

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH
HELD AT SWANSPool HOUSE, WELLINGBOROUGH
ON TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2017**

Present: The Mayor, Councillor P Bell and Councillors Abram, Allebone, Aslam, Bailey, Beirne, Bone, Carr, Ekins, Emerson, Francis, Gough, Graves, Griffiths, Hallam, Harrington, Henley, G Lawman, Lloyd, Maguire, Morrall, Partridge-Underwood, Scanlon, Scarborough, Simmons, Skittrall, Stevenson, Ward, M Waters, V Waters, Watts and York.

Officers present: Mrs L Elliott, (Managing Director), Mrs B Gamble, (Director), Miss J Thomas (Monitoring Officer/Director) Miss K Denton, Mrs S Knowles and Mrs V Jessop (Assistant Directors), Mr G Betts, (Mayor's Sergeant) and Mrs C A Mundy, (Democratic Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anslow, L Lawman, Patel and Walia.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the following declarations were made.

Name of councillor	Item	Interest
Abram	Resources Committee 1 11 17 - Min no 7 Castle Theatre	Other - Son works at the theatre.
Carr	Min no: 9 - Motion on Local Government Pay Min no: 11 - Northamptonshire County Council budget consultation	DPI – Local Government employee DPI – is employed by the county council.
G Lawman	Min no: 11 - Northamptonshire County Council budget consultation	Registerable – is a county councillor
Maguire	Planning - 4 10 17 Minute 8 - WP/17/00545/CRA	Registerable – is an objector

3. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING OF 13 OCTOBER 2017

The minutes of the special council meeting, held on 13 October 2017, were received.

RESOLVED that minutes of the special council meeting, held on 13 October 2017, be confirmed and signed.

4. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 17 OCTOBER 2017

The minutes of the council meeting, held on 17 October 2017, were received.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting, held on 17 October 2017, be confirmed and signed.

5. QUESTIONS/PETITIONS/REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

RESOLVED to note that no requests to speak had been received.

6. MINUTES TO NOTE

The minutes of the following meetings were received to note:

Planning Committee	4 October 2017
Planning Committee	8 November 2017
Licensing Committee	23 October 2017
Licensing Sub-Committee (1)	23 October 2017
Licensing Sub-Committee (2)	23 October 2017

The chairman of the licensing committee asked that it be noted that Councillor Bell had submitted apologies for the full licensing committee meeting.

The chairman made reference to the licensing sub-committee (2) held on 23 October, and asked that it be noted that the following words had been removed from page 249 “and had subsequently over charged two special constables”. He also informed council that a further licensing sub-committee meeting had taken place on 23 November, the minutes of which would be presented to the council meeting in January.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the above meetings be noted.

7. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 30 OCTOBER 2017

The minutes of the development committee of 30 October 2017 were received.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the development committee of 30 October 2017 be adopted.

(Cllr Gough joined the meeting.)

8. RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 1 NOVEMBER 2017

The minutes of the resources committee of 1 November 2017 were received.

Councillor Scarborough spoke in relation to minute number 4 and the substantial use of general reserves to fund the current homelessness crisis. There was much concern across the country over the number of people and families that were being made homeless through no fault of their own. He paid tribute to officers from both the council and Wellingborough Homes who were working together to help the homeless. He believed that there would be further cause for concern when universal credit was introduced in the coming months, as it had been widely reported that there were delays of up to 11 weeks in people receiving their money.

The leader confirmed that the council was working together with Wellingborough Homes regarding the homelessness situation. A recent housing event had given a good insight into the problems that the council was facing and this would be given high priority.

Reference was made to minute 5 - capital programme monitoring - and the recommendation therein, which on being put to the vote was declared carried.

The recommendation contained within minute 7 - Castle Theatre progress report - was also put to the vote and declared carried.

(Councillor Partridge-Underwood had declared an interest on this item and did not vote.)

RESOLVED that approval be given to:

- (i) the use of the property contingency budget to fund the new boilers for Tithe Barn and Swanspool Pavilion totalling £20,200;
- (ii) transfer and combine the ICT budgets totalling £101,337;
- (iii) the additional request for £96,250 of in year budget for the Academy system upgrade;
- (iv) an Arts and Culture Sub-Committee being created to report to services committee with effect from January 2019;
- (v) the sum of £1,050,000 being included in the capital programme to cover all works identified in phases one and two of the capital bid as essential for the effective operation of the theatre and the longevity of the building;
- (vi) the sum of £25,000 being included in the revenue budget, to span two financial years (2018/19 and 2019/20), to enable the council to work with the new operator to complete the redecoration and upgrading of flooring.
- (vii) the adoption of the resources committee minutes of 1 November 2017.

