

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH  
HELD AT SWANSPool HOUSE, WELLINGBOROUGH  
ON TUESDAY 9 JULY 2019**

**Present:** The Mayor, Councillor J Beirne and Councillors Abram, Allebone, Aslam, Bell Carr, Ekins, Emerson, Gough, Graves, Griffiths, Harrington, Henley, G Lawman, L Lawman, Lloyd, Maguire, Morrall, Partridge-Underwood, Scanlon, Scarborough, Simmons, Skittrall, Walia, Ward and York.

**Officers present:** Mrs L Elliott, (Managing Director), Miss J Thomas, (Director/Monitoring Officer), Mr S Darcy, (Director/S151 Officer), Mrs V Jessop, Mr A Piper, (Assistant Directors), Mr S Whiteley (Electoral services Team Leader), Mr G Betts and Miss S Gibson (Mayor's Sergeant and Deputy Sergeant) and Mrs C A Mundy (Democratic Services Officer - Committees).

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anslow, Bailey, Bone, Francis, Hallam, Patel, Stevenson, M Waters, V Waters and Watts.

**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:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Reason</b>
P Bell	Report 8 – Nene Valley Crematorium	Registerable Director of Wellingborough Bereavement Services
Maguire	Report 8 – Nene Valley Crematorium	Registerable Board member of Wellingbroough Bereavement Services

**3. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 2 APRIL 2019**

The minutes of the council meeting held on 2 April 2019 were received.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting of 2 April 2019, be confirmed and signed, with it being noted that Councillor Maguire and Councillor Henley were both in attendance.

#### 4. **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF 21 MAY 2019**

The minutes of the annual council meeting held on 21 May 2019 were received.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the annual council meeting of 21 May 2019 be confirmed and signed, subject to the following amendment being noted that to the membership of the Local Government Reform Sub-Committee; the Conservative members will be Councillors Griffiths, Partridge-Underwood, Allebone, Graves, and Simmons and the Labour members, Councillors Francis and Scarborough.

#### 5. **QUESTIONS/PETITIONS/REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE MEETING**

Requests to address the meeting were received from Marion Turner-Hawes and Tony Banks in relation to the climate change motion. The mayor allowed both to address the meeting for three minutes each. They spoke to give their full support to the motion before council and to pledge their help in supporting their community on any decisions made by the council.

The mayor thanked both speakers for their attendance and support.

**RESOLVED** to note the comments of the speakers.

#### 6. **MINUTES TO NOTE**

The minutes of the following meetings were received to note:

Licensing (Regulatory) Sub-Committee	25 March 2019
Planning Committee	10 April 2019
Additional Planning Committee	8 May 2019
Planning Committee	12 June 2019

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the above meetings be noted.

#### 7. **AUDIT COMMITTEE – 26 MARCH 2019**

The minutes of the audit committee of 26 March 2019 were received.

Councillor Henley referred to the presentation at that meeting by Ernst & Young and the information given that they would be taking over the external audit process. They had failed to do, because of staff shortages. He asked what the implications of this would have on the council.

The chairman responded and confirmed that Ernst & Young had been unable to provide sufficient staffing and that this had caused issues across the whole of Northamptonshire with delays to the completion of audits. The council had been assured that there would be no direct repercussions over this delay. The

Director of Resources/S151 Officer, Mr Darcy would be issuing a member briefing note following the July meeting of the audit committee.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the audit committee of 26 March 2019 be adopted.

#### **8. RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 JUNE 2019**

The minutes of the resources committee of 19 June 2019 were received.

Reference was made to minute 6 - 2018-19 Capital Outturn and the recommendation therein, which on being put to the vote was declared carried.

The chairman made reference to minute item 8 – property matters and informed members that there would be two drop-in sessions held, one for members and one for the public, in regard to the multi-storey car park refurbishment and the public realm at Burystead Place. This would give the opportunity to view the plans and proposals and to ask questions. The improvements to the multi storey car park would include new lifts, improved ‘trigger’ controlled lighting, new toilets and charging points for electric cars. Members would be notified of the dates in due course.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Partridge-Underwood spoke in relation to minute 9 – community asset transfer, he and the chairman had attended the Bozeat Fete and had been handed £1 in payment for the freehold transfer of the village green at Bozeat, from the chairman of the parish council.

