COUNCIL MEETING – 23 MARCH 2021

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

18 January 2021

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

Also present: Mr A Piper (Assistant Director/Committee Manager), Mrs S Bateman (Senior Planning Officer), Mrs C Clooney (Team Leader Environmental Protection), Mrs V Phillipson (Principal Property and Projects Manager), Mrs C A Mundy (Senior Democratic Services Officer (Committees/Members) - minute taker and Mrs E Robinson (Democratic Services Officer) - meeting producer.

The chairman welcomed everyone to the last scheduled meeting of the development committee, prior to the Borough Council of Wellingborough becoming part of North Northamptonshire Council.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies were received from Councillors Ekins, Emerson, Gough, Maguire 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, no declarations were made.

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF 28 SEPTEMBER 2020

The minutes of the development committee of 28 September 2020 were received. It was proposed by Councillor Bell and seconded by Councillor Anslow that the minutes be adopted. The motion, on being put to the vote, was declared carried.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the development committee of 28 September 2020, be confirmed and signed.

4. ISHAM CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The annexed circulated report of the principal planning manager was received to seek approval to consult with interested parties on the proposed Isham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan.
Appended to the report were the following:

Appendix 1 - Draft Isham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan;
Appendix 2 - Draft Isham Conservation Area boundary map.

The appraisal had been undertaken by Place Services on the borough council’s behalf. Place Services is an historic environment service provider with the Institute of Historic Building Conservation, a registered organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA). It has a proven track record of undertaking appraisals for clients and these are completed in line with national and local policy and guidance.

The report detailed the approach and methodology used for the review. The appraisal proposed several revisions to the Conservation Area boundary to reflect changing methodologies of good practice and to provide a clearer strategy, whilst acknowledging the practicalities of Isham’s unique built environment. These changes were further detailed in the report.

Approval was sought for a six-week consultation exercise, with interested parties such as Ward councillors, Isham Parish Council, Historic England, Northamptonshire County Council, Wellingborough Civic Society and residents. Correspondence would be sent directly to these interested parties and the information would be available on the council website and in reception areas. A finalised document and plan considering any responses received would be presented to a suitable committee meeting.

Members praised Place Services for the excellent and detailed report. The chairman informed the committee that Mr Murphy and Mr Martin of Place Services were present at the meeting and would answer any questions from Members.

The first question related to the rationalisation of three areas, as detailed in the report. Mr Murphy explained that the three areas have been removed to protect and safeguard the conservation area.

A question was asked about why the school was excluded. Mr Martin explained that the conservation boundary remained unchanged since 1980 and that it was the modern part of the school that was not included.

It was noted that reference was made to the Methodist Chapel within the report; this was incorrect, it was the Wesleyan Reform Chapel. This was noted and the document would be updated.

Councillor Griffiths proposed that a six-week consultation, as detailed in the report, be undertaken. This was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood. On being put to the vote this was declared carried.
RESOLVED that approval be given to a six-week consultation on the proposed Isham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, being undertaken with interested parties.

5. AIR QUALITY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to seek adoption of the Air Quality Supplementary Planning document (SPD), following a period of consultation.

Appended to the report were the following:

Appendix 1 - Statement of Consultation;
Appendix 2 - Air Quality SPD

The SPD had been prepared to support Policy 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and was intended to expand on the development plan policy by providing further details. Guidance within the document would be a material consideration in determining planning applications once adopted.

Councillors commended the SPD and considered this to be an excellent document and addition to the planning process. There was disappointment that developers were reluctant to embrace this as a way forward. By installing, for example, electric charging points this would be more environmentally friendly and cost effective, and developers should be encouraged to do so when building.

Members also asked if the document could be re-branded with the Borough Council of Wellingborough Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Supplementary Planning Document as the title, so North Northamptonshire Council could adopt this in the future.

Members raised some concern over the air quality through the town centre, which showed that emissions were high; with the prospect of more people living in flats in the town centre and this actively being promoted, it was considered important that improvements to air quality needed to be considered as soon as possible.

It was suggested that officers write to the local Members of Parliament and ask them to give their support to this document. Research had indicated that air quality had considerably improved during the first lockdown in 2020 when there was much less traffic. Anything that could be done to promote and encourage developers to add electric charging points during the build would be beneficial.

Councillor Griffiths proposed that the SPD be adopted, incorporating the borough council’s details. This was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood.
Councillor Lawman also proposed an addition that officers write to the local MP’s to ask them to promote and support the aims of the SPD. This was seconded by Councillor Bell.

The chairman put the proposals to the vote, and these were declared carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

(i) the responses to the consultation be noted;
(ii) approval be given to the adoption of the Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document, subject to it being rebranded with the Borough Council of Wellingborough’s details;
(iii) Correspondence be sent to the local Members of Parliament, Peter Bone and Chris Heaton-Harris, seeking their support.

6. **PROJECT UPDATE AND FUTURE PROJECTS**

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to update members on current and future projects to be put forward to the North Northamptonshire Council, and to discuss works at the Tithe Barn open space.

Appended to the report were the following:

Appendix 1 - Project register;
Appendix 2 - Water feature;
Appendix 3 - Tithe Barn Trees;
Appendix 4 - Wellingborough Town Regeneration Working Group notes.

The chairman welcomed Councillor Jon-Paul Carr to the meeting, via telephone, and allowed him to address the meeting.

