

COUNCIL MEETING – 14 JULY 2020

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

22 June 2020

Present: Councillors Allebone (Chairman), Skittrall (Vice-Chairman), Anslow, Bell, Ekins, Emerson, G Lawman, Maguire, Morrall, Partridge-Underwood, Walia, M Waters and Watts.

Also present: Mr A Piper (Assistant Director/Committee Manager), Mrs S Bateman, (Senior Planning Officer), Mrs V Phillipson (Principal Property and Projects Manager) and Mrs C A Mundy, (Democratic Services Officer), Mrs F Hubbard and Mrs E Robinson were also present as meeting producers.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that an apology was received from Councillor Griffiths.

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, no declarations were made.

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF 17 FEBRUARY 2020

The minutes of the development committee of 17 February 2020 were received.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the development committee of 17 February 2020, be confirmed and signed.

4. HOUSING REQUIREMENT FOR ISHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The annexed circulated report of the principal planning manager was received to agree an indicative housing requirement figure for the Isham Neighbourhood area.

The council is required to provide an indicative housing requirement figure for a neighbourhood area if requested to do so by a neighbourhood planning body.

The report detailed the approach for agreeing a housing requirement figure for Isham being a designated neighbourhood area. Also detailed in the report were the housing requirements for the borough as adopted in the Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy in 2016.

It was considered that an overall housing minimum requirement of 50 dwellings, between 2011 and 2013, would be reasonable; this would need to

be tested through the neighbourhood plan examination, and follows a similar approach to that used in the JCS and is considered robust and defensible.

The chairman made reference to a conversation with the ward councillor, Councillor Hallam, who had been unable to attend the meeting, but who had raised concerns over the current sewage infrastructure which was not adequate for the houses in the village. Recent rainfall had resulted in raw sewage in the gardens of a number of houses in the lower areas of the village. Work had been undertaken by Anglian Water but there was still an issue which needed resolution before additional housing was built. He was also concerned that additional housing would mean additional vehicle movement and reiterated the need for Isham bypass to be completed.

Members discussed the housing need in detail and agreed with Councillor Hallam's comments and concerns. It was stressed that the housing need should be based on the requirements of Isham to enable young people to continue to live in affordable homes in their own village, and for older people to be able to downsize to a more suitable home. A question was asked about whether there would be suitable and sufficient sites within the village boundary and why the nearest high-growth settlement was defined as Wellingborough, as it was deemed that there were other towns in closer proximity to Isham. There was also concern over the sustainability of the number of potential properties. Councillors asked if the current core strategy would change when Wellingborough became part of the unitary council.

Mrs Bateman responded to the points raised and explained that the borough council's role was to identify the housing need of the parish, any constraints on the housing needs figures would need to form part of the neighbourhood plan. Such plan could recommend restrictions, or a delay in development, until suitable infrastructure was in place. Mrs Bateman stressed that the Neighbourhood Plan initially needed to plan for 13 dwellings and identify where these would be. Assistance in finding suitable sites and support from the council would be given to deliver the plan to examination stage. She also clarified that the current strategy limited development in villages; this was unlikely to change even if the bypass progressed. The nearest high-growth settlement was defined as Wellingborough as this was within the borough, however, discussions could take place with other villages, to see if they would be prepared (and able) to take development. With regard to those people with a housing need, the neighbourhood plan could include a policy to give priority to those who had a strong connection to Isham.

The chairman thanked members and Mrs Bateman for the good discussion.

Councillor Skittrall proposed the recommendation as contained within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Ekins.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that approval be given to an indicative housing requirement figure of 50 dwellings for Isham Neighbourhood area for the period 2011 to 2031.

5. TOWN CENTRE VISION

(Councillor Watts joined the meeting at this point.)

The annexed circulated report of the director was received to update members on the responses to the town centre vision document, which had been the subject of a public consultation, between 9 March 2020 and 19 April 2020.

Twelve responses had been received and the comments had been collated and acknowledged and were detailed in appendix two of the report, along with the officer's responses and suggested way forward.

