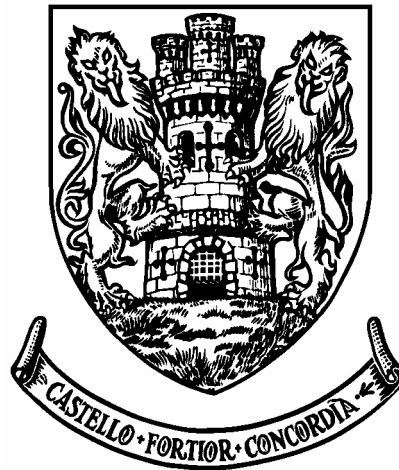


NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Proceedings of the Council Meeting held on 9th, 16th and 19th May 2005, and the Executive and Committee Meetings of the Council held during the March/April/May cycle

M.McLEAN Chief Executive

Index of Committees

	Page No.
Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6	917 - 922
Overview & Scrutiny Committee 5	923 - 932
Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1	933 - 935
Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2	936
Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	937 - 940
Planning Committee	941 - 953
Overview & Scrutiny Committee 4	954 - 957
Minutes of meeting Monday, 23 May 2005 of Executive	958 - 968

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 3 March 2005

PRESENT: Councillors: S Beardsworth (Chair); Councillor L Mason (Deputy Chair);
 Councillors: D Acock, Caswell, Crane, Evans, Markham and Yates and
 co-optees: A Timson, H Genus

Attendees

Maureen Hunter	Head of Overview and Scrutiny
Tracy Feltham	Scrutiny Officer
Christine Stevenson	Corporate Manager
David Wardle	Options Appraisal Manager
Sarah Bellis	Tenant Participation Manager
Steve Pointer	Team Leader (Planning)
Councillor D Palethorpe	Portfolio Holder

Local Residents

Ms M Hindson, Ms S Chambers, Mr C Swinn, Mr N Adams and Mr P Marsh.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor J Robinson. Mr S Winder.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the joint meeting with Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 4 January 2005 and the meeting held on 13 January 2005 were signed by the Chair.

The Chair introduced S Pointer who provided an update following the joint call- in on the Executive decision of 6 December on Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance. Scrutiny recommendations as a result of this call-in had been accepted by the Executive. As the Executive had been unable to demand contributions from developers on sites smaller than the 15 threshold, it not being in the Local Development Framework, Scrutiny had recommended obtaining GOEM advice on changing the LDF. The Leader had written to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) asking their advice on how NBC could negotiate contributions on small sites (fewer than the 15 threshold) for affordable housing.

The core strategy was currently being prepared and would be presented to the Executive in June/July for consultation in August/September. It was anticipated that the Inquiry would take place during the first half of 2006, (a period of 4-5 months had been allowed for reflection on the consultation). The document, however, would be published within six months.

Affordable housing was a key issue for the town and the threshold of 15 dwellings would be re-evaluated. Investigations were taking place how commuted sums could be acquired on

sites below the threshold.

A Local Development Document steering group involves councillors who are also Scrutiny members, but this committee will want to see, at least the policy, if not the whole development document, to ensure the recommendations made are implemented.

The Chair emphasised that affordable housing was needed for the town, in particular, for young people wanting to join the housing ladder. She reminded the officer that the call-in recommendation was for inclusion in the LDF document within 6 months, not 2006. That Scrutiny had recommended a letter to GOEM as to how to effect this. Although the officer was able to confirm that commutable sums could be negotiated below the 5 dwelling threshold, it remained unclear as to whether the scrutiny recommendation had been addressed. The Chair instructed that the question be posed to the Executive.

RESOLVED

1. The Local Development steering group policy document is brought to this committee for scrutiny prior to being submitted to the Executive.
2. That the Executive be requested to explain implementation of the accepted recommendations.
3. That the Executive is asked whether following the letter to GOEM, the LDF could now be amended to include commutable sums below the threshold.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Mr C Swinn, Mr N Adams and Mr P Marsh for item 5.

5. HOUSING OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Mr C Swinn explained his concerns that not all tenants had received all of the consultation literature. He referred to the Housing Scrutiny Committee held on 4 November, where officers had agreed to consider the Housing Options Appraisal information produced by Bolsover Council when considering improvement for NBC. He commented on the poor content of information about Housing Options Appraisal on NBC website and he raised concern about the suspension of the Customer Panel and the constitution of the Focus Group.

Mr N Adams concurred with Mr Swinn's comments that many residents had either received little or no consultation material. He was concerned about the low return from the first leaflet issued by Birmingham Cooperative Housing Services (BCHS) – 1,000 leaflets distributed and only 67 received back. He was worried there would also be a low return for the second stage of the consultation because NBC was aiming for a 14% return. He was concerned that NBC was aiming for the lowest acceptable figure.

Mr P Marsh commented that as an ex-member of the Customer Panel and a member of

groups such as the Sheltered Housing Sub Group and the Project Team he had several concerns. He was worried about the second stage of the consultation – ‘door knocking’, the amount of time being spent, and he did not have confidence in the effective management of the process.

The Chair advised that the whole point of the consultation was to reach as many people as possible.

The role for Scrutiny at this meeting was to satisfy itself that NBC was doing everything possible to consult with its 12,800 tenants and leaseholders.

It was understood that residents in sheltered accommodation were not being targeted in stage two, as a good response had already been received from this group of residents.

The Committee discussed issues of concern regarding the Housing Options Appraisal:

- The extended consultation would be likely to knock on the door of tenants that had already responded to the first consultation and whether this aspect had been addressed
- It was possible that many elderly people that had already responded were those not living in sheltered accommodation, and their views could differ from those living in sheltered accommodation.
- Whether the consultants were visiting singly or in pairs.

David Wardle, Options Appraisal Manager responded that the Independent Tenant Advisers had been engaged on a separate contract to carry out this stage. A team of 7 field workers and a team leader were door knocking individually. They had been advised of the need for 1000 responses, which could be achieved more effectively by door and phone, than by post. The consultation was being conducted on the same basis as the original, giving 4 options, and then the result would be added to the first consultation results. GOEM had pointed out the areas of deficiency.

- Although all tenants had been mailshotted originally, some came to meetings and said they had not received a questionnaire. Some members of the Tenant Panel had not been comfortable that the letter about this next stage was not going to every tenant
- Whether the consultation would end when 1000 responses were collected and whether doing the consultation between two dates, getting as many responses as possible, would be preferable.

David Wardle responded that the letter was going to named tenants from the council database and that 1000 responses were being sought on advice from GOEM. Once received, the consultation would stop.

- The disappointingly low response from the original consultation and the difficulty of getting tenants to take part. The use of questionnaires, pre-paid reply envelopes, prize draw, press, radio etc could not ensure responses as this was up to tenants.
- Whether this new stage would access fresh responses from those not previously responding.
- The evidence that some persons had already responded more than once at different

- events and whether this could keep on occurring.
- Whether computer recording had been considered.
- Whether the first consultation had been considered adequate in the light of several people having now been consulted up to three times.

David Wardle responded that it was not possible to know whether previous respondents would be targeted again as the first consultation had been anonymous. Researchers would ask, but there was no way to eliminate previous respondents. Computer recording had not been considered important. The consultant had delivered the job according to the specification. He reminded councillors that this was not a ballot but a test of public opinion. It did not involve vote counting.

- Whether the consultant had considered means of ensuring representative samples for consultation, which might have avoided the skew in the first stage.
- Whether the 1,000 aimed for together with the 600 original responses, would satisfy GOEM.
- Whether it could be useful for Scrutiny to survey some tenants as to what they understood by the Options Appraisal, to gauge level of local understanding.

David Wardle pointed out that the survey had gone out to every tenant. GOEM had already expressed satisfaction with the numbers that would be achieved by the second consultation. He advised caution about conducting further consultation at this stage because of possible confusion.

- Whether the volume of questions might have put off some tenants from responding.
- Whether the way the survey was conducted could have led tenants to answer certain ways

David Wardle explained that the Option Appraisal had to be signed off by GOEM and has to show that it has been representative. The researchers followed an authorised script and there was no intention of leading. It would need to be said that some options could be delivered, and some could not, so there was always the possibility that this could be construed as bias.

He agreed the committee could have a copy of this script.

The consultation period would end on 18 March 2005 the Project Board and the Housing Investment Action Group will independently consider each option against the assessment criteria. . The Independent Tenant Advisor (ITA) analysis and findings would be reported to Full Council on 18 April when a decision on the Authority's preferred option would be made. Following this the council tenants and stakeholders would be advised of the preferred option and next steps.

Councillor Palethorpe, Portfolio Holder, emphasised that GOEM's concern was in relation to the response rate and not to the representation of the community consulted. He was confirmed his confidence that the best effort possible had been made to reach the 12,800 homes and was personally aware of many residents in his ward that had received the consultation material. He emphasised his unequivocal support for whatever the preferred option. Everyone involved was being as fair and transparent as possible making valiant efforts to obtain tenant responses.