Councillor Scarborough referred to minute 11 and the unitary progress update. He extended the congratulations of the chamber to Councillor Griffiths, who had been appointed as chairman of the North Northamptonshire Joint Committee, with Councillor Tom Beattie from Corby as the vice-chairman.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) approval be given to the release of £860k for future infrastructure development of the crematorium site;
- (ii) approval be given to the inclusion of the additional budget requests as detailed in the report in the agreed 2019-20 capital programme;
- (iii) the minutes of the resources committee of 19 June 2018 be adopted.

#### **9. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 24 JUNE 2019**

The minutes of the development committee of 24 June 2019 were received.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the development committee of 24 June 2019 be adopted.

## 10. MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS

- (i) The following motion was proposed by Councillor Emerson and seconded by Councillor Scarborough:

“The council declares a climate emergency. We will appoint a climate emergency champion and set up a cross party group to take action. We will aim to use our influence for appropriate action, quick wins, and put in place an ethos that the council does nothing to damage the planet further. We will support projects that progressively reduce carbon dioxide release into the atmosphere to ultimately achieve negative carbon. We will work to improve the borough’s air quality.”

Both Councillors Emerson and Scarborough spoke on this item before members debated the motion before them. Members noted that the council already took into consideration climate change issues with the use of solar panels, a local solar farm, the electrification of the railway line, the introduction of a new country park at Stanton Cross and a green corridor running through the borough.

The leader proposed an amendment to the motion as follows.

“This council notes that parliament has declared a climate emergency.

“Although this council has limited time, powers and resources we nevertheless commit to playing our proper part in delivering on the national commitments as far as we can within the constraints under which we must operate.

“We will consider the climate impact of our activities especially through the process of transition to unitary and support appropriate council projects that effectively reduce carbon emissions or improve air quality. In addition we will establish a cross party working group to refresh our climate change strategy.”

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood.

The mayor put this amendment to the meeting and it was declared carried with 20 votes in favour and six against.

This amendment then became the substantive motion, which on being put to the vote was declared carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) It be noted that parliament has declared a climate emergency;
- (ii) It be noted that the council commits to playing its proper part in delivering on the national commitments, as far as it can, within the constraints of the limited time, powers and resources, under which it operates;

- (iii) It be noted that consideration will be given to the climate impact of council activities through the process of transition to a unitary council and in supporting appropriate council projects that effectively reduce carbon emissions or improve air quality;
  - (iv) approval be given to the establishment of a cross-party climate change working group to refresh the council's climate change strategy.
- (ii) The following motion was proposed by Councillor Scarborough and seconded by Councillor Emerson:

"This council notes that:

- (i) Analysis of the 2018 local election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 34% of councillors in England are women, up 1% since 2017;
- (ii) As of summer 2017 only 4% of councils in England and Wales has parental leave policies;
- (iii) The role of councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background and that introducing a parental leave policy is a step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become councillors, and is also a step to encourage existing councillors who may want to start a family to remain as councillors;
- (iv) Parental leave must apply to parents regardless of their gender and should also cover adoption leave to support those parents who choose to adopt;"

"The council should therefore resolve to:

- (i) adopt the parental leave policy drafted by the LGA Labour Group's Women's Taskforce to give all councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting;
- (ii) ensure that councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate."

Councillor Scarborough noted that an amendment was to be proposed to the motion, which he confirmed was acceptable, on the understanding that a report be presented to the next council meeting. The resolution would read as follows:

"This council resolves to:

- (i) review its own position regarding a parental leave policy and seek to influence any policy to be adopted by the new North Northamptonshire Unitary Council which gives all councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting and report back to members for the agreement of any new policy at the next council meeting;
- (ii) ensure that councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate;"

Members debated the motion and proposed amendment; they considered that this was a good way forward and also suggested that consideration be given to parents whose babies were born prematurely.

This motion was formally proposed by Councillor Scarborough and seconded by Councillor Emerson and on being put to the vote declared carried.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (i) approval be given to a review of the council's parental leave policy; and that a commitment be made to influence any policy to be adopted by the new North Northamptonshire Unitary Council which gives all councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting;
- (ii) a report be presented to members for the agreement of any new policy at the next council meeting on 15 October 2019;
- (iii) approval be given to councillors, with children and other caring commitments, being supported as appropriate;

**11. APPOINTMENT OF NEW MONITORING OFFICER**

The annexed circulated report of the managing director and head of paid service was received to appoint a new monitoring officer and to report on the proposed action to cover the role of director for place and strategic growth in the future.