Many of the responses highlighted the need to reduce traffic, create pedestrian areas, increase cycleways and to consider maximising the value of open space.

Officers are continuing to progress the following approved projects as agreed by the appropriate development or resources committee, and relevant comments received can be fed into these projects where possible.

- The Tithe Barn and Public Realm.
- Multi-story car park refurbishment.
- Phase 1 of footpath to Morrisons
- Croyland Gardens and Park Entrance.

The report proposes that officers undertake further studies on connections and roads/transport and that the feasibility work on other projects are brought forward to the Wellingborough Town Regeneration Working Group for discussion before being presented to the appropriate committee.

Progress would continue on the above which would feed into the previously approved projects as detailed below:

- The Tithe Barn and Public Realm;
- Multi-storey car park refurbishment;
- Phase 1 of footpath to Morrisons;
- Croyland Gardens and park entrance

It was intended that the Wellingborough Town Regeneration Working Group would meet to discuss this further with a view to reporting back in September.

Members made reference to the comments and suggestions following the consultation and considered that the main issues were transport related with a requirement for transport studies, more pedestrian only areas, cycle routes, suitable town centre disabled parking provision, the need for open spaces and a desire for a water feature, if possible making use of the natural springs that Wellingborough is known for. Members also asked about the removal of buildings in Market Street which would give further open space and a view of

the Market Place and church; also commenting that that cycling had become increasingly popular in the current climate.

Mrs Philipson clarified that the county council was consulting on connectivity with regard to traffic flow, and improvements to the sign-posting of the borough's extensive cycleways was also being looked at. Various suggestions for the type and location of a water feature had been made and this could be considered by the working group. Public consultation would be undertaken on individual proposals before being approved by committee and implemented. With regard to the possible changes to open up the Market Street area, this had been considered but would involve the removal of buildings via a compulsory purchase order, and loss of revenue, so financially would not be considered viable.

Councillor Lawman proposed an amendment to the proposed action in the report, to enable this to be progressed as quickly as possible, as follows:

“Resolve to note the consultation responses and agree the officer comments; and seek to progress these projects and initiatives through the Wellingborough Town Centre Regeneration Working Group as soon as possible.”

Councillor Anslow seconded this amendment.

The chairman put the amendment to the vote. This was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the consultation responses, and officer comments, be noted and agreed;
- (ii) Approval be given to progress these projects and initiatives through the Wellingborough Town Centre Regeneration Working Group as soon as possible.

6. ANY OTHER ITEM THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES IS URGENT

The chairman informed the committee that there was no further business and closed the meeting.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm.

COUNCIL MEETING – 14 JULY 2020

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

24 June 2020

Present: Councillors Griffiths (Chairman), Partridge-Underwood (Vice-Chairman), Allebone, Bell, Emerson, Francis, Graves, Harrington, Henley, L Lawman, Morrall, Scarborough, Skittrall, Ward and Weatherill.

Also present: Mr S Darcy (Director/Section 151 Officer), Mrs V Jessop, Mr A Piper and Mr E Symons (Assistant Directors), Mr M O'Donnell, Team Leader (Health Protection), Mrs A Wilcox, (Principal Environmental Health Manager), Mrs C Mundy, (Democratic Services Officer), Mrs F Hubbard and Mrs E Robinson (Meeting Producers.)

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

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 declaration was made:

Councillor	Minute no.	Reason
Henley	Min 7 Revenue Outturn 2019-20	Other interest Volunteers with One Wellingborough
Emerson	Min 7 Revenue Outturn 2019-20	Other interest Volunteers with One Wellingborough

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2020

The minutes of the resources committee of 11 March 2020 were received.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the resources committee held on 11 March 2020, be confirmed and signed.

4. COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER – 47 ALBERT ROAD, WELLINGBOROUGH

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received on the progress made with regard to the compulsory purchase of 47 Albert Road, Wellingborough; and to seek approval of the General Vesting Declaration and property purchase.

