

**NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**18<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 6.00p.m.**

**To: Members of the Executive Committee (Councillors Birch (Chair), Marriott (Vice Chair), Hibbert Lane, Brian Markham, McCutcheon and Russell)**

**Cc: Other members of the Council (for information)**

**You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Executive Committee to be held remotely by Zoom on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 6.00 p.m. when the business set out below will be transacted**

**<https://www.youtube.com/user/northamptonbctv/>**

**Richard Walden  
Acting Town Clerk  
12<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**Guildhall  
Northampton  
NN1 1DE**

**A G E N D A**

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

**3. Minutes of last meeting**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (copy enclosed)

**4. Delegations to Committees and Officers**

To consider recommending to the Council a scheme of delegations to Committees etc.

**5. Mayoral Allowance**

To consider a recommendation to the Council as to the amount and method of managing the Town Mayor's allowance

**6. Councillor Allowances**

To note the process for the Council to consider this matter

**7. Transfer of Property and Services**

To update the Committee on this matter and to agree to an additional Council meeting being held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## **8. Information Technology and Accounting Software**

To authorise the Town Clerk to conclude agreements for the services set out in the report of the Acting Town Clerk

## **9. Freedom of Information Act: Publication Scheme**

To approve a Publication Scheme

## **10. Payroll Services**

To consider initial arrangements for payroll services

## **11. Transfer of Coat of Arms**

To note the report of the Acting Town Clerk

## NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 19 January 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillor Birch (Chair); Councillor Marriott (Deputy Chair); Councillors Lane, B Markham, McCutcheon and Russell

In attendance: Councillors Ashraf, Hallam, Hibbert and Stone with Mr R Walden (Acting Town Clerk), Ms M Goodman and Mr L Gould (Borough Council) and Dr L Sambrook-Smith (Northants CALC)

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

#### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

#### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

#### 4. TRANSFER OF PROPERTY AND SERVICES

The Acting Town Clerk recalled that over a period of time a wide range of properties and services had been suggested for possible transfer from the Borough Council to the new Town Council. These fell into three general categories: those which had already been agreed; those which the Borough had agreed to transfer in principle subject to further reports; and those in respect of which the Town Council had requested further information on the financial and staffing implications of transfer before considering further.

##### a) Transfers already agreed

The Statutory Order creating the Town Council had transferred the following allotment sites on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021: Billing Road East, Broadmead Avenue, Glebeland Road, Graspin Lane, Harlestone Road, Parklands, Rothersthorpe Road and Southfields.

The Order had also transferred the Mayoralty and accordingly the full current budget for mayoral support services is being included in the draft budget. A long list of other civic items including regalia, robes, muniments and other artefacts was being compiled and would be reported in due course.

Following the creation of the Town Council the Borough Council's previous responsibility for maintaining closed churchyards also passed automatically to the Town Council. I have not yet been advised the precise areas of land involved or the maintenance costs for them.

## **b) Transfers agreed in principle by the Borough Council**

At its meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> November the Borough Council had agreed in principle to transfer the following property and services subject to further reports to the Cross Party Working Group and full Council: Markets, Events and Entertainments, Festive Lighting, Street Furniture, Hanging baskets and Planting Displays, Town Twinning, Community Grants, and Town Centre Management Activities.

The Borough Council at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January had agreed that the Town Council be offered, subject to the concurrence of the Shadow West Northants Council, a long lease of the historic part of the Guildhall on an internal repairing basis only. At the last meeting of this Committee it had been noted that the principal council would retain the freehold and responsibility for structural repairs including the roof and the external statues. As the Guildhall was currently managed and serviced as a single unit with the modern office extension and could not be readily be divided it was likely that the landlord would continue to be responsible for heating, lighting and other services, cleaning, security and other overheads such as insurance and business rates. The Town Council would then be required to pay a service charge for its proportion of those costs.

The Committee had agreed at its last meeting that the Town Council was willing to continue to explore a long lease of the historic part of the Guildhall as indicated, subject to the receipt of further details of all income and expenditure related to this part of the premises. No further details were available at this meeting, but officers undertook to endeavour to present more details of income and expenditure at the Council meeting.

## **c) Property and Services for which the Committee has requested more information**

In addition to the services set out in sections a) and b) above, he recalled that the Committee had asked the Borough Council for advice as to the financial and staffing implications of further potentially local services being transferred to it. These were: Local Open Spaces and Play Ares (but excluding premier parks and land held under the Housing Revenue Account), Community Centres, War Memorial and statues, Council representatives on outside bodies and charities, Neighbourhood Wardens, Park Rangers.