Councillor Carr thanked the assistant director and his team for the work undertaken to retain the Drill Hall and 8a High Street, shortly to be adapted for supported living accommodation, as part of the important streetscape heritage value of the town centre. He commended officers for the suggestions to take forward ongoing projects to North Northamptonshire Council, including work to the Market Square, Church Street, Cycling Strategy and further works to The Embankment. He also considered that further discussion was needed around the two redundant London Road Cemetery Chapels and hoped that these historic buildings could be used in some way for community benefit in the future. He referred to the Tithe Barn area and agreed that the removal of some of the trees was justified. He asked if the cobbles, proposed to be removed, could be used somewhere in the new scheme, as he believed they originated from the former farm complex. He had reviewed the three options for a water feature in the report and considered that option C was preferable and wondered if, as this was historically a farmyard, the water feature could depict a water/cattle trough where water could pour from the heads of the animals. Alternatively, with this being close to the former site of the Abbey, that Monk’s Heads, could be used. He also suggested that aspects of the twinning connections with both Niort and Wittlich be depicted.
The chairman thanked Councillor Carr for his comments and suggestions which he believed would be worthy of consideration.

Members discussed the report before them.

Reference was made to the Tithe Barn area and the removal of trees, which was considered the right thing to do and would give a much better view of the Tithe Barn itself. Replacing the trees with alternatives as detailed in the report was supported. Regarding the water feature, there continued to be mixed views, though members did comment that Councillor Carr’s suggestions were a good alternative and in keeping with the history of the area. Whatever was installed members asked that it be reasonably priced with low maintenance costs. They also felt that the cobble stones, when removed, could be considered for incorporation in the Tithe Barn area.

One councillor referred to the ‘five wells water feature’ which was now planted as a sensory garden. She reported that this former water feature had running water leaking from it and that it urgently needed maintenance. She considered that this could be used again as a water feature rather than adding a further water feature in this vicinity.

Officers responded to the concern raised and informed the meeting that a scheme to address the drainage issues and water leak at this site was being worked on.

Reference was also made to the Doddington Road development site which was currently on the market. It was suggested that this be removed from the market as North Northamptonshire Council may choose to develop the site as part of its housing stock, rather than it being sold to a registered provider for social housing.

Bassett’s Park Skate Park was also discussed, as Councillor Anslow had received communication from concerned residents about the location of the skate park, following information residents had received over the last few days. She considered that Bassett’s Park was an ‘old-fashioned’, traditional Victorian park and this area was not suitable for a skate park of this size. Councillor Anslow cautioned that the noise emanating from skate parks was considerable and that the proposed location was not ideal for the residents of St Barnabas Street and the nearby schools. Residents had been given a week to comment on the scheme, which was the subject of a planning application. Councillor Anslow felt that, whilst agreeing that a skate park would be well used and invaluable, there may be more suitable parks, such as Croyland Park or Dale End for this facility – and that it should be sited well away from houses because of the noise levels. Cllr Morrall cautioned that Dale End was a former rubbish tip and would not support a structure such as a skate park.

Officers explained that the consultation was the first opportunity for residents to provide their views but that they can make their comments through the planning application process when the application is submitted. There was
information about the scheme on the website and more clarity would be added, but assurance was given that residents would have the opportunity to comment on the skate park through the planning process.

The chairman reminded members that, at this stage, officers only required a steer on how to move forward with the water feature; it was not a final decision.

It was suggested that a meeting of the Wellingborough Town Regeneration Working Group be convened as soon as possible to discuss the options for the water feature.

Members were extremely impressed with the long list of projects that had been completed, and those that were soon to come to fruition and thanked officers for the hard work that had taken place over the last three years to bring these forward for the people of the borough.

The following was proposed by Councillor Griffiths and seconded by Councillor Lawman:

(i) the update provided be noted;
(ii) the proposed projects detailed at 6.2 in the report be put forward to North Northamptonshire Council as part of the project selection process;
(iii) approval be given to the removal of three trees outside the Tithe Barn and that officers proceed with providing replacement trees in the vicinity of the Tithe Barn and/or Croyland Park;
(iv) the discussion and views of the committee be noted, and a meeting of the Wellingborough Town Centre Regeneration Working Group be convened to provide officers with a steer on a suitable water feature.

On being put to the vote, this was declared carried with two abstentions.

**RESOLVED** that:

(v) the update provided be noted;
(vi) the proposed projects detailed at 6.2 in the report be put forward to North Northamptonshire Council as part of the project selection process;
(vii) approval be given to the removal of three trees outside the Tithe Barn and that officers proceed with providing replacement trees in the vicinity of the Tithe Barn and/or Croyland Park;
(viii) the discussion and views of the committee be noted, and approval be given to convene a meeting of the Wellingborough Town Centre Regeneration Working Group to provide officers with a steer on a suitable water feature.
7. **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 8.15pm.
COUNCIL MEETING – 23 MARCH 2021
REPORT OF THE PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

8 February 2021

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

Also present: Miss K Denton (Assistant Director), Mrs G Chapman (Principal Community Support Manager), Miss N Harewood (Policy and Compliance Officer), Mr S Darcy (Director), Mr S Whiteley (Electoral Services Team Leader), and Ms E McGinlay (Electoral Services Officer).