For many years officers had been working with the owner of 47 Albert Road, Wellingborough to encourage refurbishment and re-occupation of the property, without success. Services committee in 2014 had given approval to commence action to move towards a compulsory purchase of the property. Whilst pursuing the action, officers continued to work with the owner without resolution. In February 2020 the case was referred to a public inquiry conducted by the Planning Inspector who confirmed the order; council officers have now progressed to the next stage of advertising the decision and publicising the required notices, and now require member approval to progress with the purchase and subsequent resale of the property.

The Planning Inspector's decision was appended to the report.

Members fully supported the decision to proceed with the compulsory purchase, with ward councillors particularly thanking officers for their hard work in bringing this to fruition after so many complains and concerns raised by constituents. Councillors also fully supported the need to bring empty properties back into occupation. A question was asked about the outstanding council tax; the officer confirmed that this would be reclaimed from the sale proceeds, if there was a legal mechanism to do so. Members also asked if they could be issued with a Member briefing note regarding the number of empty properties in the borough. Officers confirmed they would do so.

Councillor Emerson proposed the action within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Francis. On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that the General Vesting Declaration (GVD) be approved in respect of the compulsory purchase order of 47 Albert Road, Wellingborough (and associated land as shown edged in bold in appendix A) under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981;

R1 RECOMMEND that:

- (i) the compulsory purchase order be concluded;
- (ii) all final decisions regarding the purchase and resale be delegated to the assistant director (corporate landlord) in conjunction with the section 151 officer.

5. HOUSING OPTIONS UPDATE

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received in relation to the delivery of the housing options service with a request that temporary staffing arrangements be continued to mitigate against homeless pressures.

The report detailed that homeless case loads and demand for homes continued to increase in 2019. Homelessness placements into temporary and emergency accommodation reduced to a three year low in April 2019. Over 20 properties had been purchased in the last two years to use as temporary accommodation and this would continue in the future.

Mrs Jessop, Assistant Director, presented the report to committee.

A successful rough sleeper project was formed to meet government expectations of eradicating rough sleeping with over £350,000 secured in government support.

During the year the service had concentrated on managing casework along with the additional emergency demands from the covid pandemic.

Appended to the report were the following:

- Management information relating to homeless applications, housing register applications and temporary accommodation use;
- Temporary accommodation costs and mitigation;
- Affordable housing delivery;
- Current staff structure (established and fixed term MHCLG funded).

Members discussed the report and congratulated officers on the considerable work that had been progressed since the last report.

Particular reference was made by members to the properties that had been purchased, and the delay with the repairs and works contracted to Corby Borough Council, who was carrying out this work on the borough council's behalf. Mrs Jessop clarified that there had been capacity issues at Corby and further delays had been caused by the Covid pandemic. Some of the homes listed in appendix three needed major work such as central heating, new boilers and roofing to comply with Corby's high 'decent home standard'. Members continued to express their concern and commented that progress had been slow on getting these properties back into use and that this was of great social importance. If Corby BC was unable to manage this work in a suitable time consideration should be given to this being carried out by someone else. Mrs Jessop noted the concern and referred members to the recommendation in the report to agree additional capacity to manage the homes and help mitigate this risk.

Reference was made to the progress made with the rough sleeping strategy and the work undertaken to give support, not only with accommodation but also with other issues which frequently led to rough sleeping. A government

grant had been requested to mitigate the council against the impact of the Covid pandemic, following the government's 'everyone in' campaign, launched when the pandemic hit. The service had rehoused a significant number of rough sleepers in one week.

Councillors referenced appendix three, affordable housing delivery, and asked for clarity on where in Earls Barton the houses were and also referenced the projected figures for Glenvale Park.

Mrs Jessop confirmed that the houses in Earls Barton were on the David Wilson estate. With regard to Glenvale Park, Mrs Jessop responded to say that housing associations were in discussion with developers about buying units which would increase the offer of affordable houses. The government had made a pledge to create 3,000 new homes in the wake of the pandemic with £633m of funding on offer. The chairman suggested that further information on this would be available for the September committee.

(Councillor Graves joined the meeting, having experienced technical difficulties.)

Members asked the assistant director to pass on the thanks of the committee to the housing service for the work that had been progressed during the last year.

