
Officers present: Mr S Darcy, (Executive Director/S151 Officer), Miss K Denton, Mr A Piper, Mrs V Jessop, Mr E Symons (Assistant Directors), Mrs C A Mundy, (Senior Democratic Services Officer), minute taker, Mrs F Hubbard (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Mrs E Robinson (Democratic Services Support Officer) as meeting producers.

Prior to the meeting commencing the Mayor’s Chaplain, Revd Catherine Lomas said prayers.

The Mayor also welcomed representatives from Nene Valley Crematorium, Places for People, Greatwell Homes, Castle Theatre and Tresham College. He also welcomed Ms L Wightman, Director of Public Health and Mr Curless who had made a request to address the meeting. Finally, he also welcomed his parents, who were watching virtually, along with any members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies had been received from Councillors Ekins, Patel and Watts (3).

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>Name of Councillor</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aslam</td>
<td>Partnerships &amp; Performance Committee 8 2 2021 – min 4</td>
<td>As printed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beirne</td>
<td>Min. no. 8 Motion</td>
<td>Personal – Works as a Covid tester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>Min. no. 14 Annual Report - Nene Valley Crematorium</td>
<td>DPI – Chairman of Wellingborough Bereavement Services (NVC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emerson</td>
<td>Partnerships &amp; Performance Committee 8 2 2021 - Min 7</td>
<td>Other - Member of the management committee of the Victoria Centre and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources Committee 24 2 2021 – min 5 and min 6.</td>
<td>acting treasurer and vice-president of Wellingborough Twinning Association.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henley</td>
<td>Min item 8 Motion Amendment</td>
<td>Personal – Active volunteer One Wellingborough as referenced in amendment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G Lawman</td>
<td>Partnerships &amp; Performance Committee 8 2 2021 – min 5 and min 7 Resources Committee 24 2 2021 – min 5, 6 and 8</td>
<td>Other – Director of Shire Community Services (NCC representative) Board Member of Hemmingwell Community Skills Centre Trustee (NCC rep.) Victoria Centre (which runs One Wellingborough)</td>
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<tr>
<td>L Lawman</td>
<td>Partnerships &amp; Performance 8 2 2021- min 5 Resources – 24 2 2021 Min 8 Min no. 15 Mayoral chains of office, insignia and other artefacts</td>
<td>Personal – Husband is Director of Shire Community Services. As printed. Other - Chairman of the shadow council of Wellingborough Town Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maguire</td>
<td>Min 14 Annual Report – Nene Valley Crematorium</td>
<td>DPI – Vice-Chairman of the Board of Wellingborough Bereavement Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skittrall</td>
<td>Planning 17 3 2021 Partnerships &amp; Performance Committee 8 2 2021 – min 5</td>
<td>Personal – is a member of Bozeat Parish Council As printed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward</td>
<td>Resources committee 24 2 2021 – Min 8</td>
<td>Personal - is a member of Finedon Town Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weatherill</td>
<td>Resources Committee – 24 2 2021 – Min 8</td>
<td>Personal - is a member of Finedon Town Council.</td>
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3. REFLECTION - MINUTES SILENCE

The mayor addressed the meeting and called for a minute’s silence to reflect on the Covid-19 pandemic and the way that life had changed over the last 12 months.

4. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 8 DECEMBER 2020

The minutes of the council meeting held on 8 December 2020 were received.
It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths and seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood that the minutes be confirmed. On being put to the vote this was declared carried.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting of 8 December 2020, be confirmed and signed.

5. LONG SERVICE AWARD – MISS JULIE FROST

The report of the executive director/head of paid service was received to present Miss Frost with her long service award for 40 years-service to the Borough Council of Wellingborough.

The mayor addressed the meeting and commented as follows:

“Miss Frost, or Julie, as many of you know her, is one of our most precious members of staff. She is like a silent missile in our accounts department, getting on with her work with a dedication that should be praised for completing 40 years’ service. More importantly she is also the person who sorts out the wages for our employees. Thank you, Julie, for your 40 years of outstanding service.”

Members were most appreciative of Miss Frost's excellent work ethic and her dedication over the last 40 years to the council.

Julie was presented with a gift of vouchers.

RESOLVED that the long-service award presented to Miss Frost be noted.