It was accepted that Councillors would require further information on all the above property and services in due course to enable them to consider which services the Council wished to continue to explore. However, as many services are currently managed as part of much wider contracts or in a “package” with other services, he advised that disaggregating the precise income and expenditure details which Councillors would expect to see as part of usual budget preparation was complex and would take some time to achieve, final figures may not be available in time for the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

Given the circumstances set out in the above advice, the Committee considered the best courses of action including potential discussions with West Northants Council which had already included provision in its own draft budget for many of the services which might potentially be transferred.

**Recommended:**

- 1. To agree in principle, subject to the concurrence of the Shadow West Northants Council, to the transfer on 1<sup>st</sup> April of those properties and services set out in paragraph (b) of the report of the Acting Town Clerk (including a long lease of the historic part of the Guildhall) and, subject to the approval of the draft budget for 2021/22, further reports on the financial and staffing implications of these transfers be presented to the Executive Committee;**
- 2. To explore with the Shadow West Northants Council a possible funded transfer of the further services set out in paragraph (c) of the report on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021; and**
- 3. That, in the event of the Borough/ West Northants Councils agreeing to the transfer of property and services outlined above but it not proving possible to conclude the formalities of any of those transfers by 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021, the Town Clerk be authorised to conclude a Service Level Agreement to enable those services to be continued to be delivered under existing arrangements until such time in 2021 when the formalities of transfer can be completed.**

**5. BUDGET 2021/22**

The Acting Town Clerk advised that the Meeting of the Council on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 was the final occasion at which the Council could agree its budget for the coming financial year and agree a precept upon West Northants Council. He further advised that, for the reasons explained in the previous item, it had not been possible to provide the degree of itemised estimated income and expenditure for all budget heads which Councillors might usually expect to have before them as a number of key component decisions, not least relating to services to be transferred, were yet to be finalised. The draft budget was therefore very much a contingency budget to meet the deadline for setting a precept and at the same time provide adequate financial flexibility to enable the Town Council after the May elections to determine its own priorities. Although the Government had not applied referendum principles to town and parish council precepts for 2021/22, it had urged restraint and had advised that it could consider introducing such measures (which are more likely for the largest town councils) for future years.

The Borough Council had suggested a draft base budget for the Town Council, but it was this Council which had to make the final decision.

The net contingency budget of £1,775,500, based upon 36,401 equivalent Band D properties would result in a Council tax of £48.78 at Band D or £32.52 (62p per week) at Band A (a typical town centre property).

This level of proposed council tax compared with other town and parish councils as follows:

<b>Council</b>	<b>Band D £</b>
Northampton Town Council	48.78
All parish councils in England (average)	75.00
Parishes in Northants (average)	71.00
Far Cotton and Delapre draft Budget	48.40
Kingsthorpe draft budget	32.11
Largest 20 Town Councils (average)	110.00

**Recommended:**

- 1. To approve the draft budget in the sum of £1,775,500 as set out in the Appendix to these minutes and to agree a precept on West Northamptonshire Council for 2021/22 in that sum;**
- 2. That, as a matter of priority, the new Town Clerk undertakes detailed reviews of all services which are transferred to enable the Council to consider any possible modifications and enhancements to those services.**
- 3. That, subject to the inclusion of appropriate provision in the finally adopted budget, the Town Clerk be authorised to recruit and appoint the following support staff to commence duties on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021:**
  - Administration Officer (full time)**
  - Administration Assistant (part time)**
  - Finance Officer (part time); and**
- 4. That no expenditure be committed on the items in the budget marked with an \* until the relevant committee has approved full details of how these contingency sums will be expended.**

**Appendix**  
**Northampton Town Council Draft Contingency Budget 2021/22**

	NBC Recommended budget 2021/22	Recommended Revised Budget
Staffing costs (including Town Clerk, and one full time two part time admin staff), relocation costs, recruitment advertising, travel costs, etc	221,000	221,000
Contingency for additional staff recruited during 2021/22 including Community Engagement Officer and two Administrative Apprenticeships		60,000
Professional services/subscriptions (audit, insurance, legal fees, etc)	40,000	60,000
Running costs (including payroll/finance system costs, postage, office supplies, telephones, etc)	40,000	50,000
Mayoral and Member costs	130,000	130,000
Election costs	70,000	70,000
Accommodation costs	180,000	180,000
Other miscellaneous running costs and contingency	30,000	50,000
Amounts to develop future services in 2021/22 and/or transfer to reserves	400,000	
First contribution to reserves		200,000
Contingency for new services and service enhancements		200,000
Councillor Community Funding 25 x £3,000		75,000
Community Grants		50,000
<b>Services</b> (estimates based up current NBC direct service costs, excluding management costs)		
Allotments (excluding staff costs)		26,000
Markets		44,000
Planting, hanging baskets etc		66,500
Events and Entertainments		104,000*
Festive Lighting, Christmas etc		145,000*
Town Centre Management		44,000
Closed Churchyards		Not yet available
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,111,000</b>	<b>1,775,500</b>