The Chair suggested that it be ensured that the residents of Alliston Gardens, and flats of a similar design, receive all the consultation material. She acknowledged that the extended consultation exercise was acceptable to GOEM and expressed her hope that it would attract a reasonable response.

The committee was advised that the Customer Panel would begin meeting again on 7 February at 10.00am.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the committee receive further information on the progress of this second stage consultation.
- (2) That D Wardle ensure that the residents of Alliston Gardens, and flats of a similar design, receive all the consultation material.

7. FUTURE WORK PLAN

- The Committee discussed concern with difficulties experience when contacting Housing Services. E.g.
- telephone calls going unanswered
- the good response from some officers, but very poor from others
- Benefit claimants on Income Support noted on computer systems, but not acted on by Council Tax section.
- Various sections within the service not communicating with each other.
- A councillor's experience of telephoning from 9am but not obtaining a response to the call until late afternoon.
- The need for an effective telephone queuing system

Christine Stevenson, Corporate Manager, responded referring to the management review in NBC and that Housing and Housing Benefits would be brought together under the umbrella 'living in Northampton' and that this should bring improvements. The new One Stop Shop facility should enable information to be "pulled together" about a customer so that all of their queries could be answered at one point using the customer service standards contained in the Corporate Plan.

C Stevenson emphasised that:

- NBC was in the transitional authority stage and at the beginning of the root and branch review with the need to look at how we would move through the transitional stage to the new authority.
- The Housing Service and Housing Benefits now worked together and a draft service level agreement was in place, which could be submitted to the next meeting.
- Benefits already had a telephone queuing system and how telephone answering could be resourced was under investigation.
- The new document management system, with electronic access for all service areas would also help.

The committee expressed the need to know what steps were being taken to address fragmentation, determine timescales for improvement and complete the integration with the Housing Service. There was a need to examine where we are now and what we are aiming

for. It was agreed that a copy of the draft service level agreement would be circulated to committee.

Councillors were concerned that Northampton citizens had been very patient awaiting improvement and that they would not want to wait further through the transition period. Councillor Crake's experience should not be repeated for citizens and some improvement should be made now so that telephone calls are answered.

Councillor Evans queried the rate of payments on account to Housing Associations and referred to the obligation to make benefit payment within 14 days, as well as to interim payments to individuals. C Stevenson admitted this was not achieved in all cases and effectiveness was being monitored.

The committee agreed that Councillors Crake and Evans examine this aspect and bring information to a future meeting.

It was noted that Finance Scrutiny was in the process of a Benefits Review from the customer perspective and that this committee's concerns should be notified to Cllr Marriott for joint working where necessary.

A Timson offered to feed back information on the Housing Department's review of the feasibility of providing skips in car parks and housing estates so the committee can determine whether any useful contribution can be made to this work.

RESOLVED: That the following be discussed at the next meeting:-

1. Customer Focus and Response Times
2. Housing and Benefits draft Service Level Agreement
3. Payment on Account to Housing Associations and interim payments.

The meeting concluded at 7.42pm

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

**HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC PROTECTION OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 9 March 2005

PRESENT: Councillor Markham (Chair); Councillor McCutcheon (Deputy Chair);
Councillors B Eldred, P Flavell, J Lane, C Malpas, M Pritchard, B
Glynane (substituting for Councillor Allen) and R Church (substituting
for Councillor J Hollis)

Maureen Hunter	Head of Overview and Scrutiny
Tracy Feltham	Scrutiny Officer
Councillor J Lill	Portfolio Holder
Michelle Williamson	NDAS (Item 10)
Mark McDonnell	CASPAR Manager (item 10)
Pam Nock	Operations Manager
Paul Martin	Directorate Group Accountant
Mario Abela	Corporate Director
Councillor J Caswell	
Councillor B Hoare	
Mr C Mountjoy	Member of the public (item 8)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Allen and J Hollis.

2. MINUTES

After amendment concerning the transposition of the names of Cllrs Lane and Acock the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2005 were signed by the Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest.

Councillor Malpas referred to an email circulated by the Chair to committee members and the Head of Overview and Scrutiny, but omitting some committee members. The Chair explained that he had received correspondence by email from several committee members regarding wheelie bins. Cllr Pritchard had asked for this item on the next agenda and copied that email to the Deputy Chair.

Those councillors (Allen, Hollis and Pritchard) in contact, and the Deputy Chair as he had previously been copied into emails, were copied into the Chair's request to the Portfolio Holder for her attendance at the next meeting, so that they could be aware of action.

Those councillors not receiving the email were simply those that had not previously

corresponded with the chair on this issue. The apparent slight was regretted and Cllr Markham apologised for the unintentional omission. and his request for the Chair to the Committee that had not been sent to all Members. The Chair apologised for omitting some Committee Members, emphasising that it had not been intentional to leave out some Members.

4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Councillor B Hoare and Mr C Mountjoy addressed the Committee on item 8 – Expansion of the Wheelie Bin Scheme.

5. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY

The Review of the Harlestone Road Allotments report had been received by the Executive on 21 February 05 and all of Scrutiny recommendations had been accepted. The Chair commented that to date no written response with details of implementation and effect had been received from the Executive.

The Chair would ask the Executive to confirm a timetable for implementing the recommendations, of which some were long term and others short term, and would request that the agreed template for Executive responses to Scrutiny be used.

6. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S PRIORITIES

Councillor Markham referred to the circulated copy of Mr Halsey's letter about graffiti and Councillor Pritchard expressed concern that his contract was at an end. The Portfolio Holder commented that:

- The original contract had been for one year only
- NBC had extended the contract for an additional year.
- Work had been undertaken for NCC and others too.
- Short notice had been required in the contract.
- The notification letter had been written in Dec but not received until Feb.
- The Leader and Cllr Lill had met Mr Halsey to provide an explanation.
- Mr Halsey has received an apology for the short notice, and effect.

The portfolio holder assured the committee that:

Targets would be met (target 14 days, currently achieving less than 10)

Equipment was ordered and would go out on 1 April 05

Her understanding was that all would work and be effective.

The Committee discussed graffiti issues, making the following observations:

Cllr Pritchard reported ward graffiti daily and submitted relevant cards. Regarding garages in Lumbertubs, when phoning the relevant number was advised of a need to check whether NBC cleaned graffiti from garages, but promised call not returned. Often experienced lack of response.

- **The Portfolio holder agreed to check on this**

Local residents' groups have been asked to use graffiti removal kits and be filmed using

them. Councillors were concerned about possible risks and NBC responsibility.

- **The Portfolio holder assured the committee of flexibility and that residents' input was welcomed.**

Cllrs Glynane & McCutcheon raised the possibility of permitted graffiti – for example the Avon graffiti wall, and that at Brampton Valley Way.

- **The Portfolio holder confirmed this was under discussion with no outcome as yet.**

Cllrs Malpas and Markham remarked on the speed of graffiti removal but were concerned that this might be due to Mr Halsey.

- **The Portfolio holder acknowledged the good work and advised that the new arrangements would be reviewed in six months.**

Cllr Markham confirmed that the committee would monitor cost, effect, success improvement and achievement of KPIs and local indicators.

The committee requested the Portfolio Holder to respond to their queries about her priorities and progress with them:

- 5-year Strategic Plan for the Race Course, the use of the redundant part of the pavilion, and replacement bollards.
- Toilet Strategy – Progress on the provision of toilets at various community sites including Delapre Abbey, and the Park Strategy.
- Progress on integrated grounds and street scene work (multi-tasking)
- Garden Waste Collection Service progress report.
- Recycling facilities for flats and other such premises.

All to be provided to the next meeting of this committee.

The Portfolio Holder advised the committee of the Women's Forum request that the council have all its premises made breast-feeding friendly. The committee was happy to support this initiative and agreed to flag up the issue to Community Leadership committee and provide support in writing to the Executive for consideration of implementing this across the authority in line with our family friendly policies.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) The Committee to monitor the effects of changes to graffiti removal, with the portfolio holder's review after six months, then conducting independent research.
 - (2) That the Executive is requested to consider implementing the breast-feeding policy for all council premises.
 - (3) That the Portfolio holder is required to respond to the committee's concerns and to its examination of progress with her priorities.
 - (4) That the Chair's request for a response to the Harlestone Road Allotment review is submitted to the Executive in writing.

7. CHILD & VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny reminded the committee of its work on this policy. The policy had obtained support but some professional issues needed to be addressed. The Executive had approved the policy for use in Leisure Services and had agreed the need for

it to be adopted corporately after expertise was sought to make amendments and that relevant Scrutiny members should be involved in ensuring the policy was fit for purpose.