6. RETIREMENT AWARD – MRS BARBARA BROWN

The report of the executive director/head of paid service was received to present Mrs Brown with her retirement award after 44 years-service to the Borough Council of Wellingborough.

The mayor addressed the meeting and commented as follows:

“Barbara, was always one of the friendly faces on arrival at the offices, more recently at Swanspool House. Likewise, her dulcet tones greeted you on the phone and she always recognised other people' voices too! Always ready to assist, her service to this council was unstinting and I know she is greatly missed. I am sure you will join with me to wish her a very happy retirement.”

Members thanked Mrs Brown for her dedicated service. She was presented with a gift voucher of her choice.

RESOLVED that the retirement award presented to Mrs Brown be noted.

Both officers received a round of applause for their service and dedication to the Borough Council of Wellingborough.
7. QUESTIONS/REPRESENTATIONS/PETITIONS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC

The mayor welcomed Mr Derek Curless, who had requested to speak on agenda item 8, the motion regarding test and trace. The mayor also informed the meeting that Ms Wightman would be addressing the meeting.

Mr Curless addressed the meeting for three minutes

He gave his support to the motion and considered that a more local test, track and trace system would be beneficial for Wellingborough, as he felt the national system was ineffective. Increased self-isolation and compliance was required and he considered that if this was carried out locally with follow-up calls using local telephone numbers and enforcement self-isolation and compliance would improve. He also considered that local volunteers could be used for support and to give advice to vulnerable groups and those isolating.

Ms Lucy Wightman, Director of Public Health also addressed the meeting and informed the meeting that there was a local test and trace system in place in Northamptonshire. She reported on the 1,374 deaths in Northamptonshire which had been unimaginable 12 months ago. A local community infection prevention and control team had been working in the community giving advice to businesses, schools, custodial suites and prisons. She also referenced the setting up of the lateral flow testing centres and the roll out of the vaccination programme. On 15 August a local contact tracing programme had commenced in Northamptonshire, the second in the country, this was located at the customer call centre at Northamptonshire County Council and had enabled local engagement with those who were self-isolating who were contacted with follow-up text messages, calls giving contacts for support, letters and door-knocking. In addition, encouragement was given to the public to report breaches and environmental health enforcement officers and the police had issued several fixed penalty notices.

She also extended her thanks to borough council members for their engagement with the BAME community and Mrs Wilcox, Principal Environmental Health Manager and her team who had provided superb support to the public health team and had gone above and beyond what they were required to do to help fight the pandemic.

The mayor thanked both speakers for their input and informed the meeting that he intended to deal with the motion next.

8. MOTION – COVID PANDEMIC – TEST AND TRACE SYSTEM

The mayor asked Councillor Scarborough if he wished to speak on the motion.

Councillor Scarborough thanked the speakers and noted the achievements within the county, particularly those of the health professionals and the borough council’s highly skilled environmental health team. He however,
considered that the test and trace system could and should be even better. The rates of infection in Northamptonshire remained high and continued to increase. He commended the vaccination programme which he considered to be a superb example of the NHS and volunteers working together extremely well and the achievements locally were fantastic. He also considered that there should be a re-balancing of funds from national to local level as local knowledge was invaluable in reducing infections and this had been the purpose of the motion.

Councillor Scarborough proposed the following motion, which the mayor read:

“Wellingborough Borough Council expresses concern that, so far into the COVID pandemic, the country still does not have an adequate testing and tracing system, putting the people of Northamptonshire at increased risk of suffering from Coronavirus.

“The lack of integration of test and trace with local authorities prevents the timely offering of financial and practical support. In late recognition that its tracing performance could not improve without local participation, NHS Test and Trace have in recent months passed to local authorities the names of people with positive tests who they failed to reach. In short, they are getting local authorities to deal with their failures.

“The council believes the only way to fully rectify the situation is for full control to be passed to local authorities, with the necessary funding to do the job properly, with national input providing any support necessary to ensure effective co-ordination.

“We believe a local scheme will:

- Improve traceability;
- Enable increased and targeted testing, including asymptomatic testing;
- Be better integrated into existing council Covid support services;
- Be a more cost-effective solution;
- Achieve greater community engagement;
- Allow for the engagement of local volunteers.

“This council agrees to add its voice to those challenging the current, failed system by asking the leader to:

- Call on our Director of Public Health and the leader of the council to support more local authority engagement in testing and tracing;
- Write to our MPs asking them for their support.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Henley, who in doing so reiterated his praise and appreciation of all that officers were doing and would continue to do.

(Councillor Bone left the meeting.)
Members discussed the motion with many considering that the current system was adequate and that the statistics did not support the suggestions within the motion. The performance figures in Northamptonshire were very good and track and trace had been invaluable.

Councillor Griffiths moved the following amendment to the motion:

“The Borough Council of Wellingborough is pleased to note that the combined National and Local testing and tracing systems are now reaching 98% of the contacts of the people of Northamptonshire who have tested positive for coronavirus and for whom contact information is available. We also welcome the addition of asymptomatic testing at our local testing station which now gives local access to this service.

“This, in combination with the rapid rollout of vaccinations both in our county and nationally, is making our residents feel that they can see the light at the end of the tunnel. This is in stark contrast to the situation across the channel where France and Poland have entered another lockdown as they combat a third wave of the virus.

“The integration of national test and trace with local authorities means that 88% of cases are traced through the national system, enabling our local authorities to direct their efforts towards tracing the more difficult to reach 12% where a local presence can make a difference. This has left our officers with the capacity to support our residents and local businesses by participating in the One Wellingborough project and distributing over £5.4 million in local support grants to date.

“This council believes that the appropriate division of effort between national and local authorities, with the necessary funding, enables both parties to play to their strengths and also ensure that local authorities have the capacity to deliver their core services and not be overwhelmed by the need to design, equip, accommodate, recruit and train new organisations.

“We believe that the blended scheme now:

- Improves traceability;
- Enables targeted testing, including asymptomatic testing;
- Is a more cost-effective solution;
- Achieves greater community engagement;
- Allows for the engagement of local volunteers where it is safe to do so.

“This council agrees to ask the leader to:

- thank our Director of Public Health and the council officers for their contribution to the overall effort that is delivering effective testing and tracing
- Issue a press statement encouraging residents of the borough to take up the offer of vaccinations and expressing this council’s gratitude to
the large numbers of volunteers and organisations for their many and varied contributions during the pandemic

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Skittrall.

The mayor put the amendment to the vote, and this was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

Councillor Scarborough raised a point of order as he did not consider this to be an amendment but a wholly different motion and that the correct procedure had not been followed. He considered that if members did not approve of his motion that they could have voted against it, rather than submit a wholly different amendment.

Councillor Griffiths responded to this and believed that this was an appropriate amendment, detailing the correct information and that it followed the same layout as that of the original motion.

The mayor noted that a vote had been taken and that this was now the substantive motion and the debate was opened.

Councillor Scarborough expressed his disappointment that a constructive suggestion had caused such a response, in his opinion it was common knowledge that the test, track and trace system needed to be improved and could be done better and that lessons needed to be learnt from previous mistakes. He cautioned that rates remained high in Northamptonshire. The UK had been badly affected and had a very high death rate, much of which could have been avoided. He considered the substantive motion to be self-congratulatory and self-indulgent and not in the spirit of the original motion and expressed his disappointment.

Other councillors also spoke, and whilst supportive of the praise given to officers, felt that the test and trace system needed considerable improvement which would be best carried out at a local level with proper financial support being provided to enable this to be done. There was concern that a third wave would hit the UK and that further variants of the virus could spread more widely, there were many issues in Europe with an increase in rates which could spread to the UK.

There was also support for the substantive motion, and members referenced the information provided by the Director of Public Health which clearly indicated that a local system was in place already and that it was working effectively. One Wellingborough had also been a huge success and had provided wonderful support to local people.

The mayor read out the substantive motion.

A recorded vote was requested by Councillor Bell, which was supported by more than seven councillors.
The mayor put the motion to the vote.

The following votes were cast:

For: Councillors Allebone, Anslow, Bell, Griffiths, Hallam, Harrington, G Lawman, L Lawman, Morrall, Partridge-Underwood, Simmons, Skittrall, Stevenson, Ward, M Waters, V Waters, Weatherill and York (no. 18)

Against: Councillors Abram, Aslam (no. 2);

Abstain: Councillors Beirne, Emerson, Francis, Henley, Maguire, Scarborough (no.6);

Absent: Councillors Bone, Ekins, Gough, Patel and Watts (no. 5).

Councillors Graves and Walia lost connectivity and were unable to cast their vote.

The mayor declared the motion carried.

**RESOLVED** that the leader:

(i) Extend the council’s thanks to the Director of Public Health and the council officers for their contribution to the overall effort that is delivering effective testing and tracing;

(ii) issue a press statement encouraging residents of the borough to take up the offer of vaccinations and expressing this council’s gratitude to the large numbers of volunteers and organisations for their many and varied contributions during the pandemic

9. **MINUTES TO NOTE**

The following minutes were received to note:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning Committee</td>
<td>2 December 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Committee</td>
<td>6 January 2021</td>
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<td>Planning Committee</td>
<td>3 February 2021</td>
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<td>Planning Committee</td>
<td>17 March 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards Hearing Sub-Committee</td>
<td>4 March 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licensing Sub-Committee</td>
<td>10 March 2021</td>
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Councillor Skittrall referenced the circulated planning committee minutes of 17 March 2021 and asked for a correction on item no WP/20/00039 - Nene Milling site and asked that it be noted that his comment should read ‘it is one of the few remaining employment sites’ rather than ‘it is the only remaining employment site’. This was noted.
RESOLVED that the above minutes be noted along with the correction thereto.

(Councillor York abstained from noting the minutes of the Standards Hearing Sub-Committee.)

10. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 18 JANUARY 2021

The minutes of the development committee of 18 January 2021 were received.

Members thanked officers for the supplementary planning document on air quality.

It was proposed by Councillor Allebone and seconded by Councillor Skittrall that the minutes be adopted. On being put to the vote this was declared carried.

Councillor Allebone expressed his thanks and appreciation to all officers involved with the development committee for their advice and guidance over the years.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the development committee of 18 January 2021 be adopted.

11. PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE – 8 FEBRUARY 2021

The minutes of the partnerships and performance committee services committee of 8 February 2021 were received.

Councillor Hallam referenced the community grants scheme, which had seen great investment in the local communities and had been much appreciated, his thanks were extended to the borough council for this.

It was proposed by Councillor Skittrall and seconded by Councillor Aslam that the minutes be adopted. On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the partnerships and performance committee of 8 February 2021, be adopted.

12. RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 24 FEBRUARY 2021

The minutes of the resources committee of 24 February 2021 were received.

On presenting the minutes Councillor Griffiths informed members that following various issues with drainage at Doddington Road cemetery, an urgent action for the cost of additional works required at this location, in the sum of £99,500 had been taken. This would ensure that the improvement
works were carried out and that further distress to bereaved relatives would be avoided. Councillors Scarborough and Skittrall thanked the leader and fully supported the need for the urgent action at the cemetery and appreciated the sensitive way in which this had been handled.

The chairman also noted the excellent work that the committee had undertaken over many years.

This included the voluntary sector funding grants that since 2016 had enabled 72 community grants to be brought forward equating to over £1m which had benefited residents of the borough.

The recent initiative of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, supported by the borough council, to fund CCTV and the gating of alleyways would protect communities and would keep the alleyways tidy.

The multi-storey car park had been refurbished during lockdown and was much brighter and safer for users and had been nominated for a national award.

The community asset transfer to Finedon would ensure that the recreation ground and the obelisk would be looked after by the town council for the people of Finedon.

Reference was made to minute 6 – capital programme monitoring and the recommendation contained therein, which on being put to the vote was declared carried.

Councillor Morrall, ward councillor for Earls Barton, thanked the committee for approving the request for capital grant funding, which would enable requests for match funding to be applied for. This was supported by Councillor L Lawman.

Councillors Ward and Weatherill referenced the community asset transfer of Finedon recreation ground, toilets and obelisk to Finedon Parish Council and thanked the borough council for such transfer.

The chairman thanked members for their comments and responded to their thanks. He considered that the grant funding for sports provision in Earls Barton would improve life chances for young people and hoped that match funding would be found.

He also thanked the finance officers for their prudent financial management over the years, which had enabled such grant funding to be available. He was proud to inform the meeting that in moving to North Northamptonshire Council, the borough council would be taking £20m, with no debt and no borrowing, and with an impressive portfolio of property investments.
It was proposed by Councillor Griffiths and seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood that the minutes of the meeting be adopted. On being put to the vote this was declared carried.

**RESOLVED** 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;
(iii) the urgent action taken in relation to Doddington Road cemetery, in the sum of £99,500 be noted;
(iv) the minutes of the resources committee of 24 February 2021 be approved.

13. **AUDIT COMMITTEE – 2 MARCH 2021**

The minutes of the audit committee of 2 March 2021 were received.

Councillor Weatherill, as chairman, updated members on both the internal audit and the audited statement of accounts for 2019-20 which had been delayed as satisfactory clearance was required from the auditors on the going concern of North Northants. Information received indicated that the chairman and section 151 officer would be able to the sign the accounts off for 2019-20 before 31 March 2021, this would mean that Wellingborough would be the first council to do so.

The chairman extended sincere thanks to the Finance team of Shaun Darcy, Eric Symons, Julie O'Connell, Caroline Conway-Hook, Tracey Cave and Julie Frost who had worked incredibly hard to get to this position.

Councillor Weatherill proposed the adoption of the minutes and this was seconded by Councillor Bell. On being put to the vote the minutes of the audit committee of 2 March 2021 were declared carried.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the audit committee of 2 March 2021 be adopted.

14. **NENE VALLEY CREMATORIUM – ANNUAL REPORT**

The annual report of the board of Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd was received and presented by Councillor Paul Bell as chairman.

In doing so Councillor Bell expressed his sincere thanks to Tracy Lawrence and her team for the service they had provided to the bereaved, particularly during the last year, their sensitivity, kindness, compassion and dignity had
been very appreciated. Councillor Maguire as the vice-chairman, also extended his appreciation.

(Councillor Bell and Maguire withdraw from the discussion having declared an interest.)

Councillors praised the ongoing work by Wellingborough Bereavement Services at the Crematorium. Comments were made about the landscaping improvements and the serenity of the gardens. The staff were very professional, and respectful and under the leadership of Mrs Lawrence had provided a wonderful service to the bereaved.

The fees for 2020-2021 were also detailed within the report.

Councillor Griffiths proposed that the annual report be noted and that the setting of fees, as detailed in the report be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor Partridge-Underwood. On being put to the vote this was declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the annual report of Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd be noted;
(ii) approval be given to the setting of fees for 2020-2021 as follows:
   (a) Core fees for cremation to remain at £899.00;
   (b) The extended service fee be increased from £200 to £450;
   (c) The memorial fee be increased from £200 to £450.

(Councillors Bell and Maguire re-joined the meeting.)

15. MAYORAL CHAINS OF OFFICE, INSIGNIA AND OTHER ARTEFACTS

The circulated report of the executive director was received to petition for North Northamptonshire Council to consider passing some of the Borough Council of Wellingborough’s (BCW) mayoral chains of office, insignia and artefacts to Wellingborough Town Council (WTC) in the future.

The report detailed that a working group of the Deputy Leader, Councillor Partridge-Underwood, Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Scarborough, the Mayor, Councillor Carr, Councillor Harrington and Councillor Emerson had been established.

Councillor Partridge-Underwood in presenting the report to council explained that items which currently belonged to BCW, would automatically vest in North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) from 1 April 2021. The working group considered that some items currently in the ownership of BCW would be better placed with WTC if the town council wished to have them. Some of this would be subject to the town council deciding what it wished to do regarding the appointment of a town chairman or town mayor and the proposals within the report were suggestions with the final decision being made by NNC.
The working group had sought the assistance of the Senior Democratic Services Officer (Civic) who had compiled a list along with photographic evidence of items held by BCW. Members thanked her for her assistance with this.

It was therefore suggested, subject to WTC appointing a town chairman or town mayor, that NNC be petitioned to agree that the following items be placed with WTC:

- the current BCW Mayor’s chain of office (chain only) be offered to WTC;
- the former Wellingborough Urban District Council’s badge of office also be offered to WTC for use, if appropriate with the BCW’s Mayor’s chain of office (originally used by the Wellingborough Urban District Council).
- the current BCW Mayoress’ chain of office and badge of office be offered to WTC;
- the BCW Mace be offered to WTC, on the proviso that the BCW Coat of Arms on the crown, would not be used in its current form;
- the BCW Mayoral Robes be offered to WTC;
- the former Wellingborough Urban District Council’s chairman’s occasional chain and badge (with neck ribbon), the chairman’s consort pin badge and chairman’s consort occasional badge (with neck ribbon), past chairman’s lady’s badge and the chairman’s consort chain and badge will be offered to WTC.