(Councillor Carr left the meeting during discussion on the following item having declared an interest.)

9. MOTION – LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY

The annexed circulated motion was received in relation to local government pay.

Councillor Scarborough presented the motion to the meeting. This detailed the following:

“The National Joint Council (NJC) determined pay and terms and conditions for local government services, with workers having experienced a three year pay freeze from 2010 to 2012 only receiving 1% pay increase annually since then. In real terms NJC basic pay had fallen by 21% since 2010 with NJC pay being the lowest in the public sector. There was concern that differentials in pay grades were being squeezed and distorted by bottom-loaded NJC pay settlements, needed to reflect the increased statutory national living wage.

The NJC pay claim for 2018, submitted by Unite UNISON and the GHB on behalf of council workers needed to be met in full with calls for the immediate end of public sector pay restraint and an assurance that NJC pay would not be allowed to fall further behind other parts of the public sector.

He called on the government to provide all additional resources to ensure local authorities could fund a decent pay rise for NJC employees and the pay spine review.”

Councillor Scarborough proposed the following, which was seconded by Councillor Aslam:

The council write to the:

- LGA asking it to make urgent representation to government to fund the NJC claim and the pay spine review;
- Prime Minister and Chancellor supporting the NJC pay claim and seeking the additional resources needed to fund a decent pay rise and the pay spine review;
- local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and the pay spine review.

The Leader, Councillor Griffiths responded to the motion stating the following:

“In September 2017 the Government announced its intention to move away from the 1% basic public sector pay award policy for public servants, which is paid in addition to any incremental pay progression and allowances.

It also confirmed that it would ensure the overall pay award was fair to public sector workers, as well as to taxpayers, and that it reflected the vital contribution employees made to delivering high quality public services.

In his recent budget announcement the Chancellor addressed some of the issues about NHS pay, making a commitment to protect services by looking at

the funding of any pay claims. It had been disappointing that the Chancellor had not included local government in his remarks about public sector pay. Local government employees strive every day to provide a wide range of essential services to our communities. Without additional funding it will be increasingly difficult to retain staff and sustain service levels.

The LGA, on behalf of all local government bodies, is continuing to call for additional funding to cover the cost of adjusting the local government pay structure to take account of the national living wage. It is only right that we request that they continue to make representations to government to fund local government pay pressures - wider than just the national living wage - for a decent pay rise for all public sector workers.

The Chancellor had also pledged to provide for the NHS “additional funding for such a settlement” should the “talks bear fruit”. He considered that a letter be sent to both the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, to request the same courtesy for the rest of the public sector, to protect our own much needed front line services.

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The council is committed to ensuring that the best possible pay and conditions are provided for its staff. The determination of these is decided by national pay bargaining, and as a council we have to respect the results of this process. Representations could, however, be made through regional pay consultations.”

Councillor Griffiths proposed the following amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood:

The council resolves to write to the:

- (i) Local Government Association (LGA) in support of its ongoing representations to government to fund local government pay pressures but, in addition, to widen this to cover the negotiated pay settlement;
- (ii) Prime Minister and Chancellor seeking commitment to fund the NJC pay claim, in a similar way to the commitment for the NHS made in the budget, to protect our local services;
- (iii) local NJC union representative to convey support for a decent pay rise as a result of the national pay negotiations.

Cllr Scarborough thanked Councillor Griffiths for his words and accepted the amendment.

The mayor put the amendment to the vote and this was declared carried. This then became the substantive motion and on being put to the vote was declared carried.

RESOLVED that the council write to the:

- (i) LGA in support of its ongoing representations to government to fund local government pay pressures but, in addition, to widen this to cover the negotiated pay settlement;
- (ii) Prime Minister and Chancellor seeking commitment to fund the NJC pay claim, in a similar way to the commitment for the NHS made in the budget, to protect our local services;
- (iii) Local NJC union representative to convey support for a decent pay rise as a result of the national pay negotiations.

(Councillor Carr returned to the meeting.)

10. REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES 2018

The annexed circulated report of the director was received in relation to the revised proposals of the Boundary Commission for England's (BCE) review of parliamentary boundaries.

The proposed review made proposals which would have a significant effect on the constituents in the existing Wellingborough constituency. A response to the initial proposal was submitted by the council. The BCE published its revised proposals on 17 October 2017 with the consultation period ending on 11 December 2017.

