



Democratic Support Service
2nd Floor One Angel Square
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MINUTES of the Business Meeting of the NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at County Hall, Northampton on 23 November 2017 at 10.30am.

PRESENT

Councillor Dudley Hughes (Chairman)
Councillor Stephen Legg (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor	Fiona Baker	Councillor	Malcolm Longley
"	Jane Birch	"	Arthur McCutcheon
"	Elizabeth Bowen	"	Allan Matthews
"	Wendy Brackenbury	"	Andy Mercer
"	Rebecca Breese	"	Gill Mercer
"	Julie Brookfield	"	Dennis Meredith
"	Adam Brown	"	Ian Morris
"	Robin Brown	"	Sandra Naden-Hroley
"	Pinder Chauhan	"	Steve Osborne
"	Rachel Cooley	"	Bill Parker
"	Julie Davenport	"	Victoria Perry
"	Gareth Eales	"	Adil Sadygov
"	Scott Edwards	"	Sam Rumens
"	Jonathan Ekins	"	Adil Sadygov
"	Matt Golby	"	Bob Scott
"	Andre Gonzalez de Savage	"	Mick Scrimshaw
"	Martin Griffiths	"	Judy Shephard
"	James Hakewill	"	Heather Smith
"	Mike Hallam	"	Chris Stanbra
"	Amy Howard	"	Danielle Stone
"	Sylvia Hughes	"	Michael tye
"	Cecile Irving-Swift	"	Allen Walker
"	Andrew Kilbride	"	Malcolm Waters
"	Graham Lawman		

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

Lesley Hagger, Director of Children's Services
Damon Lawrenson, Director of Finance
Paul Hanson, Manager of Democratic Services
Jenny Rendall, Democracy Officer (minutes)
Susan Zeiss, Monitoring Officer

And 37 members of the public

73/17 Apologies received from Councillors for inability to attend the meeting:

Apologies were received from Councillors Richard Auger, Michael Clarke, Robert Gough, Eileen Hales, John McGhee Suresh Patel, Christina Smith-Haynes and Winston Strachan.

74/17 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting Held on 21 September 2017

RESOLVED that: Council approved the minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2017

75/17 Notification of requests by members of the public to address the meeting:

Item 6: Petitions

- Jo Taylor – to present a petition on behalf of Desborough Library
- Rachael Macmain – to present a petition about the closure of Kingsthorpe Library
- Cllr Danielle Stone – to present a petition regarding library cuts
- Joanne Lowe and Debbie Bastin – to present a petition regarding Moulton Library
- Mr Solesbury-Timms – to present a petition regarding Middleton Cheney library

Item 7: Opposition Priority Business

- NBC Councillor Sally Beardsworth
- Mrs Anjona Roy
- Mrs Penny Smith

Item 8: NSAB Annual Report

- Wendy Stanton

Item 9: Leaders Report

- Kathryn White
- David Jones

item 11: Motion regarding the closure of libraries

- Jeanette Wonfor
- Rebekah Johnson
- Lucy Kheir

- Sue Botterill
- Phillipa Costello
- Derry Collins – Alison Richards is speaking on his behalf
- Mrs Sue Bentley
- Camille Giffard
- NBC Councillor Rufia Ashraf
- Mr Phil Leach

76/17 Declarations of Interest by Councillors:

There were none

77/17 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman made the following announcements:

The said death of Councillor Glenn Harwood MBE. He was a County Councillor since May 17 2017 and was a member of the Environment, Development and Transport Committee. He was keen to do a good job as he attended many of the post-election induction sessions.

He was Deputy Leader of East Northants District Council and a member of Cheveston-Cum-Caldecottee Parish Council. He had been a member of the Royal Signals where he reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was present at the signing of the letter of surrender at the end of the Falklands war and served as Chairman of the Higham Ferrers branch of the Royal British Legion.

The Chairman had written to his wife Jenny and offered his sincere condolences.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Councillor Andy Mercer said his death had been sudden and left a huge hole in public services in East Northants. He was a deeply patriotic, hard-working and modest man. He had joined the Army as a boy soldier, and worked his way from private to Lieutenant Colonel, something few achieve. Much of his career was classified but he was aware he was one of the first British troops into the Falklands, before the UK Task Force reached the South Atlantic. Later in the Gulf War he led a column across the desert and even later still he was the base commander of an important MOD base. He collected an MBE and a serious spinal injury, when a parachute failed to open properly. It recently had major surgery to rebuild his spine and it took 8 consultants, 13 hours of surgery and 2 days in OR. It was one of the several occasions when he was given low odds of survival and he ended up an inch taller.

He became a councillor on retirement from the Army. He was extremely hard working in local government and served on many committees and public bodies. He was kind, courteous, honest, friendly, diligent, deceptively intelligent, incisive and perceptive.

Councillor Heather Smith stated he was an extraordinary person. He was an honest and punctual person and really interested in the County Council. He

wished to understand all before forming a view and listened to the facts. On the day he died he was due at a meeting she was at and she was deeply shocked to hear that he had not arrived due to his death.

Councillor Dennis Meredith said it was always sad when a councillor passed on and his deepest sympathies were passed to his wife and immediate family.

A minutes' silence was observed in memory of Councillor Glenn Harwood MBE.