Leader of the Council Scrutiny Committee had chosen to monitor this policy in their examination of how policies became implemented corporately. The Executive had charged an officer with this project and comment was awaited from NCC, but there had been no progress.

There also appeared to be a similar policy in Housing Services. Councillor Allen, Chair of Leader of the Council Scrutiny Committee, was to inform the Executive of the two policies (leisure and housing) and request the implementation of one for the whole authority.

The Chair commented that last year the policy had been put in place quickly for Summer Schemes and suggested that the Executive be asked about the arrangements for this year's Schemes.

RESOLVED: That the Executive's response to Councillor Allen's Information and the Chair's query regarding summer Schemes are submitted to a future meeting.

8. EXPANSION OF THE WHEELIE BIN SCHEME

The Chair advised that when the scheme was rolled out, in particular to terraces with small front gardens, Members began to receive complaints, comments and objections. He referred to the Committee's report, '*Review of household recycling collection*' and its recommendations, which the officers had agreed to implement. He commented that if the recommendations had been implemented by officers, they would have resolved or avoided complaints. The Executive had accepted all of the recommendations and he requested a response from the Portfolio Holder as to which recommendations had been implemented and reasons for any that had not been implemented.

Mr Mountjoy addressed the Committee about concerns with the new scheme: -

- Objection to the fortnightly collection.
- No information leaflet prior to receipt of the bins.
- Bins delivered being strewn across pavements.
- A promise for a visit after a telephone complaint – not kept.
- No details of the evaluation of the pilot
- His view that the whole issue was a gross intrusion
- The need to leave bins at the front of the property, when previously rubbish has been collected from the rear of properties
- The apparent need to store bins in front gardens
- The possibility of collection from the back of properties, at the alley.

Councillor B Hoare then addressed the Committee commenting that:

- The end was not in question, the means to it, however, is.

- Ward councillors received lists of streets for roll-out of the scheme. Wheelie bins were delivered to some streets NOT on the list and were explained as having been added later, and would be surveyed.
- A need to know the criteria for inclusion and the costs of collection, as well as whether simply having a front garden was a qualification?
- The expansion and roll-out was actually having the effect of turning residents against recycling.

The Committee discussed:

- How the criteria for delivery and allocation was devised, whether councillors were notified of issues and how the survey was conducted and construed.
- Why the issued street listings had additions and why ward councillors weren't notified.
- Although an information leaflet was available, prior notification was again deficient. Why?
- Promises made to complainants, then no action. Whether the level of telephone complaints was higher than predicted.
- Why the evaluation survey did not include contact with ward councillors?
- If we have concluded bins can be stored in front gardens, whether consideration has been given to providing help in reducing ugliness. (modular systems for instance)
- Whether we have reached the limit of wheelie bin issue?
- Who decides distribution and how? Some tenancies had steps, some had side roads. (e.g. Standens Barn)
- Ward councillors being informed by email of leaflet issue then a less than effective distribution in all areas.
- Why there is no information on the small bin facility. The information only goes to complainants.
- Why annual calendars have not been issued to all households, as agreed.
- The list of committee recommendations, accepted by the Executive, being provided again to the portfolio holder to enable her to respond to the committee.
- The list of queries raised at this meeting being provided to the portfolio holder.

The Chair requested that the Portfolio Holder email the Committee a response to the following queries by Monday 14 March: -

- Criteria for the survey
- How many properties did not receive the initial leaflet stating when the bins would be delivered
- Progress on the annual calendars
- Why a Recycling Officer was not present at this meeting.

Mr Mountjoy added that one black bin was inadequate for his needs. The portfolio holder offered to provide an audit of his waste recycling and to investigate the possibility of collection from the rear alley.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Portfolio Holder emails a response to the above four queries to the Committee, Councillors Church and Glynane and Mr Mountjoy.

- (2) That an Officer contacts Mr Mountjoy regarding his wheelie bin queries, an audit and possible alley collection.
- (3) That the list of committee recommendations, accepted by the Executive, be provided again to the portfolio holder to enable her response to the committee.
- (4) That the list of queries raised by councillors be provided to the portfolio holder for consideration and response at the next meeting.

9. TREE POLICY WORKING GROUP

The Working Group had met and had begun to scope its review. The council only had a Tree Maintenance Policy so the Working Group was looking at a new policy.

RESOLVED: That further information is submitted to the next meeting.

10. PLACE FOR DRUGS IN OUR SOCIETY

The Chair reminded the committee of its aim to provide expert, evidenced information to aid future policy discussion for Northampton. Witnesses from the Drugs Action Team (DAT), Health Panel and expert professionals had been invited to contribute. He suggested that the Committee hear from experts in the drugs field on a range of information on current trends, types of drugs, effects on people and communities, and possibilities for dealing with issues for the future.

The following experts and professionals had been approached:

- Martin Barnes, Chief Executive, DrugScope, - willing to come to next scheduled meeting - 13 April. The organisation had carried out research into legalisation of drugs. It is generally opposed to the legalisation of drugs but does support Government radical reforms.
- Sue Whitaker, DAT able to attend 13 April meeting
- Dr Russell Newcombe, John Moore's University, Liverpool – unable to attend a meeting but will forward a written submission for the Committee's information.
- Sgt. Mark McDonnell, CASPAR and Michelle Williamson, Community Nurse, NDAS, both of who had agreed to attend this meeting.

Michelle Williamson, Community Nurse, NDAS, was welcomed and explained her role with those in trouble in relation to drugs and rehabilitation attendance. She had four years experience as general nurse in the prison service and had seen different approaches to the problem. Her current post as Community Nurse dealt with drug offenders referred through the Probation Service and concerned people committing acquisitive crime to fund drug habits.

She explained Drug Testing Orders and emphasised they were not an easy option in preference to a custodial sentence. An Order was from a period of six months to three years. It looked at how to treat the client, keeping them off drugs and installing a whole new

life style package. Clients were assessed for their suitability for community detox treatment (e.g. methadone treatment and blocking effects on opiate receptor sites). Residential detoxing was difficult due to funding issues and ensuring the client's attendance. Psychologists would assess the clients; many had a history of being around drugs, for example, parents, friends, close family being users and the client might have been using cannabis and alcohol from an early age. Often drug use was due to peer pressure.

The NDAS primary concern was heroin use and occasionally crack cocaine, but mainly opiate offences. They also received referrals from clients using recreation drugs, such as, cannabis and ecstasy. NDAS did not deal with alcohol abusers. The unit ensured prescribing continued with the detox programme. There were residential possibilities but funding was an issue. A new Order due to come into place in April 2005, would have a wider remit, including alcohol.

Michelle answered many questions covering:

NDAS could not enforce rehabilitation attendance. It was the client's decision to attend rehabilitation; however, a Drug Testing Order could be enforced. NDAS worked closely with the Probation Service and Magistrates would deal with breaches of attendance through the legal system.

Many drug users give a history of having been around drugs before starting themselves. E.g. parents, siblings or peers who deal or use. Often starting with cannabis or drinking at an early age with social circle and peer pressure to progress.

Users can begin as recreational users and progress. Heroin is more addictive than ecstasy and cannabis; the psychological addiction being worst. Those dabbling in heroin will usually become addicted.

Smoking heroin uses 70% of the bag bought.
Injecting heroin uses 100% of the bag bought.

People from all social backgrounds and in all walks of life can become users and it is hard to pinpoint reasons. There are two types of users and offenders:

Offending drug-users - offending because they need to fund their habit
Drug-using offenders - who have the means and use drugs because they can. These usually have a good income.
NDAS work is with the offending drug-users.

In Kettering and Corby there were specific types:

- Those living on council estates where the whole social scene is drug use and there is great deprivation.
- They type of person is not socially exclusive – it depends on exposure.
- We can go to schools and look at offending behaviour and see 14 year olds in middle class schools exposed to drug use.
- In inner cities we can find the same.
- Both situations will talk of parents injecting in front of them.

An offending drug-user can be imprisoned or can be given this programme.

NDAS had a good retention rate and also deals with offenders coming out of prison. It has a completion target of 35% (currently 135 offenders) and was currently on target. Completion entailed reaching the end of the Drug Testing Order without going back to prison. This does not mean they do not re-offend or come off drugs. Not all clients finished the treatment completely.

The social background of drug users was difficult to pinpoint. There were in the main two types of users and offenders: -

- Drug using offenders – Offending because they did not have the means to fund the habit
- Offending drug users – Usually had a good income. NDAS did not generally deal with these.

Drug users were not socially exclusive, often dependent on exposure.

For at least 22 years, Northampton has had a drug problem.

The committee welcomed Sergeant Mark McDonnell, CASPAR Manager, for the Semilong and Spring Boroughs CASPAR 3 Project. Mark offered to comment on the CASPAR 1 project on Blackthorn and the relationship with drugs and alcohol in the CASPAR projects. The first CASPAR initiative had been set up in Blackthorn as the burglary rate had been eight times the national average so it tried to reduce burglary. Research had identified ten individuals committed responsible for 70% of detected burglaries, all known to each other, all living in the area and all drug users.

Spring Boroughs got a CASPAR project because there was a known vice problem. In 2001 there had been a change to drugs and therefore the behaviour of women sex workers so it became very visible. Before 2001 there was little crack cocaine, after 2001 there was an influx of crack cocaine. The difference of crack cocaine compared to heroin is about behaviour.

Heroin is a depressant and users chill out and stock supplies and control take up. Crack cocaine is a stimulant. There is an incredible high for 20 minutes, then an incredible low needing another hit, so there are hits every hour, needing prostitutes on the street more.

Street prostitution in the area involves around 220 women with an established £200 per day habit. Street prostitution in the area involves around 220 women with an established £200 per day habit. Some prostitutes are multiple drug users taking crack cocaine to get the courage to work. They work until they cannot go on then take heroin to sleep. Sellers sell a mixed bag so users now take them at the same time and get twice the high or twice the low, or both at the same time!

With crack cocaine there tends to be a binge and an inability to control usage. Crack cocaine is taken until there is no more left. Users can go 3 weeks without any but it is mentally addictive, as with smoking, so has the same problem as smoking to come off it. There is no medical treatment for crack cocaine usage but acupuncture has had some

success.

The SWAN Project tried to help women exit from prostitution and there had been a 50% reduction in prostitution over the past three years. Although 135 different women were cautioned for prostitution in Semilong streets there were no cautions for the tolerance zone at Grafton Industrial Estate at night. (So the figure of 220 in prostitution is correct). 90% of sex workers were willing to use the tolerance zone.

The Police had completed 'Operation Scorpion' – an under cover test drug purchase operation from July to October 2004. Three under cover Officers had purchased drugs (heroin and crack cocaine) from 90 different individuals. 42 had been arrested but this indicates the level of crime

It is difficult to assess the relationship to criminality. The SWAN project is specifically for women drug users as there are no male prostitutes in the CASPAR area. Research on the level of criminality of women shows that of 15 offenders, 10 were known for prostitution, for credit card and shoplifting, also burglaries and thefts from motor vehicles. There is a huge amount of violence.

There is the possibility people are committing low level crime to get into drug treatment as a DTO will get them treatment when simply presenting themselves wont. The police deal with prostitutes not by taking them for soliciting or loitering, as this brings only a financial penalty, but on anti-social behaviour as the breach can be subject to a DTO. Being on a DTO demands a higher level of commitment from the offender so if they fail they get sentenced for the original offence. After 2 or 3 breaches the DTO would be revoked and a custodial sentence given.

Police have equipment for immediate testing for contact with drugs. In tests trialled in pubs and clubs. As a condition of entry swabs were taken from customers that showed many had been in contact with drugs 40 minutes prior to entry. (mainly crack cocaine). Not many had wanted to take up treatment. However, 100% of sex workers wanted to take up the test and the offer of treatment. Most wanted to come off drugs due to the effect it was having on them and their families. Michelle added that the same applied for NDAS clients. During discussion Mark and Michelle confirmed that there were issues specific to alcohol abuse that were not related to drugs. Legalisation of alcohol seems not to decrease the crimes associated with over use. There is no evidence that the same would occur with drugs, but both have effects, both psychological and physical, on personality.

Of those in prison who are drug users, the reason for imprisonment is possibly more related to crime than drugs, as so much acquisitional crime is related to drug use. If the habit is £200 per day crack cocaine, the user is thinking of nothing else but the next fix. Other drugs allow users to maintain responsible jobs.

There are very few classic pimps. The issue is complex. Prostitutes are mainly financing someone else's drug habit as well as their own, or funding a drug dealer who insists purchase is solely through him. Many pimps became drug dealers. They come from Birmingham and Coventry etc, and it is an international trade.

The CASPAR Project had been very successful in reducing vice crime within present

legislation.

Mark suggested that Ray Campbell, Northants Police, and a representative from CAN might make a useful contribution to the Committee's future debate.

Michelle Williamson and Mark McDonnell were thanked for their useful and informative contribution to this research and for giving up an evening to attend the committee.

The Chair suggested that the committee continue to gather information relating to drugs and crime over its next few meetings and evaluate findings. Cllr Glynane suggested including decriminalisation of prostitution too following the successful tolerance zone in Northampton but recognised there were severe doubts about the success of a similar experiment in Liverpool.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the Committee continue to gather information over its next few meetings and evaluate findings.
 - (2) That the Committee hear from Martin Barnes, Chief Executive, DrugScope and Sue Whitaker, DAT, at its next meeting.
 - (3) That Ray Campbell, Northants Police, and the director, CAN, be invited to address a future meeting.
 - (4) That more information is gathered about finance and housing.

11. FUTURE WORK PLAN

Next meeting:-

- Drugs and crime in our Society
- Tree Policy Working Group
- The next phase of the Neighbourhood Wardens project
- Portfolio Holder's response to requests regarding listed items.

The meeting concluded at 8.50pm

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND GENERAL PURPOSES
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 29 March 2005

PRESENT: Councillor Christopher Malpas (Deputy Chair – in the Chair); Councillors John Caswell, Richard Church, Penny Flavell, Brian Hoare, Anjona Roy and Tony Woods (substituting for Councillor Marion Allen)

Maureen Hunter Head of Overview & Scrutiny
Tracy Feltham Scrutiny Officer
Simone Wade Head of Organisational Development and Improvement (item 8)

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Allen.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2005 were circulated and would be submitted to the next meeting for approval. It was noted that Councillor P Flavell should be included to the list of apologies.

3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

5. SCRUTINY PROCESS IN NEW POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny referred to the Political Structure Review meetings. The first of which had looked at the Executive structure. The second regarding Overview and Scrutiny had taken place on 23 March 2005. Councillors had agreed the need for a sufficient number of Scrutiny Committees, ranging from three to six, either matching Executive Portfolios, management structure or a mix of both and the need for a co-ordinating Committee.

The meeting set for 30 March would discuss the role of Full Council, Area Partnerships and Forums then the 4th and final meeting would look at the outcomes in readiness for presentation at Annual Council. If agreed, it was likely there would be a review again in November.

The Political Review meeting had included:

- The roles of Overview and Scrutiny
- Current difficulties
- Structure of Scrutiny
- Roles of Scrutiny
- Need for parity of esteem for Scrutiny
- Right level of Scrutiny Support, such as Scrutiny Officers, secondment, Member/Officer training.

The committee commented that the Member/Officer training scheduled for the summer should include training for Officers to understand Scrutiny's needs.

It had been agreed that the notes of the Political Structure Review meetings would be sent to all Councillors to ensure understanding of progress.

6. CORPORATE POLICIES

A full discussion had been held at the previous meeting with Clive Thomas, Corporate Director, who had committed to attend this meeting. The committee expressed concern at the absence of the Corporate Director and requested a letter to the Chief Executive expressing concerns.

RESOLVED: That the Deputy Chair write to the Chief Executive (copy to the Leader) expressing concern at the unexplained non-attendance of the Corporate Director.

7. SICKNESS AND ABSENCE MONITORING

The committee was further concerned that the officer requirement to attend for this item had not been met and agreed that this also be included in the Chair's letter to the Chief Executive (as detailed in item 6).

RESOLVED: That this absence be included in the Chair's letter to the Chief Executive (as detailed in item 6).

8. CORPORATE PLAN

Simone Wade, Head of Organisational Development & Improvement, explained that there had been insufficient time for the Corporate Plan to be examined by Scrutiny prior to submission for approval.

The Government Monitoring Board (GMB), whose timetable had been the main driver for the completion of the Corporate Plan, was happy with the current format and Pat Coleman, ODPM, had had extensive input.

Simone described the content and style of the Plan which had been drawn up after much consultation, including open sessions for councillors and a mapping exercise for the vision, values, behaviours and actions.

What is expected of councillors and officers, how we will treat customers and how we will work with partners are key elements of the Plan.

Executive approval on 14 March had given the Leader and Chief Executive delegated powers to implement any changes at either the Recovery Board or GMB meetings. Finally, the Plan would be submitted to Council on 18 April for approval.

Some initial concerns were:

- It appeared to be a 'given' rather than a 'developed' plan and it was important that the Council had ownership of it.
- Some targets were set beyond the life of the first version (one year).
- The need to be formally reviewed annually.

- The need for flexibility so that the Plan could be changed.
- The need for a specific public consultation during the summer.
- Approval of the inclusion of all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which could be monitored by the Executive and Scrutiny.
- The limitation of consultation with partners via the Local Strategic Partnership (which included the Voluntary Sector) but recognition of time constraints.
- That future Corporate Plans should contain less history and more details of forward planning with the council's vision more clearly stated.