(Ms C Fisher and Ms R Mallows attended from Daylight Centre to present on Agenda Item 4. Ms Breeden and Mr G Lawman attended from Shire Community Services to present on Agenda Item 5. Ms R Hadaway attended from Nene Valley Community Action to present on Agenda Item 6.)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Maguire and V Waters.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Councillor</th>
<th>Minute</th>
<th>Report Title</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aslam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Presentation from Daylight Centre</td>
<td>Registerable interest – sits on Victoria Centre Management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skittrall</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Presentation from Shire Community Services</td>
<td>Registerable interest – Director at Shire Community Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2020 be confirmed and signed.

4. PRESENTATION FROM DAYLIGHT CENTRE

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to introduce the presentation from Daylight Centre. The chairman invited Ms C Fisher and Ms R Mallows to deliver the presentation.

Ms Fisher thanked members for the invitation and began her presentation. She discussed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Daylight Centre,
including the centre and the shop having to close during the first lockdown and the effect on the available volunteer base, many of whom had to shield following government guidelines.

She went on to outline some of the other impacts of the pandemic, including the introduction of a delivery model for food parcels and working closely with officers at the council to provide solutions for the housed homeless and rough sleepers.

She explained that there had been a 37% increase in requests for food parcels during the first twelve weeks of lockdown, with a steady escalating need as people had been furloughed or lost employment, leading to a total of 46 tonnes of food and other essential items and toiletries being provided to vulnerable people across over 2,900 deliveries.

Ms Mallows outlined some of the volunteering activities and partnership working that the Daylight Centre had undertaken alongside projects for the future, including working with Accommodation Concern and starting an urban farming project.

Members discussed the work that Daylight Centre had undertaken, especially given the pandemic, and referenced low temperatures having an impact on service users. Ms Mallows and Ms Fisher confirmed that risk assessments and personal protective equipment (PPE) was available and in use and that many of their staff had received the Covid-19 vaccination. They also explained that service users were accessing support and food by visiting the new centre as required.

Members thanked Ms Fisher and Ms Mallows for their presentation and commended the work that had been undertaken by Daylight Centre throughout the pandemic.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

5. **PRESENTATION FROM SHIRE COMMUNITY SERVICES**

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to introduce a presentation from Shire Community Services (SCS). The chairman invited Ms Breeden to deliver the presentation.

Ms Breeden thanked members for the invitation and began her presentation. She outlined the history of SCS and provided some information around its Wellibus and Volunteer Medical Car services, outlining the impact that these services have for vulnerable residents around the borough.

She went on to explain the impact that the pandemic had had on the service, with significant drops in service users as many of their customers were advised to shield during the pandemic. She outlined how the organisation had implemented changes for personal safety, including a reduction in seating capacity on the Wellibus service and regular cleaning of touchpoints within the vehicles.
She concluded her presentation by explaining that one of the bigger challenges faced by SCS would be rebuilding confidence in the service, but that she felt that SCS were in a strong position moving forward to resume the service provision to vulnerable residents once Covid-19 restrictions allowed.

Councillor Aslam expressed his concern and thanks to SCS for providing their service to the residents of the borough and his hopes that SCS would be able to return to full capacity as soon as they were able to do so. Ms Breeden and Mr Lawman thanked the borough council for its support throughout the past year.

Members thanked Ms Breeden for her presentation and the wider Shire Community Services team for the work done to help to support residents through this year.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

6. PRESENTATION FROM NENE VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to introduce a presentation from Nene Valley Community Action (NVCA). The chairman invited Ms Hadaway to deliver the presentation.

Ms Hadaway outlined a merger between NVCA and Serve as a result of challenges faced by NVCA and issues with pre-pandemic funding, but that whilst the contracts had all been successfully novated, NVCA retained their branding and identity and that Serve had relocated to join NVCA on their premises.

She went on to discuss the issues faced by NVCA as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a client and volunteer base hugely impacted by the government advice to shield and a adaptation of how these customers were supported, including socially distanced garden visits and befriending telephone calls rather than visits. She also outlined a scheme where local children had been able to provide rainbow and poppy drawings for clients to show their support for the NHS and for remembrance celebrations.

Ms Hadaway outlined how NVCA had worked through the pandemic, including supporting the voluntary sector with ongoing weekly bulletins and funding alerts, alongside guidance for impending local government reform.

Ms Hadaway then praised officers at the council for managing the Health and Wellbeing Forum, as well as outlining further projects to assist with volunteering in the borough, including a new website and helping to set up new groups.

Members discussed the presentation and thanked Ms Hadaway for her presentation and the wider NVCA team for the work done to help to support residents and the voluntary sector throughout the year.
Members requested that their condolences for the sudden passing of Hugh Fenton, a well-known local volunteer who had worked closely with NVCA and other charitable organisations, be noted.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7. VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS PROGRESS REPORT

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to update members on the interim outcomes of the grants awarded to local voluntary sector organisations during 2020-2021.

The chair invited Mrs G Chapman, Principal Community Support Manager, to introduce the report. Mrs Chapman outlined that a decision had been taken in this financial year to provide extra funding opportunities to the voluntary sector alongside existing contracts.

The funding opportunities were allocated to two broad areas of support; housing and associated community support and improving health and wellbeing. Mrs Chapman went on to outline that this decision had proved extremely well timed given the impact of the pandemic, allowing for the sector to adapt services and assist the community in different ways.

Mrs Chapman closed her report by outlining the monitoring information across three key areas, allowing members to view the broad breadth of services that the extra funding had supported.