The action within the report was proposed by Councillor Harrington and seconded by Councillor L Lawman. On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that approval be given to:

- (i) continue the temporary arrangements for three staff to deliver the housing options services;
- (ii) a temporary additional staff member being appointed to deliver housing management services to July 2021, the decision on financing this post would be delegated to the leader of the council and the director of resources/section 151 officer;
- (iii) the noting of the decision made, under the head of paid service delegations, to extend the housing manager and fixed term posts to July 2021.

6. PROPERTY MATTERS

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to provide an update on ongoing approved property projects as detailed in appendix one to the report.

Mr Piper, Assistant Director (Corporate Landlord), presented the report and referred to the car park in Doddington Road and the former air raid shelter in Arthur Street, Wellingborough.

Planning consent for the residential development of the staff car park in Doddington Road had been approved along with the disposal of the asset to Greatwell Homes. Greatwell Homes no longer wished to develop the land and approval was now sought for the disposal of the site on the open market.

The garages at Arthur Street were also to be included in the transfer of assets to Greatwell Homes, leaving the former air raid shelter on the corner of the site in the ownership of the council. The existing occupier has expressed an interest in acquiring the freehold, which has no services and is used for storage. Approval is sought for the disposal of the site, initially to the occupier, subject to terms to be agreed, or alternatively on the open market.

A member asked about the progress with the Redhill Farm, roads and sewers. Mr Piper confirmed that there was one very minor issue to be resolved and that he was hopeful that this would be completed shortly. Mr Darcy confirmed this would be expedited.

Members noted the steady progress as detailed in appendix one but asked if the end dates shown on the table could detail the revised dates and provide more up to date information. Mr Piper clarified that he would ask the project managers to do this for the next report.

An update was requested on Doddington Road Cemetery and the provision of cemetery plots. Mr Piper clarified that there had been some delay during the pandemic with regard to the availability of contractors to create the additional plots, but this issue should be resolved in the near future.

Mr Piper was also asked for an update on the Greatwell Homes land rationalisation. He clarified that the legal documentation was being finalised along with the associated 16 plans that were being drawn, with completion expected in July.

Members also congratulated officers on the completion of the community asset transfer to the Daylight centre, and asked for an update on the community asset transfer for the Hemmingwell Centre. Mr Piper clarified that more information was required to bring this forward to committee and that officers were working with the community on this potential asset transfer.

Councillor Allebone proposed the action within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Morrall. On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the progress with regard to projects, as outlined in appendix one to the report be noted;
- (ii) approval, in principle, be given to the disposal of the Doddington Road car park, Wellingborough site for residential development;
- (iii) approval, in principle, be given to the disposal of the former air raid shelter at Arthur Street, Wellingborough;

- (iv) delegated authority be given to the assistant director (corporate landlord), to agree the detailed terms of disposal in respect of the above properties.

(During the discussion on this item Councillor Graves lost connectivity and left the meeting.)

7. REVENUE OUTTURN 2019-2020

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received to give members an overview of the council's revenue expenditure against approved budget for the financial year 2019-2020.

The section 151 officer summarised the report. He detailed the underspend of £859k compared to that reported in January of £690K, and as further detailed within the report. The final outturn position indicated that there had been no need to use general funds for 2019-2020. The use of earmarked reserves was estimated to be £308K with £92K for grants for homelessness and property recharges flowing through reserves to services.

Section 8 of the report also detailed the response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the urgent actions that had been taken. There were some concerns over the impact of the pandemic and these would be reported more fully at the September meeting.

Appended to the report was the revenue monitoring position to 31 March 2020.

The report further detailed the creation of the urgent approval group, made up of the leader of the council, leader of the opposition and the chairman of the arts and leisure sub-committee, this enabled the council to provide funding and support to respond to local needs and prevent failure of service. The following decisions had been approved by that group:

- One Wellingborough bid – a partnership between the Victoria Centre and Glamis Hall.
- The Castle Theatre;
- Doddington Road Cemetery capital works.

