



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE

3 March 2020

Report Title	Location for the West Northamptonshire Shadow Council meetings
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to outline the recommended location for the West Northamptonshire Shadow Council meetings.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the WNJC:

That following a workshop session with the Leaders from Daventry District Council (DDC), Northampton Borough Council (NBC), Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) (see Appendix 1) approve:

The selection of County Hall, Northampton, as the location for the West Northants Shadow Council Meetings.

That all other committee meetings that will be required for West Northants Shadow Council will make use of existing rooms in the four local authority buildings

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 There is a requirement within the Structural Changes Order to hold a Shadow Council meeting within 14 calendar days of the day of the elections (7th May 2020).

3.1.2 In planning and considering a proposed location a number of administrative and logistical factors were considered. These are covered in detail in Appendix 1 but included:

- Members' accommodation will need to be ready to hold full Council meetings for the Shadow Authority on or before 21st May 2020.
- The full Council meetings will need to accommodate 93 Members plus Officers, public and press observers.
- There will need to be delegate units in sufficient quantity or an appropriate substitute.

3.1.3 There were also a number of assumptions considered, again covered in detail in Appendix 1 but included:

- The building where full Shadow Council meetings are held will not necessarily be the new named HQ location of the Unitary Authority going forward.
- The Executive Committee and Committees of the Shadow Council will be of a more easily manageable membership size and could either be held in existing local authority meeting rooms or in the same building allocated for full Council meetings.

3.2 Issues and Choices

3.2.1 In selecting the venue both 'internal' (Councils' owned) and external venues were considered. After due consideration of options presented, the four leaders of NCC, NBC, SNC and DDC all had a preference for County Hall that best meet the needs of the full council meetings.

3.2.2 With some modifications, County Hall will allow for a maximum capacity of 110 people. An antechamber for observer overflow will also be available with video live-streaming of the meeting should this be required for each meeting.

3.2.3 At present it is believed that the existing County Hall audio video (AV) system, supplemented with equipment from other Northamptonshire Authorities if required, will be sufficient to meet the needs of the Shadow Council meetings.

3.2.4 In terms of webcasting, paperless meetings and electronic voting, the four Leaders preference was that this was not required at this stage but will be a future decision for the Shadow Council once elected.

3.2.5 In regard to the Executive Committee meetings (these in effect hold the same status as a Cabinet in a Shadow Council), the preference agreed at the workshop was that they would rotate between each of the main local authority buildings in West Northamptonshire:

- Lodge Road, Daventry
- The Guildhall, Northampton
- The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester
- One Angel Square, Northampton

For the purposes of rotation the Northampton buildings will count as one.

There will also be a number of other committee meetings held by West Northants Shadow Council (e.g. Overview and Scrutiny, Standards Committee) and it was felt that as with the Executive Committee these would make use of existing committee rooms in each of the four buildings detailed in 3.2.5

- 3.2.6 It was also noted a members' room and office(s) should be available in each of the main council buildings for the new Shadow Council.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 There are no policy considerations.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 Costs are still being evaluated although overall they are expected to be minimal. Once assessed they will be reflected in status updates to the Budget Monitoring Reports.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 There are no legal considerations.

4.4 Equality and Health

- 4.4.1 County Hall, as a listed building, has made all reasonable modifications to enable disability access. However officers will ensure that should there be a need for any additional access arrangements that these are factored in before the first meeting in May 2020.

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