Councillor Roy expressed concern about the duplication of information in the Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan and queried the need for both. Simone explained that only Key PI s were contained within the corporate plan but agreed that close cohesion was essential.

9. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

- CPA Self Assessment (analysis to provide recommendations)
- Corporate Policies Clive Thomas to report on action
- Grosvenor/Greyfriars Councillor Hadland to advise
- Sickness & Absence Monitoring (development and effect) J Jackson
- Best Value Performance Plan (development)
- Civil Contingencies Act (response to the new directions)

Councillor Malpas placed on record his thanks to Councillor Allen for chairing this Committee over the past 12 months and on behalf of the Committee wished her well.

The meeting concluded at 7.15pm

Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 31 March 2005

1. Apologies

Due to there not being a quorum, the meeting could not take place.

2. Minutes
3. Declarations Of Interest (Including Whipping Declarations)
4. Deputations / Public Addresses
5. Report From The Working Groups
6. Forum Minutes
7. Future Work
8. Exclusion Of Public And Press

The Chair moved that the Public and Press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that there was likely to be disclosure to them of such categories of exempt information as defined by Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 as listed against such items of business by reference to the appropriate paragraph of Schedule 12A to such Act.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND E- GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 5 April 2005

PRESENT: Councillor Lane (Deputy Chair in the Chair); Councillors J Duncan, M Hoare, R Matthews, M Pritchard, S Stewart and A Woods.

Maureen Hunter	Head of Overview and Scrutiny
Peter Parkes	Consultant (Change Team)
Debbie Ferguson	Community Safety Manager
Steve Elsey	Environmental Health Manager
Mario Abela	Director, Governing Northampton
Cllr L Tavener	Portfolio Holder
Trini Crake	Observer

1. APOLOGIES

Received from Councillors L Barron (Chair), D Edwards and from G Owen, General Manager, Parking and Security Operations.

2. MINUTES

The Deputy Chair signed the minutes of the 22 February meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

None.

5. CCTV

Councillor Tavener, portfolio holder, referred to the circulated draft strategic review of the options available to the council for CCTV for the next five years. The committee heard that the council's CPA made it impossible to enter into any contracts for private work and this had been confirmed by Nick Raynsford via Pat Coleman.

Discussions were underway with Wellingborough DC for the possibility of an arms length arrangement. The capacity constraints at St. John's and the lack of facility elsewhere, may mean expansion into some of the parking area.

Concerns were raised about a recent University of Leicester (UL) report that argued the ineffectiveness of CCTV (although 4,000 arrests in Northampton would seem to refute this) and the fear, should the Government heed this report, for reduced funding.

The committee discussed the options provided in the officer report and the possible impact of the UL report. At the request of the interim director, the officer report provided only the barest outline options and the committee expressed the view that it would need to be more

comprehensive in the final version for the Executive.

The cost of any expansion was broadly estimated at £100,000 and the area in question would only become available in October 05.

The committee felt it would be useful to examine the UL report to gauge the impact on Northampton's CCTV operation.

The portfolio holder requested Scrutiny input in the examination of the wider implications of the options, the possible impact and costs of any Wellingborough venture, the digital impact, possibility of increased input from the Police and it was expected that a final officer report would go to the Executive after Scrutiny examination.

The committee agreed to set up a small workgroup to examine the U of L report and agreed to invite Chief Inspector Sean Bell to a future meeting for the Police view.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That this committee to first examine the University of Leicester report for its range and implications, and then look in detail at the options for NBC's CCTV operation, including costs and achievability.
 - (2) That Cllrs M Hoare, R Matthews, J Duncan and J Lane agreed to examine the UL report.

6. IMPROVING SERVICES THROUGH E-GOVERNMENT

The committee welcomed Peter Parkes, Consultant (Change Team) who circulated an information report entitled 'Customer Focused Services'.

He explained that the focus on the IT website had been dropped, for focus on customer services. The Recovery Plan project on Customer Focused Services and the Root and Branch review, were brought together under Change Management. The aim is to give a better front-line service, linked with an efficient, tailor made, back office system, with one set of account information.

Previously, the project had been based on technical systems, which will be covered by the project board, but the main issue now is process management. Some issues have been:

- Lack of stakeholder input – no discussion with the public as to their needs
- Need to talk to excellent authorities
- Dialogue with Government bodies/Cabinet/IDeA
- Revs and Bens installing document management, but not 'joined-up'
- 4 years into e-gov and no significant progress.
- lack of in-house capacity for project management and change management.
- ODPM drivers for IEG/5 -----extent of consultation
-----extent of partnerships
- currently devising a consultation process
- assessing efficiency savings related to improved services
- assessing investment – to be reflected in CPA scores
- lack of Governance in Recovery Board, now addressed
- ITAG meetings set up
- e-vision, project plan for public access) both now in train
- CRM strategy)
- Availability of grants is being investigated

It is expected that the project will be completed in May with the results available in June.

Following the Root and Branch review the One Stop Shop programme will be revisited and the migration of Revs/Bens/Housing into the One Stop Shop will be accelerated. Attention will be given to meshing many tactical IT projects.

The portfolio holder expressed disappointment that councillors have not been enthusiastic about this project and she requested Scrutiny help in promoting the issue and its means of providing greatly enhance services.

We must achieve targets by 31 December 05 or risk losing funding and suffer the lack of improvement. The funding must aid in achieving efficiency savings and on enhance services. We have invested in software/hardware that is not mutually compatible as acquisition was driven by service need rather than a strategic approach.

The committee discussed such issues as Security (when working in partnership with other agencies). They reminded the officer that the Corporate Plan says much about internal Focus and councillors felt it needed bolstering – about what has been done.

It was felt that the ITAG delay should have been revealed in the Recovery Plan and the portfolio holder expressed his view that the project board should include a member of Scrutiny to challenge (and promote interest). Whilst the committee felt that customer focus is as much cultural change, as technical change, the portfolio holder emphasised that councillors needed to pressurise and Scrutiny help was required to do this. She gave the example of the great public response to the issue of wheelie bins last year: The Scrutiny recommendations for improvement and that the new phase made the same mistakes as last time.

Aspects of the project were discussed:

- Mystery shopping
- Action on complaints (to address causes)
- Need for more than 9 – 5, 5 days per week, access
- Poorly prepared out of hours telephone operatives
- The advantage of this presentation to political groups.

Cllr Woods offered to volunteer for the Customer Focused Services project board and to advise on Recovery Board reporting.

The portfolio holder commented on the Chief Executive's update at the recent Executive in which a One Stop Shop for councillor queries was announced. The lack of communication with the Councillor Reference Group, which is also working on this, was deplored.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Woods represent Scrutiny on the Customer Focused Services project board and report back to this committee on aspects needing support or attention and also to feedback on Recovery Board monitoring.

7. COMMUNITY WARDENS

Steve Elsey reported that Health and Environment Scrutiny was scheduled to receive a full report on this issue and that a verbal update would be provided at this meeting. A cross-party steering group needed input from this committee and would consider:

- Reviewing the existing pilot scheme
- Role of neighbourhood wardens

- Police input and CBOs; linking all wardens
- A two year scheme for town cover by police and n'hood wardens
- Filling police gaps with neighbourhood wardens and targeting hot spots
- Criteria for neighbourhood wardens, dealing with critical areas first.

Cllr Woods commented that neighbourhood wardens had made a difference in St. David's ward but the CBO had been removed raising the question of this being the result of an effective neighbourhood warden.

RESOLVED: That Councillors from this committee to attend the Health and Environment Scrutiny meeting for this issue and to consider joining the steering group.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER UNIT UPDATE

Information from L Owens, Anti Social Behaviour Unit manager, was circulated and Cllr Tavener expressed her concern about the effectiveness of Dispersal Orders, long-term solutions and the apparent lack of knowledge among the police.

The committee requested further statistics on a regular basis to monitor success and gauge effectiveness. It was suggested that some means be found to measure effect, as the lists of actions give no indication of results.

RESOLVED: That Debbie Ferguson ensure that a statistics paper is provided regularly to this committee with an indication of effects. The committee to notify the officer if attendance is required.

9. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

- a) Website – report of first few weeks of going live
- b) CCTV working party review of the University of Leicester report
- c) Championing Customer Focused Services (verbal report Cllr Woods)
- d) Review of year's work

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**PLANNING COMMITTEE****Wednesday, 27 April 2005**

PRESENT: Councillor Robinson (Chair); Councillor Flavell (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Crake, Edwards, Hoare, Malpas, Markham, Mason,
McCutcheon and Yates

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Evans.