The report also detailed that WTC could, if in receipt of the Wellingborough Urban District Council’s insignia, apply to the Herald of Arms for permission to adopt/re-use the former Wellingborough Urban District Council’s Coat of Arms, as this was created to depict the urban area of the town of Wellingborough and would therefore remain relevant to the newly formed WTC. It was noted that some of the badges of office, would not be able to be worn with the chains of office, due to their insignia.

Should WTC not appoint a town mayor, the items proposed to be offered would remain the property of NNC, until such time as a town mayor is appointed.

The report also recommended that the following items be offered to WTC:

- The silver flagon and base presented to the Northamptonshire Rifle Volunteers Corp by the Town of Wellingborough. Further details of which were contained within the report.
- Distinguished Visitors’ Book (formerly belonging to Wellingborough Urban District Council and used by the Borough Council of Wellingborough.)
- All furniture and items currently located in the Mayor’s Parlour and Members Room at Swanspool House, but not paintings and pictures;
- Seals of the former Wellingborough Urban District Council;
• Items currently on loan to Wellingborough Museum from the Borough Council of Wellingborough;
• The Town Twinning Charters with Niort and Wittlich, together with any twinning awards, certificates and gifts relating to the twin towns or friendships with towns that have been established;
• The furniture in the council chamber, together with the clock, gavel, Standards and Royal photographs will be offered to WTC, when no longer in use by NNC. It is anticipated that items referenced within the report would remain in situ whilst discussions about the future of NNC buildings is decided;
• All miscellaneous silverware/plate and commemorative items should be given to WTC, who in turn could loan such items to Wellingborough museum for public display.
• The Mayoral gallery of photographs in Swanspool House would remain in situ and vest in NNC unless WTC wished to have them. It is recommended that the portraits remain as a complete set and it is proposed to digitise these and place within an album to be deposited with Northamptonshire Records Officer, together with the Mayoral Album, Honorary Freeman Album and photographs of Wellingborough Rural District Council and Northamptonshire County Council.

The BCW’s Mayor’s badge of office will vest in NNC, as will the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress’ chains and badges of office. The former Wellingborough Rural District Council’s chairman’s chain and badge and chairman’s consort chain and badge will also vest in NNC.

Any insignia transferred to NNC will become an asset, though it will not be able to be used by NNC.

The charters of the Borough Council of Wellingborough, Wellingborough Urban District Council and Wellingborough Rural Council, the Past Mayor’s Roll of Honour Board, the Honorary Freemen Roll of Honour Board and The Royal Anglian Regiment framed plate will become the property of North Northamptonshire Council.

Two other notable items included a silver Georgian snuffbox presented to BCW by a former employee of the council in 1993 which it was felt should be retained by NNC; and a George Medal awarded in 1941 to Arthur John Rycroft which was considered should be deposited with the National Railway Museum in York as the medal was awarded for action during the blitz on the railway in Birmingham.

BCW also owns over 100 pieces of artwork located throughout the council premises, and those of Wellingborough Norse, Nene Valley Crematorium and Wrenn School. These items will vest in NNC and it is suggested that they be deposited with the Alfred East Art Gallery in Kettering for future public display in North Northamptonshire.

The report also proposed that custodian arrangements be established to oversee the wishes of BCW in liaison with NNC. The liaison officer will be the
current Senior Democratic Services Officer (Civic) along with Councillor Carr, Honorary Freemen Dholakia and Partridge-Underwood and Mr D Smith (Independent Person for NNC).

Councillors, many of whom had undertaken the mayoral role, spoke about the items referenced in the report and considered that some were of great importance and part of the town’s heritage. Many councillors had received the honour of wearing the chains and of seeing the memorabilia. It was noted that many of these items would vest in NNC and that members could petition for some of the items to be returned or retained by the town council, should it wish to do so.

Councillor Partridge-Underwood moved the proposal within the report, and this was seconded by Councillor Emerson and on being put to the vote declared carried with one abstention.

