital receipts to smooth the transformation path and he was comfortable with the strategy adopted and the right outcome would be achieved.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

1. **Noted the current capital forecast expenditure outturn of £166m for the financial year 2016-17.**
2. **Approved capital investment totalling £1,741,391 to promote three schemes included in the Capital Strategy 2016-17:**
  - i. **Lyttleton Road Assistive Technology Bid £30,447**
  - ii. **Simon De Senlis extension £306,944**
  - iii. **E-Marketplace Portal ASC (Brolly) £1,404,000**
3. **Approved further extension to a scheme already within the current Capital Programme totalling £133,804:**
  - i. **Superfast Broadband Additional grant income £133,804****(Further detail on all of the above schemes can be found in section 9)**

08/17 NCC Schools PFI Project – Authorisation of variations to the schools PFI contract for the purpose of delivering savings

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children's Services, Councillor Golby, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and explained that the School's PFI contract had been reviewed and negotiations had brought forward savings through variations.

Councillors made the following points:

- It was queried if the variations included the ability for community bodies to use the additional rooms for community use;
- Concern was raised regarding the transfer of increased risk to the Council from the PFI contractor;
- It was noted that where the Council had proposed responsibility for delivery of services there may be some revenue costs which were currently assumed in the net savings value and it was queried what those costs would be and how they would be funded going forward;
- The revision of the PFI contract was welcomed and it was clear what was going to be saved however it wasn't clear what would be gained through this revision;

- More information on the revenue costs was sought; and
- It was felt that the allocations of hours for use before and after school hours for community use was never fully utilised and it was queried what was happening to those hours and how encouragement could be given to ensure they were used.

Councillor Brown noted that there were often opportunities to improve the level of services however the PFI contracts were not flexible. The report demonstrated an opportunity and he was confident that the proposal needed to be carried out.

Councillor Golby explained that he could arrange for a technical session on the changes to the PFI contract to be discussed at a scrutiny meeting.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Gave approval to enter into three separate variations to the PFI contract for the purpose of delivering savings to the Council's budgets (as detailed in paragraph 3.7).**
- 2. Authorised delegated Authority to the Corporate Director for Place Commissioning to sign the documents as required to enter into variations for the delivery of savings, and to enter into any other variation of the contract that has been approved by the parties to the contract to achieve the same purpose.**
- 3. Authorised delegated authority to make decisions to approve future variations of the same contract and that such delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director for Place Commissioning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.**
- 4. Authorised the signing of any necessary certificates under the local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 in relation to any of the documents required to facilitate the PFI contract variations, again to achieve the savings set out in this report.**

09/17 Expansion to All Saints CEVA Primary School

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children's Services, Councillor Golby, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and made the following points:

- He explained that the report proposed a change from 30 to 60 pupils in each year group to provide 210 new primary places;
- The changes would commence from September 2018;
- The proposals were helping to meeting the challenges of school places within the Council; and
- The proposal was funding through the Basic Needs Grant.

The Chairman paid tribute to the Strategic Planning team for their work in addressing the demand for school places within the county.

Councillors made the following points:

- It was queried how many of the Cabinet Members knew the geography of the proposal; and
- It was queried why a new school had not been proposed given that it was about a 2 mile walk between the 2 proposed sites.

The Chairman explained that all Cabinet Members had read the consultation responses regarding the proposal.

Councillor Golby explained that both sites would include full sets of year groups and the proposal was included in the school place planning strategy which had previously been agreed.

The Chief Executive explained that a lot of the proposals for school places were dictated by the types of funding available to create them and it was quite complex to manage.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Approved the increased admission number at All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School from 30 to 60 per year group to provide 210 new primary places following a statutory period of representation, conducted between 10th November and 8th December 2016.**
- 2. Noted the increase in pupil places will now take place from September 2018, not September 2017 as previously planned;**
- 3. Approved the financial and governance arrangements associated with the capital scheme;**
- 4. Noted that a capital scheme will be required to provide the necessary accommodation associated with this expansion of pupil numbers and that this will be delivered via a new build annex on a site being acquired on Croyland Road;**
- 5. Subject to the governance processes of the Capital Programme Board, authorised the final scheme to proceed to the construction phase within available and agreed financial resources; and**
- 6. Delegated authority to the Corporate Director Place Commissioning in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders to approve, accept, award and appoint the preferred bidder and to execute or authorise the execution of all the necessary documentation to facilitate the capital scheme.**

