

South Northamptonshire Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, Northants NN12 6AD on Wednesday 26 February 2020 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Rosie Herring (Chairman)
 Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ann Addison
Councillor Mark Allen
Councillor Robert G. Atkinson
Councillor Fiona Baker
Councillor Dermot Bambridge
Councillor Sandra Barnes MBE
Councillor Phil Bignell
Councillor Caryl Billingham MBE
Councillor John Budden
Councillor Roger Clarke
Councillor Stephen Clarke
Councillor Karen Cooper
Councillor Richard Dallyn
Councillor Hywel Davies
Councillor Peter Davies
Councillor Valerie Furniss
Councillor Andrew Grant
Councillor David Harries BEM
Councillor Steven Hollowell
Councillor Charles Manners
Councillor Ian McCord
Councillor Alice Kim Ord
Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Peter Rawlinson
Councillor Catharine Tarbun
Councillor Allen Walker
Councillor Elaine Wiltshire
Councillor Paul Wiltshire

Apologies Councillor Rebecca Breese
for Councillor Carole Clarke
Absence: Councillor Gregor Hopkins
 Councillor Martin Johns
 Councillor Dennis Loveland
 Councillor Abigail Medina
 Councillor Adil Sadygov
 Councillor Lisa Samiotis
 Councillor Mary-Anne Sergison-Brooke
 Councillor Sandi Smallman
 Councillor John Townsend

Officers: Richard Ellis, Chief Executive
Jane Carr, Executive Director: Operations
Martin Henry, Executive Director: Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Andrew Hunkin, Executive Director: Resources (Monitoring Officer)
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

75 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

76 **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 16 December 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

77 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

General Housekeeping

The Chairman reminded attendees that members of the public were permitted to film, broadcast and report on the meeting, subject to the efficient running of the meeting not being affected.

There were no planned fire drills so if the alarm did sound, meeting attendees should follow the evacuation instructions given by officers.

All meeting attendees were requested to switch mobile phones to silent.

Chairman's Engagements

A copy of the events the Chairman had attended had been published as a supplement to the agenda.

Post

The Chairman reminded Members to collect any post from their pigeon holes.

78 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

79 **Written Questions**

There were no written questions.

80 **Motions**

There were no motions.

81 **Announcements by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive**

There were no announcements by the Leader or the Chief Executive.

82 **Questions to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive**

There having been no announcements by the Leader or the Chief Executive, there were no questions.

83 **Corporate Plan 2020-21, Budget and Medium Term Financial Position**

Prior to consideration of the item, the Chairman sought the agreement of Members to suspend standing orders with regard to the duration of the speech by the proposer of the budget, or the speeches of the group spokesperson and group Leaders. Members indicated agreement.

The Chairman reminded Council that it was required in legislation that any motion or amendment to the budget or council tax setting reports be taken by recorded vote and this would be done at the appropriate time.

The Executive Director Finance (S151 Officer) submitted a report which presented the Corporate Plan 2020-21, the proposed budget 2020/21 and the Council's Summary Medium Term Financial Position as an integrated report which demonstrated the Council's strategic approach to aligning its resource to the delivery of the Council's Priorities.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Councillor Rawlinson, explained that the Council was required to produce a balanced budget for 2020/21 as the basis for calculating its level of Council Tax. Councillor Rawlinson gave a detailed presentation outlining the Corporate Plan, budget and medium term revenue position.

Councillor Rawlinson thanked the Executive Director Finance (S151 Officer) and the finance team who had worked hard on the budget setting process and submitted a balanced budget to Council. Councillor Rawlinson also thanked the Budget and Financial Strategy Committee and the Scrutiny Committee for their hard work supporting the budget setting and business plan process.

Having presented the report, Councillor Rawlinson proposed the Corporate Plan 2020-21, the budget 2020/21 and the Council's Summary Medium Term Financial Position. Councillor McCord seconded the proposal.

Councillor Lofts, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group, addressed Council in response to the budget and confirmed that he would be proposing no amendments.

Councillor Billingham, on behalf of the Independent Group, addressed Council in response to the budget. Councillor Billingham congratulated all involved in drafting the Corporate Plan, confirmed that she would be supporting the budget and proposing no amendments.

On behalf of Cabinet and all councillors, Councillor McCord, Leader of the Council, thanked all in charge of financial management at the council. Councillor McCord also extended thanks to the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, the Budget and Financial Strategy Committee and the Scrutiny Committee.

