

COUNCIL MEETING – 17 JULY 2018

REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

13 June 2018

Present: Councillor Griffiths (Chairman), and Councillors Allebone, Bell, Carr, Graves, Harrington, Henley, Morrall, Scarborough, Simmons and M Waters.

Also present: Mrs L Elliott (Managing Director), Mrs B Gamble (Director), Miss J Thomas (Director/Monitoring Officer), Miss K Denton, Mrs V Jessop, and Mrs S Knowles (Assistant Directors), Mrs V Phillipson (Principal Property and Projects Manager), Mr S Whiteley (Electoral Services Team Leader), Mr J Hodgson, (Private Sector Housing Team Leader) and Miss E McGinlay (Electoral Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Emerson, Francis, L Lawman and Partridge-Underwood.

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:

Councillor	Minute no.	Reason
Allebone	Min. 5 - 3G Sports Pitch	Personal – knew one of the speakers
Bell	Min. 4 - High Street/ Jacksons Lane site	Personal – knew one of the speakers
Carr	Min. 4 - High Street/ Jacksons Lane site	Personal – knew one of the speakers
Harrington	Min. 4 - High Street/ Jacksons Lane site	Personal – knew one of the speakers
Henley	Min. 4 - High Street/ Jacksons Lane site	Personal – knew one of the speakers
Morrall	Min. 4 - High Street/ Jacksons Lane site	Personal – knew one of the speakers
Scarborough	Min. 4 - High Street/ Jacksons Lane site	Personal – knew one of the speakers

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2018 AND OF THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 MAY 2018

The minutes of the resources committee held on 21 March 2018 and of the additional resources committee held on 2 May 2018 were received.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the resources committee held on 21 March 2018, and of the additional resources committee held on 2 May 2018, be confirmed and signed.

4. AMENDMENT TO ORDER OF BUSINESS

In accordance with clause 4.2.11 (c) of the constitution the chairman proposed a change to the order of business on the agenda to hear agenda items 13, 9, 16 and 15 first, as three of the items had one or more members of the public who wished to address the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Graves and on being put to vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the order of business be changed and that agenda items 13, 9, 16 and 15 be heard first.

5. HIGH STREET/JACKSONS LANE SITE

The annexed circulated joint report of the directors was received in relation to a request from the police to close the temporary car park at the rear of the Drill Hall, due to anti-social and criminal behaviour.

The report detailed the concern of the police, who had met with Wellingborough Norse and community safety and environmental health officers at the temporary car park to the rear of the Drill Hall following a number of crimes being reported. There was evidence of persistent drug use, stolen goods, car vandalism, littering, aggressive driving, public sex and potential drug deals within the area.

Additional police and Wellingborough Norse patrols had been put in place but had not resolved the continuing problem; the police crime prevention officer had therefore requested that the temporary car park be closed to the public.

Closure would mean a reduction of 84 car parking spaces although it was considered that these spaces could be accommodated on the current High Street car park and in the multi-storey car park or other car parks within the town centre.

Requests to address the meeting had been received from 11 speakers and were approved by the chairman. The speakers were heard in the following order:

- Maxine Richardson
- Cynthia Bailey

- Barbara Tungaraza
- Gordon Kerr
- Mervin Painton
- Martha McInnes
- Richard Hartnell
- Tracy Meadows
- Claire Ette
- Councillor Jonathon Ekins
- Inspector Sharan Wildman

The speakers addressed the committee and shared their concerns and frustrations about the potential car park closure. The general view of the speakers was that the anti-social behaviour should be dealt with by the police and the council, and that the problem would only move to another location if the car park was closed. The speakers deemed the closure to be harmful to local businesses as it would give shoppers and community users less space to park, which may result in them choosing to use other facilities instead of the ones near the High Street. There was also a view that closing the car park was the first stage in a process to close the whole of the High Street/Jacksons Lane car park because of the recent planning permission granted on the site.

Inspector Sharan Wildman addressed the committee and confirmed that the preferred option of the police would be to close the car park as it attracts serious vehicle crime that has not been deterred by police patrols. It was confirmed that the serious crimes included sexual acts with vulnerable young adults and drug abuse. This primarily took place from late afternoon onwards, but there was also some antisocial and criminal activity during the day time.