Members discussed the report and welcomed the decision that had been taken to expand the support available to the voluntary sector. They went on to praise the voluntary sector for the support that had been provided, and agreed that despite the impact of the pandemic, it had provided the opportunity to demonstrate to the public how the council and voluntary sector work together to support the community.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

8. PERFORMANCE: COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – 1 APRIL 2020 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 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 first half of 2020-21 in handling customer feedback, including complaints which have been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), and including performance details for managing requests for information considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

The chair invited Miss K Denton, Assistant Director, to present the report. Miss Denton outlined that the diversion of resources to the council’s response to the
Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on some of the measures compared to previous years.

Members discussed the report and noted that a higher number of compliments had been received than compared to previous years.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. PERFORMANCE: PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS 1 APRIL 2020 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to inform the committee of the council’s progress against its performance targets from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020.

The chair invited Miss Denton and Miss N Harewood, Policy and Compliance Officer, to introduce the report. Miss Denton outlined the report, explaining that available resource had impacted the ability to bring this report to members at past committee meetings. It was noted that performance information had continued to be published on the council’s website.

Miss Harewood went on to note the progress to date, explaining that some indicators were impacted by the council’s diversion of resources to the response to the pandemic, and drew members attention to future performance monitoring projects alongside Future Northants.

Members discussed the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and agreed that officers had performed exceptionally well under difficult circumstances.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.
24 February 2021

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

Also present: Mr S Darcy (Executive Director/Head of Paid Service), Mrs V Jessop, Mr A Piper and Mr E Symons (Assistant Directors), Mrs C A Mundy (Senior Democratic Services Officer (Committees and Members)) - minute taker, Mrs F Hubbard (Senior Democratic Services Officer (Civic)) and Mrs E Robinson (Democratic Services Support Officer) - meeting producers.

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies 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 declarations were made:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Councillor</th>
<th>Minute no.</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L Lawman</td>
<td>Min 8 - Community asset transfer request</td>
<td>Personal re: Hemmingwell Community Centre due to husband, Cllr G Lawman’s involvement with the asset transfer to the centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrall</td>
<td>Min 4 - Earls Barton Parish Council request for capital funding</td>
<td>DPI - Is a member of Earls Barton Parish Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>Min 8 - Community asset transfer request</td>
<td>DPI - is a member of Finedon Town council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weatherill</td>
<td>Min 8 - Community asset transfer request</td>
<td>DPI - is a member of Finedon Town council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020 AND THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020

The minutes of the additional resources committee of 16 November 2020 and the minutes of the resources committee of 18 November 2020, were received.

It was proposed by Councillor L Lawman and seconded by Councillor Morrall that the minutes of both committee meetings be adopted.

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the additional resources committee held on 16 November 2020, and the minutes of the resources committee of 18 November 2020, both be confirmed and signed.

4. REQUEST FROM EARLS BARTON PARISH COUNCIL FOR CAPITAL FUNDING

(Councillor Morrall, left the meeting during discussion on this item having declared an interest).

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received to discuss the receipt of a capital funding request from Earls Barton Parish Council for a grant in the sum of £800,000 towards The Grange Sports Field in Earls Barton.

Appended to the report was the business plan for The Grange Sports Field.

The chairman welcomed Parish Councillor Steve Glover to the meeting along with Mr David O'Neil of Nortoft Planning.

Mr Glover addressed the meeting and explained that he was a councillor for Earls Barton Parish Council as well as the chair of the Sports Development Project Management Committee set up by the Parish Council to steer development at the Grange sports field in Earls Barton.

He explained the history of the site and the work undertaken to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, which had resulted in the development of The Wickets, located off the A4500, to the North of the village. Upon occupation of the 200th dwelling, section 106 funding, would be received from the developer, David Wilson Homes.

The development plan is for new sports and community facilities that the village and borough can be proud of, it will be a permanent and much improved home for the Earls Barton football and cricket clubs, and also create spaces and facilities that will benefit the community as a whole and cater for many different interests of the village. The Parish Council is hoping that grant funding from the borough council will assist it to secure significant sporting body match-funding to deliver the facilities outlined in the business plan which
include a new pavilion, all-weather pitches and the refurbishment of the old pavilion to provide multi-use space for the community. It is hoped that such development would address the health and wellbeing of the residents of Earls Barton, along with the wider community.

The chairman thanked Mr Glover and asked the executive director to present the report.

The executive director in presenting the report informed members that the parish council had submitted a request for a grant of £800,000 (24% of the total cost of the scheme) towards the proposed provision of new community facilities. Partnership working between the borough council and the parish council had been ongoing over several years, for the planning of new housing and the provision of new community facilities for the parish. The estimated cost of the proposed scheme was £3.4m, some of which had already been funded by the parish council. The business plan detailed how the parish council planned to finance the remaining costs if the council awarded a grant.

The section 106 agreement from developers, David Wilson Homes, had been agreed for the remodelling and enlargement of the existing sports field, including a change of use from Agricultural to sports playing fields, car parking and associated facilities.

In September 2016, £10,000 of the section 106 contribution had been received by the borough council and paid to the parish council in the same year. The balance of £590,000 is due payable upon the 200th occupation at The Wickets housing development, such trigger point had been reached in December 2020 and an invoice had been issued to David Wilson Homes. Payment of this invoice remained outstanding. When such income is received a further calculation in respect of indexation and interest will be raised, anticipated to be in the region of £150k. EBPC would need to secure the remainder of the funding and have stated that positive discussions had taken place with the Football Foundation.