A recorded vote was taken, and members voted as follows:

Councillor Addison	For
Councillor Allen	For
Councillor Atkinson	For
Councillor Bagot-Webb	For
Councillor Baker	For
Councillor Bambridge	For
Councillor Barnes	For
Councillor Bignell	For
Councillor Billingham	For
Councillor Budden	For
Councillor Roger Clarke	For
Councillor Stephen Clarke	For
Councillor Cooper	For
Councillor Dallyn	For
Councillor Hywel Davies	For
Councillor Peter Davies	For
Councillor Furniss	For
Councillor Grant	For
Councillor Harries	For
Councillor Herring	For
Councillor Hollowell	For
Councillor Lofts	For
Councillor Manners	For
Councillor McCord	For
Councillor Ord	For
Councillor Pritchard	For
Councillor Rawlinson	For
Councillor Tarbun	For
Councillor Walker	For
Councillor Elaine Wiltshire	For
Councillor Paul Wiltshire	For

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Corporate Plan (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, the Rick Register (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That, having given due consideration, an increase in the level of Council Tax for South Northamptonshire Council of £5.00, or 2.6%, for a Band D property in the District for this Council's services increasing the Band D Council tax to £196.33 be approved.
- (4) That the comments from the Scrutiny Committee when it considered the investment growth items at its meeting held on 15 January 2020 be noted.
- (5) That, having given due consideration, the Draft Budget 2020-21 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (6) That, having given due consideration, the Medium Term Financial Position (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (7) That, having given due consideration, the Capital Programme (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (8) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance and Governance to amend the Capital Programme to reflect any changes in external funding such as Heritage Lottery Funding, Better Care Funding and so on, so that the capital expenditure budgets are matched to the external income received.
- (9) That, having given due consideration, a minimum level of General Fund reserves of £1.0m (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (10) That, having given due consideration, authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance and Governance to:
 - Transfer monies to/from earmarked reserves should that become necessary during the financial year.
 - Update prudential indicators in both the Prudential Indicators Report and Treasury Management Strategy Report to Council, for any budget changes that impact on these.
- (11) That, having given due consideration, the changes to the Fees and Charges as specifically (Annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved and authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance and Governance to finalise the Fees and Charges Schedule if further adjustments are required.

- (12) That the Forecast Reserves Statement (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be noted.
- (13) That, having given due consideration, the Capital Strategy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (14) That, having given due consideration, the Treasury Management Strategy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (15) That, having given due consideration, the Investment Strategy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (16) That the contents of the Section 25 Report from the Executive Director - Finance in relation to the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves be noted.
- (17) That, having given due consideration, the Statement of Pay Policy for 2020-21 as required by the Localism Act (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (18) That equality impact assessment for 2020-21 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (19) That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Director - Finance and Leader, to represent the Council on the Business Rates Pilot Board and to make whatever decisions necessary to represent the interest of the Council on that Board within the parameters set out by MHCLG which shall include the authority to agree the allocation of this funding.
- (20) That it be agreed to release a further £1.9m of reserves for the Local Government Reorganisation programme (in addition to the £500,000 funding already agreed by Council on 30 August 2018) and responsibility be delegated to the Chief Executive and the Executive Director - Finance, in consultation with the Leader, to transfer up to £2.4m in total to the Future Northants programme office in order for the Strategic Delivery Director of the programme to be able to commit this expenditure in accordance with the agreed baseline budget and provide regular monitoring reports against all aspects of the £43.5m total programme budget.

84 **Adjournment of Council Meeting**

The Budget having been agreed, the Leader of the Council confirmed that he did not require Council to adjourn to allow Cabinet to meet discuss any issues arising from the budget.

85 **Calculating the amounts of Council Tax for 2020-21 and setting the Council Tax for 2020-21**

The Executive Director – Finance submitted a report to detail the Calculations for the amounts of Council Tax for 2020-21 and the setting of Council Tax for 2020-21.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance and Governance, Councillor Rawlinson, introduced and proposed the Council Tax for 2020-21, which was duly seconded by Councillor McCord.

A recorded vote was taken, and Members voted as follows:

Councillor Addison	For
Councillor Allen	For
Councillor Atkinson	For
Councillor Bagot-Webb	For
Councillor Baker	For
Councillor Bambridge	For
Councillor Barnes	For
Councillor Bignell	For
Councillor Billingham	For
Councillor Budden	For
Councillor Roger Clarke	For
Councillor Stephen Clarke	For
Councillor Cooper	For
Councillor Dallyn	For
Councillor Hywel Davies	For
Councillor Peter Davies	For
Councillor Furniss	For
Councillor Grant	For
Councillor Harries	For
Councillor Herring	For
Councillor Hollowell	For
Councillor Lofts	For
Councillor Manners	For
Councillor McCord	For
Councillor Ord	For
Councillor Pritchard	For
Councillor Rawlinson	For
Councillor Tarbun	For
Councillor Walker	For
Councillor Elaine Wiltshire	For
Councillor Paul Wiltshire	For