The inspector explained that the police, in conjunction with the council and Wellingborough Norse, had commissioned investigations to try to find a resolution to the issues and concluded that the closure of the car park would be the most viable option.

Members questioned the inspector on the likelihood of the same result from alternative solutions, such as adding a barrier, installing CCTV and improving the landscape of the car park. She confirmed that the alternatives may help the problem but the preferred option of the police would still be to close the car park as it gave a faster resolution to the issue which was likely to be more effective.

Members discussed the concerns of both the public and the police, and deemed the risk to the public of keeping the temporary car park open to be too high. It was agreed that there were sufficient car parking spaces in the rest of the Jacksons Lane car park and surrounding car parks for the public to use.

Cllr Scarborough proposed that the resolution be agreed as printed.

The chairman proposed an amendment as follows:

“that a review of the situation be carried out in 6 months”.

This amendment was seconded by Cllr Graves and on being put to vote declared carried.

The chairman also expressed concern about the vegetation in the temporary car park and requested that Wellingborough Norse reduce it at the same time as closing the car park in an effort to deter anti-social behaviour by non-car users.

RESOLVED that the temporary car park at the top of Derek Hooton Way be closed, as soon as possible, as recommended by Northamptonshire Police, to address anti-social and criminal behaviour; such closure to be reviewed by the committee in six months.

6. EXTENSION OF MEETING

In accordance with clause 4.2.11 (l), the chairman proposed that the meeting continue beyond three hours in duration to enable the business on the agenda to be concluded. This was seconded by Councillor Scarborough and on being put to the vote declared carried.

RESOLVED that the meeting continue to enable the business on the agenda to be concluded.

7. 3G SPORTS PITCH FUNDING AND UPDATE

The annexed circulated report of the director was received in relation to the progress of the 3G pitch proposed for Redwell Leisure Centre and to seek confirmation to the in principle decision to contribute £300K of capital funding towards the project as part of the capital programme.

Resources committee had recommended in September 2016 that the sum of £300,000 of capital funding be approved, in principle, for the funding of the installation of a new 3G football pitch and floodlights at Redwell Leisure Centre.

Since then, a planning application (ref: WP/17/00378/FUL) had been submitted and approved at the planning committee of 6 June 2018.

A pre-tender estimate had been produced which identified a revised cost of around £662,000. The Football Foundation had confirmed that it would fund the project up to the full tender price over and above the council's £300k capital contribution and project development costs.

Appended to the report was the timetable for the construction of the 3G pitch. The report detailed the tender exercise that would be undertaken following the approval of the planning application.

Before this item was debated the chairman addressed the committee and proposed that an additional resolution be added, in order to provide additional open space in the area, as follows:

- 4.3 a minor amendment to the service level agreement with Wellingborough Norse be approved to include the area between Holcot Close, Wellingborough and the A5193 (Harrowden Road) in mowing schedules, the detail of such change to be negotiated with Wellingborough Norse by the managing director or her representative.

Requests to address the meeting had been received from four speakers and were approved by the chairman. The speakers were heard in the following order:

- Stuart Coles
- Anthony Froggatt
- Shona Gould
- Anne Coles

Each speaker addressed the committee to share their views on the 3G sports pitch proposed for Redwell Leisure Centre. The speakers raised concerns about their view that the council had not taken into account other potential financial risks of funding the pitch, such as noise complaints costs, potential court case costs and funding shortfalls.

The speakers also highlighted instances where similar pitches had been removed or had been forced to move sites due to noise and lighting pollution complaints from neighbouring residents.

The managing director confirmed that a feasibility study, risk assessment and cost estimate had been completed. She confirmed that the report brought to the resources committee on this occasion was purely to get approval for the capital funding for the pitch that had already been agreed in principle by members of the committee.

The principal property and projects manager addressed the committee and confirmed that the number of pitches closed due to complaints was a very small percentage of the total number of pitches. She went on to confirm that the Football Foundation had already confirmed their willingness to cover the additional funding needed, so it was unlikely there would be a shortfall in funding for the project.