A list of the events the Chairman had attended had been previously e-mailed to councillors but he would like to highlight a couple of things in particular. On 12 November 2017 the Chairman attended a remembrance service in Northampton. Many people turned out especially the young, sea cadets, army cadets and scouts with many bands. He then went on to Raunds where further people came. In the evening he attended a service at the Derngate where hundreds of people came to listen to the Northampton Music and Performing Arts band.

His garden party at Grendon featured many young people. One of the bands went on to win a national event in their class.

His next event would be His Hangar One Event and it was not too later to buy tickets. Then it would be an informal event of fun which would include a performance by Dr Basker and an interfaith service on 13 March 2018.

A member of the care leavers had designed some Christmas cards which could be purchased at lunchtime and at the end of the meeting in the rotunda.

78/17 Petitions

The following people presented petitions:

Jo Taylor from Desborough was against the proposed closure of Desborough Library. She had letters from the community and school children. She was surprised that the equality impact assessment stated there would be neutral impact to groups but she had not witnessed any consultation with those groups. Residents had informed her that many elderly relied on the library and came in every day to read the papers, socialise and get advice. For many it was the only person they saw all day. Many had a disability which would prevent them from getting a bus to the nearest alternative – Kettering. One woman had stated it was like a second home to her.

Mothers suffering from loneliness. A little kindness that was offered at the library went a long way. Play and learn for the under 1s. Mothers had informed her this had become a lifeline when ceasing work to become a full time mother.

It also offered free books to people had none at home and she asked Council to support an option 4: to keep it open with fully trained staff.

Rachael MacMain stated she had a petition of 1,116 people to keep Kingsthorpe library open. A Community led library was not an option here as they didn't have a parish council to start it. They were privately owned and would have no money to pay for the rent. One of the criteria for choosing an area was deprivation. Kingsthorpe was an area of deprivation. There was also current and future development with an additional 2,500 homes in need of it. There were 6 primary schools, with another planned and 2 secondary schools in the catchment area. Children's centres had been closed and moved into libraries which were now closing. The support system had become invaluable to her stop the feeling of isolation as a mum. It was now a community hub and at the heart of Kingsthorpe and taking it away would be taking something away that was at the heart of the area.

Councillor Stone stated she had a petition of 2,675 signatures. Libraries were like the jewel in the democratic tradition being one of the most democratic institutions as local, responsible and supportive. Each one was slightly different because it met the needs of the local community. One person had pointed out to her that the health visitors met in libraries so queried where they would be based. Libraries served the need of all no matter what age. She asked for an option 4 to be considered which was keeping libraries open.

Joanne Lowe represented the Friends of Moulton Library and she had a petition of 1,644 signatures. Moulton library was an exception and the consultation did not take account the unique position it held. It had moved location 6 months previously and was in a purpose built and future proofed library located within the new village community centre. It was a flagship and the new location also gave massive potential to add extra facilities in the space such as Adult Learning and Registrar services. The figures were wrong as they were based on the old library and did not take account of the opening hours, footfall and new membership numbers and amount of books borrowed which had doubled since the move. Moulton was expanding and the new library had welcomed 348 new members. The library was part of the community connector initiative that could see huge savings for the Council in regard to the need for adult social care provision in the area.

Future expansion over the next ten years in the Moulton Ward which was of 10,200 residents was not considered. The Council had already paid for the lease of the library for the next twenty years (costing £400,000).

Councillor Judy Shephard and herself would like to invite all councillors to come and visit the library and see what an amazing community facility it was.

Debbie Bastin had 420 letters from pupils at Moulton Primary School for consideration because they and the staff and governors at the school were very concerned about the proposed changes affecting the library.

Children at her school loved reading and used Moulton library to access a broad range of high quality books. The support from of a trained librarian was central to developing their enthusiasm and passion for reading. The Moulton librarian knew them well and gave them encouragement and personal support. Children that read for their own pleasure achieve more highly at school and where else could they access, irrespective of family finances, access reading books for free. They also

took part in other activities, such as reading challenges, homework groups, book clubs and craft sessions.

The older children visited the library independently as it was a safe place for them to do their homework. Something that couldn't happen if they had to travel to Weston Favell library.

Proposals 1, 2 and 3 had a significant and negative impact on in children and families in and around Moulton. They wanted to keep the present situation which was an option 4 – keeping it open

Mr Solesbury-Timms who represented the Middleton Cheney Library Action Group stated they had a trained professional managing it. It served the community in other ways such as offering a Mum's of under 1's gardening club. The library was split into 2 sections with the pre-school. Where would it leave them if the library which had a 10 year lease closed? The primary school which was next door also used it. It was a social hub and the elderly and young could not visit Towcester. He felt that his community received the brunt of responsibility on the Council's cuts over the last 5 years. The libraries only cost £1.5million.

79/17 Opposition Priority Business

At the Chairman's invitation the following people addressed Council:

Northampton Borough Councillor Sally Beardsworth stated the motion did not go far enough in her opinion. She referred to staff members taking a day's unpaid leave whilst the councillors still had their allowances. She then referred to the different plans for business transformation that had not appeared to work. Putting children's centres into libraries and now considering closing them. They do lots of good work supporting people and trading standards who did so much hard work protecting people and yet they were being cut by half. There were many fraudulent people taking advantage of the young and elderly. She concluded by saying the Council should stand down and let someone else take over.

