

Cllr Adil Sadygov NCC 2018-2019

“Reporting Back”

Dear Residents, Dear Colleagues, Dear Chairman, Dear Clerk,

The 2018 for County Council was an eventful year with its ups and downs, to keep the long story short, since I assume many people have followed the development at the County Council. It seems ages ago but in reality it was a year ago when cycle of our misfortunes has started. The year however is a painfully little time in the history of local government.

The Central Government sent in an independent professional, Max Caller CBE, to carry out an internal assessment into NCC and he produced a report, called Best Value Inspection.

The report has highlighted issues within the authority, linked mostly to governance and culture. The budget submitted for 2018/19 was found illegal by the NCC Auditors, then KPMG LLP, and it led to us finding ourselves with an immediate £64m gap in the budget. The budget gap was set to rise month-on-month so the Council has reacted. Newly-elected members in co-operation with long-standing councillors have re-elected the new Leader and in March 2018 the new Cabinet has been approved.

The government has appointed two commissioners to oversee the authority and the new leader, Cllr Matt Golby, with support of his fresh Cabinet and the committed backbenchers carried out series of changes within the NCC to improve the decision making process and culture.

Few months ago the government has appointed yet another commissioners to oversee Children Service department and he is paid by Department for Education.

The Council at the Full Council meeting of September 2018 has supported a decision to radically transform our Scrutiny Committee system and agreed for five existing scrutiny committees to be replaced by a single committee to focus primarily on the budget and recovery plan. The health scrutiny function would continue as a statutory requirement.

I became a member of this newly set up Overview & Scrutiny Committee and was involved in the series of day-to-day week-on-week meetings of working groups, residents meetings, stakeholder meetings and the meetings of Committee itself to try to find the solution to our financial situation and scrutinise plans set for 2019/20 and follow up years.

Today I can say that thanks to hard work of everyone involved inside and outside NCC we have managed to deliver a balanced budget for 2018/19 and have set a fresh budget for 2019/20 focused on an investment and development strategy. We would like to ensure that mistakes of the past never repeated ad

I cannot deny that due to the gigantic cuts within the authority to ensure the budget is balanced, we have sadly saw reduction within some front-line services, notably the bus service, libraries, trading standards and the gritting of roads. Backbenchers were very vocal to both the Leadership and the Commissioners on the need to keep the frontline services untouched and the amounts saved due to these cuts were a drop in the ocean in contrast of overspent budgets of statutory services, like Children's and Adult's.

Nevertheless, at the time, we sought help and support from the government and with the Local Government Settlement and their one-off permission for NCC to use the money allocated for transformation, we have managed to drop the gap fro £64m to abound £1.4m.

We are setting the budget for the following year and accounting for a return of Gritting Service to the level it was delivered in the past and further support to Libraries which cannot sustain themselves under Community Management structure.

The big thing for Northamptonshire now, is metamorphose into UNITARY AUTHORITY.

Local Government reform is on the agenda of Ministry for Communities and Local Government. Leaders and CEO of all District and Borough councils have been running fortnightly meetings for months now. All members have been in contact with their Parish and Town councils, keeping them in the loop of changes coming their way.

The new structure would see 2 Unitary Authorities:

- West Northamptonshire, comprising the current area of Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire;

and

- North Northamptonshire, comprising the current areas of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough.

West Northamptonshire unitary authority would cover approximately 402,000 people and North Northamptonshire would serve about 343,000 people.

It is an extremely difficult process involving numerous stakeholders, councillors, leaders, cabinets, CEOs, officers, partner-organisations, etc...

We are due to hear more soon but the current deadline is set for 2020, so the NCC has a lifespan left of less than a year. As the formal confirmation comes through from the Secretary of State – I will update you all further.

In a nutshell this is a summary of 2018-2019 events at NCC.

If you have got any questions or would like to make specific enquiries – please contact me on:

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you can also follow updates through my Cllr Blog:

<https://cllradilsadygov.wordpress.com/>

With regards,
Councillor Adil Sadygov

Towcester & Roade division (NCC)
Grange Park ward (SNC)