Members discussed the report and debated whether the issues raised by the speakers regarding the 3G pitch had been fully considered. Some members raised concerns that the business case for the project had not been put before the committee for review. It was confirmed by officers that the project would not progress until a business case and sports development plan had been submitted to the Football Foundation and funding was secured.

The chairman highlighted that the project would meet many of the council's priorities (PRIDE) and that it was a positive step forward for the borough.

He put the recommendation, along with the addition of 4.3 above, to the committee, and this was seconded by Cllr Graves and declared carried.

R1 RECOMMENDED that approval be given to the sum of £300,000, for the 3G pitch at the Redwell Leisure Centre, being added to the capital programme, as agreed in principle.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) a minor amendment to the service level agreement with Wellingborough Norse be approved to include the area between Holcot Close, Wellingborough and the A5193 (Harrowden Road) in mowing schedules, the detail of such change to be negotiated with Wellingborough Norse by the managing director or her representative;
- (ii) a report be commissioned to present to services committee on the facilities to be provided at Redwell Leisure Centre.

8. HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE

The annexed circulated report of the managing director was received in relation to the results of the market engagement on the housing options service and to consider ways to deploy the homelessness mitigation fund.

The report informed members that the Welland Procurement Unit issued a prior information notice on 8 May 2018 to seek open early engagement on a possible procurement of housing services with East Northamptonshire Council.

The market engagement closed on 31 May 2018. One expression of interest for both lots had been received from a national housing association. Limited information had been provided, with no detail of costs for staffing and service delivery. This was appended to the report.

Members were asked if they wished to continue to explore the procurement route further and were advised that, if the service was to be retained in-house, additional officer capacity would be required to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation placements and to find alternative housing solutions, including enabling new homes. There would be a requirement for a further three temporary/permanent officers, the costs of which would need to be met from reserves.

A full review of the service would also be undertaken to ensure that the additional capacity was directed to the higher risk areas, such as reducing the costs to the council of using emergency and temporary accommodation and delivering the council's mitigating homelessness capital fund.

One option to address homelessness was to purchase property for bed and breakfast accommodation, and re-model it as temporary accommodation. It

would also be possible to acquire units on the open market, using them as temporary accommodation.

A request to address the committee was received from one speaker (Mervin Painton) and was agreed by the chairman.

The speaker addressed the committee to express his views on the current housing options service and the options stated within the report. He urged the committee to use available money to ease the level of homelessness in the borough and spend money on a more permanent solution to help the situation. He expressed his view that the option to buy a bed and breakfast property would not be suitable for families and would not remove people from the housing register.

The managing director confirmed to members that the monies available could only be used for temporary housing and could not fund permanent housing for homeless people because the council did not hold housing stock. She also confirmed that investing in council-owned temporary accommodation would help to reduce the temporary housing costs as the overheads would be within the council's control.

Members discussed the options they had been presented with in the report and agreed that money should be spent on purchasing property to ease the pressures of temporary accommodation costs. A debate opened on how the money would be best spent to help as many people as possible. Members also expressed a wish that the housing options service remain in-house.

The chairman proposed that officers be asked to present a report to a future meeting on additional capital funding for temporary accommodation. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Scarborough and on being put to vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that approval be given to:

- (i) the council continuing to provide housing options services in-house;
- (ii) up to three officers being recruited, funded from reserves, with the decision on the financing of these being delegated to the leader and managing director, following a full service review;
- (iii) the council acquiring open market units to the value of £725k, the selection of which to be delegated to the managing director in consultation with the leader;
- (iv) a report being brought back to resources committee to consider further capital investment in temporary accommodation.

9. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

The annexed circulated report of the director was received in relation to the outcome of the consultation on the proposals relating to polling districts and polling places for the borough; and to make a final recommendation on polling district boundaries and polling places for each new polling district, to take effect for the elections in May 2019.

Appended to the report were the following:

- Appendix A - list of proposed polling districts, polling places and polling stations;
- Appendix B - representations received as part of the consultation survey;
- Appendix C - maps of proposed changes to polling districts and polling stations.

The report detailed the consultation which had taken place along with the issues which had been highlighted. Whilst polling places and polling districts were determined by the council, the actual location of polling stations within the polling place was the responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer. No comments were received during the consultation in respect of polling places and polling districts, so no changes were proposed as a result of this.