The chairman thanked the executive director and allowed members to discuss the report.

Members considered this to be a wonderful facility for the residents of Earls Barton and the wider community and that the aspirations detailed in the business plan were excellent and would lead to a superb facility.

Members asked questions for the purpose of clarity of Mr Glover and Mr O’Neil in relation to the other funding sources, particularly those from the Football Foundation and how this was progressing.

Mr O’Neil explained that discussions with the Football Foundation had indicated its support, but there was no formal offer or confirmation at this stage, this would not be forthcoming until the scheme was ready to progress.
Mr Glover also clarified that this was the case, but discussions had been very positive. Without such funding a reduced scheme could proceed but it would only be for grassed pitches rather than the artificial grass pitch, which would be the preference, as it would generate more all year-round usage and therefore more income.

A financial query was raised, as the budget figures did not include VAT. The executive director confirmed that the parish council was VAT registered, and as such would be able to claim back any VAT incurred.

Members asked if there were any firm offers of grant funding coming forward.

Mr Glover said that until the scheme was ready to progress they could not formally apply for funding, the parish council would potentially be able to secure funding from the Public Works Board, which would subsequently be an additional charge on the precept of those living in Earls Barton.

A question was raised about the competition from other similar venues that would compete with The Grange. Mr O’Neil explained that there was a deficit in artificial grass pitches and The Grange would fill a much-needed gap in the market. Currently Earls Barton Football Club depended on the use of the Wellingborough pitch for training purposes, this facility would free up space at Wellingborough for other clubs.

Reference was made to floodlighting and a question was raised over whether this would be generated by solar power. It was confirmed that sustainability was part of the planning permission, and there would be reference to this in the permission that would need to be complied with.

The chairman thanked Mr Glover and Mr O’Neil for their attendance at the meeting and opened the debate.

Members supported the request for a capital grant and believed that this facility would greatly enhance the quality of life for those living directly in Earls Barton and the nearby area. Congratulations were extended to the parish council for the work they had undertaken, the progress made so far, and the excellent business plan provided. Members wished the parish council every success in sourcing the additional funding.

It was proposed by Councillor Harrington and seconded by Councillor L Lawman that the request by Earls Barton Parish Council for £800,000 of capital funding be approved, subject to confirmation being received that other funding sources had been committed towards the project.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried with one abstention.

**RESOLVED** that approval be given, in principal, to the request by Earls Barton Parish Council for the sum of £800,000 of capital funding to be released, subject to confirmation that other funding sources had been committed.
5. **FINANCIAL MONITORING AND POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2020-21**

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received on the monitoring position for revenue expenditure only.

Appended to the report was the revenue monitoring position to 31 January 2021.

The executive director presented the report and informed the committee of the latest figures which indicated that there would be a need to use £62k of reserves.

He also informed the committee that the local authority support grant received to mitigate Covid-19 pressures had been insufficient to cover the anticipated expenditure. Support had been given to the operators of the Castle Theatre and leisure centre, One Wellingborough and to housing to accommodate homelessness under the revised statute. An additional £37k had been received from central government to support lost fees and charges, making a total of £1.375m.

A member asked a question about the increased staffing costs as indicated in the table at 6.5 of the report. The executive director confirmed that this related to the Covid-19 pandemic and the requirement for additional staffing in relation to the enforcement and environmental health services.

Reference was also made to the budget pressures and the deficit in receipt of court costs of £214k. The executive director clarified that this was due to the courts being unable to sit during the pandemic and the court costs, that would have been claimed back, not being received. It was expected that in due course, when the courts were able to resume operating, that this position would change, and receipts would be forthcoming.

Reference was also made to the contribution towards bin lorries and a question was raised over why this was a revenue expenditure and not capital expenditure. The executive director explained that this was for the leasing of extra vehicles until such time as the Wellingborough Norse contract finished.

Councillor Partridge-Underwood proposed the motion within the report, this was seconded by Councillor Allebone and on being put to the vote was declared carried.

**RESOLVED** that the position on the revenue monitoring and the reasons for the variances reported and detailed in appendix 1 be noted.
6. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING**

The annexed circulated report of the section 151 officer was received to provide an update in relation to the capital programme monitoring to 31 January 2021.

Appended to the report were the following:

Appendix 1: Capital outturn report to 31 January 2021;
Appendix 2: Capital programme funding position;
Appendix 3: Urgent action – Safer Streets CCTV.

The executive director informed the committee that the revised budget for 2020-21 was £12,638m which was further detailed at 6.1 to the report.

As some of the schemes would not be completed within the current financial year, £1.705m would be carried forward into the 2021-22 financial year.

The report also detailed the urgent action taken following the Office of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner’s decision to approve funding to increase the number of CCTV cameras, and to upgrade current cameras, in Wellingborough Town Centre at a cost of £148k. The council had been asked to contribute £35k to the cost and due to the timescales involved an urgent action had been approved under delegated powers and this was appended to the report.

The voluntary sector funding working group had met in January 2021 to discuss community project schemes. The allocated funding had been fully utilised, and the working group recommended that further funding be allocated equating to £87,800 to the community grant programme. This funding would benefit Little Harrowden Parish Council, Wellingborough and District Hindu Association, Sywell Parish Council and Hemmingwell Community Centre.