10/17 West Midlands Rail Ltd – Collaboration Agreement

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & Environment, Councillor Morris, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and explained the new Secretary of State for Transport had reworded the previous agreement therefore there was a need to note the change of position regarding rail devolution.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Noted the change of position with regards to rail devolution being adopted by the new Secretary of State for Transport;**
- 2. Agreed that the Council continues to support the signing of the revised Collaboration Agreement (included with this report as appendix 1).**

11/17 Changes to Arrangements for the Appointment of External Auditors

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, Councillor Brown, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and explained that there had been a change to the appointment process

for External Auditors due to the closure of the Audit Commission. The proposal would also be submitted to Full Council for ratification that the Council used a subsidiary of the Local Government Association to choose the External Auditors.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Endorsed for Full Council approval the decision to opt-in to the sector led body (Public Sector Audit Appointments) for the national procurement of external auditors and ultimately the Council's external auditors from 2018/19; and**
- 2. Officers write to the PSAA and request to meet with the Chief Officer at PSAA to seek assurance that a single auditor be appointed for the LGSS Partners setting out the clear rationale in terms of the efficiency and value for money that this would achieve.**

12/17 Surplus land and property holdings are to be declared surplus and sold, subject to terms to be agreed; with delegation given to Corporate Director for Place Commissioning, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Finance, to settle terms.

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, Councillor Brown, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and explained that the Council was required to maximise and manage its estates. The negotiations regarding the Maplefields site had been extensive and the decision to impose an obligation to allow for the community facilities would have the effect of the Council taking less than best consideration for the site as a whole due to the benefits to the community.

Councillor Hughes, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health and Wellbeing explained that it was a good opportunity to remind people of the vision in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy with a greater emphasis on prevention and promoting independence for adults and many aspects of that would be brought together in the proposals for the Maplefields site.

Councillors made the following points:

- There was a great need for the infrastructure to be in place before the Buckton Fields site was developed further;
- Disappointment was expressed at the decision being taken;
- The proposal would make a huge difference to Kingsthorpe, in particular regarding the infrastructure and air quality;
- There was no financial reward for Northampton from this proposal;
- There would be gridlock in Kingsthorpe from the additional traffic;
- It was queried what would happen to Smith's Farm Shop as a result of the proposals;
- It was queried why the remaining holding at Lower Lodge Farm, Pytchley has been declare surplus to requirements in 2014 when it would land lock the remainder of the site; and
- The use of the Maplefields and Pytchley/Wicksteed sites for the community was welcomed.

Cabinet Members made the following points in response:

- The council was aware of the air quality in the county and Kingsthorpe was not the only area of the county affected by poor air quality;

- The whole county could benefit from this proposal given the vast developer contributions available for infrastructure;
- The County Council needed to fund infrastructure in the county and did work with all district and borough council to leverage as much funding as possible; and
- The proposals protected Smiths Farm Shop and ensured that it could remain on the site.

Councillor Brown explained that the proposal regarding the land at Pytchley/Wicksteed would remove the cost currently associated with that land. All of the Council's assets were being looked at differently and he was confident that the Council could leverage a better return on those assets the previously.

**RESOLVED: That Cabinet authorised the following:-**

- 1. To confirm as surplus to Council requirements:**
  - **West View Farm and associated land forming the Western part of the development site known as Buckton Fields**
  - **Maplefields (Orchard) – A disposal subject to limited private treaty and (in part) at less than best consideration, to provide community facilities**
  - **Land at Pytchley adj A14 Junction 9 – A Disposal to Wicksteed Trust for a nominal consideration.**
- 2. That the Corporate Director for Place Commissioning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance was given delegated authority to agree a disposal of each of the three properties on terms to be agreed. Noting that where best consideration is not obtained (in respect of Maplefields and Pytchley) this is agreed by Cabinet to be appropriate, in order to further social wellbeing in the County.**

The Chairman advised that the next meeting of the Cabinet was scheduled for Tuesday 14 February 2017.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2.50PM

Barbel Gale  
Democratic Services

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_