A change to a polling district was suggested by officers after it was identified that electors on the Millers Park estate had incorrectly been included in the previous Great Doddington polling district which bridged the parish boundary. This issue would be rectified with a new proposed polling district (FA) and re-coding of the Great Doddington and Wilby polling districts (FB and FC respectively).

A minor administrative change was also proposed for Brickhill ward, which moved all properties on the south side of Brickhill Road into the same polling district.

As part of the report the Acting Returning Officer presented the feedback received on polling stations during the consultation, and asked for members' views as follows:

Polling district MA and MB – the stations were currently located at Kidz Zone at the Ock n Dough. This would no longer be available for use as a polling station, and, it was therefore recommended that a portakabin be sited on the car park and that this be used as a polling station.

Polling district CA – the polling station was currently located at Wrenn School; concerns over redevelopment of Wrenn School, along with the desire to prevent the use of schools, had led to the suggestion of transferring the polling station to Swanspool House. This was not, however, located within Croyland

Ward. The Cemetery Chapel at Doddington Road cemetery had been identified as an alternative but, following a risk assessment, had been deemed unsuitable. It was therefore recommended that Wrenn School continue to act as a polling station for polling district CA.

Polling district WEA – Finedon Town Hall was considered as an alternative venue for the polling station; however there were issues around suitable parking. It was recommended that the Independent Wesleyan Chapel continue to act as a polling station for electors in Finedon Ward.

Polling district HD - The Salvation Army building had previously been used as a polling station for electors in this polling district of Hatton Ward and it was recommended that this remain. An alternative of the Everyday Champions Church had been suggested, but electoral services had not received a response to communication sent.

Polling district FC - a recommendation to consider an alternative site, such as the use of a portakabin on Wilby Playing Fields, had been considered but did not appear to be a viable alternative to the primary school. Unless there was no possible alternative, portakabins were not recommended because of their unsuitability for staff and the additional access challenges they presented

Polling district WDA - It was recommended that the Youth Club in Earls Barton continue to be used as a polling station, despite alternative sites being considered.

Polling district IC - multiple sites had been considered following the loss of Hilton Hall in 2016-17 with no feasible alternative being identified. It was therefore recommended that Irchester Village Hall continue to be used as a polling station for electors in Little Irchester.

Members discussed the report and agreed that the suggested changes were sensible and should be implemented.

R2 **RECOMMENDED** that the proposed polling districts and places, as detailed in the report, be published and adopted;

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be made to the acting returning officer, in respect of a change to the location of individual polling stations at polling districts MA and MB, and that a portakabin be sited in the Ock n Dough car park.

10. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT SERVICE

The annexed circulated report of the director was received to consider the options available for delivery of the disabled facilities grant service with a recommendation that the care and repair service be brought back in house for the council to administer.

The report explained that the council had a mandatory requirement to ensure that applications for disabled facilities grants were determined within six months and such adaptations were carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the community occupational therapy team.

The report detailed the options for service delivery as follows:

- to undertake a procurement exercise;
- or
- to provide a service for administering disabled facilities grants in-house.

Members discussed the report and agreed that the disabled facilities grant service should be provided by officers of the council, rather than by Care and Repair.

RESOLVED that approval be given to the disabled facilities grant process being provided by the council with effect from 1 April 2019.

11. WORLD WAR I CENTENARY - UPDATE

The annexed circulated report of the managing director was received in relation to the work of the World War I Working Group.

The report detailed the projects and activities which had been put in place to commemorate Major Edward (Mick) Mannock's death and the centenary of the end of World War I. This included the following:

- An event to sign over the deeds of land to be transferred to the 378 Mannock Squadron Centre, on 26 July 2018, followed by a reception.
- The purchase of a Victoria Cross commemorative paving stone to include Major Mannock's name, rank and regiment and the date of action for which the VC was awarded, to be fitted onto a stone plinth in Swanspool Gardens and unveiled on a date to be agreed on or before 11 November 2018;
- Borough primary schools would be asked to take part in the commemoration by submitting a fact sheet remembering individuals. This work would be displayed in a community exhibition in Swanspool Gardens.
- A postcard had been commissioned to commemorate World War I and Major Mannock; the Friends of Wellingborough Library would apply for a community grant to cover such work;
- A 'what's on' timetable of events taking place locally would be published on the council's website;