## 6. FUTURE MEETINGS

**RESOLVED: That the following meetings which are due to consider the key decisions indicated be noted:**

Full Council, Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 6:00pm

- Recommendations re: Town Clerk and Precept

Executive Committee, Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 6:00pm

- Confirm committee structure
- FOI Publication Scheme
- IT, Telephones, Specialist software
- Payroll provider
- Professional Support
- Councillors Allowances
- Mayoral Allowance
- Chaplain and prayers at meetings

Full Council, Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 at 6:00pm

Executive Committee, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 6:00pm

Executive Committee, Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 6:00pm

The meeting concluded at 7:55 pm

## NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

19<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### REPORT OF ACTING TOWN CLERK

#### 4. DELEGATION TO COMMITTEES AND OFFICERS

**Recommendation:** That the full Council be recommended to adopt the draft Scheme of Delegations to Committees etc at Appendix "A" to this report with any appropriate amendments

At the Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2020 when it was agreed to appoint a temporary Executive Committee it was noted that the Borough Council had recommended that the Council adopt a committee system of governance with four standing committees with delegated powers to exercise most of the functions of the Council subject to major decisions being reserved to the full Council. The draft scheme now submitted attempts to define how that objective can be achieved.

The proposal includes for the option that Committees can refer any matter to the Council if they wish as well as the opportunity for any three Committee members having the ability to require any decision is presented as a recommendation to Council.

With 25 elected councillors the structure proposes a total of 50 committee places enabling each councillor to serve on two committees. To ensure that all members of the council have the opportunity to be engaged in all decisions, this Committee may want to include another provision that all councillors receive copies of agendas and reports for all committees and be entitled to attend those meetings and, with the consent of the Chair, to speak to any particular item.

Councillors will also note that the various suggested delegated functions of committees includes for all the possible functions which may be transferred to the Town Council, as discussed at the last Council meeting. This does not infer that any commitment on the part of this council to concluding negotiations for all or any transfer but it does remove the necessity of having to regularly update this document as particular transfers are agreed from time to time. A similar approach has been taken to the services included within the Publication Scheme referred to in a later agenda item.

#### 5. MAYORAL ALLOWANCE

**Purpose of report:** to invite the Committee to consider what recommendations it wishes to make in respect of (a) the level and method of payment for the Mayor's Allowance for (a) the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (the Annual Council Meeting after elections) and (b) whether it wishes to invite the Town Mayor to maintain the custom of annually appointing a Chaplain.

A Council may pay its Town Mayor a reasonable allowance to enable him or her to meet the expenses of his or her office. The amount should be fixed by the council in advance and represent reasonable reimbursement to the Mayor for the general duties of his or her office - attending events in their public figure role, hosting small receptions, etc. (s. 15(5) and s. 34(5) of the LGA

1972.) The the Mayor's allowance is usually spent or used entirely at the Mayor's discretion and without their having to account for it to the authority. A Mayor's allowance is also probably taxable under PAYE Income Tax.

In the past I understand that the Borough Council paid the full allowance to the Mayor through payroll but that, in recent years, the allowance has been split 50:50 between a direct payment and a budget sum held by the Civic and Mayoral and Officer for reimbursement of actual expenses incurred. The current allowance for the Borough Mayor is £23,359.92 and this sum is included in the Town Council's budget for next year (together with an additional allowance for the Deputy Mayor – see below). Some councillors have, however, queried whether the number of events attended and activities arranged by the Town Mayor may well be less than those undertaken by the Borough Mayor who represents a much greater population so requiring a smaller allowance. Whilst it is impossible to predict with any accuracy the actual likely expense requirements of the Town Mayor, a reasonable approach may be to allocate all the Allowance in the budget as a contingency item held by the Civic and Mayoral Officer against which all expenses can be reimbursed or paid directly on the Mayor's behalf. There would be no involvement with PAYE. This is now common practise in many larger town councils. The amount of the allowance budget can then be adjusted in 2022/23 in the light of the actual experience during the Council's first full year.

It is common for Mayors to be invited to purchase tickets for or make donations at charity events and to facilitate this the Civic and Mayoral Officer could hold, say, £100 petty cash on behalf of the Mayor which can be topped up as part of regular monthly payment runs.

The Borough Council has also paid an allowance to the Deputy Mayor, which is currently £3,818.28. The Town Council has no power to make such a payment. In other local councils this problem is overcome by the Mayor by custom allocating, say 10% of their allowance for use by the Deputy and this is probably the practise this Council may wish to adopt.

There will of course be two phases of the coming Mayoral term of office. Firstly the "balance" of the current municipal year from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 17<sup>th</sup> May when Cllr Ashraf will complete the final part of the term occupied by Borough Cllr Sargeant, the second being the Town Council's first full municipal year starting with the Annual Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May. The above budgets could be used for both these elements.

The Committee's views on this matter are requested.

## 6. COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

<b>Purpose of report: For Information</b>
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In order to attract the widest range of candidates for election some members have suggested that a councillor's allowance could help defray child care costs and other expenses such as postage, broadband, parking etc which are not reimbursable in any other form. It has not been proposed to pay any special responsibility additional allowance to the Chair/ Mayor.

Principal councils in England have since 2003 had the power to pay 'dependants' carers' allowance'. However, parish and town councils in England do not have this power. Apart from paying 'parish travelling and subsistence allowance' under the 2003 Regulations and a chairman's

allowance under section 15(5) LGA 1972, parish and town councils can only pay 'parish basic allowance'. In setting the level of parish basic allowance the parish or town council must have regard to the recommendations of the Principal Council's independent parish remuneration panel (PRP).

Parish basic allowance (PBA) can be paid to the chairman (or town mayor) or to councillors or both. The rate of allowances paid to councillors other than the chairman must be the same (but the rate paid to the chairman can be different). Any member can waive some or all of the PBA to which they may be entitled. There is no provision for the payment of 'special responsibility allowance' to, e.g. a 'leader' or the chair of a committee, as there is with principal councils.

I appreciate that some members of the Council have expressed different views on this subject but, in order to reach a conclusion on whether or not this Council should pay such allowances, it was first necessary for the Borough Council to convene its PRP. This Panel meets shortly and its Chair, Mr John Cade, has indicated that he intends to present its report and recommendations for the Council to consider at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March.

## **7. TRANSFER OF PROPERTY AND SERVICES**

**Purpose of Report:** to provide an oral update on negotiations for the transfer of property and services to the Town Council

The Committee will be apprised of the latest position with regard to property and service transfers, however it is unlikely that these will be concluded by the date of the next ordinary meeting of the full Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March. It is therefore suggested that an additional Council meeting be arranged for Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 6pm for this purpose.

## **8. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE**

**Recommendation:**

That the Acting Town Clerk be authorised to conclude agreements for the following services as indicated in this report.

### **i) The Council's requirements**

The Council needs to have several aspects of technology in place in order to become fully and effectively operational on 1<sup>st</sup> April this year:

- Suitable accountancy software
- Accounting support for the Town Clerk in her role as Responsible Financial Officer
- An IT system
- A telephone system

### **ii) The Proposed Solution**

At the meeting of the Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> January preliminary consideration was given to a possible solution but I was asked to provide further information of the details especially whether some or all of the required services could be provided by the Borough Council/ West Northants. The Town Clerk (Designate) has shared the content of this report and quotations contained within with the Borough's IT Director who has confirmed they cannot provide the service for ICT for anywhere near the quote that has been obtained.

I have been able to negotiate a composite package with a company with a long record of successful specialist support for local councils – Microshade VMS, who are based in Plymouth Science Park. They will supply the system outlined below, host the accounts package referred to and assist in its installation.

The Council has agreed that, at least for the first year, the permanent Town Clerk will also be its Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) supported by a part-time Finance Assistant although it was recognised that a full time RFO and Administration Manager would likely be required in year two. It was further agreed that accountancy support would be provided in fulfilling this role. The package negotiated with Microshade includes for its Managing Director, Mr Stuart Wilbur, to personally act as Financial Advisor to the Council until such time as the Council is in a position to employ its own qualified Responsible Financial Officer. Mr Wilbur performs this function for several large town councils including Leighton-Linslade TC where the Town Clerk also fulfils the dual role of Clerk and RFO. The company also provides the full IT service for the third largest town council, Weston Super Mare. I have spoken to the WSM Town Clerk who has provided an exemplary testimonial to the standard of service they receive.

**iii) Accounting Software**

The Council will need to have in place by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 appropriate accounting software which meets the specific requirements for all local councils to approve End of Year Accounts plus an Annual Governance and Accountability Statement. There are several sector-specific accountancy software programmes available and I have confirmed that the great majority of the largest councils use the Omega system supplied by RBS Rialtas of Swindon, which is the market leader. This is the system I was familiar with for 22 years at Dunstable Town Council where their on-line support and training was excellent. The system can be developed as the services provided by the Council grow.

RBS have provided a full quotation in the sum of £3,084 for the supply and installation of their Omega software plus first year’s support on a three year contract. Annual support and maintenance for up to five users will cost £959 in years two and three. They further quote £1,751 for four days on-site training.

**iv) Information Technology**

Having considered the systems in use by other large councils I would recommend that the Council considers a hosted computing system as opposed by acquiring its own server at significant capital cost. Advances in technology over recent years could allow the Council’s core computing infrastructure to be hosted off-site in a remote data centre which can be accessed from any location with an Internet connection. Such an independent system would provide the flexibility the Council will require as it develops it’s services in the coming years for a monthly fee and no capital outlay. There are several companies offering specific such solutions to local councils and I have had detailed discussions with two of them. Arising from these discussions I have been able to negotiate a comprehensive offer with Microshade VMS which will meet all the Council’s requirements including elements:

- Hosted applications, storage and backup )
- Microsoft Office for up to 12 users )
- Hosting RBS Omega ) £471 per month
- Up to 12 officer email accounts on Microsoft Exchange )
- 25 councillor email accounts on Microsoft Exchange )
- On line support 7 days a week 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. )
- Migration of existing data for up to 12 users £125 per user
- Accounting Services including: £3,540
  - Cash Book verification of Bank Reconciliations
  - Sales and Purchase Ledgers review balances and report anomalies

Salaries: analysis of monthly payroll and allocation to relevant service headings  
 Verification of allocation to income and expenditure to budget codes/service headings  
 Preparation and Verification of Monthly Budget Monitoring Reports  
 Preparation of Monthly Council Financial Report – Balance Sheet  
 Reporting on Earmarked Reserves.

- Production of Year End Accounts and Annual Financial and Governance return (AGAR) £295

Depending upon the final number of users and the volume of existing data to be migrated this would result in an annual cost of approximately £9,737 (£5,652 for hosting and £3,540 for accountancy).

As mentioned above Microshade provide some or all of these services to several larger town councils including accountancy support to Leighton-Linslade TC and the full package for Weston super mare TC (the third largest town council with a population of 72,000). The company is also the cyber security partner for the National Association of Local Councils.

This remote hosting could also include other specialist applications such as allotments lettings, hall hire and digital mapping as add-ons. They have also provided a quotation for supplying the meetings and agenda software used by the Borough Council, Moderngov. However, at over £9,000 in year one and £7,250 in subsequent years, I do not believe the volume of council and committee meetings likely to be involved could justify such expenditure at this stage as opposed to relying on normal MS Office applications.

#### v) Telephony

By 2025 it is currently proposed that all BT exchanges will close and from that date all new telephone systems will be provided via the Cloud or by an internet-based solution. To consider the best way forward Microshade has introduced the Council to the market leader for the new solutions, Horizon. After discussions they have offered the following alternative solutions:

#### Horizon Hosted Setup Costs (preferred option)

15 x Polycom VVX450 IP Phones	Free on a 3 year contract
1 x 24 Port Full PoE switch to power the phones	£215.00
1 x Number selection charge	£20.00
Delivery and remote setup of phones	£30.00
Optional engineer installation	£250.00
Total remote setup costs	£265.00
Total engineer setup costs	£515.00

The monthly rental cost for 15 subscriptions with inclusive UK calls @£13.00 each would be £195.00 per month based on a 3 year contract (£2,340 p.a.).

To add a softphone and mobile license to these users would add £5.00 per month to each user needing this option

## Internet Options

Only ADSL 2+ is available in the NN1 postcode at the moment, so the company suggests either of two options for these services or the Council invests in a fibre optic leased line. The costs for either option are:

### Business ADSL 2+ with speeds of about 17Mb

2 x Analogue line and Broadband activation	£150.00
1 x Draytek Vigor 2926n Dual Router and Firewall	£219.00
2 x Draytek Vigor 130 modems	£140.00
Delivery	£12.00
Total setup costs	£521.00
Monthly rental for line and broadbands	£100.00 per month

### Fibre Optic Leased Line with speeds of 100Mb

Installation costs would be free subject to a survey

Monthly rental for 100Mb leased line including Cisco router is £262.00 per month based on a 3 year contract

## Available Northampton Numbers

Although there is currently a shortage of 01604 numbers Horizon are able to port one of the following numbers from Openreach which we can port in for a one off fee of £50.00. They are also able to offer a range of direct dial numbers for free but will not be able to select them before Council places an order.

01604 636365  
01604 639393  
01604 621620  
01604 622623  
01604 626565  
01604 631177  
01604 636353  
01604 637676  
01604 637766

## vi) Summary

The Committee is asked to approve the following arrangements:

	Set up and first year costs	Ongoing annual cost
RBS Omega Software & training	£4,835	£959
Accounting Support	£3,835	£3,835
ICT system	£6,152	£5,652
Telephones (up to 12 users)	£2,855	£2,340
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£17,677</b>	<b>£12,786</b>

## 9. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION: PUBLICATION SCHEME

**Recommended :** That the draft publication scheme at Appendix “B” to this report be adopted

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives to the public a limited right to see information held by public bodies such as local councils. Each local council has to have a “publication scheme” and a suggested draft based upon the model published by the Information Commissioner’s Office is enclosed at Appendix “B” .

## 10. PAYROLL SERVICES

**Recommended: That the Council enters into an initial one year payroll services agreement with CVS Northamptonshire**

One of the Council’s key initial financial undertakings will be to ensure adequate arrangements in place to pay its contractual requirement to pay monthly salaries. As the Council’s administrative arrangements become established during the first year of operation it may well be that it will have capacity to fulfil this role in house. However, initially it is prudent and desirable to have alternative arrangements in place. A quotation has therefore been obtained from CVS Northamptonshire whose payroll service is used widely by local charities and community groups. There is a £50 set up charge, a monthly charge of £8 per employee and a year end charge of £30 making a potential annual cost, based upon 6 employees of £656.

## 11. TRANSFER OF COAT OF ARMS

**Purpose of report: For Information**

The Council’s Petition to Her Majesty for the transfer of the Borough Council’s Coat of Arms has, following consultation with the Earl Marshall, been presented to Her Majesty by Windsor Herald at the College of Arms. A copy of the text of the actual petition is enclosed at Appendix “C” for Members’ information.

## Northampton Town Council

### Delegation to Committees and Officers

Except as indicated in paragraph (1) below, each Committee shall exercise on behalf of the Council the functions assigned to it in this document. Committees are not bound to exercise delegated powers and may at their discretion refer matters to the Council for decision. Any three members of a Committee may also stand and require any decision of the Committee to be referred to the Council as a recommendation. Each Committee is required to submit to the Council a report of its proceedings since the previous meeting of the Council.

#### 1. Delegation - Exceptions

- a) The borrowing of money
- b) Approval of the annual budget and the levying of a precept
- c) The disposal of land, other than lettings for two years or less.
- d) The introduction of new major policy or a change in the Council's established
- e) The making of byelaws
- f) The purchase of land not provided for, or at a cost in excess of a sum allowed in any approved capital programme
- g) Matters relating to the employment of the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

#### 2. Sub-Committees

Committees may, subject to the concurrence of the Council, appoint Sub-Committees and (subject to the foregoing exceptions) such of the Committees' powers and duties as the Council may resolve, may be delegated to Sub-Committees. Each Sub Committee is required to submit to the main Committee a report of its proceedings since the previous meeting of the Committee.

### 3. Delegation to Committees

#### a) Policy and Finance Committee

(14 Members including the Chair and Deputy Chair of other Standing Committees)

- i) Without detracting from the duties and responsibilities of the other Committees, to review the effectiveness of the whole of the Council's organisation, its standards and levels of service.
- ii) To consider and approve corporate arrangements for risk management.
- iii) To control the policies of all Committees and, where appropriate, to make recommendations thereon to the Council.
- iv) To consider and make decisions on any matters referred to it by the Council or other Committees.
- v) To determine all matters relating to financial issues and to recommend annual revenue and capital budgets to Council.
- vi) To advise the Council on the regulation and control of the Council's finances; including in particular the financial implications and funding of any capital works.
- vii) To control the collection of revenues of the Council and to write off irrecoverable amounts.
- viii) To determine policy regarding insurances.
- ix) To receive auditors' reports and make decisions as to any policy matters raised thereby or arising therefrom.
- x) To make decisions regarding town twinning, hospitality, civic and public relations activities.
- xi) To advise on the making of any byelaws not specifically the responsibility of any other Committee.
- xii) To make decisions on all matters relating to all staff including proposals for additional staff to the Council's establishment. The appointment of the Town Clerk being the responsibility of the full Council.
- xiii) To make recommendations to the Council on the conduct of its own business - including Standing Orders, Committee organisation and membership and calendar of meetings.

- xiv) To make decisions on all matters relating to the Guildhall
- xv) To make decisions on any matters not specifically allocated to another Committee.

**(b) Accounts Sub-Committee**

This Sub—Committee will report directly to the Policy and Finance Committee and will comprise 4 Members consisting of the Chairman of Policy Finance Committee plus 3 other Members. Substitutes will be permitted from any other member of the main Committee.

- i) To approve the payment of Accounts in accordance with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- ii) To monitor the level of Council income/expenditure compared with the approved budget and to make any recommendations thereon to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- iii) To act as the Council's Audit Committee and to receive and make recommendations on reports from Internal and External Auditors.

**c) Staffing Sub-Committee**

This Sub-Committee will report directly to the Policy and Finance and will comprise 7 members consisting of the Chair of Policy and Finance Committee plus 6 others of its members

- i) To consider and make recommendations to the Policy and Finance Committee concerning the employment and terms and conditions of all staff.
- ii) To consider and make recommendations to the Policy and Finance Committee on issues concerning Council personnel policy.

**d) Appeals Sub-Committee**

This Sub-Committee will report directly to the Policy and Finance Committee and will comprise 5 Members consisting of the Chairs of the four standing committees and the Town Mayor.

- i) To consider on all matters relating to the Council's appeals procedures.

**e) Environmental Services Committee**

(12 members)

- i) To determine all matters relating to the provision and maintenance of, bus shelters, seats, litter bins and other items of street furniture
- ii) To consider the Council's response to the climate emergency
- iii) To determine all matters relating to the provision and day to day running of allotments, closed churchyards, local parks and open spaces and play areas under the control of the Council.
- iv) To consider all matters relating to the physical environment of the town, including litter and dog control, re-cycling of waste materials and liaising with local interest groups on such issues.
- v) To manage all matters relating to the Neighbourhood Warden scheme.
- vi) To consider all matters relating to the management of the Market and the Town Council's contribution towards town centre management activities.
- vii) To assemble and submit to the Policy and Finance Committee an income and expenditure budget for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Committee..

**f) Planning Committee**

(12 members)

- i) To consider all Planning Applications within the Parish submitted to the West Northants Council and subsequently advise the Planning Authority of the Town Council's views and to approve the Council's observations on any planning appeals.
- ii) To consider and comment upon any local plans, proposed listed buildings, conservation areas, tree preservation orders and building preservation orders.
- iii) To determine all matters relating to highways, footpaths and bridleways.
- iv) To respond, on behalf of the Council, to the proposals of other authorities relating to transportation and car parking issues, including traffic regulation orders.

**g) Community Services Committee**

(12 Members)

- i) To determine all issues relating to the management and maintenance of Community Centres under the Council's control
- (ii) To determine all matters relating to the Council's approach to delivering services to young people
- iii) To keep under review the need for additional community facilities and to make recommendations as to how to satisfy such need.
- (iv) To assemble and submit to the Policy and Finance Committee an income and expenditure budget for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Committee. .
- (v) To be responsible for all matters relating to the Council's approach to community safety and to liaise with Northamptonshire Police concerning community policing issues.
- (vi) To liaise with local voluntary organisations on the development of voluntary services
- (vii) To consider all matters relating to the organisation of public events entertainments including Festive Lighting and Christmas celebrations.

**(h) Grants Sub-Committee**

This Sub-Committee will report directly to the Community Services Committee and will comprise 4 Members from that Committee

- (i) To consider and make recommendations to the Community Services Committee on all grant applications made to the Council in accordance with the Council's Community Grants application process including final decisions on the Councillor Community Funding Scheme.

**i) Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer**

The following powers shall be delegated to the Town Clerk and Chief Executive or in his absence the appropriate Head of Service.

- (ii) Incurring all items of expenditure included within the approved budget for the relevant year except where an item is expressly excluded in the budget and subject to compliance with Standing Orders with respect to contracts and to Financial Regulations.

- (iii) Grant or refusal of applications to hire Council premises, sports facilities or facilities managed by the Council within the policies prescribed by the Council.

**j) Chair and Deputy Chair of Standing Committees (Emergency Powers)**

The Chair and Deputy Chairman of any Committee (provided that, if either or both be not available, any other Member(s) of the appropriate committee shall act in their stead) shall be authorised to exercise any powers within the purview of their Committee, but not otherwise delegated, provided they are satisfied that action is required as a matter of urgency.

The Members so acting shall be deemed to constitute a Sub-Committee of the Committee concerned. A full report on any action taken under this delegation shall be reported to the next meeting of the relevant Committee.

## PUBLICATION SCHEME

### Information available from Northampton Town Council under the Freedom of Information Act publication scheme

Northampton Town Council will make the information in this definition document available unless:

- it does not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOIA exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations exceptions, or its release is prohibited by another statute;
- the information is readily and publicly available from an external website; such information may have been provided by the public authority or on its behalf. The authority must provide a direct link to that information;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

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### Publishing datasets for re-use

Public authorities must publish under their publication scheme any dataset they hold that has been requested, together with any updated versions, unless they are satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so. So far as reasonably practicable, they must publish it in an electronic form that is capable of re-use.

If the dataset or any part of it is a relevant copyright work and the public authority is the only owner, the public authority must make it available for re-use under the terms of a specified licence. Datasets in which the Crown owns the copyright or the database rights are not relevant copyright works.

The Datasets Code of Practice recommends that public authorities make datasets available for re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#).

The term ‘dataset’ is defined in section 11(5) of FOIA. The terms ‘relevant copyright work’ and ‘specified licence’ are defined in section 19(8) of FOIA. The ICO has published [guidance](#) on the dataset provisions in FOIA. This explains what is meant by “not appropriate” and “capable of re-use”.