The report detailed the revised boundary which had an impact on several areas of the borough as follows:

- Finedon ward would become part of the proposed Kettering parliamentary boundary;
- Harrowden and Sywell ward would become part of the proposed Daventry and Lutterworth constituency (three villages from this ward – Ecton, Mears Ashby and Sywell were already part of the Daventry constituency);
- Irthlingborough Waterloo and Irthlingborough John Pyel would become part of the Wellingborough constituency.

Members spoke at length regarding their concerns over the above suggestions and their view that there was no reason to change the Wellingborough constituency. The BCE report had stated that the existing Wellingborough constituency, with its electorate of 74,916, did not need to change, but needed to be modified to take in changes elsewhere.

Some members thought that the suggestions were ludicrous and that they would create utter confusion for the electorate. There would potentially be three members of parliament for the Wellingborough constituency and there was no correlation with existing boundaries or communities, particularly as one constituency covered parts of Northamptonshire and Leicestershire.

The development of Stanton Cross and Glenvale Park was well advanced and needed to be taken into consideration in terms of the increase in electorate, as well as boundaries which could divide the new communities being created.

The leader thanked members for their contribution to the debate, reminding the meeting that comments could be made until 11 December and that the electorate should be encouraged to submit comments.

RESOLVED that the following be forwarded to the Boundary Commission for England:

- (i) the division of the Borough of Wellingborough between three parliamentary constituencies, thus further losing the identity of the borough as an historical and well understood unit, was of concern;
- (ii) concern be expressed that the linkage of parts of the borough to neighbouring authorities and constituencies outside the county, lacks cohesion, threatens accessibility and breaks local ties;
- (iii) the fracture of a long-standing and understood existing constituency simply in order to accommodate numerical compliance for those around it was of concern;
- (iv) the comments of members, particularly regarding the confusion this would cause to the electorate and the additional numbers that the sustainable urban extensions of Stanton Cross and Glenvale Park would bring, be forwarded.

(Councillor Carr left the room having declared an interest in the following item.)

11. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET CONSULTATION

The annexed circulated report of the managing director was received in relation to Northamptonshire County Council's consultation on saving options.

The county council cabinet on 19 October 2017 considered two reports, the first provided an update on its 2017/18 budget projections, and the second outlined a number of savings options to close the estimated budget gap for 2018/19. The county council agreed to consult on these options.

The proposed changes to services provided by the county council would have an impact on the residents of the whole borough and included the following:

- reduction in highway maintenance, including weed killing, road marking and road safety initiatives;
- reduction in stock of salt/grit, and reduction of winter gritting regime;
- removal of bus subsidies where these are not a statutory duty;
- reduction in trading standards services relating to enforcement of a range of statutes;
- removal of the fund for county councillors, known as the 'empowering councillors' fund;
- closure of Earls Barton, Finedon, Irchester and Wollaston libraries.

It was suggested the council proposed to respond to the consultation due to end on 30 November 2017, as follows:

- concern be expressed about the impact of the proposed savings on the lives of the people of the borough;
- that the borough council invite discussions with the county council to mitigate the impact on local residents;
- that the county council be advised that the borough council's own financial position is such that a transfer of responsibility for services was neither feasible nor viable.

Members addressed the meeting sharing their grave concern over the proposed cuts and savings that the county council intended to make. The cuts to the library service would have an impact on many in the community as the buildings were also used as community hubs. They also acknowledged the serious impact that adult social care and child protection were having on the county council budgets.

The leader proposed that in addition to the above the following be added to the recommendation:

“this council writes to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government seeking fairer funding for public services in Northamptonshire.”

This was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood and being put to the vote declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the managing director write to the chief executive of Northamptonshire County Council to express deep concern that reductions in funding for key services will have a severe negative impact on individuals and families living in the borough, and especially those who live in areas with high levels of social deprivation, or rural communities, whose wellbeing often depends on them;
- (ii) the managing director's letter should include a request that the proposed budget reductions be reconsidered, taking into account the expected impact on local communities;
- (iii) the borough council invite the county council to enter into discussions about ways in which the impact on its residents can be minimised, whilst not transferring the financial responsibilities for such services to the borough council;
- (iv) on behalf of the council, the managing director contribute to wider budget consultation responses submitted by district and borough councils, whilst reserving the right to submit an individual response to any issues which specifically affect this borough;
- (v) the managing director will write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government seeking fairer funding for public services in Northamptonshire.

12. CORRESPONDENCE, COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE DIRECTION OF THE MAYOR OR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

The mayor referred to the announcement, on 27 November 2017, of the engagement of His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Wales to Ms. Meghan Markle. He would be writing to extend the congratulations of the council to the couple.

Mayor

The meeting closed at 8pm.