The current director of place and strategic growth/monitoring officer had resigned from her post with effect from 9 September 2019. The MO element of this role was a statutory role and to ensure the council complies with the statutory requirements it was proposed that Assistant Director, Karen Denton be appointed as the council's interim monitoring officer (MO) with effect from 9 September 2019.

The managing director, in discussion with fellow North Northamptonshire chief executives, had been discussing ways of filling the director role and another vacant post of executive director at East Northants Council (ENC), both being similar in nature. This would enable specialist skills to be brought in for the future unitary area.

It was also considered that there needed to be a strong legal professional to lead District Law, with such role undertaking the monitoring officer duties for both councils.

It was therefore proposed that there be two posts to cover these requirements as follows:

- **Director of growth and infrastructure**  
This post would be employed by ENC, and would involve the line management of planning across ENC, BCW and Kettering Borough Council (KBC) and environmental services at ENC only. It would take on the lead role across North Northamptonshire in working with partners in SEMLEP and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.
- **Head of legal services group for North Northamptonshire**  
This post would be employed by KBC, which hosts District Law, a shared legal service in which BCW and KBC are already partners and which ENC and Corby Borough Council (CBC) are considering joining in the near future. The role would manage District Law, provide the MO role for both BCW and ENC and manage the democratic service teams at ENC and KBC. District Law has previously provided the MO role for BCW

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) approval be given to the appointment of Karen Denton, as the Borough Council of Wellingborough's monitoring officer with effect from 9 September 2019, until such time as a new permanent monitoring officer can be recruited;
- (ii) the actions taken by the managing director in her capacity as head of paid service, and by the monitoring officer, in line with delegations outlined in the constitution, to cover the role of director of place and strategic growth be noted.

## **12. MINOR VARIATION TO A CREMATION PRICE**

(Councillors Bell and Maguire left the meeting during discussion on this item having each declared an interest.)

The annexed circulated report of the managing director was received to seek approval to vary one of the prices for a non-standard cremation.

The price for cremations had been set by council in 2016. The crematorium manager for Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd has been discussing the fees for the less popular non-standard cremations and how to increase their use. She had been approached by a Northampton funeral director to work in partnership to provide a low cost funeral for those on a budget.

It was therefore proposed to add an additional service of 'attended cremation with a simple service' (ten minute eulogy only) at a trial cost of £600, this being a reduction of £75 on the 'attended no service' option and gives the mourners a chance to have a formal short eulogy from a ceremony leader. If the trial proves to be successful in terms of need, it would be proposed to permanently be included as an additional service offering.

The report detailed the current fees charged.

**RESOLVED** that approval be given to the minor variation, for a trial period, to the price of a non-standard cremation, as detailed in the report, with this being reviewed as part of the annual report to council later in 2019.

(Councillors Bell and Maguire returned to the meeting.)

### **13. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS**

The annexed circulated report of the managing director was received to seek approval to carry out a statutory review of polling districts and polling places for the borough of Wellingborough.

The council has a statutory duty to keep polling places and polling districts under review. Under this review polling stations will also be reviewed.

Appended to the report were the following:

- Appendix A – Definitions – Polling districts, polling places, polling stations;
- Appendix B - List of proposed polling districts, polling places and polling stations;
- Appendix C – Terms of reference and a summary of the review process.

Administrative changes were suggested to polling district codes to ensure that they did not clash with any designated polling district codes in other local authority areas in the North Northamptonshire area.

The Community Governance Review in 2018 established a new parished area for the town of Wellingborough, and some new polling districts are required in the current Finedon and Harrowden & Sywell borough wards, as each parish is required by statute to be a separate polling district.

It was therefore proposed that there be a six week public consultation commencing on 12 August 2019. The outcome of the review would take effect from 1 December 2019, having been the subject of a report to council with any proposals for change, on 15 October 2019.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the terms of reference appended to the report be adopted;
- (ii) it be noted that a further report would be received by council to consider the consultation responses on the review.

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

The mayor made reference to the following:

- A presentation by Jo Savage, Greatwell Homes would be held on Tuesday 16 July 2019 at 6.30pm in the council chamber for members to attend.
- The mayor reminded members that Director, Miss Thomas was leaving the council at the beginning of September and that this was her last council meeting. She was thanked for her service to the council.

Mayor

The meeting concluded at 8.15pm.