A request for capital funding had also been received for the High Street/Jacksons Lane car park, to upgrade the car park and bring it up to a better standard to include re-surfacing and enhancements to the CCTV camera in the sum of £97,100.

The public realm outside the Tithe Barn area, along with the much discussed proposed water feature, had been further discussed by the Wellingborough Town Regeneration Working Group who had suggested that the sum of £25,000 from the £170k allocated to a water feature, be provided as a grant to Wellingborough Town Council, should it wish to carry out improvements to the public realm, including the installation of a water feature.

Members praised the capital programme and the significant progress made.

The re-profiling was noted, as several items would not complete in-year.
Members asked about the multi-storey car park and the ‘snagging’ issues. There was some concern that the ‘finish’ of the car park was not as good as had been expected, though members did comment that they were pleased at how much brighter and safer the car park now was. Some concern was expressed about the impact on those living near to the site, with the intrusive noise and the spotlights that had been placed on the roof of the car park.

The assistant director clarified that the ‘snagging works’ were nearing completion and Wellingborough Norse was carrying out ongoing maintenance and cleansing. The intrusive lighting would be removed as soon as the work had been completed.

The chairman informed members that a low-key ribbon cutting was planned for the first week of March.

An update on the progress with the disabled facilities grants was also requested. The executive director clarified that there was slippage across all the North Northamptonshire councils in relation to this, which had been exacerbated by the pandemic. This had been flagged as an urgent issue for the North Northamptonshire Council to prioritise.

Councillors praised the decision of the working group to allocate funding to the town council to complete the improvements to the public realm and to install a water feature.

Members thanked officers for the considerable work that had been undertaken on the capital programme and the financial advice that had been forthcoming from senior officers.

Councillor Harrington proposed the motion within the report, this was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood, and on being put to the vote declared carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

(i) the projected outturn and anticipated variances as at 31 January 2021, be noted;
(ii) the external funding be noted;
(iii) the updates and amendments to the 2020-21 capital programme be noted;
(iv) the urgent action request approved under delegated powers be noted.

**R1 RECOMMEND** that:

(i) approval be given to the supplementary budget request of £87,800, being committed to the community capital grant programme;
(ii) approval be given to capital funding of £122,100, for the refurbishment of the High Street/Jacksons Lane car park; and for a grant to Wellingborough Town Council for improvements to the public realm in
the vicinity of the Tithe Barn, to include the installation of a water feature.

7. PROPERTY MATTERS

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received to provide members with an update on the ongoing approved projects.

Appended to the report were the following:

Appendix 1 - Project Register;
Appendix 2 - Project Summary;
Appendix 3 - Doddington Road information.

The report detailed the approved, funded projects that would transfer to the North Northamptonshire Council programme. This included the following:

- Tithe Barn office block;
- Doddington Road cemetery footpaths;
- Tithe Barn – Phase 1;
- Festival lights;
- 12-15 Oxford Street;
- Retail improvements – shop fronts;
- Street lighting replacement;
- Bassett’s Park skate park;
- Doddington Road development site;
- BCW owned properties – flats over shops;
- Digital High Street;
- Croyland Gardens;
- Park improvements;
- The Castle;
- The Embankment – Phase 1

These projects were further detailed in the appendix to the report.

The development committee had also requested officers to put forward a list of proposed projects for the consideration of North Northamptonshire Council. These projects included the following:

- Play areas – Phase 3;
- Park improvements – Phase 3;
- Road adoptions, structures, cycle paths;
- Market Square;
- Cycling Strategy;
- Church Street;
- Norse SLA Review;
- Public Halls;
- London Road cemetery chapels;
- Q2 Booth Drive, Wellingborough;
Mausoleums;  
Town Centre connections;  
The Embankment – Phase 2.

Officers were working on start-up forms and other project information to ensure that such proposed projects can be put to the new authority for consideration.

The development site at Doddington Road had been placed on the market with Underwoods, and several offers had been received. The committee was asked to approve the sale of the site for best consideration. The council had obtained planning permission for 12 flats, with such planning permission expiring on 3 October 2021. Significant works on site needed to have started before that date to ensure the planning permission did not expire.

Members discussed the report. It was suggested that the festival lights be transferred to Wellingborough Town Council, rather than passing to the North Northamptonshire Council (NNC). The assistant director clarified that such transfer could be considered by NNC.

Reference was also made to the Doddington Road site, whilst members appreciated that approval had previously been given to market this, they considered that as NNC would have its own housing stock that it may wish to consider utilising this town centre site. The assistant director clarified that Greatwell Homes had initially considered this site for development, but it had proved to be unsuitable for social housing.

An update on the flooding issues at Doddington Road Cemetery was requested. The assistant director was able to confirm that the drainage works had been completed, with further work needing to be undertaken by the Environment Agency to divert the drainage to the brook.

A question was raised over whether Freemans School had been consulted on the location of the Skate Park at Bassett’s Close. The assistant director clarified that this would be dealt with under the consultation process for the planning application.

Members further considered the issue with the sale of the land at Doddington Road and despite the advice of the assistant director, felt that such decision on the sale should be made by North Northamptonshire Council, as it may wish to consider this site for its housing stock.

An amendment to the proposed action in relation to Doddington Road was made by Councillor Partridge-Underwood and seconded by Councillor Harrington, to read as follows:

Resolve to dispose of the Doddington Road development site, in consultation with North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority, at best consideration in order to gain a capital receipt.