Ms Anjona Roy felt this was a political choice. She felt the proposals would not make all of the savings required yet they were still proposing them. She felt they had lurched from one panacea to another but none of them worked. She worried for herself and her family about the decisions they were making the fact that they were using political choice and not evidence for them. She employed them to stand down and let someone else make the decisions.

Penny Smith stated that 2 years ago she told them outsourcing or right sourcing as she was told to call it wouldn't work. The peer review has backed this up. They were still waiting to hear if employees would get an increment this year and now they were losing a day's pay. She asked them to step down and suggested someone who would take care of employees take over because she felt they were not caring for the employees who provided services for them.

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Bob Scott then proposed the following motion:

"This Council, mindful of the 12 years of Conservative control, the recent reports of the Council's fragile financial position and the dire forecast of our future financial position, declare that we have no confidence in the ability of the current Cabinet to make the right decisions, to act in the best interest of our constituents and to ensure the current, short term, medium term and long term financial position of the Council".

In moving the motion Councillor Scott highlighted the following:

- Northamptonshire had a proud heritage and he was proud to have been born in Corby which had just been judged as the best town in the UK. However, Northamptonshire's history hadn't all been glorious.
- For decades the Council had been underfunded and the assets of the Council were small in comparison with other county councils.
- The Conservatives had been in power at the Council since 2005 and in that time the Council's financial stability had become weaker and its ability to provide high quality services diminished.
- He had been a Councillor since 2007 and remembered the Carillion Budget which cost £34million instead of the budgeted £16million. The £2million that was spent on a proposal to build a bio plant with Milton Keynes which Northamptonshire pulled out of. The £6million that was paid to one landowner in the north of the county because the Council had allowed toxic waste to leak on to their land.
- Finally the shiny headquarters of £42million.
- In 2013 after 8 years in power OFSTED gave them 4 judgements of Inadequate which had cost at £80million and only to progress to Requiring Improving earlier that year.
- He referred to putting Adult Social CARE to NASS, Health and Wellbeing to First for Wellbeing, Highways to a partnership with Kier WSP and Children's and Family Services to a Community Interest Company or Trust. They had asked how much it would have cost with no answers but they believed to it be £20million.
- In 2010 they were 57th out of 57 Councils in their ability to pay their way and some time previously scrutiny reports highlighted the need to address their finances. The current temporary chief executive was brought in as deputy 151 officer to address the issue. The plan he drew up was not followed.
- For the last 12 years the Council had boasted of having the lowest council tax in the country by not increasing Council Tax year on year but it would have been more sensible to do so. The last 3 budgets had been achieved by selling off assets, postponing spending and throwing overspends into the next year. The previous year they had received a KPMG report which heavily criticised the Council on financial ability, data collecting and decision making. This year an LGA peer report was even more critical and pointed out corrective measures recommending in the KPMG report that had not been implemented.
- The county's MPs had lost faith in the leadership of the Council.
- He felt that the money he had referred to including inflation rates council tax rises amounted to over £200million. More than enough to cover the £115million required by 2020/1.

- He felt the Administration had failed and he therefore called for a vote of no confidence in the Administration.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mick Scrimshaw who quoted from reports stating 'the Council doesn't have robust and deliverable plans for its long-term future', 'it is having to dig deep and thereafter the hole looks enormous', 'time is running out for the County Council', 'a lack of collected ownership in the 2017-18 overspend', 'The Council is focussed on long-term survival to shore up the current position', 'unrealistic savings targets', 'some portfolio holders readily accept the situation where challenge has been provided by the Audit Committee has not been welcome', 'there is a tendency for cabinet members to trust that the portfolio holder has provided the relevant challenge', 'reliance on a financial bailout from the government'. All of these were written by people trying to be constructive and helpful.

Councillors commented as follows:

- The Chief Executive quit days before the peer report was due to be published. There had been recruitment freezes and the council tax freeze. Staff had not been paid increments and now had to have an unpaid days off. Libraries were being cut or closed and trading standards were being halved. The Audit Committee was not convinced the authority had sufficient things in place. The Council was at a crossroads and time was running out.
- There were no simple solutions and the Council was forced to make decisions it did not want to but needed to. It was a legal duty to set a balanced budget so the Council had to reduce spending. Many had confidence in the Cabinet to deliver what was required.
- It was noted the Opposition Groups had made it clear for years where they thought something had gone wrong. They had offered solutions but these had been ignored. But some of the solutions had been embedded in the peer review. The local MPs should have been putting the case forward for fairer funding but they hadn't. Things had not been driven forward and it was suggested that some examples across the country should have been reviewed.
- An end of the pay cap was asked for but this motion was lost. Council was questioned what they thought of the workforce. And now it was being asked to take a day's unpaid leave.
- It was felt insufficient parking at project Angel was putting an extra strain on staff.
- It was suggested the Administration had lost the confidence of the public and had in affect misled them during the May elections as they didn't say in their manifesto any of these proposals.
- It was suggested that officers didn't consider the cost of transport when booking it and issued bus passes whether people needed them or not. The authority had not realised it had so many purchase orders for orders that had not been approved. There was a lot of waste that amounted to much overspend.
- It was noted the Council was in a difficult financial position. It was felt that by working with communities some solutions could be found. The Council had a priority to help people out of hospital and this was costing millions. They

looked after the children, frail, elderly and disabled and this was costing so much that they had to look at not funding non-statutory duties.

In reply Councillor Scott stated that he felt the Administration had 'dug its own hole' and whilst he did understand the financial position the public were only just starting to. His motion was on the financial position of how the Council got into it not why the Administration should resign.

Upon a recorded vote of 11 for and 35 against the motion was rejected.

RESOLVED that: Upon a recorded vote of 11 for and 35 against the motion was rejected.

75/17 Business Items (including Budget & Policy Framework items, Appointments & Annual Reports):

(a) Annual Report by the Standing Advisory Council or Religious Education (SACRE):

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Matt Golby introduced the report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating SACRE's role was to advise local authorities on religious workshop. It also provided training for teachers and others. It was required to publish an report annual and all those involved were thanked for their input. The report provided detail on areas it had worked on including the Prevent Strategy.

The report was seconded by Councillor Wendy Brackenbury who noted that SACRE had a busy year and the syllabus it had been working on had been agreed.

Councillors commented as follows:

- The inclusion of a humanist member was welcomed.
- After acceptance by the Council it would be published to schools who would act on it. It was asked who they were.

In reply it was confirmed there was a new part-time advisor who went to the schools and assisted them in delivery. Trust Schools also agreed it.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the SACRE Annual Report for 2016-2017 which would be published to schools in order to improve teh quality of provision for Regligious Education and collective worship.

(b) Annual Report by the Corporate Parenting Board

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Matt Golby introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) who stated he was pleased to chair the Corporate Parenting Board will remained fully committed to young people in the Council's care and to those moving on to adulthood, particularly the pledge to care leavers. The Council had a duty to give those young people to publish services and they would continue to fulfil all requirements of the Act. An enormous challenge remained and they intended to create a charitable organisation for their care leavers.

Young people consistently stated emotional wellbeing was important and it was easy to forget the simple things. They were full of honesty and ambition for young people and would ensure services were as effective as they could be.

The report was seconded by Councillor Fiona Baker.

Councillor commented as follows:

- It was pleasing to hear the voice of young people and the different ways they were invited to shaping and monitoring a service.
- Working with those up to aged 25 was welcomed.
- There was a huge number of young people coming into their care and the outlook was still significantly worse with them under achieving at school and university and over represented in the criminal justice system. There had been a shift in resources from prevention to firefighting and they had to go back to the consideration that the Council's children needed to be prevented from coming into care in the same numbers.
- Councillor Golby was thanked for his influence in caring for the children. It was very important to see what they were doing and at a recent event 2 young people had given a presentation. It was brilliant and it was noted that they formed friendships well. Every councillor was urged to speak to the schools in their area and let them know what they did for looked after children.
- The services provided and the social workers were congratulated for doing a fantastic job. More from the Lesbian Gay and Bisexual should be included in the statistics.
- The amount of agency staff employed by the Council was questioned.

In reply Councillor Golby thanked councillors for acknowledging the good work they were doing, in particular the top staff they had.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report.

(c) Annual Report by the Northamptonshire Adult Safeguarding Board:

At the Chairman's invitation the Chairman of the Northamptonshire Adult Safeguarding board (NSAB), Tim Bishop introduced the report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating it provided the Board and its partners with the opportunity to reflect on achievements of the year and think about the following year. It was a partnership between the Council, Police and NHS and also a range of other relevant members. Safeguarding had been on a journey in the last decade, particularly the last 3 years when it received statutory responsibilities. His gratitude was offered to service users and carers who had told them about their experiences.

Questions on the report were provided as follows:

- Since the report they had moved to a position of this and the Safeguarding Children's board met one after the other with a joint period in the middle. Representation from the NHS had been at the highest level so there was true ability to challenge each other.
- There were some councils whose performance was lower than the Council's. There had been some differentiation in how other councils had reported

concerns and that had created a statistical phenomena. There was a need to ensure they had the right events to understand it better.

- There was a district and borough council representative with an housing perspective. He had also met other borough and district representatives, particularly with those with a perspective on community safety and community cohesion.
- The Voluntary Sector was crucial to success and he had met with a few. Healthwatch was also a member and an advocacy group that helped carers sent a representative.
- Nationally people had been neglected and abused in care homes and in their own homes. It was really important that residential care home invited people to be part of their community and he would encourage members to think about what's in their divisions and to visit them.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the Annual Report by the Northamptonshire Adult Safeguarding Board (NASB).

(d) Annual Report by the Northamptonshire Children's Safeguarding Board (NSCB):

At the Chairman's invitation the chairman of the NSCB, Keith Makin introduced the report (copies of which had been previously circulated) who stated they attempted to make it readable and accessible. He highlighted the fact that there were a high number of children in care in the county and the remark in the report is about the number. Early help and prevention isn't as good as it should be and it was being picked up by the senior team on the Council. There were probably too many children on child protection plans. This required addressing and it was being looked at. They were re-focussing the main board to achieve a situation where it was focussed entirely on strategy. From the end of January they would engage more senior people in the process

There would be changes to children's safeguarding board in the future in line with the Children's Safeguarding Act. It would cease to be known as a boards and become a partnership agreement. They could change the area of coverage but he did not think Northamptonshire would not be concerned about. They were going through a process of seeing what the opportunities in the new Act would bring. They were undertaking joint work it the Adults Board and they had highlighted the issue of neglect. They were equipping all agencies across the partnership to be sensitive to both adults and children neglect.

Questions were answered as follows:

- There wasn't a particular pattern as to why police referrals had dropped.
- He had meetings with front line staff recently and they were enthusiastic about changes. The social work academy was providing staff really well. Consistency was really critical and as a board they had asked about it.

The health and wellbeing board had been given a recent presentation which had really enabled people to understand what they were doing. The Blue Butterfly Scheme was also congratulated as it provided children with someone safe to go to when they needed.

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Matt Golby then proposed the report thanking Keith for his report and chairmanship of the safeguarding board. The report summarised where they were. Not everything was perfect but they knew what the drivers were. It was a challenging environment and they were challenging this with their partners.

The report was seconded by Councillor Fiona Baker who congratulated it on the work being done for vulnerable young people in the county.

RESOLVED that: council noted the report by the Northamptonshire Children's Safeguarding Board (NSCB)

(e) Quarterly Treasury Management Report:

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Robin Brown Proposed the report (copies of which were previously circulated) stating he had been involved for 18 months and it was the most interesting and extremely complex area of finance. The strategy was being delivered and would produce results.

The report was seconded by Councillor Bill Parker who stated the report demonstrated the good controls that the treasury management team had in place.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the Treasury Management Report.

(f) Youth Justice Plan

At the Chairman's invitation, Councillor Matt Golby Proposed the report (copies of which were previously circulated) stating it was a very positive report on how the youth justice service performed. It cut across the criminal justice system and had positive performance against many key performance indicators. It showed how young people had been engaged and how they had been invited to be involved in the design of the service.

There were 3 national indicator and the re-offending rate was good, the national custody rate was good and the first time offending had good numbers. There was good performance for the number of young people on relevant youth justice proposals. Young people at the end of an order deemed to be in good satisfactory accommodation was good too. The work of the corporate parenting board and the NSCB was very important.

The Report was seconded by Councillor Lizzie Bowen who stated there was a large amount of work done in all areas.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Restorative justice was a great thing and had won the RJC quality mark for the fourth year. Nearly 1 in 2 victims were engaged with it as well.
- The health and wellbeing board was assisting in providing services. Abusive Childhood Experiences (ACES) was a big project looking at preventative side as well.

In reply Councillor Golby stated he had found restorative practice to be incredibly powerful and they were a beacon as to how it was used in this way. The impact of ACES was very important.

RESOLVED that: council agreed the Youth Justice Plan 2017/18 as recommended by Cabinet.

(g) Appointment of the Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Robin Brown proposed the report (copies of which were previously circulated) stating the Council recognised the value of an effective audit committee that followed CIPFA practice that recommended an independent person as its Chairman. He was both independent of the authority and able to provide the skills and experience required. The Council had 15 candidates apply and shortlisted 5 for interview by a cross party of councillors. Councillor Stephen Legg chaired it and was joined by Councillors Michael Clarke, Lizzie Bowen, Davenport and himself. The report proposed that Mr Jessop be appointed. He was a chartered accountant and lived near Wollaston as did his children and grandchildren.

The report was seconded by Councillor Stephen Legg.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Councillors thanked David Watson for the help he had provided.
- It was hoped that the LGA peer review which had stated the challenge made by the Audit Committee was not very welcome would change and challenge from the new Chair would be very welcome.
- The Leader of the Council's intention to meet with the new Chairman regularly was noted.

RESOLVED that: Council agreed the appointment of Mr Bill Jessup as the Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee for a period of 4 years, ending on 30 November 2021.

(h) Appointment of Chief Officers

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Heather Smith proposed the report (copies of which were previously circulated) stating the report asked Council to approve the appointments of the Interim Head of Paid Service, the Interim Chief Finance Officer and approve the appointment of a Returning Officer for the election of County Councillors.

The report was seconded by Councillor Matt Golby.

In answer to a query from councillors said to appoint a new permanent individual could be wasting money as the issue of unitary authorities was not yet solved.

RESOLVED that: Council approved:

- 1) The appointment of the Interim Head of Paid Service and Chief Executive;**

- 2) The appointment of the Interim chief Finance Officer; and**
- 3) The appointment of a Returning officer for the election of County Councillors.**

76/17 Cabinet Business:

Councillors were informed that they should have found copies of the questions submitted and answers on their chairs that morning.

The following people were invited to address Council:

Kathryn White stated she represented Blackthorn Good Neighbours which offered a service and support to families in Blackthorn, Lings, Goldings, Thorplands and Ecton Brook. At the nursery they witnessed the impact of local and national policy on people's lives. Blackthorn was amongst the lowest 1% in terms of deprivation. They saw families who were desperate but often didn't meet the higher threshold for support. They were failing children and this had consequences for their education. There was a lack of information and non-clarity about how it affected them. Of the £9.6million of cuts, nearly a third were those to services affecting children. The cut in universal services made many families feel abandoned. Although the Council was in a difficult position they were elected by those who the cuts affected.

Mr Jones had been a resident of Northampton for over 30 years. He had chaired the area child protection committee and was chair of another child protection board. He had witnessed a relentless reduction in services for children across the country and in Northants a relentless reduction with local consequences. Councils could not meet their statutory obligations and there were people in the towns and country angry about it. They realised the Council had to make unenviable decisions but they needed to stay exactly what this meant. The reduction in the youth services had decimated the county. The current situation was unprecedented and would lead to increased risk to families and increased risk of crime.

Councillor Smith stated she understood all the comments made and she confirmed she had talks with the Director of Children's Services about reducing early help and whilst they didn't agree with it they had little choice. She confirmed that they continued to lobby Central Government.

She introduced her report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating she was devastated by the loss of her fellow councillor Glenn Harwood.

Questions were answered as follows:

- There would be an event about the budget held in Corby the following Thursday between 4 and 7pm.
- The county's MPs perhaps did not know about the Council's lack of reserves to draw on until the point at which services had to be cut. There were a number of councils worse off but they had to set a balanced budget and they were looking at every single line in the budget to ascertain if anything could be done differently.

- They wanted to keep libraries open until they realised how many other local authorities in the county had already gone to community ownership. Lincolnshire had done it 3 years previously.
- The Leader did not know the cost of the previous Chairman's picture or who was paying for it.
- They thought it correct to support the Government with a council tax freeze. They were offered some funding to assist with this but it was only in the short term. Raising Council Tax beyond 2% would require a referendum which would cost £1million and the public might vote against it. The Government had not indicated they would lift the cap so the Council had to set the Council tax within the known limitations.

Supplementary questions to those submitted in writing were answered as follows:

- Social Workers recruited from abroad went into the Council's social work academy in order to train them in the Council's processes.
- There was a permanent supervisory workforce above that of social workers to ensure confidence in leadership.
- Social workers needed to be found from somewhere but the number of agency workers was reducing and would continue to do so.
- Clarification between on the Council's foster carers and the agency workers would be provided to Councillor Stone following the meeting.
- £7million had not been spent in setting up plans for the next generation but in the way services were delivered.
- That had not undertaken zero based budgeting before the elections and therefore had not included adequate funding in the budget for the elections. They were however, able to pay the bill.

RESOLVED that: Council noted:

- 1) The report by the Leader of the Council; and**
- 2) Written answers to questions submitted by councillors and the responses to questions raised at the meeting.**

77/17 Report by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Committee:

(Councillor Ekins left at 2.35pm.)

At the Chairman's invitation the Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Committee, Councillor James Hakewill presented his report (copies of which had been previously circulated) stating councillors should have received on their chairs details of the scrutiny meetings that were part of the budget scrutiny review. As it could sometimes be difficult to meet during the day he suggested having one twilight meeting between 5.30 and 7pm. He also stressed the need to stop using acronyms.

The report was seconded by Councillor Sam Rumens who welcomed the twilight meeting.

Questions on the report were answered as follows:

- The letter to the Minister had was due to go out.

- The peer review could be considered by the Finance and Resources Committee.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Committee then said queries could be made and suggestions for agendas at any time.

RESOLVED that: Council noted the report by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Committee and answers to questions raised at the meeting.

78/17 Motions submitted by Councillors under Rule 13.1:

The following people addressed Council:

Jeanette Wonfor stated she'd lived in Desborough for 12 years and whilst it was a deprived town it was also a brilliant community. She had been surprised by the feeling against the proposal to close the library. They had various halls but these were affiliated to churches and clubs so they had nowhere else but the library in which to meet. It filled the gaps for parents of young children, people needing advice, needing computers and the elderly. Parents of young children have been saying how much they used the children's services which were based in the library. There would be a high rate of post-natal depression without it. Childminders of the town were told by Ofsted they had to introduce the children to the community but how can they without the library. There were many children without books and the library closure would have a significant impact on them.

Phillipa Costello was from Abington and felt that the consultation was a deliberate and disingenuous attempt to get one response. Libraries offered a social benefit but once they've gone they won't come back. They supported the vulnerable who without this support might later require social care. They cost little but in the long-term provide many savings. The Council in her opinion must listen to the public and provide services. People with professional skills trained to provide the service they require.

Sue Botterill who was a volunteer and committee members at Abington Library. By providing a relatively small amount of money they will give a large amount of value. The existence of a friendly and safe place was assisting to combat many issues such as isolation. Which in turn assisted mental health and social cohesion. The services currently offered were call library plus because they offer so much more. A homework club for children, family support services, photocopying documents, debt referral, free wifi, IT assistance, PCSO's catching up on paperwork. They were for the young, old, disabled and vulnerable. They were a place to visit when you were new the area. They had volunteers and supporters to assist in putting on events, provided football coaches, book lunches, a language café and many additional stay and play craft events. They were a safe place to meet friends, find friendship and support.

Lucky Kheir was a mum, teacher and volunteer at Abington Library. This was a designated children's centre but if it closed there were no plans for where the children's centre would go. Research the importance of giving under 5s activities. It was particularly important in adaption to change. Music therapy increased social

wellbeing. Visiting from an early aged reduced isolation. Parents who were isolated had nowhere else to turn. This helped them to access services. It was a safe place to engage with your children in the community.

Alison Richards was retired and regular user of libraries. She read a piece by Derry Collins who is a 16 year old who used the library. He felt they provided young people like him the opportunity to learn skills and help people get jobs. He had learned valuable skills there. Young children could do their homework there but if they were managed by the community they might not be open when the children wanted to do their homework. The libraries held educational events that could be used to help children learn in a fun way and keep their interest. Libraries could change the perception of youth groups. The elderly use the library at the same time and can see not all young are bad and become less afraid of them.