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<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<p><b>Class1 - Who we are and what we do</b> (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p> <p>This will be current information only.</p> <p>N.B. Councils should already be publishing as much information as possible about how they can be contacted.</p>	(hard copy or website)	Free
Who’s who on the Council and its Committees	Website	Free
Contact details for Town Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Website	Free
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website	Free
Staffing structure	Website	Free
<p><b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</b> (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)</p>	(hard copy or website)	

Current and previous financial year as a minimum		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Website	Free
Finalised budget	Website	Free

Precept	Website	Free
Borrowing Approval letter	Website	Free
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website	Free
Grants given and received	Website	Free
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Website	Free
Members' allowances and expenses	N/A	N/A
<b>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</b> (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)  Current and previous year as a minimum	(hard copy or website)	
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Website	Free
Quality status	Website	Free
Local charters drawn up in accordance with MHCLG guidelines	N/A	
<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> (Decision making processes and records of decisions)  Current and previous council year as a minimum	(hard copy or website)	

Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website	Free
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website	Free
Minutes of meetings (as above) – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website	Free
Reports presented to council meetings – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website	Free
Responses to consultation papers	Website	Free
Responses to planning applications	Website	Free

Bye-laws	Hardcopy	Free
<b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b> (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)  Current information only	(hard copy or website)	
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:  Procedural standing orders Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Delegated authority in respect of officers Code of Conduct Policy statements	Website Website Website Website Website	Free
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:  Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services	Hardcopy	Free
Equality and diversity policy Health and safety policy Recruitment policies (including current vacancies) Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Website Website Website Website Website	
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Hardcopy	
Data protection policies	Website	
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	N/A	

<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b> Currently maintained lists and registers only	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	Hardcopy	Free
Assets register	Hardcopy	Free
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)	Hardcopy	Free
Register of members' interests	Hardcopy	Free
Register of gifts and hospitality	Hardcopy	Free

<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b> (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)  Current information only	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	
Allotments	Website	Free
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Website	Free
Council Offices (Guildhall)	Website	Free
Community centres and village halls	Website	Free

Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Website	Free
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Hardcopy	Free
Bus shelters	Hardcopy	Free
Markets	Website	Free
Public conveniences	Website	Free
Agency agreements	Hardcopy	Free
Services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. allotment fees)	Website	Free
<b>Additional Information</b>		
This will provide the Council with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above		

**Contact details:**

**Marion Goodman – Town Clerk  
Northampton Town Council  
The Guildhall  
Northampton  
NN1 1DE**

**[info@leightonlinlade-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@leightonlinlade-tc.gov.uk)**

## SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

<b>TYPE OF CHARGE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BASIS OF CHARGE</b>
<b>Disbursement cost</b>	Photocopying @ ..p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost *
	Photocopying @ ..p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal
		Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class
<b>Statutory Fee</b>		In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)
<b>Other</b>		

\* the actual cost incurred by the public authority

**TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY**

The Humble Petition of Rufia Ashraf, Chair of Northampton Town Council, and Dennis William George Meredith, Deputy Chair of the said Northampton Town Council

SHEWETH THAT by Order in Council bearing date the Twenty-first day of May 1974 Your Majesty was graciously pleased to give and grant unto the Borough Council of Northampton Your Royal Licence and Authority that it might bear and use the Armorial Bearings recorded for the Town of Northampton at the Heralds' Visitations of the County of Northampton in the years 1619 and 1681, which Armorial Bearings were duly exemplified unto the said Council by Letters Patent under the hands and Seals of Garter, Clarenceux and Norroy and Ulster Kings of Arms bearing date the Twenty-fifth day of November 1974

THAT by an Order of the said Council made the Thirty-first day of March 2020 in exercise of powers conferred under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 a new Parish was constituted within the Borough of Northampton and a Council constituted for the said new Parish with effect from the First day of April following

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THAT by a Resolution made at its first meeting on the Seventh day of December 2020 the Council of the said Parish adopted the style of Northampton Town Council

THAT on the First day of April 2021 pursuant to an Order of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government made the Thirteenth day of February 2020 in exercise of powers conferred by the said Act, the Borough of Northampton will be abolished as a local government area and its Council wound up and dissolved

AND THAT Northampton Town Council being desirous of bearing and using the Armorial Bearings exemplified unto the Borough Council of Northampton as aforesaid,

Your Petitioners as Chair and Deputy Chair of the said Council and on its behalf therefore most humbly pray Your Majesty's Royal Licence and Authority that the said Armorial Bearings be transferred unto and exemplified in the name of Northampton Town Council, to be borne or used on its Common Seal or otherwise in accordance with the Laws of Arms AND Your Majesty's Petitioners shall ever most humbly pray etc

Rufia Ashraf

Dennis William George Meredith

Chair

Deputy Chair

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