On being put to the vote this was declared carried.
This became the substantive motion, along with the proposed action in the report and was proposed by Councillor Partridge-Underwood and seconded by Councillor Harrington, and on being put to the vote declared carried.

The chairman extended the sincere thanks of the committee to Mr Piper and his team, for the outstanding work that had been undertaken in a very short period to bring so many of the projects to fruition.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the progress in relation to the projects, as outlined in appendix 1, be noted;
(ii) the approved list of projects, as detailed in the report, be put forward to North Northamptonshire Council;
(iii) approval be given to the Doddington Road development site being disposed of, in consultation with North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority, for best consideration in order to gain a capital receipt.

(Councillors Ward and Weatherill left the meeting for the following item, having both made a declaration.)

8. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

The annexed circulated report of the assistant director was received in relation to the receipt of a request to transfer Finedon recreation ground and toilets, and the obelisk in Finedon, to Finedon Town Council, in accordance with the asset transfer policy.

Appended to the report were the following:

Appendix 1: Business case;
Appendix 2: Budget information;
Appendix 3: Valuation.

Finedon Town Council had submitted a community asset transfer application in November 2020 for the freehold transfer of Finedon recreation ground and toilets, and the obelisk. If agreed this would allow Finedon Town Council to take over the management and maintenance of the said recreation ground, toilets and obelisk. It is the town council’s intention to extend the agreement with Wellingborough Norse (WN) for maintenance and it can finance this within the parish precept. The toilets (apart from the disabled) are closed and the town council wishes to reopen these and will seek funding from North Northamptonshire Council to do so in due course.

The obelisk was built in 1789 by the Lord of the Manor of Finedon to record the blessings of the year, including the return to sanity of King George III.

The recreation ground is the subject of two leases from the borough council to the Finedon Volta Football Club and the bowls club respectively and this
generates an annual income. The obelisk and the land on which it stands require ongoing maintenance.

If the transfer is successful the current rental payments would no longer be received by this council, and the maintenance costs would also be removed.

The annual maintenance cost is estimated at £23,482 per annum and Finedon Town Council will need to enter a contract for services directly with Wellingborough Norse.

The community asset transfer policy recommends a transfer under a long lease at a peppercorn rent; however, the committee could agree to transfer the freehold if it wished to do so.

Any transfer will need to ensure that the town council uses the land for the purpose intended in the longer term, and the transfer document will include provision for that.

Members considered that this request should be approved, and that it would be beneficial for the aforementioned items to be transferred to Finedon Town Council. It was proposed by Councillor Scarborough and seconded by Councillor Morall that the following amendment be put:

Resolve to approve the community asset transfer of the freehold interest of Finedon recreation ground and toilets, and the obelisk to Finedon Town Council.

Members discussed the amendment and considered that the transfer of the freehold interest would be the best solution to ensure that the recreation ground and the obelisk were retained and maintained for the future use of the parishioners of Finedon.

The chairman put the amendment to the vote, and this was declared carried.

This became the substantive motion and on being put to the vote was declared carried.

RESOLVED that approval be given to the community asset transfer of the freehold interest of Finedon recreation ground and toilets, and the obelisk, to Finedon Town Council.

(Councillors Ward and Weatherill re-joined the meeting).

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

The annexed circulated report and appendices, along with exempt appendices, were received in relation to the write off, of irrecoverable debts.
The council’s section 151 officer had authority to write off debts up to £2,000. Debts above this level can be written off by the resources committee under the delegated powers from council.

The report requested the write off, of the following debts, due to them being irrecoverable:

- Council tax cases £47,125.32
- Housing benefit overpayment £37,024.57
- Non-domestic rate cases £4,732.52

Further details of such debts were detailed in the exempt appendices to the report.

RESOLVED that:

(i) approval be given to the sum of £88,882.41 of irrecoverable council tax and housing benefit overpayment balances being written off;
(ii) it be noted that the sum of £324,265.71 had been written off under the delegated powers of the section 151 officer.

10. ANY OTHER ITEM THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES IS URGENT

The chairman had no further business to discuss but referenced the fact that this was the last resources committee of the Borough Council of Wellingborough.

He praised and thanked both officers and members for the considerable work that had been undertaken by the committee and referenced some of the projects including the refurbishment of the multi-storey car park, the improvements to the public realm, park improvements, temporary accommodation provided for the homeless, the sale of the Drill Hall and 20 Sheep Street, the 3G pitch at Redwell, Heritage initiatives and the improvements to the Hind Hotel, the transfer of The Castle, and the ongoing community grants which had provided a lifeline for many during the pandemic. All of this provided the borough with a legacy for the future. This had only been possible due to the solid financial governance that had been provided. The committee needed to be proud of its achievements and he extended his thanks to all involved.

Several members responded to the chairman agreeing that with the help of officers’ some great decisions had been made for the people of the whole borough. Most councillors would have chosen to remain independent but that decision had been made elsewhere and whilst it was very sad that the Borough Council of Wellingborough was coming to an end, the good work would continue with Wellingborough Town Council and North Northamptonshire Council from 1 April 2021.
The chairman finished the meeting by thanking all the Borough Council of Wellingborough employees, past and present and wishing them well in the new authority.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 9.45pm.
Present: Councillors Weatherill (Chairman), Bell (Vice-Chairman), Allebone, Henley and Simmons.