Mrs Sue Bentley was speaking on behalf of 7 local authorities. The huge groundswell of support just showed what they meant to people everywhere. She had worked for Northamptonshire Libraries for nearly 40 years and taught herself to write books which was how she now earned her living. She felt it was fantastic having people borrow her books. It had created a substantial loss in book sales but it was important. It was part of the national heritage and Irchester Library was the original one which was 108 years old.

Camille Giffard who stated she was there on behalf of herself, her 5 year old daughter and 70 year old mother, all of which used the library. Her daughter had additional needs as a result of a chromosome disorder. She would not understand why should could no longer go when it closed. Her mother was deaf and socialising was difficult. She would not be able to travel further afield. The children's centre had been really helpful when her daughter was born. The mental health of the new mother was important and the library had kept her sane. She found the EQIA's confusing as the initial impact statement was that no groups would be disproportionately affected but the disabled, aged and pregnant would be. The EQIA also had to consider alternatives to closure.

Northampton Borough Councillor Rufia Ashraf stated she was representing St James and the wider town. It was about mums introducing children to the library, students undertaking research, community hub groups forming and making friend. These were award winning and must not be taken away. A fourth option to keep libraries open was needed.

Mr Leach echoed what was said by the previous speakers. Libraries were once the envy of the world and he felt threatening to close them was an attack on community hubs, young and old. He felt an alternative to keep cutting public services was to become a unitary authority.

At the Chairman's invitation Councillor Chris Stanbra then proposed the following motion

“Council notes the libraries consultation that began recently and ends on 13th January 2018.

Council further notes that the consultation questionnaire only offers respondents the opportunity to express a view on three options all of which the questionnaire makes clear will result in library closures.

Council expresses its concerns that the results of the survey will be skewed in favour of library closures

Council instructs officers to add a fourth option to the consultation:

To keep all of Northamptonshire’s libraries open, in permanent public ownership and operated by properly trained staff”

In moving the motion Councillor Stanbra thanked all those who had spoken noting they had some very compelling stories. Literally hundreds of people had signed various petitions. The motion did not seek to prejudice any decisions but merely sought to ensure Council had all regard to all relevant situations and had made a real valuation to all opportunities, one of which was to keep them open, operated by trained staff. Unless this was considered it was not a proper consultation. The current consultation only provided 3 options all of which ended in closure of the libraries. However, people went there to socialise. Those with dementia and those who regularly looked after them had stated it was their only lifeline. It was a place where they could read the papers and talk to people. It was a valuable service and it didn't want to risk the Council being the worst in the country because it closed libraries. His own party had formed a solution and was happy to discuss this with the Administration.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Dennis Meredith who stated librarians were very skilled people. The idea that libraries could be managed by the community was in his opinion madness. They required trained people to provide someone to explain to children what was happening in them. They affected the elderly.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Libraries were considered by some to be an essential service, particularly because of the extra services put into them. The communities could be expected to manage them.
- The consultation must include an option 4.
- It was noted that councillors and officers were invited to a meeting in St James to discuss the issue but gave their apologies. How can a consultation be effective if they don't even attend the community meetings?
- Far Cotton Library was noted for putting on events that enabled people to have subsidised trips to visit places they would not otherwise do.
- It was felt that the idea of a parish council providing funding was cherry picking as not everywhere had a parish council.
- The libraries at the moment could order a book that they didn't stock from another library. Would this still be possible when they were no longer connected?
- None of the current options offer a way for communities to say what they felt. Without Option 4 the consultation was considered meaningless.

- Some felt the Council could not cut any further and were concerned about how community groups could make effective relationships with other with nowhere to meet.
- The option of doing nothing was not viable. The Library Service was asked to consider their costs. 20 out of 27 county councils no longer delivered their libraries and had a community service. Footfall was reducing and information on costs was asked for before forming the options. The consultation would complete on 31 January 2018

In summing up Councillor Stanbra agreed there was a serious issue in areas where there was no parish council. The authority had made libraries a place that did more than just lend books.

Upon a recorded vote of 10 for and 32 against with 1 abstention the motion was rejected.

RESOLVED that: Upon a recorded vote of 10 for and 32 against with 1 abstention the motion was rejected.

Councillor Danielle Stone then proposed the following motion:

“This Council resolves to reinstate the Northamptonshire Young Leaders Forum. This successful programme previously gave the Council the opportunity:

- *To hear directly from young people.*
- *To consult them on issues affecting them and*
- *To support them in in developing their own work streams, as they did so effectively on the Mental Health charter.*

This Council further resolves to implement the afore-mentioned mental health charter.”

In moving the motion Councillor Stone stated it seemed to her that a lot of repair work was needed with communities and she had brought this motion at the request of former young leaders who asked her what was happening. They were proud of the work they had undertaken which had enabled this Council and for the support from Northamptonshire Healthwatch in producing the report. This report then fed in to the mental health charter. The enormous value of hearing the voice of young people could be seen in the corporate parenting report and youth justice report. This scheme was hugely beneficial to those young people but they were never told it wouldn't continue. It just disappeared. This motion was asking for it to be restored so that it look at how the mental health charter was being implemented. She was aware of Councillor Golby's amendment and she was happy to accept that.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Arthur McCutcheon who stated his own experience through his years as a lecturer and tutor was then young people were given responsibility and are given the proper support they take it and run with it.