Funding of £840k had been awarded by the government to support the additional pressures faced from the pandemic. It was currently estimated that £1,140m had been spent. It was also anticipated that there would be reduced income streams during the financial year because of the pandemic. This would result in an adverse impact on finances and may lead to reserves being used. Further information would be available for the committee in September.

Members were grateful for the information provided and stressed the need to ensure that the government provided sufficient funds so reserves did not need to be used. There was concern that planning fees, business rates and the collection fund would be affected and that this would result in a significant reduction in income for the year. Members understood that the true picture

would not be known fully until the September committee when officers would provide a more detailed report. In the meantime officers would continue to pursue the government for additional funding.

Councillor Skittrall proposed the action within the report and this was seconded by Cllr Harrington. On being to the vote the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) approval be given to the utilisation of existing earmarked reserves as detailed in the report at 6.7a;
- (ii) approval be given to the contribution to existing earmarked reserves as detailed in the report at 6.7b;
- (iii) the outturn position, subject to audit, as outlined in the report and the reasons for the projected outturn variations as at 31 March 2020 be noted.
- (iv) the Covid-19 update as detailed in the report, along with the urgent actions taken to support the council's response to dealing with the circumstances and the recovery stage, be noted.

8. CAPITAL OUTTURN 2019-2020

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received to give an overview of capital expenditure.

The section 151 officer, summarised the report and referenced the progress of the multi storey car park and the Isham bypass funding. He also reported that an application had been received from Earls Barton Parish Council for funding but further information was required before it could be brought before committee.

Attached to the report were the following appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Capital outturn report to 31 March 2020;
- Appendix 2 - Capital programme funding position;
- Appendix 3 - Analysis of significant capital budget variances.

Councillor L Lawman asked if the concerns over the 3G pitch and the water logged areas had been resolved. Mr Piper confirmed that the sub-contractor had been asked to return to resolve this. He was not aware of the current position but confirmed he would make further enquiries and provide a member briefing note giving an update.

Councillor Henley asked if the capital spend of £22m this year plus £25,000 next year would be achieved as this was the last year of the borough council. He considered that for the September meeting members needed to know what would be completed and there potentially needed to be some reprofiling.

The section 151 officer confirmed there would be extensive spend in this year but said that a thorough re-profiling would be provided for the September meeting.

Members also asked whether the borough council had a duty to notify the progress on capital schemes to the shadow authority. The s151 officer clarified that task and finish groups had been established and there was discussion about assets and expenditure. A task and finish group for accommodation had also been established and there would be a requirement to rationalise properties.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the outturn position on the capital programme and the reasons for the variances as detailed in appendix one, be noted;
- (ii) the position on the funding of the capital programme be noted and that re-profiling of budgets, as shown at appendix two, be agreed;
- (iii) the update on the 2020-2021 capital programme, as detailed in the report, be noted;

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN – ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received to inform the committee of the outturn position in respect of the application of the treasury management strategy for 2019-2020.

The section 151 officer reported that there had been an over achievement of £96k on that forecasted. Whilst interest rates had dropped, long term investments had been good.

R2 RECOMMENDED that the treasury management outturn position, as detailed in the report be approved.

10. ANY OTHER ITEM THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES IS URGENT

The chairman had no further business to discuss and thanked everyone for their attendance; and officers for the organisation and conduct during the meeting; before declaring the meeting closed.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 8.20pm.

COUNCIL MEETING – 14 JULY 2020

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

29 June 2020

Present: Councillors Graves (Chairman), Skittrall (Vice-Chairman), Aslam and Maguire.

Also present: Miss K Denton (Assistant Director), Mrs V Jessop (Assistant Director), Mr S Whiteley (Electoral Services Team Leader) and Ms E McGinlay (Electoral Services Officer).

(Ms J Savage, Ms D Lewis and Ms M Meadwell attended from Greatwell Homes for Agenda Item 4. Ms S Jinks from Corby Borough Council attended to present on Agenda Item 5.)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillor Patel.