The objectives of the working group had now been completed and it was proposed that there would be no requirement for it to meet again. Members discussed the report and asked that thanks be extended to the officers dealing with the working group.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the arrangements in relation to commemorating Major Edward (Mick) Mannock and the end of World War I, be noted;
- (ii) any further decisions required to finalise arrangements, be delegated to the managing director, in consultation with the chairman of the working group;
- (iii) as the working group had completed the objectives set out in its terms of reference it would be disbanded.

12. 2017-18 REVENUE OUTTURN

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received in relation to the council's revenue expenditure against approved budget for the financial year 2017-18.

The final outturn position had been calculated and £0.837m of general reserves would be required to fund the 2017-18 outturn. This was a favourable movement of £0.234m compared to the original budgeted use of reserves. The report reminded the committee that the continued use of reserves to support the budget remained unsustainable.

Appended to the report was the revenue monitoring position to 31 March 2018.

The section 151 officer presented her report and reiterated that the biggest risk to the budget was the rising cost of temporary accommodation for the homeless. Members discussed the report and agreed that the current use of reserves was unsustainable. It was noted that the decision made on the housing options service would help to reduce the need to rely on reserves in future.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the creation of new ear marked reserves as detailed in the report be approved;
- (ii) the utilisation of existing ear marked reserves as detailed in the report be approved;
- (iii) the contribution to existing ear marked reserves, as detailed in the report, be approved;
- (iv) the outturn position, subject to audit, outlined in the report, along with the reasons for the projected outturn variations as at 31 March 2018 be noted.

13. 2017-18 CAPITAL OUTTURN

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received in relation to the council's capital expenditure against approved budget for the financial year 2017-18.

The capital programme had been agreed in February 2017 with priorities as at schedule 1 being approved for funding. Supplementary bids and the re-profiling of schemes produced a total programme for the year of £3.811m. Information ascertained from budget managers throughout the year had resulted in an updated forecast outturn of £3.465m being reported to committee in March 2017.

The final capital programme monitoring statement for 2017-18 as appended to the report at appendix one had an outturn of £2.162m, a variation of £1.303m, compared to the previously revised forecast of £3.465m.

Also appended to the report was the capital programme funding position at appendix two and the analysis of significant capital budget variances at appendix three.

The report also detailed a request for an additional £27,000 for the memorial wall scheme at the crematorium, as the original planned location for the wall had to be revised due to a major utility line running through the site. An alternative site had been identified which required an access pathway from the main car park.

An initial estimate of £1,247k had been received in respect of future infrastructure works identified for the crematorium site. These works included memorial gardens, including one for veterans, an extension to the car park and associated groundworks and drainage. The committee was asked to agree a budget of £1,247k to be released into the capital programme as each element of the development progressed.

In October 2016 a two year implementation programme for an ICT transformation strategy had been approved. Significant progress had been made in both the business applications area and the underpinning infrastructure. In 2018 the focus was to establish a new data centre at Crown Hosting, along with the implementation of a new wide area network across sites, to progress an applications rationalisation and to re-design the IT service. Details of the implementation of phase two of the programme were contained within the report, which required additional funds of £212,981.00.

The managing director addressed the committee and confirmed that, due to the IT issues that occurred at the end of May, the IT team would be presenting a report to the committee to provide an update on the outage. It was also confirmed they would be presenting to the partnerships and performance committee to discuss lessons learnt, and to confirm what measures they had put in place to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence in future.

Members raised queries regarding the ability to meet the volume of projects in the capital programme. The section 151 officer confirmed that the council's capacity to deliver projects had increased since last year and will increase further after the property and projects restructure, so she was confident that the projects would be managed if funded. It was confirmed that a report

requesting additional resource would be taken to the July council meeting, which would help to deliver the capital programme.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the outturn position on the capital programme and the reasons for the variances as shown at appendix one be noted;
- (ii) the position on the funding of the capital programme be noted; and the reprofiling of budgets, as shown at appendix two, be agreed;
- (iii) the update on the 2018-19 capital programme, as shown in section 7 of the report, be noted.