(Councillor Victoria Perry left at 3.42pm)

They undertook the work because they were allowed to choose it. Mental health is something everyone is concerned with and it affects more and more people.

The following amendment was then proposed by Councillor Matt Golby:

Is Council resolves to explore options that would allow it to reinstate the Northamptonshire Young Leaders Forum.

This successful programme previously gave the Council the opportunity

- To hear directly from young people.*
- To consult them on issues affecting them and*
- To support them in developing their own work streams, as they did so effectively on the Mental Health Charter.*

This Council recognises the very valuable work previously undertaken by the Northamptonshire Young Leaders forum on the Mental Health Charter. This Council resolves to continue to work with representative groups of young people including the Shooting Stars Group, the Children in Care Council, Care Leaves forum and the various youth forums in the county to promote democracy and important issues like mental health. Mental health is a priority of the Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board and an integral part of the Northamptonshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.”

In moving the amendment Councillor Golby stated the Young Leaders Scheme cost in excess of £50,000 but he felt they could ascertain if they could be reinstated. Councillor Hughes had mentioned the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and they had a mental health concordat that included measures to track progress. He felt sure this could provide confidence that it would be implemented.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Adam Brown.

RESOLVED THAT: Upon the vote the motion as amended was accepted.

79/12 Urgent Business

There was none

80/17 Exempt Business

There was none.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.45pm.



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Recorded Votes for Council:

Date of Meeting: 23 November 2017

Item No: 7 – Opposition Priority Business

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Auger	Richard				√
Baker	Fiona		√		
Birch	Jane	√			
Bowen	Elizabeth		√		
Brackenbury	Wendy		√		
Breeze	Rebecca		√		
Brookfield	Julie	√			
Brown	Adam		√		
Brown	Robin		√		
Chauhan	Pinder		√		
Clarke	Michael				√
Cooley	Rachel	√			
Davenport	Julie	√			
Eales	Gareth	√			
Edwards	Scott		√		
Ekins	Jonathan		√		
Golby	Matthew		√		

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Gonzalez de Savage	Andre		√		
Gough	Robert				√
Griffiths	Martin				√
Hakewill	James		√		
Hales	Eileen				√
Hallam	Mike		√		
Harwood	Glenn	- -	- -	- -	- -
Howard	Amy		√		
Hughes	Dudley		√		
Hughes	Sylvia		√		
Irving-Swift	Cecile		√		
Kilbride	Andrew		√		
Lawman	Graham		√		
Legg	Stephen		√		
Longley	Malcolm		√		
McCutcheon	Arthur	√			
McGhee	John				√
Matthews	Allan		√		
Mercer	Andrew		√		
Mercer	Gill		√		
Meredith	Dennis	√			
Morris	Ian		√		
Naden-Horley	Sandra		√		
Osborne	Steve		√		
Parker	Bill		√		
Patel	Suresh				√

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Perry	Victoria		√		
Rumens	Sam		√		
Sadygov	Adil		√		
Scott	Bob	√			
Scrimshaw	Mick	√			
Shephard	Judy		√		
Smith	Heather		√		
Smith-Hayes	Christina				√
Stanbra	Chris	√			
Stone	Danielle	√			
Strachan	Winston				√
Tye	Michael		√		
Walker	Allen		√		
Waters	Malcolm		√		
Totals		11	36	0	9



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Recorded Votes for Council:

Date of Meeting: 23 November 2017

Item No: 11(a) – Motion on Library Service Consultation

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Auger	Richard				√
Baker	Fiona				√
Birch	Jane				√
Bowen	Elizabeth		√		
Brackenbury	Wendy		√		
Breeze	Rebecca		√		
Brookfield	Julie	√			
Brown	Adam		√		
Brown	Robin		√		
Chauhan	Pinder		√		
Clarke	Michael				√
Cooley	Rachel	√			
Davenport	Julie	√			
Eales	Gareth	√			
Edwards	Scott			√	
Ekins	Jonathan				√
Golby	Matthew		√		

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Gonzalez de Savage	Andre		√		
Gough	Robert				√
Griffiths	Martin				√
Hakewill	James		√		
Hales	Eileen				√
Hallam	Mike		√		
Harwood	Glenn	- -	- -	- -	- -
Howard	Amy		√		
Hughes	Dudley		√		
Hughes	Sylvia		√		
Irving-Swift	Cecile		√		
Kilbride	Andrew		√		
Lawman	Graham		√		
Legg	Stephen		√		
Longley	Malcolm		√		
McCutcheon	Arthur	√			
McGhee	John				√
Matthews	Allan		√		
Mercer	Andrew		√		
Mercer	Gill		√		
Meredith	Dennis	√			
Morris	Ian		√		
Naden-Horley	Sandra		√		
Osborne	Steve		√		
Parker	Bill		√		
Patel	Suresh				√

Surname	First Name	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Perry	Victoria		√		
Rumens	Sam		√		
Sadygov	Adil		√		
Scott	Bob	√			
Scrimshaw	Mick	√			
Shephard	Judy				√
Smith	Heather		√		
Smith-Hayes	Christina				√
Stanbra	Chris	√			
Stone	Danielle	√			
Strachan	Winston				√
Tye	Michael		√		
Walker	Allen		√		
Waters	Malcolm		√		
Totals		10	32	1	13