Also present: Mr S Darcy, (Director & S151 Officer), Mr E Symons (Assistant Director) Mr M Watkins (Head of Internal Audit of CW Audit Services), Mr N Harris, (Associate Partner at Ernst & Young), Mr S Whiteley (Electoral Services Team Leader) and Miss E McGinlay (Electoral Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

   RESOLVED to note that apologies were received from Cllrs Francis and L Lawman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

   RESOLVED to note that no declarations of interest were received.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

   RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020 be confirmed and signed.

4. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT OPINION FOR 2020-21

   The annexed circulated report of the s151 officer was received to present the annual internal audit report from the council's internal auditor in compliance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and the Public Sector Audit Standards (PSIAS), which require the Head of Internal Audit to provide an annual opinion on the work undertaken by internal audit.

   The Head of Internal Audit’s opinion was that significant assurance can be given and that there is generally a sound system of internal control, designed to meet the organisation’s objectives, and that controls are generally applied consistently. However, some weakness in the design and/or inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of objectives at risk.

   The Head of Internal Audit presented his report to members and confirmed the 2020-21 audit opinion was being issued a month earlier than usual, due to the local government restructure, as agreed at the previous meeting. He went on to confirm that the report provided a progress update on the items mentioned at the previous meeting, as well as the annual audit opinion.

   It was highlighted that one audit assignment was given full assurance, ten were given significant with two receiving moderate assurance. He noted that the audits that were carried out in this year were significantly different in comparison to previous years, given the context of the pandemic and the local
government restructure, and highlighted how positive it was that the majority still received significant assurance.

The Head of Internal Audit gave his thanks to the s151 officer and the finance staff for their hard work and cooperation during the last year. He noted that their flexibility around the volume and difference in the audits carried out in the last year was greatly appreciated. He also thanked the members of the committee for their good level of scrutiny over the years, which had made the committee very effective.

Members discussed the report and queried why the recommendation tracker for all outstanding issues was not present, as with usual audit reports. It was confirmed all outstanding recommendations had been closed off and will be transferred to North Northamptonshire Council. A member briefing note would be issued before vesting day to confirm the status of outstanding level 2 recommendations.

Members agreed that the audit report generally provided them with good assurance and provided a control environment which is a solid base to hand over to North Northamptonshire Council from 1 April. They asked for their thanks to CW Audit Services, the s151 officer and all the finance staff involved, be formally noted and passed on.

RESOLVED that the annual internal audit opinion for 2020-21 be noted.

5. AUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019-20

The annexed circulated report of the s151 officer was received to present the draft statement of accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020 and associated EY’s Audit Results Report following the audit being completed and any subsequent amendments to the draft statement, for approval.

The draft statement of accounts was signed by the s151 officer on 28 August 2020. The external audit, originally scheduled to take place in July 2020, commenced in October 2020 and completed in February 2021. The report confirmed the auditor expects to issue an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and has no matters to report regarding the arrangements that the authority has made to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The associate partner presented his report to members and confirmed that the audit of the 2019-20 accounts was sustainably concluded and an opinion is expected to be issued in the coming weeks. He noted that the item being finalised related to going concern and the future budget, viability and liquidity for North Northamptonshire Council and that the matter was in hand. It was highlighted that the audit resulted in a limited number of findings which was testament to the high quality of accounts and positive reporting environment at the council.

The associate partner gave his thanks to the s151 officer and the finance team at the council for the assistance and cooperation given to him and his team during the last year. He confirmed that Borough Council of Wellingborough were one of the few councils in the county who will probably be able to get
everything for y/e 31 March 2020 signed off before vesting day and noted he would do this best to get everything completed as early as possible.

The s151 officer assured members that everything is in hand and on track to be completed as soon as reasonably possible. He noted that the recommendation at 4.2 in the report should also state that the statement of accounts along with the letter of representation, can be signed off jointly by the chair and the s151 officer.

Members discussed the report and gave their thanks to Ernst & Young, the s151 officer and all the finance staff involved. A motion was put forward to accept the amendment of the resolution at 4.2, to extend the sign off by both the chair and s151 officer of the statement of accounts. Cllr Bell proposed this, with Cllr Allebone seconding – on being put to vote, the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

(i) the matters raised by the council’s auditors in their report were considered; and

(ii) the letter of representation and the statement of accounts be approved for sign off by the s151 officer and chair on the committee’s behalf, following clearance from the auditors that the North Northants going concern basis is satisfactory; and

(iii) authorisation be given to the s151 officer to approve any amendments, if required, after the committee date and prior to the official signing of the accounts.

6. **ANY OTHER ITEM THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES IS URGENT**

The chairman addressed the committee to query the process for the sign off of the 2020-21 accounts with the external auditors. The associate partner confirmed that conversations had already taken place with the chief financial officers at North Northamptonshire Council to discuss a timetable and requirements for the audits of the 2020-21 accounts for the four sovereign councils.

He noted that governance arrangements and information sharing would be crucial for the new audit committee at North Northamptonshire Council to ensure they have enough background needed to properly scrutinise the accounts.

It was highlighted that central government had consulted on the timetable for financial reporting for the upcoming year and agreed that local authorities should aim to publish draft accounts no later than 1 August 2021, with a target date to conclude audited accounts by the end of September. The associate partner confirmed that he thought this date may be hard to meet for a lot of authorities but that it should be achievable for the Borough Council of Wellingborough’s accounts.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 7:50pm