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 under-mentioned councillors declared an interest in the following items:

Councillor	Minute	Report Title	Reason
Maguire	4	Presentation from Greatwell Homes	Registerable interest – relative in employment of Greatwell Homes

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 be confirmed and signed.

4. PRESENTATION FROM GREATWELL HOMES

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to introduce the presentation from Greatwell Homes. The chairman invited Ms J Savage, Ms D Lewis and Ms M Meadwell to present the report.

The representatives from Greatwell Homes thanked members for the invitation and began their presentation, discussing their achievements over the past year and the activities undertaken in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ms Meadwell, Director of Customers, outlined some of the work around digitalisation and improving the range of services accessible online, including

customers paying rent online and setting up direct debits, with a 49% increase in customers utilising online services.

She also informed members of Greatwell Homes' achieving TPAS accreditation, largely as a result of the implementation of their customer involvement framework, and went on to say that over 80% of Greatwell Homes tenants expressed that they were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

Ms Lewis, Director of Assets, outlined some of the improvement works undertaken and the phased planned building works going forward, including the delivery of 159 new homes in the borough over the next few years.

Ms Savage, Chief Executive, provided members with information relating to the organisation's response to Covid-19, including suspending non-essential works, identification of vulnerable customers and providing welfare calls and support to those at most risk of isolation. She went on to explain some of the challenges for the organisation moving into the recovery phase, and how the service provision may need to adjust to accommodate different working practices alongside government guidance and the potential financial impact of the pandemic.

Members discussed the presentation and queried the approach to evictions under the pandemic, with some concerns around antisocial tenants and tenants at high risk. Ms Meadwell specified that whilst evictions had been suspended until 23 August 2020, Greatwell Homes has a generally low level of eviction rates, with five evictions due to arrears and three due to antisocial behaviour within the last year. She went on to say that eviction was always used as a last resort, and that Greatwell Homes work hard with customers to ensure that any customers experiencing difficulties were not slipping into rent arrears.

Members also discussed the challenges facing tenants who are having to move properties during lockdown and the support offered by Greatwell Homes to those residents. The chair thanked the members from Greatwell Homes for attending and wished them well for the future.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

Due to slight technical issues the chairman decided to take agenda item 6 earlier in the meeting and re-ordered the agenda accordingly.

5. PERFORMANCE: COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – 1 OCTOBER 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2020

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to inform the committee of the council's performance, including Wellingborough Norse, during the second half of 2019-20 in handling customer feedback, including complaints which have been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

The assistant director advised that there were no significant areas of concern, with attention paid to the consistent positive outcomes from complaints that had been referred to the LGSCO.

Members thanked Ms Denton for the report and expressed their pleasure with regard to the positive outcomes and requested again that their thanks to the council's employees be noted.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6. PRESENTATION FROM HUMAN RESOURCES SHARED SERVICE

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to introduce a presentation from the Human Resources Shared Service (HRSS). The chairman invited Ms S Jinks of Corby Borough Council to present the report.

Ms Jinks thanked the chairman for the invitation to the meeting and talked members through the background and the structure of the HRSS, which works in partnership with Corby Borough Council and East Northamptonshire Council. The service began as a collaborative agreement, working together for around 12 months up to the formal adoption of the service in 1 April 2020.

Ms Jinks outlined some of the key achievements of the HRSS, including a performance management report allowing for comparison of key information between the three authorities, and specified that the Borough Council of Wellingborough had the lowest sickness absence and staff turnover of all partners in the shared service. Other achievements resulting from the partnership included a more efficient digitalised shared recruitment platform and the development of an agency framework for temporary resources within the public sector.

She went on to focus on the options that the HRSS delivered for training, including the reduced costs of procuring corporate training across three councils, alongside the identification of free training courses online for employee-led training opportunities and how the HRSS provides great resilience for all three authorities involved in the service.

Moving onto the Covid-19 response, Ms Jinks outlined the challenge of significant changes to working environments and how it has impacted on the relationship between employees and staff, alongside dedicated resources for staff to assist with different personal situations and maintain connected professional relationships.