2. MINUTES

Subject to the addition of Councillor Malpas' declaration of a personal, non-prejudicial interest regarding application N/2004/0955, the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That Mark Craddock and Councillor Woods be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2004/1812 – land at former Northampton Middle School and Green Oak Lower School, land off Bective Road.
 - (2) That Peter Springett be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0366 – land at junction of Bedford Road and Liliput Road.
 - (3) That Mr Symes be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0030 – St Andrews Street / Broad Street.
 - (4) That Kevin Stoney and Abass Hireso be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0245 – Arnold House, 56 Lorne Road.
 - (5) That Rod Kilsby be permitted to address the Committee regarding applications N/2005/0258 and 0259 (CA) – 18/20 Kingsley Road.
 - (6) That Mrs L Dockerty, David Doyle, Ms Allen and Mr Sayers be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0262 – Unit 1, Cranbrook Road, Kingsthorpe Hollow.
 - (7) That Alan Bodfish and Rod Kilsby be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0284 – 17 Reedhill.
 - (8) That Councillor Tavener be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0327 – 38A Main Road, Duston.
 - (9) That Mr B Ghaman be permitted to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0328 – 25 St Leonards Road.
 - (10) That Mr Howard, Kate Syree and Mr Stock be

permitted to address the Committee regarding applications N/2005/0332 and 0333 (LB) – 3 Gray Street.

4. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

RESOLVED: That the determination of the following item, which was considered by the Chair to be a matter of urgency because of the undue delay if consideration of it was delayed, be as follows:

(A) AFFORDABLE HOUSING

RESOLVED: That this item be considered in Private on the grounds that there was likely to be a disclosure to them of such categories of exempt information as defined by Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. LIST OF CURRENT APPEALS AND INQUIRIES

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a List of Current Appeals and Inquiries and elaborated thereon.

Members were informed of decisions reached by Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State regarding two applications:

- N/2004/0461 – Gough Lane, Main Road – Appeal allowed.
- N/2004/0203 – St James Retail Park – Appeal dismissed.

RESOLVED: That the List and report be noted

6. FRINGE AREA APPLICATIONS

There were none.

7. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL APPLICATIONS

There were none.

8. NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL APPLICATIONS

There were none.

9. PRINCIPAL ITEMS

(A) N/2004/1724 - 61-63 CHURCH WAY (OUTLINE APPLICATION)

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining the outline application for new access and siting for two building plots for bungalows at 61-63 Church Way, Weston Favell, and elaborated thereon, referring to the amendments to conditions 11 and 12, as contained in the Addendum, which was circulated at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved as shown in the Decision List attached.

(B) N/2004/1812 - LAND AT FORMER NORTHAMPTON MIDDLE SCHOOL AND GREEN OAK LOWER SCHOOL LAND OFF BECTIVE ROAD (OUTLINE APPLICATION)

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining the outline application for a residential development at land off Bective Road (part of former Northampton Middle School and Green Oaks Lower School site), and elaborated thereon, referring to the amendment of condition 7 and additions to the obligations to be secured by a legal agreement, as stated in the Addendum circulated at the meeting.

Mark Craddock addressed the Committee, expressing concern at the deterioration of the area since the closure of the two schools. He commented that the land should be used to provide better facilities for the existing community instead of being sold and therefore removed from community ownership, asserting that there was enough land to build a new school, community centre and have adequate playing fields for the local community.

He also expressed concern at the traffic implications of these proposals.

Councillor Woods addressed the Committee, as Ward councillor, commenting that nearby roads are too narrow to accommodate the extra traffic accessing the proposed entrance to the new school. He asserted that there should be a separate entrance and exit to accommodate school traffic.

He added that the current playing fields were regularly used by young people and that the proposals did not provide a suitable alternative.

RESOLVED: That the application be refused, contrary to officers' recommendations due to a lack of public open space, as shown in the Decision list attached.

(Councillors Edwards, Mason and McCutcheon each declared a personal interest, which each considered to be non-prejudicial, and so all remained to consider, discuss and vote on the above.)

(C) N/2005/0219 - LAND EAST OF UPTON WAY, SOUTH OF WALTER TULL WAY, WEST OF STORTON PITS

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining proposals for a residential, integrated Primary Care Trust Centre, open space and associated access road (outline application) at land east of Upton Way, south of Walter Tull Way and west of Storton's pits, and elaborated thereon, referring to the amendments to conditions 17 and 21 and the deletion of a contribution to public transport facilities which was to be secured by a legal agreement, as contained in the Addendum circulated at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved in principle subject to:

1. The prior finalisation of a legal agreement to secure:
 - Provision of 35% on-site affordable housing
 - Contribution to educational facilities
 - Provision of public open space and play equipment and its maintenance
2. The objections of the Environment Agency being addressed; and
3. Conditions as shown in the Decision List attached.

(D) N/2005/0356 - 2-10 THENFORD STREET (OUTLINE APPLICATION)

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining proposals for a residential development (outline application) at 2-10 Thenford Road, and elaborated thereon, referring to the amendment to condition 11, as contained in the Addendum, which was circulated at the meeting.

Members requested the addition of a further condition to ensure the retention of the façade of the original building.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved, as shown in the Decision List attached.

(E) N/2005/0366 - LAND AT JUNCTION OF BEDFORD ROAD AND LILIPUT ROAD, BRACKMILLS

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining the application for the development of industrial starter units, warehousing, lorry compound and workshops with associated offices and facilities at land at the junction of Bedford Road and Liliput Road, Brackmills, and elaborated thereon.

Peter Springett, representing English Partnerships, addressed the Committee, thanking officers for their work in this application. He reported that this application was one of a series of applications making up the brownfield initiative, developed in conjunction with Northampton Borough Council. He asserted that the proposals for this site fitted in with the surrounding infrastructure and provided an opportunity for the partner company to expand in a competitive industry.

RESOLVED: That a Members' site visit be arranged, as recommended.

10. SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted 15 reports, outlining various proposals, and elaborated thereon.

Mr Symes was not present when invited to address the Committee regarding application N/2005/0030 – St Andrews Street / Broad Street.

Kevin Stoney addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0245 – Arnold House, 56 Lorne Road. He expressed concern at the proposed operating hours of the proposed community centre, and the noise, traffic and parking implications that the proposals would raise.

Abass Hireso also addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0245. He assured the committee that users of the Centre would come and go with the utmost respect for neighbouring residents. He stated that he would be willing to adjust the proposed hours of operation to suit neighbours. He added that most clients would visit the Centre by bus or on foot, resulting in a minimal effect on traffic and parking. He also stated that the application had the support of the local MP.

Rod Kilsby addressed the Committee regarding applications N/2005/0258 and 0259 – 18/20 Kingsley Road, stating that the proposals were sympathetic to the existing building and respects the boundary with the neighbouring property. There would be no detrimental effects on neighbouring properties. He added that the facility provides high quality residential care and is used by Northamptonshire County Council's Social Services. Department.

Mrs L Dockerty addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0262 – Unit 1 Cranbrook Road, Kingsthorpe Hollow. She commented that Cranbrook Road had become more noisy and polluted in recent years and that local children had difficulty getting safely to nursery and school. Road humps and other traffic calming measures had not improved things; HGVs used the road regularly and people were double-parking, making the road much more congested. She added that she would like a ban on all future development in the area.

David Doyle also addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0262, questioning the accuracy of the details submitted in the application, specifically the details regarding the parking area. He commented that the area could accommodate only 5 or 6 vehicles, and there was insufficient turning room for lorries, so cars have to be moved to enable the delivery vehicles to leave the site.

Ms Allen addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0262. She stated that most of the company's business (trade counter, warehouse and storage) would be conducted inside, which would keep noise to a minimum. The proposals would reduce the unit's operating hours, most customers would be using trade vehicles, and it was anticipated that there would be 50-80 customers and approximately 15 deliveries per day. She added that there were 14 off-road parking spaces, and the change of use would benefit local residents.

Mr Sayers also addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0262, expressing concern at the level of objection to this application. He commented that the proposals would mean more private vehicles rather than commercial vehicles. Cars would be driven into the building and there would be enough spaces for parking. He requested that the application be approved.

Alan Bodfish addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0284 – 17 Reedhill. He commented that the drawing submitted for this application shows walls very different to those actually built. Photographs submitted with the application show properties over 2 miles away. He asserted that the wall is overbearing and intimidating, it has no security merits and near collisions had occurred because of restricted vision.

Rod Kilsby also addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0284 apologising, on behalf of his clients, for the amendments submitted. He commented

that he felt that the amendments enhanced the local area, and added that there had been no objections from the Highways Officers.