R3 RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) the request for an additional £27k for the crematorium memorial wall scheme be approved along with an approval, in principle, to the sum of £1,247k, for future infrastructure development of the site;
- (ii) the request for an additional £213k for phase two of the IT transformation programme, as detailed in section 9 of the report, be approved.

14. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN – ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received in relation to the annual report of treasury management activity for 2017-18 and the outturn position in respect of the application of the treasury management strategy for 2017-18.

The report detailed the investments and included money market transactions; short term investments for periods of less than one year; investment trusts; borrowing; interest received; and future prospects.

Appended to the report were the prudential indicators for the year 2017-18 along with the economic overview.

The section 151 officer addressed the committee and confirmed this would be the last resources committee she would be attending before leaving the organisation. Members asked for thanks to be noted to Mrs Knowles for her dedication and hard work over her time at the organisation.

R4 RECOMMENDED that the treasury management outturn position, as detailed in the report, be approved.

15. PROPERTY MATTERS

The annexed circulated report of the director was received to provide members with an update in relation to various property matters.

During several workshops members had identified the projects they wished officers to focus on over the next eighteen months; these would be identified as priorities on which officer and financial resource should be focused.

The report set out a list of priority projects, indicating whether they should be expedited (E), High (H), Medium (M) or Low (L) with each project being detailed further within the report as follows:

- (a) Croyland Hall and Abbey (E);
- (b) Wellingborough Homes land rationalisation (H);
- (c) Croyland Road development site (former swimming pool) disposal (E);
- (d) Doddington Road development site – options (H);
- (e) Drill Hall – disposal (E);
- (f) Town centre car parking – options (H);
- (g) Redwell leisure Centre – review (H);
- (h) The Tithe Barn – improvements and enhancements (E);
- (i) Tithe Barn Road offices conversion – options (H);
- (j) S106 projects, including town centre enhancement (H/M);
- (k) Castle Theatre (E);
- (l) Crematorium (E);
- (m) Multi-Storey car park (H);
- (n) Asset strategy – disposal and acquisition (M);
- (o) Tender for the management of the commercial property portfolio (E);
- (p) High Street/Jacksons Lane retained land (E);
- (q) Road adoptions/street lights and brooks (H)

Before the report was discussed by members, the chairman addressed the committee and confirmed that the Drill Hall had attracted considerable interest by potential buyers. Members expressed their views on the potential sale of the building and agreed that they wish the site to be utilised.

A concern was raised about the plans to commission a report to create additional car parking facilities adjacent to Castle Way as it could potentially destroy the landscape, and other sites could be more suitable. It was noted that a comprehensive report on parking would be provided to members, taking into account the comments made.

Cllr Scarborough proposed an amendment to 4.4 of the report which was seconded by Cllr Henley to read as follows:

“to commission a detailed report on creating additional car parking spaces in the town, to be presented to the town centre sub-committee”

On being put to vote, the motion was declared carried. This amendment became part of the substantive motion and on being put to the vote was declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the list of priority projects as outlined in 6.2 of the report be approved, with dedicated officer and financial resource 2018-19 and 2019-20, and the progress to date be noted;
- (ii) no further work be progressed to convert Croyland Hall and Abbey into residential accommodation until it was no longer required as temporary accommodation by this authority or other organisations;
- (iii) the Croyland Road development site be disposed of for best consideration should planning permission be obtained;
- (iv) approval be given to the commissioning of a detailed report on creating additional car parking spaces in the town, to be presented to the town centre sub-committee.

16. NENE VALLEY CREMATORIUM – PROPERTY MATTERS

The annexed circulated report of the director was received in relation to the outstanding property related issues of the crematorium and to progress the lease of the site to the wholly owned company.

The report detailed the officers' reasons for recommending that the council enter into a peppercorn lease from September 2016 for a period of five years with Wellingborough Bereavement Services. The report also detailed the capital bid to create infrastructure within the grounds to allow gradual phased development of the site; phasing was necessary because of its size.

(Councillor Graves left the room during the discussion on this item due to the conflict of his position on the board of directors at the crematorium).

RESOLVED that:

- (i) approval be given to the granting of a lease for five years from September 2016, at a peppercorn rent, to Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd, taking into account the need for the company to become established and time for the council to complete the project to landscape the grounds; the period of the lease would also provide sufficient flexibility should local government in Northamptonshire be reorganised;
- (ii) it be noted that a bid for capital funding had been submitted to enable the development of the site landscaping, with the first stages relating to infrastructure.

(Cllr Graves returned to the meeting).

17. OXFORD – MILTON KEYNES – CAMBRIDGE ARC GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The annexed circulated report of the managing director was received to seek approval to become a member of the central corridor growth board.

The report detailed the ongoing discussions, at a regional level, with regard to a response to the National Infrastructure Commission's report on the southern midlands area 'Partnering for Prosperity: a new deal for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford arc'. It proposed membership of a central area growth board and an annual contribution of £5,000 towards the running and administration costs of the board.

The terms of reference of the board were appended to the report.

The managing director addressed the committee and explained the benefits to the borough, either as a separate entity or as part of a wider unitary council in future. Members considered the request and agreed that the membership would bring huge potential for the borough with it.

R5 RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) approval be given to the council becoming a full member of the Central Area Growth Board, and that the terms of reference be adopted;
- (ii) approval be given to an annual contribution of £5,000, of revenue support, to the growth board to help fund the work thereof;
- (iii) the leader of the council and the deputy leader of the council, in his absence, be appointed as the council representative on the growth board.

18. SHARED SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received in relation to shared service opportunities with Corby and East Northamptonshire councils for human resources, and to note the actions taken with East Northamptonshire Council for delivering the role of communications officer. This would build on the council's existing partnership arrangements and the opportunity to strengthen these.

The committee was also informed that the managing director was exploring all options for appointing a section 151 officer/deputy, following the resignation of the assistant director currently appointed to that position. This would be the subject of a separate report to Council.

The report detailed the opportunity of sharing the human resources function with other councils, with Corby Borough Council hosting the shared service as they already had a large team led by a human resources manager. The Borough Council of Wellingborough's HR service consisted of one full time senior human resources officer supported by a part time administrative assistant.

In May 2018, East Midlands Councils (EMC) carried out an independent review of the human resources function in order to evaluate the delivery of the service by the users, as well as from the perspective of the officers within the HR teams. The review was appended to the report. This identified that the

quality and advice from the existing team was good, but that capacity was insufficient when compared to other authorities. It was considered that this partnership opportunity would be beneficial for the council and the human resources team, particularly with the potential changes across the county.

Work was now underway with other authorities to address potential efficiencies arising from joint working, as well as harmonising policies and procedures.

The report also detailed the timetable for the shared service with a provisional start date of 1 November 2018; and the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE), which would apply for employees within the human resources service, who would transfer to Corby Borough Council.

The assistant director presented the report to members and asked that the resolution 4.1 be amended to read “a shared service for the human resources function be agreed, in partnership with Corby and East Northamptonshire Councils, with Corby as the hosting authority, at the earliest opportunity”

R6 RECOMMENDED that approval be given:

- (i) to a shared service for the human resources function, in partnership with Corby and East Northamptonshire Councils, with Corby as the hosting authority, at the earliest opportunity;
- (ii) for appropriate consultation being commenced with employees affected by the proposal;

RESOLVED that it be noted that:

- (i) the position of communication officer be shared with East Northamptonshire Council on a 50% basis;
- (ii) the managing director would consider opportunities to secure the appointment of a section 151 officer and/or deputy and would report to Council at a later date.

19. IRRECOVERABLE COUNCIL TAX, HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS, NON-DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTS

The annexed circulated report and exempt appendix of the section 151 officer was received for the write off of irrecoverable debts. The purpose of the report was to request approval for the write off of the debts that were in excess of £2000.

Members discussed the amounts and agreed to write off the debts as identified in the report.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The sum of £29,659.67 of irrecoverable council tax and non-domestic rates be written off;

- (ii) It be noted that the sum of £32,223.30 had been written off under the delegated power of the section 151 officer.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 10:35pm.