Resolved

- (1) That it be noted that Executive Director – Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance and Governance calculated the Council Tax Base 2020-21:

- a) for the whole Council area as 37,012.1 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - b) For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in column 2 of the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).
- (2) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2020-21 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) is £7,266,586.
- (3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2020-21 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-
- a) £40,245,051 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.
 - b) £29,631,192 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
 - c) £10,613,859 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - d) £286.77 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses);
 - e) £3,347,274 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as per the attached annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).
 - f) £196.33 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates;
- (4) That it be noted that for the year 2020-21 the Northamptonshire County Council, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire and the Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below :-

<u>Valuation</u> <u>Band</u>	Northamptonshire County Council	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire	Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority
	£	£	£
A	856.95	170.03	41.31
B	999.77	198.36	48.20
C	1,142.60	226.70	55.08
D	1,285.42	255.04	61.97
E	1,571.07	311.72	75.74
F	1,856.72	368.39	89.51
G	2,142.37	425.07	103.28
H	2,570.84	510.08	123.94

- (5) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2020-21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
- (6) That the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2020-21 is not deemed to be excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (7) That the following discounts and exemptions be approved:
- i That in respect of properties within Class A and B as defined by the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (furnished chargeable dwellings that are not the sole or a main residence of an individual) the discount provided by Section 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 shall be zero.
 - ii That in respect of properties within Class C as defined by the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (a property that is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) the discount provided by Section 11A of the said Act shall be 50% for a period of three months and thereafter zero.
 - iii That in respect of properties within Class D as defined by the said Regulations (chargeable dwellings that are vacant and undergoing major repair work to render them habitable) the discount provided by Section 11A of the said Act shall be zero.
 - iv That no council tax discount shall be applied to dwellings that are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years and that the council tax payable on such properties is 200% (except for those properties which fall into prescribed Classes E and F).

86 Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-2021

The Executive Director – Finance submitted a report to consider the proposed Local Discretionary Relief Policy and to seek approval of the Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme and related policy for 2020-2021.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That the adoption of the Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-2021 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

87 Business Rates Retail Relief Policy

The Executive Director – Finance submitted a report to provide members with an update on the retail relief scheme and the forthcoming changes to the scheme as announced in the Queen’s Speech on 19 December 2019, and to seek approval of the Business Rates Retail Relief Policy for 2020 -21.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That the adoption of the Business Rates Retail Relief Policy (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

88 Business Rates Retail Pub Relief Policy

The Executive Director Finance submitted a report to provide members with an update on the forthcoming changes for Business Rates Relief and to seek approval for the proposed Pub Relief Scheme.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That the adoption of the Business Rates Retail Pub Relief Policy (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

89 West Northamptonshire - Memorandum of Cooperation Update

The Assistant Director Planning and Economy submitted a report to consider an update to the Memorandum of Cooperation between the partner Councils: Daventry District Council; Northampton Borough Council; Northamptonshire County Council; and, South Northamptonshire Council.

Resolved

- (1) That the updated Memorandum of Cooperation (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be agreed and re-signed.

90 **Licensing Act 2003 Review of Statement of Licensing Policy**

The Assistant Director Environment and Regulatory Services submitted a report to consider a revised Statement of Licensing Policy as part of the Licensing Act 2003.

Resolved

- (1) That the revised Northamptonshire Statement of Licensing Policy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved for adoption.

91 **Community Funding Policy - Delegation Levels**

The Assistant Director: Wellbeing submitted a report to gain approval for the delegation levels set out in the new Community Funding Policy, which had been approved by Cabinet at their meeting of 10 February 2020.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing, Councillor Cooper, thanked the Communities Team for their hard work on the new Policy.

Resolved

- (1) That the delegation of funding grants under £5,000 to the Assistant Director: Wellbeing be approved.
- (2) That the delegation of funding grants from £5,000 up to a maximum of £25,000 to the Executive Director: Operations be approved.
- (3) That the delegation of funding grants in excess of £25,000 to Cabinet be approved.
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make all necessary changes to the Council's Constitution.

92 **Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman)**

There were no items of urgent business.

93 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item 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.

94 **Service Provision**

The Executive Director – Finance (S151 Officer) submitted an exempt report regarding Service Provision as detailed in the exempt Minutes.

Resolved

- (1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.
- (2) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Chairman:

Date: