

Agenda Item No: 2



Democratic Support Service
PO Box 136
County Hall
Northampton
NN1 1DN

MINUTES of the Business Meeting of the NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at County Hall, Northampton on 24 September 2015 at 10.30am

PRESENT:

Councillor Phil Larratt (Chairman)
Councillor Malcolm Waters (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor	Sally Beardsworth	"	Derek Lawson MBE
"	Paul Bell	"	Stephen Legg
"	Wendy Brackenbury	"	Chris Lofts
"	Julie Brookfield	"	Malcolm Longley
"	Michael Brown	"	David Mackintosh
"	Mary Butcher	"	Arthur McCutcheon
"	Michael Clarke	"	John McGhee
"	Adam Collyer	"	Allan Matthews
"	Elizabeth Coombe	"	Dr Andy Mercer
"	Gareth Eales	"	Dennis Meredith
"	Brendan Glynane	"	Ian Morris
"	Matt Golby	"	Steve Osborne
"	André Gonzalez De Savage	"	Bill Parker
"	Christopher Groome	"	Bhupendra Patel
"	James Hakewill	"	Suresh Patel
"	Eileen Hales MBE	"	Ron Sawbridge MBE
"	Mike Hallam	"	Bob Scott
"	Jim Harker OBE	"	Mick Scrimshaw
"	Stan Heggs	"	Judy Shephard
"	Alan Hills	"	Heather Smith
"	Jill Hope	"	Danielle Stone
"	Dudley Hughes	"	Winston Strachan
"	Sylvia Hughes	"	Michael Tye
"	Cecile Irving-Swift	"	Allen Walker
"	Joan Kirkbride	"	

Also in attendance (for all or part of the meeting):

Honorary Alderman John Bailey
Honorary alderman Gina Ogden
Dr Akeem Ali, Director of Public Health & Wellbeing
Dr Paul Blantern, Chief Executive
Tony Ciaburro, Director of Highways, Transport & Development

Art Conaghan, Conservative Group Political Assistant
James Edmunds, Assistant Democratic Services Manager
Laurie Gould, Monitoring Officer
Paul Hanson, Manager, Democratic Services
Alex Hopkins, Director of Children, Families & Education
Carolyn Kus, Director of Adult Social Care Services
Michael Quinn, Liberal Democrat Group Political Assistant
Jenny Rendall, Democracy Officer (Minutes)
Ben Wesson, Labour Group Political Assistant

And 8 members of the public.

56/15 Apologies for non-attendance:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jim Broomfield, Robin Brown, Sue Homer, Graham Lawman, Russell Roberts & Sarah Uldall as well as Honorary Aldermen Derek Batten & Priscilla Padley and the Independent Chairman of the Northamptonshire Local Safeguarding Adults Board, Mrs Marie Seaton.

59/15 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18 June 2015:

RESOLVED that: Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18 June 2015 as a true and accurate record of the meeting subject to the following amendment\:

- **Item 51/15 first sentence to state “*At the Chairman’s invitation stating the following.*”**

60/15 Notification of requests by members of the public to address the meeting

There were none.

61/15 Declarations of Interest by Councillors:

Councillor David Mackintosh declared a personal interest in Item 13a as a local MP stating he would not take part in the debate or vote on this particular motion.

62/15 Chairman’s Announcements:

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Christine Woods, leader of Northamptonshire’s Hospital and Outreach Education Team had won the top prize for innovation in the British Medical Association Patient Information Awards 2015 in recognition of her contribution to the schools information pack, Cancer and School Life which was created by the charity CLIC Sargent. The pack was given to schools where a pupil has cancer to assist teachers in supporting classmates to understand their friend’s illness. The booklet was praised by the judges for providing good information to teachers on how to cater lessons to young cancer patients’ needs and for offering helpful advice in answering children’s questions about the disease.

Christine's team had also been shortlisted earlier that year for a Times Educational Supplement in the Alternative Provision of the Year category which recognised excellent work by schools for students taught in special schools or in pupil referral units.

- Councillors were thanked for attending the Chairman's Civic Reception earlier that month and were invited to his Civic Service which would take place on Sunday 11 October 2015.
- The Chairman was also hosting a charity 'Curry Night in the Royal Bengal Restaurant in Bridge Street, Northampton on the evening of Sunday 1 November 2015 in aid of his charity, the Caring & Sharing Trust.
- Cyclists who had recently cycled to Ypres were thanked for their fundraising in aid of the Hope Centre which supported the homeless in Northampton.

At the Chairman's invitation, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jim Harker paid tribute to ex-Chief Fire Officer, Martyn Emberson who had recently retired after 35 years in public service, the last 9 of which had been spent as Northamptonshire's Chief Fire Officer. Mr Emberson had led innovation in Fire Services at a time of absolute need. He had introduced co-responding with the East Midlands Ambulance Service and COBRA, an innovative fire hose which now enjoyed a worldwide reputation. His collaboration with the Northamptonshire Police would in Councillor Harker's opinion lead to improved quality services in a combined approach from all of the emergency services. During his time as Chief Fire Officer, Mr Emberson had also been awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal and the Freedom of the Borough of Northampton had been bestowed on the Fire Service. Councillor Harker concluded by thanking Mr Emberson for all he had achieved for the Fire Service and wishing him and his family all the best for the future.

At the Chairman's invitation, Councillor Brendan Glynane then added his best wishes to Mr Emberson. In recognising all the achievements previously stated by the Leader of the Council, he felt that Mr Emberson would be a good person to seek out for advice during challenging times in the future.

The Chairman then invited the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor John McGhee to address Council who stated that whilst he did not always agree with the Chief Fire Officer, he respected all that he had achieved for Northamptonshire. He recognised all he had done to create more cohesive emergency services and wished him well in the future.

The Chairman noted that a leaving event had been held for Martyn Emberson which was attended by several councillors. He also added his best wishes to Mr Emberson.

63/15 Petitions:

None received.

64/15 Opposition Priority Business:

At the Chairman's invitation, Councillor Mary Butcher proposed the following motion (copies of which had been previously circulated):

"This Council notes the research published by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medical in the 'Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health,' which concludes that reduced street lighting in England and Wales is not associated with road traffic collisions or crime. However, we recognise that the research is at odds with what the vast majority of Northamptonshire's residents believe.

Local people have made consistent representations to County Councillors regarding their safety and security whilst the lights remain switched off. However, the Council's response has always been that as the highways authority they are only interested in how this affects the roads and traffic. The Council has not taken into consideration difficulties in pedestrians walking in the dark, nor what effect the switch off may or may not have on the perception of crime.

This Council therefore resolves to commission an independent impact assessment/ study to ascertain local residents' views on the street light switch off and the private finance initiative (PFI) replacement programme."

In moving the motion, Councillor Butcher referred to a report published by the School of Motoring which had suggested there was no connection between the switch off of street lighting and road deaths. She disagreed with this report and referred to an accident earlier that year in Corby whereby a pedestrian died from injuries 2 days after being hit by a silver transit van. Those investigating this accident concluded limited visibility between the street lights in the area had contributed to the accident. Councillor Butcher also stated switching off street lights had contributed to a perception of crime. After 40 years of doing so the Council had decided they would no longer maintain lights in her division stating it was the responsibility of Corby Borough Council despite the fact that Corby Borough Council did not receive any funding from Council Tax to fund this. She felt it was not the responsibility of councillors to contribute to making unsafe environments in this way and felt the best way to address issues that arose was by commissioning an independent impact assessment studying local views of residents with regard to where lights should remain. This in her opinion would make local residents feel safe again.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Julie Brookfield who stated residents had a right to feel safe and have well lit approaches to their homes. She felt many residents would be asking why their streets were not lit as many of those residents who paid their council tax found themselves leaving for, and returning home from work in the dark during the winter months. She also referred to street lights that had been switched off simply because cars did not pass the house to which they were attached. She felt this was a fault within the current contract which should be reviewed because of the long lasting implications it would have on residents

Councillors commented as follows:

- Frustrations were voiced by councillors who had struggled to ascertain and make contact with the relevant officer within Northamptonshire Highways to contact.
- Some felt an independent review was an unnecessary expense as councillors could discuss issues with their constituents and report them back to Northamptonshire Highways using the current mechanisms.

- It was noted new lighting columns were being placed across the county as part of a contract with Balfour Beatty who were in turn praised for responding quickly to issues referred to them by councillors on behalf of their residents.
- The standard of work within the programme of replacing street lighting was considered by some to be of a high quality.
- Issues were then raised that some of the new lighting columns were sited in a different place to the one they were supposed to be replacing.

(The Chief Executive arrived at 11am)

- Concerns were voiced about the safety of children and the elderly who were the County's most vulnerable residents and it was suggested such a review would save money as it would avoid the need for the contractors to replace the new street lights that could be placed in the most inconvenient or unhelpful place for residents.
- It was suggested that where possible, parish and district councils be asked to fund their local street lights as many in the district of Daventry already did
- The wording of the motion was queried as it first referred to research that had been undertaken already but which appeared not to be in agreement with the vast majority of residents who had not been complaining. It was then noted that in a recent poll Balfour Beatty were given 3.9 out of 5 for the way in which they had rolled out the programme. It was also noted that since the start of the contract crime, including burglary and vehicle crime had reduced.

(Councillor David Mackintosh arrived at the meeting at 11.05am)

- It was noted a lack of reported crime was not necessarily an indication of a reduction in crime as people did not always report crime for fear of reprisals.

In reply Councillor Butcher referred to 5,000 complaints related to street lighting across the county during 2013. She noted this was an issue her constituents had brought to her and referred to a need to resolve an issue whereby Balfour Beatty had placed new lighting columns in front of resident's porches as well as 24 new street lights that had to be replaced in her division alone. She then referred to night time activities ceasing in her division because people were too afraid to venture out into the dark. Councillor Butcher also noted residents did fund their street lighting through the council tax and she felt it would be a nice gesture if the Council took account of residents' feelings as noted during the review to ensure all future lighting columns were placed where they were needed.

RESOLVED that: Upon the vote, the motion was defeated.

65/15. Business Items (including Budget & Policy Framework Items & Appointments):

(a) Transitions Programme for Children and Young Adults:

At the Chairman's invitation, Councillor Suresh Patel proposed the report (copies of which had been previously circulated) confirming it covered the programme for the period 2012-15. He thanked officers for their support in assisting disabled children as they transitioned from Children's Services to Adult Services. This was in his opinion a much improved report and noted how officers in both services had worked together to support young people with disabilities as well as with housing partners. He himself chaired the Governance Board and the Director of Adult Social Services

chaired the Challenge Board to ensure a robust system was in place. Both boards had been strengthened and the service improved by work undertaken with other agencies.

The report was seconded by Councillor Heather Smith who felt this was a service to be celebrated. The transition from childhood to adulthood was a difficult area to support, particularly for those with profound disabilities. During the last 12 months there had been an increased number of children moving into this service which was now a true partnership between Children and Adult Services and one that was recognised nationally. Much of the work had been in ensuring the disabled young people contributed to the decisions about their support as they moved between the services.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Some felt having the details of the consultation would have given councillors an insight into the issues raised by the young people this service supported.
- Some Councillors wished to see more detail of the process so that they could be helpful when issues might arise.
- The Service was praised as a positive way forward.
- The report was considered by some to be very easy to read and understand. It was felt much had been undertaken since 2011 to improve the service and ensure positive support to young people not just from the Council but from all of the partner agencies that were sharing responsibility for providing support through this service.
- Some felt there was a need to understand how this service would operate within the next generation council.
- The recognition not just of what had been achieved but the need to achieve more was praised.

In reply Councillor Patel stated an important part of the work and success of the Service was its work with partner agencies as well as the joint work between Children and Adult Services.

Councillor Patel also offered to provide councillors with written responses to the following questions which were raised during the debate:

- Given possible future changes to the Connexions Service, how would this vital support continue?
- Examples of joint commissioning that had taken place and how this had improved experiences of young people.
- How many people were involved in outreach work to those with Autism and details of short interventions?

RESOLVED that: Council noted the achievements of the 3-year Transitions programme 2012-15 and next steps.

(b) Monthly Capital Report (MCR) new capital scheme approvals.

At the Chairman's invitation, Councillor Bill Parker proposed the report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating the Capital Investment Board had

recommended a slight increase in funding to complete the programme to move education in East Northamptonshire from 3-tier to 2-tier education.

The report was seconded by Councillor Andre Gonzalez de Savage.

In answer to a comment from members, it was noted that unlike many other schools in the county the King John Middle School site had been shared between the lower and middle schools. As the existing lower school was already operating at capacity it was sensible to make the whole site available for the new Thrapston Primary School.

RESOLVED that: Following the project and funding review undertaken by the Capital Investment Board and consideration of the extensive public consultation on the Scheme and the review of land for use by the community reducing the capital disposal receipts to support the project, Council approved the uplifting of the original budget of £19,200,000 for the East Northamptonshire Education Transition to a 2-tier structure to £21,155,000 and the promotion of the scheme into the Council's Committed Capital Programme.

(c) Youth Justice Plan:

At the Chairman's invitation, Councillor Matt Golby proposed the report (copies of which had been previously circulated) highlighting the following:

- The Youth Justice Service (YOS) was a multi-agency partnership between Northamptonshire Police, the Nene & Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups, Northamptonshire Probation Service and the Council. Each of these agencies had agreed the report before submitting it to the Youth Justice Board.
- The YOS was sited within the Council's Children's Services and the Criminal Justice System to support those aged between 10 and 17 years.
- Whilst the report listed a number of successes it also detailed areas for improvement. The focus of prevention would also be returning to the YOS.
- Staff in the Northamptonshire YOS were leading various areas at a national level and the Service had been one of the first in the country to be awarded the Restorative Justice Quality Mark.
- The Youth Justice Plan had been developed with all statutory partners and stated targets, challenges and successes in areas such as re-offending and ex-offenders entering suitable education, training and employment.
- The number of people entering the youth justice system was falling. There was much still to achieve however as 23% of those in the system were looked after children and 40% were known to social care services.
- The key to success both past and in the future was considered to be the partnership aspect of supporting those entering the service as well as in terms of preventative work and the former Head of Service, Jon O'Byrne was thanked for his excellent leadership of the team.

The report was seconded by Councillor Heather Smith who felt this was a good example of close partnership work between the agencies involved which could be replicated with other partners to provide services for the county.

Councillors commented as follows:

- The service was praised not just for excelling in the way it provided a service

but also the way in which it reported on the service it provided.

- It was suggested the Council amongst other agencies were often judged as having some responsibility when young people entered the criminal justice system and it was felt including profiles of who the young people entering the system were (e.g. how many looked after children entered the system, how many suffered from mental health issues and how many had suffered abuse), would assist Council to better support those in its care to prevent them from ever entering the criminal justice system.
- It was suggested the team providing the service should include secondees from health and education services. It was also felt the support teams should reflect the profiles of the young people they were supporting by including a greater gender and race balance.
- It was also suggested this service be included in the relevant scrutiny committee's work programme to assist it in improving further.
- Concerns were raised that youth re-offending in the county was higher than the national and regional average as was the frequency of re-offending. Understanding the statistics about those offending could assist the Service to undertake even greater and more successful preventative work.
- Concerns were also raised about the number of those the Service lost contact with once they had left the Service and it was suggested this could be improved through scrutiny of the Service.
- Concerns were raised that the proposed changes to provision of magistrates' courts could have an adverse affect on the Service (e.g. taking longer to obtain a warrant to enter someone's address) and the Leader of the Council was thanked for his offer to write to Parliament to express such concerns.

In reply Councillor Golby stated he felt the Service was an excellent one but was aware of the situation with regard to looked after children and welcomed the suggestion that the relevant scrutiny committee review the service with a view to making recommendations for further improvements.

RESOLVED that: Council approved the Youth Justice Plan 2015-16

66/50 Questions, if any, to the Chairman of the Audit Committee relating to the work of the Audit Committee since the last ordinary meeting.

At the Chairman's invitation, Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee, David Watson addressed the Committee stating the following:

- Reference was made to the published minutes from May 2015 when the Committee reviewed interim work with the external auditors, from June 2015 when the draft accounts were reviewed and August 2015 when the final accounts were discussed.
- The deadline for signing off the accounts had been brought forward for future years to the end of July and although much had been undertaken to attempt to meet that deadline in the current year, they had not yet been signed off. The Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee was meeting with the finance team later that afternoon to discuss any outstanding queries from the external auditors.
- Part of the reason for the delay in signing off the final accounts was due to one individual who had exercised his right as a member of the public to view the

accounts prior to raising a very detailed set of queries to the auditors. The result was the auditors requiring more time to answer these queries and could also be an invoice for a higher sum than in previous years due to this additional work.

- Reference was made to his recent correspondence with leaders and group business managers of all political groups to ensure all councillors complied with the required control procedures by confirming they had no declarations of interest in the accounts.
- Once the Independent Chairman was confident in the final accounts, he would recommend to the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance that they be formally signed off.

The Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee then answered queries as follows:

- There was a convention within the accounting profession that the external auditor commented on how he felt about risks within the accounts. Many companies generally had concerns about their ability to continue trading for the next 12 months following signing off their accounts and the auditor would be aware of what those concerns were. Although local authorities were different to trading companies, he felt the auditor's opinion in this respect was still valid within the local authority's accounts and he would be discussing this with the relevant director at the Council's external auditor's (KPMG) prior to the final signing on the accounts.
- There was a requirement for the auditors to view the declaration of interest forms from all councillors.
- Vexatious issues could be referred to the Monitoring Officer and should it be necessary, to a court of law.

(Honorary Aldermen John Bailey and Gina Ogden left the meeting at 11.55am)

- The Audit Committee had not specifically discussed the living wage but he was positive the finance officers had discussed it as part of their work on the budget for the following year. He acknowledged the challenge it would pose not just for the Council but all employers who would also need to consider care and pension costs.
- The Chief Executive also confirmed the Council's commissioners had been reviewing the effect of the living wage which Central Government had stated it would reflect in the Comprehensive Spending Review.
- The Independent Chairman had met the Director for Transformation and offered to provide his independent view as the work progressed.
- The finance team presented draft accounts in June 2015 in preparation for meeting the earlier deadline that would come in effect the following year. The Independent Chairman was pleased with their work for which the timetable had been brought forward in order to identify any issues before they arose the following year. He did not know why the external auditors had not begun their work earlier (as he had hoped) but he felt the issue in future would not be the finance team's ability to complete them earlier but one of how to ensure the accounts were agreed earlier.
- The additional queries that had been received were a major issue in the lateness of the accounts as they required the auditors to liaise with the Council often more than once on the same query as they would be unaware of many of

the finer details. This cost time and money.

- He felt that in the future, many organisations would probably start preparing final audits over a longer period of time to ensure the new deadline of 31 July could be met.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the update and answers to questions from the Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee.

67/15 Annual Reports:

(a) Annual Review of the Constitution and changes to the Constitution

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Bill Parker introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating these minor changes had been discussed at length by the Councillor Services & Governance Working Group.

The report was seconded by Councillor Allen Walker who re-iterated the Councillor Services & Governance Working Group included members from each of the political parties and the changes they reviewed were necessary to keep the constitution fit for purpose.

In reply to a query Councillor Parker confirmed the Monitoring Officer would discuss queries about the Constitution with Councillor Eileen Hales outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED that: Council:

- 1) **noted the Monitoring Officer's annual review of the Constitution;**
- 2) **agreed the constitutional changes as set out in Section 5 of the report;**
- 3) **agreed that these changes would take effect from 24 September 2015 unless otherwise stated; and**
- 4) **agreed that the Monitoring Officer be delegated responsibility to make these amendments and any associated conforming amendments and republish the Constitution.**

(b) Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2014-15 & Corporate Parenting Board Strategy:

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Joan Kirkbride introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating the following:

- In her opinion the role of a corporate parent was one of the most important roles councillors undertook if not the most important one. Although much had been achieved, it was in her opinion insufficient and she felt the plan for 2015-17 must accelerate the improvements already made.
- She felt that Council would only succeed in improving the life chances of the children in its care should they be given the same choices as councillors' own children and that was the aim and goal for 2017.
- Reference was made to improvements in the Council's leaving care services and the work undertaken with the Nene Valley Care Trust as well as the work undertaken with borough and district councils which was vital as they provided housing for the Council's looked after children (LAC).
- Improvements for children in foster care had also been made, particularly as

they could stay longer in foster care. More was required for those LAC in residential care homes however.

- Councillors were thanked for donating money for the LAC Awards Ceremony and a request was made that the sum of £100 be earmarked for this in their empowering councillors scheme funding the following year as it was important to demonstrate to LAC that the Council did care and wished to improve their life chances.
- Reference was made to the closing statements from the Children in Care Forum who had stated they wanted to be treated as an individual and have a secure home that kept them happy and safe.

The report was seconded by Councillor Matt Golby who stated it was incumbent on councillors to 'push' for the very best life chances for all the Council's LAC. He commended the compassion and dedication of all those staff aiming to provide the best for them. They were very aware of the issues LAC faced, particularly as some of them were ex-LAC themselves. Turning to the issue of education, he felt there was a clear need to do more than had been in the past for LAC. He felt the virtual school had not been fit for purpose the previous year and whilst there was still much to improve there he was confident updates he would be receiving at a safeguarding event the following week would provide details of progress. He concluded by asking councillors to inform him of any negative reception they received at a school with LAC within their division so that he could address the issues quickly.

Councillors commented as follows:

- The Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Board, Councillor Joan Kirkbride was thanked for her support to LAC.
- It was suggested councillors read the reviews that working groups of the Corporate Parenting Board had undertaken into the number of young people not in employment, education or training as well as improvements to increase the number of foster carers in the county and improvements in the stability of the workforce that supported them, particularly as there had been a high turnover of qualified social workers.
- The Children in Care Forum was recommended to councillors as through this the Council's LAC in a few words, encompassed their feelings about being a LAC and the issues they faced.
- There was a need to provide stability for children to ensure they did not have 2 or 3 or more placements during the most important, first 3 years of their lives.
- Some felt there was a need to keep in touch with children as noting where they went (employment, training, starting their own family) and their experiences would enable the Council to ascertain how successful the services were and address issues that had arisen.
- Concerns were raised regarding the lack of stability within the directorate with many staff moving to different positions.
- Further concerns were also raised regarding the stability of placements.
- It was noted the cognitive abilities of young people who had suffered trauma were affected by that trauma and consequently they made educational progress at a slower rate than their peers. It was therefore suggested more extra-curricular opportunities should be sought for these young people to take part in gymnastics and sports.

- Concerns were raised that the number of LAC was expected to rise from 900 to 1,400 during the next 5-6 years. The number of unaccompanied asylum seekers in the county was also noted as an issue and Central Government funding after the first 25, was only provided for 1 year. This would be a very real challenge for the Council which was already struggling to recruit adequate numbers of foster carers and having to place many LAC in expensive out of county provision. Its ability to support the expected growth was therefore questioned.
- It was noted that the Council's performance in terms of pathway patterns had dropped from 70% to 54% against a target set of 92%.
- There was a need to encourage greater attendance at various meetings associated with the Corporate Parenting Board as attendance appeared to be between 59% and 75%.
- The Corporate Parenting Board was invited to work closer with borough and district councils, particularly as they could assist with accommodation for those leaving care.
- Social workers were commended for their work, particularly in the support they provided to foster carers who went on to become adoptive parents.
- The issue of unaccompanied asylum seekers was a national one which made the number of placements available even out of county, few in number. Placing LAC out of county was expensive not just for the Council but also those visiting them whether that be their social worker or family members. The process of placing a child in a safe home took approximately 26 weeks and there was a need to recruit as many foster carers as possible not just for unaccompanied asylum seekers but also for those born in the county.
- A recruitment campaign had begun using various mediums such as Facebook and You-Tube.

In response Councillor Kirkbride thanked councillors for their support. She recognised there was much more to be achieved in terms of education and in assisting young people to secure permanent employment in order to ensure they had the life chances they deserved. Monitoring what happened to LAC when they left care was an ongoing piece of work. Bonding within the first 2 years of a child's life was vital and work was being undertaken to improve the stability of placements as well as increasing the number of placements. She also recognised the need to prepare for the expected rise in the number of unaccompanied asylum seekers. It was also confirmed the issue of pathway plans would be presented to the Corporate Parenting Board who were keen to improve exam results. The Corporate Parenting Board was working closely with borough and district councils with each appointing its own Children's Champion. Substitute members for the Corporate Parenting Board would also be trained to the same level as the regular members they would substitute for.

RESOLVED that: Council:

- 1) **noted the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2014-15 and accompanying reports:**
 - **Northamptonshire County Council Placement Sufficiency for Children in Care 2015-16:**

- **Demand, Placement & Provision Analysis (April 2015);**
- Independent Reviewing Officers' Service Annual Report (2014-15); and

2) approved the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015-17.

(c) Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB).Annual Report 2014-15:

At the Chairman's invitation, the Independent Chairman of the NSCB, Mr Keith Makin to address the Council who stated the following:

- The report which was required by regulations would also be shared with the Department of Education (DfE) and was based on work undertaken during the year as well as a recent conference attended by 19 of the Board's partners. It had also been reported to the Northamptonshire Health & Wellbeing Board.
- The Board was working closely with the Children's Improvement Board.
- The report in the new style adopted the previous year provided more details about the impact of its work on the children of the county, being much more outcome and less process focussed. There had also been an attempt to ensure it was less technical and jargonistic and easy to read.
- The covering report referred to a review of governance of the Board and its various sub-committees. There had been very good attendance from all partners and very good contributions had been made by all partner agencies.
- There was still much to achieve particularly in engagement with the voluntary and community sector (VCS).
- The website had been refreshed to ensure it was more customer friendly and some new sub groups had been developed including a young persons local safeguarding children's board and to consider issues of child sexual exploitation (a big priority for the future alongside children missing from home and education), female genital mutilation (including prevention work) and radicalisation (including all extremes) which included a lot of work with schools. The number of people accessing the website (4,000 on one section alone) was reassurance that this was a good way forward.
- A conference to launch a toolkit had been attended by 600 professionals across all agencies.
- They were now capturing more data and analysing it more intelligently to ensure all partners understood the impact on young people. They were also sponsoring multi-agency and single agency audits for which there were outcomes
- Much had been done to ensure improved learning from serious case reviews and in ensuring that learning was assimilated across all agencies.

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The Chairman then invited Councillor Heather Smith to propose the report (copies of which had been previously circulated) thanking the Independent Chairman for his support and noting he had taken on that role at a very difficult time with the formation of the Children's Improvement Board. She felt it had been a massive learning experience to note just how well partners could work together as a united team to deal with some of the most horrendous issues affecting children in the county.

In answer to a query from Councillor Smith, the independent chairman stated the Board had been working on the basis that there was a possibility the Children's

Improvement Board would pass its responsibilities to the Board during the first half of 2016. He felt the Board had the best level of representation and was well placed to take over when this happened.

The report was seconded by Councillor Dudley Hughes who stated he felt the Council's scrutiny function was complementing the work of the Board because in his opinion, councillors should be receiving more information about this important issue.

In answer to queries on the report, the Independent Chairman of the NSCB confirmed the following:

- Whilst there was good engagement with VCS representatives already involved with the NSCB there was a need to extend the current activity across the county and this would take time.
- The NSCB had improved engagement with schools to gain an understanding of what was happening within schools and ensure safeguarding controls were in place. Audit returns from schools had been very good that year with an 100% return against 49% the previous year.
- Whilst as an independent Chairman he would not be involved in developing the Councils future operating model, he felt reassured from recent discussions with the Chief Executive that the NSCB would be consulted on safeguarding issues and independent views incorporated into development plans.
- Whilst housing issues were mainly a concern of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board, there was some relevance to children as well and the Board was working closely with district and borough councils and he regularly met with the Chief Executive of the Borough Council of Wellingborough who took a lead in licensing. Amongst licensing of landlords, they also discussed licensing of taxi drivers and fast food outlets because a link had been identified between these areas and sexual exploitation.
- The Board was also discussing housing provision for young people leaving the care system as well as homelessness of younger people to ensure the situation was improved.
- Overcrowding was an important safeguarding issue and those living in poor housing conditions should be referred for assistance. This was very important.
- The group formed to tackle Female Genitalia Mutilation (FGM) would be reviewing in detail how to engage with all communities affected by this.
- There had been a recent significant rise in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and the NSCB was currently reviewing what this meant for the county and how those children could be supported and assisted to engage with their natural communities already formed in the country.
- Further engagement with the VCS was important as they were the experts in many areas.
- The play by a local playwright about child exploitation (Sophie's Choice) had been presented in local Northampton schools and the Board was currently discussing extending this across the county with relevant schools as it was an excellent play that dealt with real issues very well.

Councillors also commented that the idea of a Young People's Safeguarding Board was welcomed.

In reply Councillor Smith thanked the Independent Chairman for all he had done to assist in achieving significant improvements in the past 12 months.

RESOLVED that: Council, after consideration of the Annual Report agreed to continue to support the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board in the challenges ahead and future priorities as outlined in the Annual Report.

(d) Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) Annual Report 2014-15

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Suresh Patel introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) thanking the Independent Chairman of the NSAB, Marie Seaton (who had been unable to attend that day) for all of her work as well as the partner agencies represented on the NSAB and its various sub-groups.

The report was seconded by Councillor Sylvia Hughes who felt the Board demonstrated strong leadership supported by a good structure which led to improved services.

On behalf of the NSAB, the Director of Adult Social Care Services, Carolyn Kus answered queries as follows:

- All local authorities operated an 'expected pay rate' for beds that they accessed and the Council sought to place people at that rate to meet their eligible needs. Families could pay extra for additional care but were not charged for anything their relative was entitled to within their eligible need which would only be changed following a review and not in-between reviews.
- The Director was working with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) to undertake a detailed analysis of the implications of the Living Wage. All areas of the country would be affected differently to each other and the details of the survey could be shared with councillors at the appropriate time.
- Following a judgement in Cheshire West, many care homes had requested re-assessments of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS). Publication of the judgement had also resulted in increased referrals leading to a backlog in assessments. The majority of people affected by DOLS were in a care environment and not at risk and the assessments were ensuring they were not deprived in any way rather than ensuring their safety.
- Work was being undertaken to understand why people hoarded as it was recognised hoarding was an issue, particularly for those with mental health issues.

Councillors also noted the following:

- The Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee could review the impact of the living Wage on services through the budget scrutiny process.
- Central Government had recognised that the introduction of the Living Wage would have an impact particularly on care homes and the Law Commission was undertaking an independent review which the Council was urged to comment on.
- Councillor David Mackintosh would lobby Central Government with regard to the implications of the introduction of the Living Wage in his capacity as MP for Northampton South.

In reply Councillor Suresh Patel thanked the NSAB and supporting officers from the Council for all their work during the year.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2014-15.

(e) Health & Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2014-15

The Chairman informed Council this item had been withdrawn and would be presented to the next meeting due to be held on Thursday 26 November 2015.

RESOLVED that: Council noted this item had been withdrawn.

(f) Empowering Councillors & Communities Scheme – Annual Report of the Scheme for the Financial Year 2014/15

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Bill Parker introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating it was a very straight forward report that provided a clear indication as to how councillors had spent their fund within their divisions. He also noted there had been no negative comments from those accessing the process.

The report was seconded by Councillor Allen Walker who stated it had been a very good way of assisting councillors to better understand their communities for a number of years. Although he recognised the challenges to the Council's finances, he felt this was a scheme that should be viewed as sacrosanct, particularly as the Council was one of the few local authorities offering this support to its local communities.

Councillors commented as follows:

- The fact that funding could be provided quickly and easily to those applying was considered to be an important part of its success.
- An example was given of how a small sum could assist in achieving further funding from other organisations. A small sum from the empowering councillors scheme had enabled a local school to undertake a consultation project with children which in had received good engagement from the local children who then wrote a successful bid for several thousand pounds to improve a local park.
- The scheme was considered by many to be very effective supporting all sorts of projects in communities.
- An example was provided of how some funding from the scheme had enabled young ambassadors to encourage young people to look after their area and obtain funding for a playpark that they now maintained themselves.
- It was noted 47% of the funding supported projects addressing health issues.
- Another example was provided of how the funding had assisted a very diverse community to form an orchestra, providing local people the opportunity to learn music skills they would otherwise have no opportunity to practice and which had gone on to play in public for the first time earlier that year.
- It was noted the administration costs of the scheme were low because the

councillors undertook so much of the work, meeting with communities and completing the form with them.

- The Scheme provided the opportunity to support people and organisations that would otherwise 'fall through the gaps'. It enabled councillors to assist those who had been affected by injustice and resolve that issue
- It was noted how such a small percentage of the Council's gross budget (less than 1%) could assist hundreds of residents. Some organisations were able to achieve a lot with only a small sum from the scheme of perhaps £50 or £200.

In reply Councillor Parker noted this scheme enabled all councillors to engage with the communities they represented, talk to people to ascertain their needs and find ways to assist them to address those needs.

RESOLVED that: Council endorsed the annual report of the Scheme for the Empowering Councillors & Communities Scheme for the financial year 2014-15.

68/15 Cabinet Business:

At the Chairman's invitation, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jim Harker introduced his report (copies of which had been previously circulated).

Councillors were referred to the answers to questions submitted in writing (copies of which had been previously circulated). Supplementary questions to these were answered by members of Cabinet as follows:

- The value to the county's economy from its heritage was being recognised more and more. Heritage was something everyone could enjoy and a recent conference had been held at Boughton House at which several speakers spoke about the importance of heritage to the economy nationally as well as locally. This conference included high profile speakers such as the Chairman of Historic England, a developer working on a major project in Buxton, representatives from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Houses Association. Heritage was also a job creator as could be seen in the Buxton project developing the old Spa Crescent over a 7-8 construction year period. Once complete, it would provide even more jobs within the large hotel and shopping complex that would be created as well as attracting more people to Buxton. The Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership had undertaken some work to provide draft figures and a strategic approach for harnessing the county's heritage which included 70 major heritage attractions such as Rockingham Castle and Althorp House both of which employed 25-30 people as well as smaller sites such as 78 Derngate. In addition to approximately 1,000 jobs within the county's heritage industry, over 1,000 new people settled every month in Northamptonshire not just because of good regular connections to London or cheap housing but because they also wanted to enjoy the heritage.
- Councillor Parker would raise the issue of contacting staff within LGSS that had joined as part of other borough and district councils at the next meeting of the Chief Executive Officers.
- The Council had enjoyed a good relationship with local unions, something the Leader of the Council looked forward to enjoying in the future.
- There was a need to provide as much diverse educational provision across the

county as possible and the county benefitted from two University Technical Colleges as well as Moulton and Tresham Colleges. Any further debate on the future profile of provision particularly in how it linked with business, especially the highly technical industry, would be welcomed with Councillor Groome outside of the meeting.

- The introduction of universal free school meals had a positive impact on pupils in Key Stage 1 and the Cabinet Member for Education was unaware of any planned future changes to this provision.
- The Council had a positive relationship with the Regional Schools Commissioner to the point that the Council had been asked to submit evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee of how that had been built and would be maintained in the future.
- Councillor Stone could be invited to take part in the many discussions being held with housing providers in relation to how the needs of asylum seeking children and other families were met.
- As all new schools would be free schools or academies, there was a need to work closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner to identify needs. There was also a need to review the county's strategic needs in relation to education and schools as there had been many changes since it had last been undertaken in 2010.
- Clarification of the details of the investment available to target localised pockets of need for 2-year old funded nursery places would be provided to Councillor Bob Scott following the meeting.
- When setting the final budget, comments from scrutiny were always considered. Because of the need to reduce the budget by a substantial amount, scrutiny would also need to make suggestions on how this was undertaken when objecting to any proposals in the budget.
- Clarification of how the formula to measure the impact of poverty on the health and wellbeing of Northamptonshire's Children was practised would be provided to Councillor John McGhee following the meeting.
- Details of how well prepared Northamptonshire was to manage a winter crisis in the NHS would be provided to Councillor Brendan Glynane following the meeting.
- The proposal for future use of the former Grange Care Home site in Daventry was currently being finalised.
- Details of any outstanding works of improvement to the roads in Northampton Town Centre would be provided to Councillor Arthur McCutcheon following the meeting.

Additional verbal questions were then answered as follows:

- Where the Council has been unable to recruit an officer of a particular calibre to a post after several attempts, an officer could be employed on an interim basis at a higher rate. As they have an interim contract they would not be paid for annual leave or sick leave and no pension or national insurance contributions are made on their behalf. The business case for their employment would be based on the Council's need to ensure all requirements were met and a suitable permanent replacement would be employed as soon as one could be found. This situation usually arose in areas where a national shortage existed such as social care.

- For many years Northamptonshire had been underfunded in some areas such as education. Whilst Northamptonshire welcomed additional growth, it also required infrastructure to support that growth and the Council welcomed Councillor Mackintosh's offer to lobby Central Government on its behalf in his capacity as local MP for Northampton South.

RESOLVED that: Council noted:

- 1) **The report by the Leader of the Council;**
- 2) **Answers provided to questions submitted both in writing and verbally to the meeting;**
- 3) **That Councillor Golby would discuss the required profile of education required in the County with Councillor Christopher Groome outside of the meeting; and**
- 4) **That the following written answers would be provided following the meeting:**
 - **Clarification to Councillor Bob Scott on the details of the investment available to target localised pockets of need for 2-year old funded nursery places;**
 - **Clarification to Councillor John McGhee on how the formula to measure the impact of poverty on the health and wellbeing of Northamptonshire's Children was practised;**
 - **Details to Councillor Brendan Glynane of how well prepared Northamptonshire was to manage a winter crisis in the NHS;**
 - **To Councillor Arthur McCutcheon details of any outstanding works of improvement to the roads in Northampton Town Centre.**

69/15 Report by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Committee

At the Chairman's invitation, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Committee, Councillor Judy Shephard introduced her report (copies of which were previously circulated) drawing attention to the workshop sessions that were being arranged to scrutinise the full business case for the Wellbeing Community Interest Company (CIC). She also thanked councillors and officers for their dedication and support to the scrutiny process.

The report was seconded by Councillor Jim Hakewill who informed Council that the Finance & Resources Scrutiny Committee had arranged a meeting on 30 September at which 3 senior officers would discuss areas of major concern within their budget. All councillors were invited to this meeting and they were also reminded that queries could be brought to scrutiny at any time.

In reply to queries raised, Councillors Shephard and Hakewill confirmed the following:

- Scrutiny of governance arrangements within the next generation council would be discussed by the Scrutiny Management Committee and then filtered through the scrutiny process once a scoping mechanism had been completed.
- Throughout the process of creating the next generation council interaction would be undertaken with elected members in the usual way. Scrutiny would ensure good governance would be included in the plans and ensure questions

were answered.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the report by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Committee

70/15 Motions submitted by Councillors under Rule 13.1 of the Constitution:

(a) Motion submitted by Councillor Brendan Glynane:

The Chairman invited Councillor Brendan Glynane to move the following motion:

"This council notes that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has stated, 'Syria has become the greatest tragedy of this century – a disgraceful humanitarian calamity with suffering and displacement unparalleled in recent history'.

Council further notes that more than 6.5 million Syrians are reported to have been forcibly displaced from their homes in the last 3 years.

This Council believes that all life is precious, and that Britain's historic openness and hospitality to refugees in need should be a source of pride.

Council further notes that given the level of suffering and the number of lives lost, the response from the UK government has been inadequate.

This Council therefore resolves:

- To play a part in the initiative to respond to the suffering and trauma of refugee families, by assigning an officer to take the lead in working with any appropriate community groups, faith groups or other organisations that wish to accommodate refugees and to co-ordinate necessary support.*
- Council further resolves to liaise with neighbouring authorities and all interested parties, including our MEPs, local MPs and housing associations, to make representations to the Government that the people of Northamptonshire believe more aid must be given.*
- Council will also make representations to government insisting that Council's must be granted adequate financial support to ensure that they are never forced to put a monetary value on a human life."*

In moving the motion Councillor Glynane stated he considered the motion to be simple. He was proud of being British and of British values of openness, tolerance and looking after other people. He felt Britain had a history of assisting refugees, noting the French Huguenots and Jewish people taken in both before and after the Second World War. There were many examples of how well these refugees had achieved. There was an issue however of finance and he noted the need to ensure funds were in place to support refugees who settled in Britain. The Local Government Association (LGA) had had stated it cost approximately £50,000 per year to support a child that entered the country as an unaccompanied asylum seeker and the Government only provided funding for the first year, after which time, the financial responsibility fell to the local authority. He felt the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive should take the opportunity to inform Government of the need for further financial assistance after the first year.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Jill Hope who referred to the assistance all councillors provided to those in their divisions on a daily basis. Whilst supporting residents, she also spoke to others and learned of their problems and she was proud that Britain was a compassionate nation. She reminded councillors that those the motion referred to had nothing; no clothes, food or shelter and many asylum seekers were unaccompanied children, all of whom needed the Council's assistance.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Some felt funding was also required to assist in greater and more general integration with communities learning about the issues and beliefs of their new neighbours to ensure they were well received. There were lots of examples of good practice around the country where new residents also learned about the cultures of their new adopted home. This also reduced incidents of racism.
- It was noted refugees were fleeing situations far worse than those currently experienced in their new home. Having lost everything they were hoping to rebuild their lives in a more prosperous and stable country than the one they had left.
- Some felt Britain had a moral obligation to use its resources to assist refugees and it was suggested local councils shouldn't wait for Central Government but take a lead themselves to assist those hoping to settle in Britain.
- In noting this was a very emotive subject, it was also noted there was a housing shortage in the county, particularly in Northampton where only those that were truly homeless could be assisted. It was therefore suggested a working group be set up to discuss how the county could assist.
- Some felt there was a need to ensure the motion was clear and realistic as there were several other factors that should also be considered such as the need to ensure those assisted were genuine refugees and not male economic migrants, to work alongside other organisations such as local churches who also assisted refugees and the support the Council already gave to an increasing number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children arriving in Northamptonshire. Britain already provided a higher sum than many European countries to support refugee camps in Syria.
- The way in which families put themselves at risk to reach Europe was noted including the way in which the situation changed almost daily. Support already given by Great Britain was also noted such as financial assistance to the refugee camps in Syria and the Government had appointed a minister to oversee the resettlement of genuine refugees and reduce the number taking dangerous journeys. Some felt the motion was not required as Central Government was already providing what was needed.
- The fact that the county was already struggling to support the existing number of LAC was felt by some to be a reason to consider very carefully how to support genuine orphans of the crisis. This could take time and required assistance from other agencies.

In reply Councillor Glynane referred to how 'moved' everyone was by the crisis. He felt supporting the Government's current activity was not adequate. The Council in his opinion should be taking a lead role alongside churches and other agencies supporting refugees. It should review housing and make representation to Central Government to put a funding package together, particularly as the Council already faced serious funding challenges. It was in his opinion unfair for Central government

Deleted:

to expect local people to fund the burden of support when it had the finances to fund it. He concluded by thanking Councillor Mackintosh for offering to make representation to Central Government in his capacity as MP for Northampton South.

RESOLVED that: Upon a recorded vote of 32 against and 16 for with 2 abstentions the motion was defeated.

(b) Motion submitted by Councillor Adam Collyer:

At the Chairman's invitation and Councillor Adam Collyer proposed the following motion:

"Significant service improvements and cost savings can be achieved by closer integration of the "blue light" emergency services. Council therefore welcomes the progress already made in the county towards closer working between the Police and Fire Services.