Ms Jinks closed by providing members with information around some of the work being undertaken with Future Northants to prepare for the new local authorities in the county, such as TUPE of staff and the development of the culture of the new organisation with policies, procedures and training.

Members also considered how Kettering Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council would be dovetailed into the existing shared service as part of unitary developments and were advised that this was yet to be determined.

Members thanked Ms Jinks for her presentation and paid particular thanks and praise to the employees at Wellingborough for the positive feedback received as part of the presentation.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

7. PROGRAMME OF WORK 2020-21

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to seek guidance from the committee as to what broad areas of policy they would like to review in the coming year.

Members discussed the organisations proposed and which services and organisations they would like to call to present to the committee within the current cycle.

Following a short discussion it was agreed that the work programme for 2019-20 at Appendix B would be amended to include Shire Community Services to present at a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the work programme for 2019-20 at Appendix B to the report be agreed with the inclusion of Shire Community Services.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 8:35pm.

COUNCIL MEETING – 14 JULY 2020

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

30 June 2020

Present: Councillors G Lawman, Ward, Harrington, Scanlon and Abram.

Also present: Mrs V Jessop (Assistant Director), Mrs A Wilcox (Principal Environmental Health Manager), Mr M O'Donnell (Team Leader Health Protection), Mrs L Eglinton (Senior Housing Technician), Mrs C Somerville (Team Leader Environmental Protection), Miss E McGinlay (Electoral Services Officer) and Mr S Whiteley (Electoral Services Team Leader).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that no apologies for absence were received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED to note that no declarations of interest were made.

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2020 be confirmed and signed.

4. AMENDMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY 2020-2022

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to propose amendments to the private sector housing policy in order to include the addition of the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 – policy on private sector landlord obligations.

Members discussed the report and requested clarification over the energy performance certification (EPC) for private rented properties, in particular at what point in time they were required to be renewed, especially if new tenants came in. The team leader (health protection) confirmed that a change in law that came into force in April 2020 meant that the legislation now applied to all private rented tenancies, regardless of when their contract started. He also noted that it was a landlord's responsibility to ensure their properties are compliant, but, that publication of the new obligations would be cascaded via the website, local agents and other avenues. Officers noted they would use the opportunity of the consultation to promote their series to landlords.

It was confirmed that the proposed consultation would allow the council to consult with a wider range of stakeholders and use it as an opportunity to work with the sector to get more information out on the changes in legislation.

Members noted that it was the council's policy to work with landlords and engage proportionately in education, rather than enforcement, in the first instance. Assurance was also given that work was in hand to ensure that the approach was common across north Northamptonshire in preparation for the unitary authority.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) a 21-day consultation on the draft policy be approved, and;
- (ii) delegated authority be given to the assistant director, in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman of the services committee, to make minor amendments to the draft policy on the basis of any consultation responses, and;
- (iii) the policy be adopted, subject to the assistant director's review of the consultation responses, where, if warranted, the policy would be returned to committee for further consideration.

5. PROPOSED CONSULTATION ON THE POTENTIAL RENEWAL AND AMENDMENT OF PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS (PSPO)

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to seek authority to undertake a consultation to review, amend and extend the borough wide PSPO pertaining to dog control and the town centre PSPO.

The team leader (environmental protection) confirmed that an initial screening equalities impact assessment had been undertaken, which showed no issues but confirmed that if any consequential changes happened as a result of the consultation, then this would be confirmed to the next committee.

Members discussed the report and queried whether motor vehicle nuisance such as driving across parks, using motorbikes and quad bikes, could be included in the town centre PSPO as well as extending it to the Doddington Road cemetery.

Members also asked that officers ensure that the consultation was clear about activities such as camping out or sleeping overnight in parks. It was confirmed that this detail would be added to the consultation, along with any additional suggestions from members. A members' briefing note would be issued to confirm further details of the consultation and seek any additional suggestions or comments.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) approval be given to a consultation being carried out by officers regarding the review, extension and amendment of the existing PSPOs; and
- (ii) it be noted that a further report will be submitted to committee to consider whether to extend and amend the existing PSPO's following consultation later in the year.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 7.22pm.