RESOLVED that:

(i) North Northamptonshire Council consider the wishes of the Borough Council of Wellingborough to transfer to Wellingborough Town Council, some of the Mayoral chains of office, insignia and artefacts, as detailed within the report;
(ii) the Senior Democratic Services Officer (Civic), act as liaison officer to deliver such wishes.

16. CLOSEDOWN MEASURES – COUNCIL MINUTES SIGN-OFF

The annexed circulated report of the monitoring officer was received to seek delegated authority for the sign-off of the final set of council minutes and any other urgent committee meetings to the monitoring officer, in consultation with the mayor or relevant committee chairman.

RESOLVED that approval be given to delegate authority for the sign-off of the final set of council minutes and any urgent committee meetings, to the monitoring officer, in consultation with the mayor or chairman of the relevant committee.

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

The mayor had no further business but was aware that several councillors wished to speak about their time on the council on what was the council’s last meeting.

Several members reflected on the time they had spent serving the residents of the Borough Council of Wellingborough, expressing that their role had at times been rewarding, challenging, enjoyable and frustrating. Many of the councillors who spoke had also served in the position of Mayor and they had
thoroughly enjoyed the experience of working with so many community
groups and volunteers, as well as meeting with the business community.

They also spoke of the excellent working relationships with officers, both past
and present. Reference was made to the senior management team, the
housing department, community section, all in council tax and benefits,
environmental health and the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Wellingborough Norse, the planning team, the project team, the executive
office and finally the work of the democratic services team, especially during
the last year with the virtual meetings. Thanks were all extended to the
cleansing operatives and caretakers for the extra work they had undertaken to
keep the offices sanitised and safe. They wished officers well in the future
council. Thanks, were also extended to councillors from all political parties,
as Wellingborough councillors had a unique way of working together for the
good of its residents and despite differing opinions the right conclusion was
reached on important issues. Reference was also made to former councillors
who were remembered with fondness.

The leader summed up the thoughts expressed and thanked both members
and officers for the work ethos that had ensured the delivery of high quality
services to residents and businesses, and which had also been able to deliver
a number of key projects that will benefit North Northamptonshire for many
years to come.

Wellingborough employees had a can-do attitude and culture and worked
collaboratively across departments and this is something all can be extremely
proud of.

In such a difficult year, employees had managed to deliver ‘business as usual’
and tackled the many challenges that Covid 19 had presented. They had also
been working on the significant challenges of the local government
reorganisation for Northamptonshire.

He also referenced some of the key achievements of recent years including:

- The delivery of a massive capital programme of projects including
  improving the public realm in our town centre and the completion of the
  upgrade of the multi storey car park;
- Tackling of homelessness issues and protecting those in need during
  this difficult period and bringing forward the temporary accommodation
  project to invest in assets and reduce the council's revenue burden
  moving forward;
- The movement with the sustainable urban extensions of Stanton Cross
  and Glenvale Park to include social affordable housing and to create
  new communities and additional infrastructure and employment;
- Giving additional support for developments that will give a huge boost
  to the local economy including the aforementioned Stanton Cross and
  Glenvale Park and the HMP Five Wells prison that will be the ‘flagship
  prison in the whole country when it opens later this year;


- Significant improvements to IT, which has ensure that virtual meetings can be held;
- The council has also achieved its first balanced budget with no use of reserves in more than 10 years and will be taking a sound budget, asset base and a significant level of reserves into North Northants.

He reiterated that the working relationship between officers and fellow councillors was exemplary and enabled decisions to be made efficiently and effectively for the good of the whole of Wellingborough and its communities.

Whilst it was very sad to see the demise of BCW he believed that this was the start of a new and exciting journey for many in the new council, as the services and structures evolve. He hoped the ‘Wellingborough Way’ and the employee ethos would continue into North Northamptonshire Council.

On closing the meeting, the mayor spoke warmly of the wonderful town of Wellingborough, the heritage, parks, theatre, leisure centres, excellent schools, community groups, and the surrounding villages with their own individual history. He thanked the community groups, volunteers, the dedicated staff and his fellow councillors for the part they had all played in making the borough a very special place, and making Wellingborough a place to be proud of.

Mayor

The meeting closed at 10pm.