Council should continue to promote closer working and co-operation between the Police and Fire Services and opportunities should be sought over time to include the county's Ambulance Service in this process"

In moving the motion Councillor Collyer stated this was not a new idea as the Fire and Police Services had already started to work closer together. There were many benefits from collaboration (including sharing of premises and joint operating teams) and many examples across the country, the first of which having been in Northamptonshire. Such a programme of work would contribute to the Council's required savings of £27million and the Fire Service's requirement of £2million savings over the next 2 years. Services with so much in common sharing back-office resources could result in reduced costs and flexible, more responsive services. It would also provide increased job security and there was a legal duty from the Government to collaborate. He felt the Police and Fire Services could easily merge into one single police and fire authority. Perhaps in time the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) which was currently experiencing its own challenges could join with a combined force. He felt this was an opportunity for Northamptonshire to be at the forefront of collaboration, particularly as Central Government had recognised the collaborative work the county had already undertaken. He urged councillors to respond positively to the government consultation paper and seek further collaboration through a merger of all blue light services.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Christopher Groome who referred to the previous good service provided by the Two Shires Ambulance Service. He then referred to the merger creating EMAS that had led to a poorer performance and EMAS reinstating local management in order to return performance back to where it once was. He then referred to the merger of police forces in Scotland and the fact that the Chief Constable of Scotland had recently resigned due to poor performance. He thought Government seemed to think large mergers between a number of areas was a positive move but he felt the more locally focussed services proposed in the motion were a good way of achieving savings from sharing services whilst maintaining a local focus.

Councillors commented as follows:

- The benefits of collaboration were accepted, particularly in relation to emergency services. Many co-responders were retained firefighters but they did not have the same level of training as paramedics and it was suggested the needs of a combined service should be carefully considered. Firefighters, police officers and paramedics should be consulted on where and how they undertook their roles and the length of time it took to undertake their roles. There was also a need to consider the level of provision required and level of staffing to provide it.
- Concerns were raised that there was no real business case for Police and Crime Commissioners to take responsibility for the fire and ambulance service.
- It was suggested joint commissioning between the emergency services, such as sharing a building or maintenance for vehicles, was the best way forward to ensure standards of service as one person controlling reorganisation with skills and experience in only one third of the services they would be responsible for was concerning for some.
- Support for the motion was expressed by some who felt this was an ideal opportunity. Integrated services were a way to effectively utilise all the county's resources in a smarter and more effective way. It was also noted some savings had been affected by the joint collaboration that had already happened. Firefighters for instance had responded to emergencies providing medical assistance pending the arrival of an ambulance.
- Concerns were raised about giving the responsibility of 3 services to a Police and Crime Commissioner who was only experienced and fully understood one of them. It was felt by some that the knowledge was with the organisations currently running them rather than the head of one of them. It was also felt the public would not have confidence in a fire engine responding to their call for an ambulance.

Councillor Collyer waived his right of reply and moved to the vote on the motion.

RESOLVED that: Upon the vote the motion was accepted.

(c) Motion submitted by Councillor Chris Lofts:

At the Chairman's invitation and Councillor Chris Lofts proposed the following motion:

"Council recognises that a significant problem for this Council to tackle as it moves to its "next generation" model is ensuring that services remain easily accessible and accountable to the residents of Northamptonshire.

Many residents react with frustration when one Council point to another as the appropriate point of contact for a given concern - a structure of multiple, quasi autonomous organisations will increase the complexity of interacting with "Council services" even further, and to a significant degree.

Council further recognises that this problem is already showing itself, with officers in NCC and in other organisations that use LGSS complaining that as staff shifts they

do not know who to contact with specific concerns. Councillors may well have experienced similar problems, with both LGSS and the Highways contractor.

Council therefore resolves to immediately produce a new staff directory that includes any organisation undertaking work on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council, and includes both job titles and areas of responsibility.

Council further resolves that a single point of contact (Phone number, email address, etc.) will remain available to residents under the “next generation” model, with the ability to transfer people directly to any organisation or officer within the NCC group of companies.

Finally, Council resolves that to ensure consistency of service and political accountability, all appeals and complaints will be controlled by the “retained organisation” and through the “single point of contact”.

In moving the motion Councillor Lofts stated he felt delivery models for various services were complex and this would only get worse. This motion was concerned with ensuring it was easy and transparent for external organisations wishing to contact the Council's services. It also ensured the Council was accountable for any problems that arose.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Sally Beardsworth.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Concerns were raised that the new operating model for the Council was a form of privatisation during which it would be difficult to ascertain who the appropriate officer was to answer a query and how to contact them. The directory would then be even more important.
- It was noted the proposal within the next generation council would be for the corporate complaints team to remain within the Council with the customer contact team acting as a contact point and maintaining links to resolve customer enquiries where possible and when appropriate referring them to the appropriate officer in any of the organisations within the next generation model.
- Some concerns were expressed with the customer contact team's ability to answer queries that might require information from so many partner organisations.
- Some felt it was already difficult to ascertain who the most appropriate person to provide assistance was and this would only get worse with a more fragmented council. This was particularly unhelpful and frustrating for councillors attempting to assist their constituents.

In reply Councillor Lofts moved to the vote on the motion.

RESOLVED that: Upon the vote the motion was defeated.

(Councillor Phil Larratt left the meeting and the Vice-Chairman; Councillor Malcolm Waters chaired the meeting from this point)

(d) Motion submitted by Councillor Winston Strachan

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Winston Strachan proposed the following motion:

"This Council recognises that in June 2013 Cabinet agreed to create "a new public space and urban parkland that services the interests of local residents, businesses and visitors to the [county] town" on the site of Castle House in Marefair.

Councillors note that in July 2015 the Council completely changed intentions for the site and made an announcement inviting architects to submit plans for up to 30 homes to be built on Castle House. This is clear digression from the June 2013 Cabinet decision, which is not permitted within the scope of the delegated authority contained within the report.

This Council notes as no further decision was taken by the Cabinet and no consultation (public or otherwise) took place around the housing plans that the democratic process has been boycotted and that the Council is currently acting in an unlawful manner. We therefore resolve to halt any activity on the housing proposal until a decision is taken in line with the Council's usual decision-making processes."

In moving the motion Councillor Strachan stated many of those in his division had expressed disappointment that the Castle House site in the Marefair part of Northampton would be developed as housing instead of a public space. He referred to a decision by Cabinet in June 2013 to create a new public space on that site including urban parkland that serviced the interests of local residents, businesses and visitors to the county town. In July 2015 however, it was announced designs were being sought for a development of up to 30 homes on the site. As the councillor for the Castle Division he was disappointed at this change and the lack of further public consultation prior to the Council changing its intentions. He felt there were links across the site between Northampton Castle, St Peters Church, Hazelrigg House and the Protestant Dr Doddridge's Castle Hill Church which provided a unique opportunity to tell Northampton's historic story. Given the historic significance of the site, he believed any change of use of the land should be put out to public consultation and he asked that the housing proposal be halted until a decision could be made through the Council's usual decision making processes.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Arthur McCutcheon who re-iterated Councillor Strachan's points. In his opinion the Council's own procedures had been ignored. He voiced concerns that the area was becoming more industrialised and he felt it should be a commodity that concentrated on the elements in the town's history that told that history. The site had links back as far as Saxon times and provided information relating to roman settlements in the area. In more recent times the focus had been on the early medieval development of the castle particularly when it functioned with a national interest and as a royal palace. That particular part of Northampton's history had been well represented and very appropriately but this was only part of the story and the Castle House site provided the opportunity to tell more about Northampton's history including the slaughter of the Jewish community in the 13th century by throwing them from the castle walls and the use of the castle as a

quarry in the 17th century by those founding the trade with which the town became associated.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Whilst it was true heritage was something all people carried with them, the signs of it were required in order to understand why that heritage was carried and understand what present day people represented. This particular area of Northampton had been visited by over 100 people during the recent heritage weekend. Whilst it was only a relatively small part of the town, it was very rich in heritage and local people had been requesting the inclusion of the heritage gateway in their local plan to ensure people could understand the huge significance of their area.
- Concerns were raised about the executive housing that was part of the development plans and how it would form a barrier between two parts of the heritage site and block the view of the castle mound, a very important part of the heritage site. Local people needed to be able to view a seamless connection when explaining its part in the town's history to their children and visitors.
- It was noted the Cabinet paper presented in June 2013 proposed the launch of a plan for an important part of the county town's heritage. The strategy centred around investment where possible and in the last 18 months the Council had worked with key organisations stakeholders such as the Northampton Heritage Gateway Board, members of the Council, Northampton Borough Council, Friends of Northampton Castle, the Castles Trust, Northampton University and various organisations related to English Heritage. All of these had viewed the plans but the Council only owned part of the site. There were other various owners of parts of this site and they as well as the other stakeholders that had viewed the plans had different ideas about how the site should be developed.
- It was noted local people would be very disappointed about the new plans for the site and it was suggested returning to the plan of maintaining it as an open space should be considered.
- Some felt the site should not be sold or developed for profit. It was suggested Northampton had adequate numbers of 2-bedroomed flats and did not need the flats that would be provided on this development which were likely to be bought not by local people but by people wanting to live closer to the station to commute.
- It was suggesting these new plans felt like a broken promise to local children that they could visit the heritage they learned about in school on their own doorstep.
- It was noted the county consisted of more than just one town and the County Council had to consider all residents in the county. Despite this, it had used a large sum to assist in redeveloping this part of Northampton. It had also spent a lot of time in preserving as much of this site as possible, negotiating for instance with the owners of the Black Lion Public House to ensure that historical inn remained.
- Council was reminded that the site was formerly occupied by an empty 3-4 storey office block with no prospects until earlier that year. There would still be an open space in the area. English Heritage had stated the site could not be taken back to the original street line up to Marefair but the open space would remain. What the Council required now was increased partnership to develop

the site.

In reply Councillor Strachan moved to the vote on the motion.

RESOLVED that: Upon the vote the motion was defeated.

(e) Motion submitted by Councillor Danielle Stone:

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Danielle Stone proposed the following motion:

"This Council recognises the potential benefit that could be achieved by reducing the speed limit to 20mph in the proximity of parks and playgrounds.

This Council acknowledges that according to transport statistics – more than half of road deaths and serious injuries occur on roads with 30mph limits. We also recognise that some parks and play areas in the county do not have the protection that residential streets enjoy.

This Council recognises the seriousness of road traffic accidents around our parks and play areas and therefore resolves to mandate the relevant scrutiny committee to carry out a review of speed limits outside them."

In moving the motion Councillor Stone stated the motion requested that Council followed the example of many other local authorities by creating 20mph speed limits around the county's parks and playgrounds. One aim was increased safety as fatalities were reduced by 50% where the vehicle has been travelling at 20mph. The areas of Bristol and Nottingham had created a culture that understood 20mph was a reasonable speed in such areas and increased pedestrianisation and cycling. Children and parents were more likely to walk to school as they would find it safer and easier to cross the road. Creating signs recommending a 20mph speed limit was not adequate and there was a need to ensure it became embedded in communities and driving habits. She felt sure many local organisations, the local police, councils and communities would be willing to campaign for it especially when they knew how well it had been achieved in other areas of the country.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mick Scrimshaw who felt it was sensible to discuss what was in his opinion a sensible idea. Even if it proved unsuccessful surely attempting to implement it would prove the Council's commitment to road safety.

Councillors commented as follows:

- It was noted the Council did treat safety as a priority. The number of road casualties and deaths had been reducing for the past 12 years with 43% fewer fatalities on the county's roads than 12 years ago. Even when safety cameras had been removed, there had been no increase in the number of road deaths.
- It was suggested a road analysis commissioned by the Department of Transport in relation to 5mph and 10mph limits should be considered before any decision was made in relation to the motion. The results of this were expected the following year and councillors were urged to wait for this solid evidence before making any decision about 20mph.

- Some felt the success from the 20mph zones that had already been placed around schools and various residential areas should be adequate evidence for expanding the areas in which 20mph limits were sited.
- It was noted 20mph speed limits appeared to cause drivers to drive more carefully. Children however were not always so thoughtful particularly if they had been playing in the park and suddenly realised they were late returning home. Their immediate consideration would be to get home before they were in trouble with their parents and not the road they would have to cross on their way home.
- Concerns were raised about the number of deaths on the roads and it was suggested the prevention of just one death justified implementation of the 20mph zones around parks.
- Some expressed concern about the funding of the implementation of the 20mph zones and it was noted the scheme in Oundle Town Centre had been funded by the town council.

In reply Councillor Stone referred to the statistics one of which was better in her opinion than the 20mph speed limits reduced fatalities by 50%. She felt lessons could be learned from the areas of Bristol, Middlesbrough and Nottingham who had with appropriate campaigning been able to embed this habit within the local community and increase the number of pedestrians by 23%. She felt funding should not make a difference to a child's safe environment.

RESOLVED that: Upon the vote the motion was defeated.

71/15 Urgent Business:

There was none.

72/15 Exempt Business:

There was none.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 4.40pm.

Jenny Rendall
Democratic Support
October 2015

Chairman's Signature:-

Date:-

Appendix 1

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Recorded Votes for Council:					
Date of Meeting: Thursday 24 September 2015					
Item No: 13(a) – Motion submitted by Councillor Brendan Glynane under procedure rule 13.1					

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Beardsworth	Sally	√			
Bell	Paul		√		
Brackenbury	Wendy		√		
Brookfield	Julie	√			
Broomfield	Jim				√
Brown	Michael		√		
Brown	Robin				√
Butcher	Mary	√			
Clarke	Michael		√		
Collyer	Adam		√		
Coombe	Elizabeth	√			
Eales	Gareth	√			
Glynane	Brendan	√			
Golby	Matthew		√		
Gonzalez de Savage	Andre		√		
Groome	Christopher		√		
Hakewill	James		√		
Hales	Eileen	√			
Hallam	Mike		√		

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	<i>Absent</i>
Harker	James		√		
Heggs	Stanley		√		
Hills	Alan		√		
Homer	Sue				√
Hope	Jill	√			
Hughes	Dudley		√		
Hughes	Sylvia		√		
Irving-Swift	Cecile				√
Kirkbride	Joan		√		
Larratt	Phil			√	
Lawman	Graham				√
Lawson	Derek		√		
Legg	Stephen		√		
Lofts	Chris	√			
Longley	Malcolm		√		
McCutcheon	Arthur	√			
McGhee	John	√			
Mackintosh	David			√	
Matthews	Allan		√		
Mercer	Andrew		√		
Meredith	Dennis	√			
Morris	Ian		√		
Osborne	Steve		√		
Parker	Bill		√		

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	<i>Absent</i>
Patel	Bhupendra		√		
Patel	Suresh		√		
Roberts	Russell				√
Sawbridge	Ron		√		
Scott	Bob	√			
Scrimshaw	Mick	√			
Shephard	Judy		√		
Smith	Heather		√		
Stone	Danielle	√			
Strachan	Winston	√			
Tye	Michael		√		
Uldall	Sarah				√
Walker	Allen		√		
Waters	Malcolm		√		
Totals		16	32	2	7

Appendix 2

Questions submitted under rule 10.2

1. Question to Councillor Jim Harker, Leader of the Council from Councillor Joan Kirkbride:

How are we connecting our heritage to the economy of the County?

Connecting heritage with our local economy is central to our strategic aims and we have examples where we are doing so.

2. Question to Councillor Bill Parker, Cabinet Member for Finance, performance and LGSS Sally Beardsworth:

Staff at both NCC and NBC are telling me they are struggling to contact appropriate people at LGSS. What plans are in place to improve the way LGSS works with local authorities?

I am not aware of any major issues, but if you forward me the details that you have I will bring this up with the Managing Director of LGSS personally.

3. Question to Councillor Jim Harker, Leader of the Council from Councillor Gareth Eales:

The Government's Trade Union Bill will not lead to increased efficiency, productivity, profitability, nor protection of the general public. It will have the reverse effect and instead place arbitrary and unnecessary restrictions on people's right to protest and to withdraw their labour, which are fundamental human rights. Will the Leader of the Council write to the Prime Minister urging the Government to drop the Trade Union Bill and write to our local MPs asking them to oppose the draft legislation?

At Northamptonshire County Council, we are very pleased to have good working relationships with our Trade Unions over many years and this has also been the case even when we have had to make significant savings by changing terms and conditions and reducing jobs.

The Government's Trade Union Bill proposes the introduction of new reforms to strengthen strike laws, ensuring the right to strike is balanced with the right of people to be able to go about their daily lives and work within the context of modern working practices.

The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills have undertaken a consultation exercise on various elements of the Bill for all those potentially affected to input to; the consultation exercise closed on 9 September. I assume that Cllr. Eales pursued this avenue before requesting my help.

Given the potential impact of strike on public services and the general public, we feel that it is legitimate to consider and pursue alternative methods.

Whilst we advocate the continuation of working in partnership with the Trade Unions, we have to balance impact that public sector strikes can have on public and the County Council's services and our customers. With this balance in mind, I do not feel that it is necessary to write to the Prime Minister urging the Government to drop the draft legislation.

4. Question to Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Learning, Skills & Education from Councillor Christopher Groome:

It is the Council's policy to increase the number of school places for technical subjects to help address the skills shortages holding back such important industries as construction, high performance engineering and food. Will the Cabinet Member please update Council on the progress to date, the lessons learnt from the various types of provision, and future plans to ensure that all subjects are provided and all parts of the county have access?

Northamptonshire has two University Technical Colleges that opened in September 2013 to provide a 14-19 pathway for engineering and technology. Silverstone UTC has an intake of 138 pupils into Year 10 for either High Performance Engineering or Business & Technical Events Management. The UTC in Daventry admits 120 pupils at Year 10 in the specialisms of new technologies in engineering, modern methods of construction and environmental sustainability. Neither facility has filled to maximum capacity. Neither facility has filled to maximum capacity: 110 pupils have started as the new intake at Silverstone this term and 43 are enrolled in the New Year 10 at Daventry.

5. Question to Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Learning, Skills & Education from Councillor Danielle Stone:

How important does the Cabinet Member for Learning, Education and Skills feel Universal Infant Free School Meals are in terms of increasing children's concentration and attainment levels at school?

Research evidence has shown that improvements in the quality of school meals led to significant improvement in attainment outcomes. The 2011 government report on the universal free school meal pilot provision found a clear impact on improved attainment that was particularly marked for children in low-income groups. However, where the pilot extended provision (rather than provided universal provision) there was less take-up and no evidence of improved attainment.

This scheme was for school-age children rather than infants but it s reasonable to assume a similar likely outcome. It is also the case that good early years outcomes are the best predictor of continued educational success.

6. Question to Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Learning, Skills & Education from Councillor Wendy Brackenbury:

What is this Authority doing to raise the profile to Central Government of the issues facing us as we try to improve educational attainment of our children in the county?

The council and senior officers have worked closely with the Department for Education over the development and implementation of the Race To The Top strategy. The Leader of the Council and the Director of Children's Services have met Ministers to discuss the issues that particularly effect our efforts to improve outcomes.

7. Question to Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Learning, Skills & Education from Councillor Danielle Stone:

We cannot raise educational achievement in this county while many of our children are disadvantaged because they live in overcrowded housing. Can we facilitate a joint working group with Borough and District Councils to look at this important issue with a view to ensuring all of our children live in a decent home?

Overcrowding is on of the many socio-economic factors that can affect children's educational attainment. Many studies have established the links between this and educational attainment. However, studies have also demonstrated that it is possible to mitigate the impact through, for example, providing facilities that enable children to complete homework away from the home; that provide opportunities for peace and quiet for leisure or study activities; that provide healthy activities for children so that the poor health effects often associated with overcrowding are mitigated.

8. Question to Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Learning, Skills & Education from Councillor Julie Brookfield:

How many secondary school places are we short? How many will we be short in September 2016 and September 2017? Where are the predicted shortages? What is the plan for ensuring we have adequate school places in the county?

We are currently reviewing the pupil place position for the secondary phase across the county for September 2016 and 17. An updated "Strategic Plan for Schools" is being worked on and the Council is also conversing with the Regional Schools Commissioner on the role of Free Schools and Academies in planning this capacity.

New secondary provision will be required for Northampton, Corby and Kettering in this time period. In Northampton, there are two new Free Schools scheduled to open in September 2016 providing 10 forms of entry (300 Year 7 places) at Northampton

International Academy (Barrack Road) and 4 forms of entry (120 Year 7 places) at Wootton Hall Park Free School.

In Corby, discussions are being held regarding possible expansion at an existing school, plus the process has started to identify a site for a new secondary school to serve the town.

Similarly in Kettering, expansion at existing schools is likely prior to a new secondary school being delivered at Kettering East, where a site is reserved. The applications process for secondary places in September 2016 has just started, with the deadline being 31st October 2015.

9. Question to Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Learning, Skills & Education from Councillor Bob Scott:

Regarding the two year old offer – how many places are available? How many have been taken up? What is the places shortfall? What is the plan moving forward?

In summary the current estimated number of eligible children in Northamptonshire is 3380 of these 1790 were reported to be accessing provision in the Summer 2015 funding period.

Early Years Providers reported in April 2015 that there were 4016 space for funded 2 Year olds available across Northamptonshire although the availability versus estimated children was variable across different geographic areas. Based on take up versus availability there are currently 2226 spaces not yet taken by funded 2 year olds in the county. The areas with lower place availability in order of priority are Northampton Central, Northampton East, Wellingborough, Corby and Northampton North. The Total shortfall of place to achieve 100% sufficiency in all areas is 238.

The 2 Year Old Capital Programme is currently in progress and investment is currently being made that will create a total of 328 new places, 56 Places in Corby, 152 Places in Northampton Central, 72 Places in Northampton East and 48 in Wellingborough. In addition discussions are in play with a private provider who has expressed an interest in setting up provision in the Northampton North Area. Once completed based on the information provided by the sector there will be sufficient provision across the county. Analysis is currently underway to review the current low take up of provision and explore whether there are any more localised issues regarding sufficiency of provision. This will identify whether there are any localised pockets of need. A decision is currently pending from the Minister of State at the DFE on the Capitalisation of a further £300K of investment to target these specific areas to support the creation of places. In addition there is a 2 Year Old Trajectory Funding scheme for creation places which funds start up and feasibility costs for settings. The final £50K of this investment is being focussed directly in those areas identified with localised need.

The chart below provides the detail by area across the county of the current take up, availability of places and current live capital projects.

	Total Est of Eligible Children	Summer 2015 Take up	Current % Take up	Summer 2015 Availability	Spaces Currently Available	Possible Take up availability	Capital Programme Space Creation from Sept 2015	% Take up Availability after investment	Capital Schemes
Corby	440	245	55.7%	402	157	91.36%	56	100.00%	Woodnewton Learning Community, Kingswood
Daventry	245	143	58.4%	543	400	100.00%		100.00%	
East Northants	295	220	74.6%	473	253	100.00%		100.00%	
Kettering	475	246	51.8%	477	231	100.00%		100.00%	
Northampton Central	330	122	37.0%	219	97	66.36%	152	100.00%	Spring Lane Charity, Spring Lane Primary School, Little Learners, Queen Eleanor Primary School
Northampton East	475	238	50.1%	405	167	85.26%	72	100.00%	Eastfield Primary School, Little Gems
Northampton North	195	97	49.7%	180	83	92.31%		92.31%	New Provider interested in setting up provision.
Northampton West	325	199	61.2%	374	175	100.00%		100.00%	
South Northants	135	72	53.3%	520	448	100.00%		100.00%	
Wellingborough	465	208	44.7%	423	215	90.97%	48	100.00%	Highfield Nursery School
Whole County	3380	1790	53.0%	4016	2226		328		

10. Question to Councillor Matt Golby, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Learning, Skills & Education from Councillor Julie Brookfield:

Is the Horizons service in free fall?

No

11. Question to Councillor Bill Parker, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, Performance & LGSS from Councillor Chris Lofts:

For the second year in a row, it is apparent that many of the areas where the Council is failing to make planned savings this year were highlighted by Scrutiny as undeliverable. Will the Cabinet be taking Scrutiny's advice more seriously in the upcoming budget process?

The Cabinet always takes onboard the advice of the scrutiny committees in the budget process.

12. Question to Councillor Robin Brown, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health & Wellbeing from Councillor John McGhee

Do we have a methodology that measures the impact of poverty on the health and wellbeing of the children in the county?

Yes

13. Question to Councillor Robin Brown, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health & Wellbeing from Councillor Brendan Glynane:

Not long ago, this Council bought over a number of social workers from India due to the fundamental importance of their job and a lack of available staff domestically. Are you concerned about the warning from the NHS that politically motivated changes to immigration rules for nurses are likely to lead to a shortage of capable staff in Hospitals this winter?

If so, what representations have you made to Government regarding their policies?

We believe that local NHS leaders work hard to ensure that their Trusts have effective policies for recruitment and retention of staff. In addition, we are aware that the Home Office has stated that NHS trusts have been given more than 1,400 tier 2 certificates of sponsorship for nurses since April this year, but over 600 of the places allocated to them in April and May this year have been returned unused. The government continues to monitor Tier 2 take-up and to receive recommendations from the independent Migration Advisory Committee, as its response to workforce needs within immigration policy.

14. Question to Councillor Robin Brown, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health & Wellbeing from Councillor Brendan Glynane:

If Northamptonshire hospitals are forced to resort to agency nurses over the winter, what effect is this likely to have on the funding available for shared projects you have planned with the NHS?

The shared funding agreements between commissioners have considered many alternative options and contingencies especially known ones like higher urgent care need during cold snaps and heavy winter period. We do not expect that the eventual balance of agency and non-agency staff in our hospitals which would have to be within allocated budget or contingency funding allocated were there to be undue pressure during this year's winter will change planned joint activities.

15. Question to Councillor Robin Brown, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health & Wellbeing from Councillor Brendan Glynane:

In rejecting a Lib Dem motion to tackle poverty in our County, Cllr. Heather Smith stated "Actions speak louder than words."

In the last 6 months, you scrapped the SILS scheme, which provided independent living grants to the homeless (among others).

You have also cut so deeply and left so much uncertainty in funding streams that staff and support for homeless people in our area have been reduced by as much as half.

What do you think these actions say about this Cabinet's attitude to the poor and the homeless?

The Cabinet's strategic intent is to ensure that our response to homelessness in the county is durable, effective and efficient in preventing further homelessness. Consequently, our operational approach is now intricately linked to other long term interventions to improve the public's health. Our attitude to tackling avoidable homelessness in the county is that we need to develop and implement evidence-based approaches which would address the root causes of homelessness and other profound social needs, in a co-ordinated and integrated manner. This is the Public Health approach which is about organised efforts of society. We will continue to work with our partners including strategic housing authorities, the NHS, voluntary sector, localities, and many others around the Health & Wellbeing Board to tackle homelessness. Budgets are finite, and our strategic choice is to seek to help people in preventing and reducing such needs, as part of a radical step change in prevention and wellbeing.

16. Question to Councillor Robin Brown, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health & Wellbeing from Councillor Sally Beardsworth:

Given that the Business Case for the Health and Wellbeing Social Enterprise is being developed alongside the implementation of the organisation, rather than being put together before work begins, what will happen if the business case suggests the new organisation will be less financially viable than assumed?

Work is ongoing on the Business Case and it is indicating that the new organisation will be financially viable. Any constraints regarding how the CIC will operate financially will be addressed by the overall commissioning strategies for the Next Generation Council.

17. Question to Councillor Suresh Patel, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Social Care from Councillor Sally Beardsworth:

Given a recent peer review of services stated "Whilst it is clearly common sense that the wellbeing approach to primary prevention outlined could ultimately lead to some reduced costs and demand on Adult Social Care and health in the longer term, we were unable to find evidence that it currently is or how it will be measured, given the difficulty in demonstrating successful prevention" – there is clearly a serious question about the efficacy of the new model. Do you consider that this question exists because of your failure to understand the service you are reshaping, or because of your failure to adequately communicate your vision with staff and service users?

Given a recent peer review of services stated "Whilst it is clearly common sense that the wellbeing approach to primary prevention outlined could ultimately lead to some reduced costs and demand on Adult Social Care and health in the longer term, we were unable to find evidence that it currently is or how it will be measured, given the difficulty in demonstrating successful prevention" – there is clearly a serious question about the efficacy of the new model. Do you consider that this question exists because of your failure to understand the service you are reshaping, or because of your failure to adequately communicate your vision with staff and service users?

Neither. I believe that the Peer Challenge team appropriately identified the importance to Adult Social Care that the new Community Interest Company is shaped, specified and performance managed taking into account the needs of Adult Social Care in both:

- a) supporting individuals to help themselves, and*
- b) preventing vulnerable individuals from needing long term support.*

The comment acknowledges both the need, and the difficulty, in demonstrating successful outcomes and value-for-money of prevention and early intervention services.

An Action Plan has been developed to take forward the recommendations of the Peer Challenge. This will form a focus of a working group to scrutinise the Peer Challenge Action Plan.

The Plan, as it relates to Primary Prevention, has been developed jointly with colleagues in the Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate. As part of that Plan, the specification and performance management of the Community Interest Company is to incorporate Adult Social Care requirements, and this is to be completed autumn 2015.

18. Question to Councillor Robin Brown, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health & Wellbeing from Councillor Sally Beardsworth:

How much money, in total, including an estimate for officer time etc., has been spent on the "20 Million Steps" weekend, and how much was spent on the "10 Million Steps" weekend last year?

The work done to promote the 20 Million Steps last year was delivered as part of the normal business of the Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate. This was linked to work that would usually be done in the libraries by library assistants promoting social connection, rangers in the country parks promoting visits to the park, by communications team promoting healthy behaviours, and by specialist public health teams working to promote population level behaviour change aimed at increasing number of physically active people in the county.

We estimate that the planning time was up to 10x 1-hour meetings of relevant officers, time to conduct ~4x short radio interviews of 2-5minutes, and the time taken by staff volunteers (mainly out of their own personal time and given willingly during the weekend because they participated in the walks with friends and families), resulted in the tremendous results we got last year.

There were approximately 7,000 recorded participants who joined a walk, visited our parks and many of them also chose to keep the habit based on self reports. Many people also took part in events even when they had not registered.

19. Question to Councillor Robin Brown, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health & Wellbeing from Councillor John McGhee:

Three years from now, will Northamptonshire's public health and wellbeing services be fully privatised?

As stated in the paper to Cabinet in September, paragraph 6.2, The Commercial Case, 'the intention is to ensure that the CIC in its design would require no further procurement exercise to be undertaken for it to deliver services that are currently delivered by NCC.

20. Question to Councillor Suresh Patel, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Care Services from Councillor Adam Collyer:

Can the Cabinet Member let me know what the plans are for this site? How much longer is this council asset expected to be wasted, and can I be assured that the intention is still to use the site for adult social care?

NCC are developing a business case for The Grange to look at the feasibility of using the site for accommodation for younger adults with learning disabilities and physical disabilities. Lauren Humber is working with Carol Wood and LGSS. A funding proposal will also be submitted for capital funding for this project.

The Grange Care Home in Daventry was closed in 2013. At the time I was informed that the intention was to use the site for some form of adult social care. The target was to submit a feasibility study to Cabinet in autumn 2014. The closure of the Care Home was justified partly on the grounds that this

would be considered.

No plan for the site has yet been published, and the site remains unused.

21. Question to Councillor Suresh Patel, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Care Services from Councillor Mary Butcher:

The Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP, has announced that plans to limit care bills from 2016 to £72,000 for over-65s and younger adults have been delayed until 2020. This was a key part of the Care Act, which this Council has invested significant time and resources in preparing to deliver. Can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Services confirm precisely how much of our local taxpayer's money has been spent on preparing for this policy and if the Council will be requesting a refund from the Department for Health for the wastage?

The Department of Health provided £125k in 2014/2015 to support implementation of the Care Act 2015 changes. The 2015 Care Act changes were significant and the local authority did commit resource for implementing these changes, particularly as they relate to carers, deferred payments, people in prisons, national eligibility criteria, safeguarding and advocacy.

NCC allocated resource focused primarily on delivering the 2015 changes, although we did engage in the consultation and planning for the, now delayed, 2016 changes. As an authority we had not yet begun to develop the mechanisms for the 2016 changes and appreciate Minister's decision to delay the planned 2016 changes

22. Question to Councillor Suresh Patel, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Care Services from Councillor Sally Beardsworth:

How many BIAs has the Council got now compared with 3 years ago?

In 2012 NCC had 12 BIAs – none of them worked full time in role – most providing 1-2 days per month
Of the 12 , 9 worked for NCC and 3 were Trust staff

Currently in 2015 , NCC has 21 BIA's – none work full time within the role although 2 staff provide most of their time to the role . All are now employed by NCC.

In addition we have just completed our partnership course locally in collaboration with Bournemouth University and 18 staff have completed their training and successful candidates are expected to be able to practice by November 2015 .

NCC is also sponsoring 5 candidates to commence training at Birmingham University in October and OWD are inviting tenders for Universities to provide locally based BIA training for NCC cohort of staff commencing in 2016 with the aim of training approximately 40 staff.

The current costs for procurement of independent Best Interests assessors is a variable cost to the council. If we have to 'spot purchase' a BIA in a specific area (

usually out of county and a significant distance from Northants) the costs can vary between £ 320 - £600 per individual assessment .

Where we have sought to 'recruit' independent BIA to work within Northamptonshire we have offered a rate of £320 per assessment.

Where we have attempted to recruit BIAs to operate with Northamptonshire using agency recruitment we have offered to pay £320 per assessment to the BIA – additional costs would include agency fees. This option has been almost impossible to achieve as BIAs are a scarce resource and there is little actual availability.

Using NCC staff – The BIA role is not independently graded but most staff undertaking the role are senior practitioner (Grade K – scp 38 – 42)

The hourly rate – plus on costs for staff within the grade is approximately £25 per hour and with each assessment taking a minimum of 10 hours I would estimate that the average cost is between £250 - £300

The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding report delivered this month highlights that "High demand exceeds ability to respond to even the most urgent cases" leading to current breaches of timescales – with it taking between 1 and 2 weeks to undertake even the most urgent of assessments. Obviously this is not acceptable.

The management suggested includes using independent Best Interest Assessors – on average, how much does this cost the Council compared with using in house staff?

23. Question to Councillor Suresh Patel, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Care Services from Councillor Sally Beardsworth:

Recent peer review raised questions about the depth of understanding throughout the organisation about the implications of the Care Act, shown both by Staff comment and lack of Care Act readiness. Following this review, what changes are being made to ensure proper understanding and compliance permeates NCC?

The Peer Challenge took place in February 2015. The Care Act was new legislation and the implementation timetable was short and fast paced with the final version of the legislation published in October 2014 and the Act, with all the necessary policies, procedures and practices coming into effect from April 2015. NCC put in place an intensive period of training for those affected from mid February to the end of March 2015. A blended learning approach was adopted using face-to-face training, e-learning and workbook supporting in-practice training.

The Peer Challenge comments were primarily directed at preparedness in relation to Safeguarding changes and the Action Plan for the Peer Challenge sets out the actions and plans for each recommendation, including an action to develop safeguarding practice to become more outcome focused and embedding Making Safeguarding Personal. This is to be achieved by March 2016.

24. Question to Councillor Andre Gonzalez de Savage, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Strategic Infrastructure, Economic Growth & Public Protection from Councillor Malcolm Longley:

With the recent Government announcement on fire/police partnership working, how hopeful are you that the Government will put forward legislation to provide for the full integration of blue light emergency services in the county?

In a speech on 11th September, the Prime Minister announced that the Government would introduce reforms that will enable the police, fire and ambulance services to work more closely together to improve effectiveness and reduce duplication of public expenditure.

25. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor John McGhee:

We understand that generally there are no subsidised bus services serving any of the main towns across Northamptonshire and they are all run on a commercial basis. The vast majority of subsidies go directly to remote rural areas via the county connect services. Whilst we recognise the need for subsidised services in rural areas, there is also a strong and growing need for subsidised routes in urban areas to allow working people to reach their jobs on time and to prevent older people walking long distances with their shopping. Surely the county council should look to allocate some of its funding to urban areas? Furthermore, will the Cabinet Member work with Cllr Bob Scott to accelerate the community transport programme he has been working on?

The majority of bus services are operated commercially with the operator deciding the routes, timings and fare charged. The County Council has the power under the 1985 Transport Act to subsidise services to fill what it sees as gaps in the commercial bus network.

The County Council set out its most recent policy for subsidising bus services in a cabinet paper in May 2011, which policies have since been incorporated in the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan Bus Strategy agreed by cabinet in December 2012.

The policy sets out a minimum level of service for both urban and rural areas where, if the service is not provided commercially, a subsidised service should be provided. For rural areas this is based on the population of the village. In urban areas this is based on an identifiable neighbourhood of more than 2000 people (approximately 900 dwellings) being more than 400 metres walk from an hourly bus service.

When the policy was implemented in September 2011 only one urban area contained an identifiable neighbourhood as described above which did not meet this criteria via commercial provision. As a result the W4 service was subsidised in Wellingborough. Subsequently, this service has been taken up by an operator commercially, which meant that no urban areas met the intervention criteria. .

One reason why the policy sets out an identifiable urban neighbourhood of more than 2000 people is that conventional bus services struggle to serve smaller pockets of population not served by bus services. This is often because the street layout makes the routeing of bus services difficult. .

For such areas, and for those who struggle to walk to a bus stop, a demand responsive dial-a-ride service is a much more practical proposition. Such services are provided by community transport operators in a number of the county's larger urban areas. However, Corby and Kettering currently have no such provision.

Councillor Bob Scott approached the Cabinet Member last year to see whether the County Council could support such a service. While there was no difficulty in supporting such a service in principle, it was expected that as with other community transport operations the service would require a level of financial support which was not available at the time. However, over the last year most of the Council's subsidised bus services have been re-tendered and as a result some budget has been 'freed up' which could potentially fund part of the costs of introducing such a service, although it is likely that further funding would also be needed from other sources, including local empowerment. I have therefore asked officers to work with myself, Councillor Scott and relevant community transport operators to examine the business case for a workable and sustainable community transport service for Corby and Kettering.

I understand that your questions partly arise from the recent withdrawal by Stagecoach of two commercial bus services in Corby: off-peak service 7 serving The Lawns, Exeter Estate, Stephenson Way and ASDA and the 1635 journey from Earlstree Industrial Estate on service 4.

The County Council is currently subsidising a limited replacement service 7, although the expectation is that this will be replaced by the community transport service referred to above if this can be successfully introduced.

Unless we were simply to have policy of maintaining existing journey to work services (which is what we did pre-2011 changes) , it is not evident how any criteria for supporting the withdrawn service 4 journey could be devised. There are many industrial estates across the county, sourcing their employees from many housing areas. Because there are other journeys on service 4 still remaining, it could well be that other journeys to work with no bus service would be prioritised ahead of it.

Experience of past such support also shows that subsidising peak services can be a very expensive business, as if an operator is unable to inter-work a journey with other business such as schools journeys, then we can be effectively paying a full day's cost just for a single journey. It is unlikely that this would be affordable within existing budgets.

26. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor Arthur McCutcheon:

Can we survey the roads in Northampton leading from Waterside, the new University Campus, the Innovation Centre, and Abington Street with the view of making them a shared space with cyclists and pedestrians given priority?

Surveys could be undertaken. However, most of the roads referred to are key A-road radial access to the town centre (Bedford Road, St Peters Way., Towcester Road, West Bridge), and as such are not suitable for re-engineering as shared spaces. While shared spaces may not be suitable, some of these roads already have

dedicated cycle and pedestrian facilities (such as the Bedford Road), although some corridors are no wide enough to facilitate such a solution. There are other means of delivery that may be a more appropriate solution. I would be happy to meet with Cllr McCutcheon and appropriate officers to better understand what he is trying to achieve.

Plans are being explored with NBC for further improvements to the streetscape of further roads in the town centre.

27. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor Sarah Uldall:

How much income has the Cycle Connect scheme seen since its launch?

In the period up to 30th June 2015 we have generated £4,537.28 from the hire of bicycles.

28. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor Sarah Uldall:

What has been the average cost of a Cycle Connect hire?

In the same period there were 1,764 chargeable hires. This equates to an average of £2.57 per chargeable hire.

29. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor Sarah Uldall:

The "Cycle Connect Progress Report" states that "...the scheme is a notable success and has exceeded results from comparable schemes at the same lifecycle stages." – Could you clarify what data is behind this (i.e., number of hires, amount of income, etc.) and what the comparable data actually is for comparable schemes?

The progress report was prepared by Hour Bike, the scheme operator, and the County Council does not have the comparable data immediately available. Also, income figures from other schemes may not be readily available due to the sensitive nature of the data. Anecdotal evidence from the managing director of Hourbike suggests that Cycle CoNNect performs in the top 2 schemes in the country when comparing the number of rentals per bike.

We do, however, have access to usage and membership data from the scheme in Lincoln for the month of July 2015. The following comparisons have been made and support the assertion made in the Cycle CoNNect report:

- *The Lincoln 'Hirebike' scheme has a total of 19 hubs and has been running since August 2013*
- *The Northampton Cycle CoNNect scheme has a total of 10 hubs and has been in operation since July 2014*
- ***The total number of subscribers (to end July 2015): Hirebike 1,707, and CoNNect 1,501 (bearing in mind Hirebike has been running nearly twice as long as CoNNect)***
- ***Total number of rentals to end July 2015: Hirebike 4,624; CoNNect 6,943***

- **Rentals in July 2015 alone:** Hirebike **462**; CoNNect **739**
- Each month since Cycle CoNNect was launched, The Northampton scheme has seen a notably higher number of rentals per month than the Lincoln Hirebike scheme.

30. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor Sarah Uldall:

Where is the business case that justifies additional spend expanding the scheme to extra hubs?

The business case for expanding the scheme to additional hubs is still being developed. Owing to the additional costs involved, it is likely that expansion will only proceed if a suitable level of sponsorship can be achieved. A small investment in initiatives such as CycleConnect, which encourage healthier lifestyles can have positive financial benefits for other areas of council and wider public expenditure.

31. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor Sarah Uldall:

It has now been over a year since this Council passed a motion to strongly encourage and support cycling, including developing infrastructure for cyclists both "within and between" our towns.

In the last year, how many meters of new cycle path or bike only space has been laid in Northamptonshire? Where? What gaps in the County's cycling network have been filled?

There have been a number of new cycleways constructed or upgrades (widening) of cycleways across the county during the previous financial year. These are as follows:

- Daventry – Drayton Way to Monksmoor 350 metres
- Corby – Oakley Road from Tesco to KFC 700 metres
- Corby – Elizabeth Street 100 metres
- Towcester – Belle Baulke Park – improvements to existing cycleway to help prevent flooding
- Towcester – Old Tiffield Road 100 metres
- Northampton – Mill Lane 850 metres
- Northampton – Tollgate Way 750 metres
- Oundle – Barnwell Road 500 metres

Toucan crossings have also been installed on Mill Lane, Northampton and Oakley Road, Corby and several minor works (signage, lining, dropped kerbs, etc), have also been undertaken in this period.

Further cycleway works planned for this financial year include further work in Mill Lane, Northampton (550 metres) and Upton Way, Northampton (500 metres).

32. Question to Councillor Michael Clarke, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, Highways & The Environment from Councillor Michael Brown

Would the Cabinet Member update us on progress with the street lighting PFI? Is it on schedule and within budget? If not, what actions are being taken to bring it back into line?

The streetlighting PFI is currently on target for completion by the 3rd of October 2016 in accordance with the Contract. Currently the budget spend is at the level we expected at this point in the Contract.