Councillor Tavener addressed the Committee, as Ward Councillor, regarding application N/2005/0327 – 38a Main Road, Duston. She commented that she supported the officers' recommendation, adding that the previous decision had been changed on appeal. She asserted that this was a good business in the wrong place and that there had been significant problems since the appeal had been upheld, including lack of rear access resulting in a large bin being placed on the pavement at the front to the building. She also stated that she had no confidence in the owners abiding by the conditions attached to any consent.

Mr B Ghaman addressed the Committee regarding application N/2005/0328 – 25 St Leonard's Road, commenting that there were several off-licences in the area, but no restaurants, so the area needed one. In light of planned developments in the Old Towcester Road and Ransome Road area, a restaurant in walking distance would be useful for new residents.

Kate Syree addressed the Committee regarding applications N/2005/0332 and 0333 (LB) – 3 Gray Street. She stated that she was afraid to sit in her garden after an incident that involved flying debris from the roof of the application site. She added that if the redevelopment was permitted, she would like the relevant windows of her house re-appointed. She was aware that redevelopment would result in more demand for parking, but felt it was necessary for something to be done with the former factory building.

Mr Stock also addressed the Committee regarding applications N/2005/0332 and 0333 (LB). He stated that, as the owner of the building, he wanted it to remain intact, but convincing a developer to take the project on was problematic. Regarding parking, he commented that there was a demand for parking when the factory was operational, so use by residents would make no difference. He added that the building was Listed and therefore needed protection.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That applications N/2004/1794, N/2005/0030, N/2005/0258, N/2005/0259, N/2005/0350, N/2005/0412, N/2005/0418 and N/2005/0422 be approved as shown in the Decision List attached.
 - (2) That application N/2005/0332 be approved in principle, subject to appropriate conditions, as identified by officers and a legal agreement to secure a contribution towards sustainable transport, contrary to officers' recommendations, as shown in the Decision List attached.
 - (3) That applications N/2005/0245, N/2005/0327, N/2005/0328 and N/2005/0346 be refused as shown in the Decision List attached.
 - (4) That application N/2005/0284 be refused, contrary to officers' recommendations due to the negative visual impact on the visual amenity and on the character of the area, as shown in the Decision List attached, and that the Chief Solicitor be authorised to instigate legal

- proceedings.
- (5) That application N/2005/0333 be delegated to officers as recommended.
 - (6) That application N/2005/0262 be deferred pending a Members' site visit.
 - (7) That the withdrawal of application N/2005/0248 be noted.

(The Chair declared a personal interest regarding applications N/2005/0258 and 0259 (CA), which he felt to be prejudicial and so left the room for the duration of the item. The Deputy Chair assumed the Chair for the duration of this item.)

(The Chair and Councillor B Hoare each declared a personal interest regarding application N/2005/0284, which neither considered to be prejudicial, and so remained and participated in the discussion and voting thereon.)

11. ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

(A) 38A MAIN ROAD, DUSTON

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining the situation regarding the non-compliance with the Breach of Condition Notice No 3/2003 at 'Taste of Spice', 38a Main Road, Duston, and elaborated thereon.

RESOLVED: That the Chief Solicitor be authorised to instigate prosecution proceedings should the non-compliance persist.

(B) UNIT 1 HORSLEY ROAD

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining the situation regarding the non-compliance with Enforcement Notice No 02/2004 at Unit 1 Horsley Road, and elaborated thereon.

RESOLVED: That the Chief Solicitor be authorised to instigate prosecution proceedings in respect of the non-compliance with Enforcement Notice No 02/2004.

12. OTHER REPORTS

(A) CHANGES OF USE OF BUILDINGS AND LAND - THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (USE CLASSES) ORDER 1987 (CIRCULAR 3/05)

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report detailing changes to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(B) CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE PLANNING CONTROL OF MEZZANINE AND OTHER INTERNAL FLOOR SPACE ADDITIONS

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report regarding the consultation paper on the Planning Control of Mezzanine and other internal floor space additions, and elaborated thereon.

RESOLVED: That a response based on the considerations outlined in the report submitted be forwarded to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as recommended.

(C) THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING TEMPORARY STOP NOTICE (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2005

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report outlining the Town and Country Planning (Temporary Stop Notice) (England) Regulations 2005 and elaborated thereon, advising that Full Council will need to consider delegating the power, rather than the Executive as stated in the report.

RESOLVED: (1) That the report and the provision of Temporary Stop notices be noted; and
(2) That Full Council considers granting delegated authority to the Corporate Directors or the Chief Solicitor to serve Temporary Stop Notices where a breach of planning control has occurred.

(D) DEED OF VARIATION TO S106 AGREEMENT AT FORMER ST CRISPINS HOSPITAL SITE

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report regarding the Deed of Variation to the Section 106 agreement at the former St Crispins Hospital site, and elaborated thereon.

RESOLVED: That a Deed of Variation to the original Section 106 agreement at the former St Crispins Hospital site be agreed, confirming that only a primary school is required, that the surplus land be retained by the developer and that this land will then fall within the terms of the original outline planning permission (97/0566) and the Section 106 agreement.

(E) HIGH HEDGES

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report informing Members of the details of Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, which gives local authorities in England and Wales new powers to deal with complaints regarding high hedges, and elaborated thereon.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(F) STREET NAMING: NEW ROAD OFF BLISWORTH CLOSE

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report informing Members of the naming of the new road off Blisworth Close as 'Braunston Close'.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

13. LISTS OF DELEGATED APPLICATIONS**(A) LIST OF DELEGATED APPLICATIONS APPROVED**

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a List of Delegated Applications Approved during the period 3 to 30 March 2005 for Members' information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(B) LIST OF DELEGATED APPLICATIONS REFUSED

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a List of Delegated Applications Refused during the period 3 to 30 March 2005 for Members' information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

14. LIST OF DEFERRED APPLICATIONS

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a List of Deferred Applications for Members' information.

Members were informed that the agreements regarding applications N/2004/1104 – Unit 2, former Manfield Shoe Factory and N/2004/1545 – 30/32 Kingsley Road had been completed.

RESOLVED: That the report and positions be noted.

15. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Chair moved that the Public and Press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that there was likely to be disclosure to them of such categories of exempt information as defined by Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 as listed against such items of business by reference to the appropriate paragraph of Schedule 12A to such Act.

The Motion was Carried.

16. MATTER OF URGENCY - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Further to discussions held at the last meeting, the Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration reported on a letter received regarding the development of part of the former Timken site.

RESOLVED: That, subject to estimates of affected affordable housing not being wildly different to the given estimate of 40-70, the Planning Committee will not seek retrospective application of the revised Affordable Housing policy.

APRIL PLANLIST

DEFER LIST APRIL 1

<TRAILER_SECTION>

The meeting concluded at 9:55 pm

PLANNING COMMITTEE

27 APRIL 2005

LIST OF DEFERRED APPLICATIONS DETAILED BELOW:

APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE

- | | |
|--|--|
| 98/0973
N/2001/788 | Construction of two bus lay-bys at Pavilion Drive
Demolish existing buildings and erection of 13no. duplex flats/apartments at 27-35 Craven Street |
| N/2001/1283 | Infill two storey extension between the happy gathering Chinese restaurant and eternity nightclub to create three restaurants at 137-151 Bridge Street |
| N/2002/296
N/2002/733 | Two storey extn to existing offices at Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd, Ryehill Close
Proposed extension of car park and removal of bank at Northampton General Hospital, Cliftonville |
| N/2002/1041
N/2002/1058
N/2002/1059
N/2002/1060 | C/U to hot food takeaway with ancillary seating area at 89 Kettering Road
Warehouse Class B8 (Plot 300) at Swan Valley
Office Class B1 (Plot 310) at Swan Valley
3 units for business, general industry or warehouse uses Classes B1C/B2/B8 (Plot 400) at Swan Valley |
| N/2002/1061 | 1 unit for business, general industry or warehouse uses Classes B1C/B2/B8 (Plot 420) at Swan Valley |
| N/2002/1062
N/2002/1063 | Warehouse Class B8 (510) at Swan Valley
1 unit for business, general industry or warehouse uses Classes B1C/B2/B8 (Plot 530) at Swan Valley |
| N/2002/1294
N/2002/1540
N/2002/1641 | Proposed drive-thru restaurant at land adjacent to B&Q Retail Warehouse, Towcester Road
Erection of 39 apartments above existing buildings at The Ridings Arcade, St Giles Street
Conversion and change of use from general industrial (Class B2) to 8 flats, Sunlight Works, Grafton Street |
| N/2003/195
N/2003/374
N/2003/524
N/2003/573
N/2003/727 | Change of use of rear ground floor to cafe/restaurant use Class A3, 137 Kettering Road
Conversion and change of use to 19 flats at 25-29 Robert Street
Conversion to residential development at Connaught House, 32 Connaught Street
Demolition of garage and erection of 12 flats at 1A Derby Road
Demolition of existing factory and construction of new residential block of 31no. flats and 8no. affordable housing units at 35-37 Talbot Road |
| N/2003/1188 | Residential redevelopment – Outline Application Land and buildings at Stimpson Avenue/Lea Road/Adnitt Road |
| N/2003/1286 | Residential development (flats and houses) - outline application at former Water Works rear of 73-89 Friars Avenue, Delapre |
| N/2003/1531 | C/U to residential care home (Class C2) for a maximum of eight residents at 8 Kingsthorpe Grove |
| N/2003/1588 | Renewal of outline planning permission for residential development ref: N/2003/323 at 544-548 Wellingborough Road |
| N/2004/200 | Comprehensive redevelopment to provide employment (B1 Use and B2 Use), housing, sports facilities and public open space – outline application at former British Timken site, Duston |
| N/2004/354
N/2004/495 | Repairs and Alterations at St John's Church, Bridge Street
Mixed use development comprising residential, recreation and employment uses, civic amenity site, bus depots, car parking, link road & associated development (outline application) at land west of Harvey Reeves Road |
| N/2004/510 | Residential, community facilities and associated development, access improvements and retention of operational railway line (outline application) at land off Ransome Road |
| N/2004/918 | C/U to restaurant (Class A3) with erection of rear extension and new front entrance at Vernon Hall, 156 Wellingborough Road (Mencap) |
| N/2004/1071 | Refurbishment of listed building including additional floors with new building adjacent providing 130No. residential flats, 2 flexible units, exhibition space and associated parking at 27-29 Guildhall Road |
| N/2004/1104 | C/U from an optician's (Class A1) to a champagne bar (Class A3) at Unit 2, former Manfield Shoe Factory, Wellingborough Road |
| N/2004/1115
N/2004/1117 | Extension to existing (vacant) D2 leisure unit at St James Retail Park, Towcester Road
Refurbishment of existing retail park including subdivision of unit 3 (courts) and extension of unit 5 (Allders) to create a new unit with reconfiguration of car parking and landscaping at St James Retail Park, Towcester Road |
| N/2004/1124 | Erection of new four/five storey block of apartments and conversion of existing buildings to residential units at Northern portion of former St Edmunds Hospital site, Wellingborough Road |
| N/2004/1294 | Internal and external alterations at Pony Club Stables, Delapre Abbey, London Road |

952

N/2004/1545 Change of use to residential/nursing care for the elderly as an extension to existing adjoining facility at 32 Kingsley Road at 30 Kingsley Road

PENDING AND DEFERRED

98/0957 Link road and alterations to cul-de-sac at Cob Drive, Swan Valley
N/2000/14 C/U to residential-phase one at 36-38 Milton Street, Kingsley
N/2000/15 C/U to residential-phase two at 36-38 Milton Street, Kingsley
N/2000/286 Business/industrial/storage at Pineham, South West District
N/2000/630 Business (class B1) and industrial (class B1/B2) development and wind tunnel together with associated access, parking, infrastructure and landscaping at land at Pineham
N/2000/1192 Redevelopment of existing buildings to form hotel, leisure and conference facilities, restaurant, bar together with ancillary retail areas at former St Crispins Hospital off Berrywood Road, Upton
N/2000/1193 Part demolition of main hospital at former St Crispin Hospital off Berrywood Road, Upton
N/2001/246 C/U from working mill to residential at Upton Mill, Upton
N/2001/247 C/U from working mill to residential at Upton Mill, Upton
N/2001/1112 Renewal of Outline Planning Approval 98/0680 - variation of conditions 2 and 3 of planning permission 95/0502 to allow an extension of time limit for approval of Reserved Matters development of B1, B2 and B8 use Classes land at Lilliput Road/Bedford Road
N/2002/171 Variation of condition 2 of Planning Permission 98/0393 to allow submission of Reserved Matters by 11/6/05 at Land off Wellingborough Road
N/2002/332 Variation of condition 2 and 3 of 98/0679 at land at Billing Park Great Billing
N/2002/638 Variation of cond no.4 of planning permission N/2000/516 to 163-165 Kettering Road
N/2002/1238 Renewal of outline planning permission for the erection of light industrial units (Class B1(C) at 174 St Andrews Road
N/2002/1676 Mixed employment uses at land at Pineham North
N/2003/1076 Residential development at former St Crispin Hospital site, Duston
N/2003/1209 Illuminated advertisements located on 19no. bus shelters at various site in Northampton
N/2003/1288 Demolition of factory and erection of 80no. apartments at Pearce Leather Works, Wellingborough Road
N/2003/1289 Demolition of factory and erection of new offices and residential apartments at Pearce Leather Works, Wellingborough Road
N/2003/1290 Forming of new access drive. Erection of garages, refurbishment of cottages and extn of the caretakers cottage at Caretakers & Engineers cottages, Pearce Leather Works, Wellingborough Road, Great Billing
N/2003/1291 Forming of new access drive, erection of garages, refurbishment of cottages and extn at Caretaker & Engineers cottages, Pearce Leather Works, Wellingborough Road, Great Billing
N/2004/265 Mixed use development, incorporating residential, community facilities, local leisure and retail centre, plus access arrangements at Bedford Road and Southbridge Road. – outline application at land at Nunn Mills and Avon Cosmetics
N/2004/530 Residential, retail and commercial leisure development, community facilities, open space, car parking, link road and associated development and access improvements - outline application at land at Sixfields, east of Upton Way south of Weedon Road and west of Storton's Pit
N/2004/1116 Erection of drive-through restaurant (Class A3) with associated car parking, access and landscaping, with reconfiguration and refurbishment of customer car park serving retail park - Outline Application at St James Retail Park, Towcester Road
N/2004/1200 C/U to care home and single storey side extns at 10 Repton Road
N/2004/1403 Residential development for 24 flats – outline application at 101-103 Berrywood Road
N/2004/1597 20 unit commercial dog boarding kennels at Broad Acres, Bedford Road, Little Houghton
N/2004/1715 Pursuant to outline planning permission 97/0732: A) Approval of all reserved matters for the erection of a warehouse unit for uses within Class A8; and B) Approval in relation to conditions 12 and 14 at Plot 400, Cob Drive, Swan Valley
N/2004/1718 Internal and external alterations and conversion to mixed use development of 9no. office units and 20 flats (Class C3) at former Angel Hotel, 21-23 Bridge Street
N/2004/1719 Internal and external alterations and conversion to mixed use development of offices (Class A2) and 20no. flats (Class C3) at former Angel Hotel, 21-34 Bridge Street
N/2005/144 Residential development of 103no. units at Area E. St Crispin Hospital site, Duston
N/2005/219 Residential integrated primary care trust centre at land east of Upton Way, south of Walter Tull Way, west of Storton Pits, Upton
N/2005/263 Erection of pair of semi-detached dwellings at land adjacent to 129 Malcolm Drive
N/2005/277 Erection of 20No. two bedroom flats at land rear of 81 Station Road, Great Billing
N/2005/285 Demolition of disused church and erection of 6No. houses (3no. semi-detached) at St Margaret's Gardens, Dallington
N/2005/332 Conversion of former factory into 8No. residential units at 3 Gray Street
N/2005/333 Conversion of former factory into 8No. residential units at 3 Gray Street

NEW APPLICATIONS:**953**

- N/2005/337 Erection of 7no. new flats at land south of Cattlemarket Road
N/2005/357 Extn and alts to existing residential care home at 25-33 Berrywood Road, Duston
N/2005/358 Detached dwelling, 3no, apartments, car parking and double garage at land adjacent to Lowood House, 52 The Avenue, Cliftonville
- N/2005/360 Demolition of existing factory and erection of 52no. residential units at 35-36 Talbot Road
N/2005/365 Demolition of school building and redevelopment for residential purposes at Old Military Road School, Military Road
- N/2005/368 Conversion of existing bedding factory to 10no. flats at 74-76 Overstone Road
N/2005/370 Residential development at Abington Vale Middle School at land off Brdiegwater Drive
N/2005/382 C/U to 6no. flats at 8 Talbot Road
N/2005/390 Demolition of existing building and construction of new school buildings at Kingsthorpe Community College Boughton Green Road
- N/2005/411 C/U to hot food takeaway (Class A3) at 203 Broadway East
N/2005/438 Erection of 160no. dwellings at Area G, Sr Crispins, Duston
N/2005/446 Proposed mix use development comprising 78no. apartments at land adjacent to Cotton End, Southbridge West
- N/2005/447 Conversion of existing factory into 10no. flats at 18 Henry Street
N/2005/450 Redevelopment of existing industrial unit at Salthouse Road, Brackmills Ind Est
N/2005/460 Conversion and extn of existing factory to create 12no. apartments at 20 Henry Street
N/2005/469 Change from 4 to 3 storey residential buildings at former St Crispins Hospital site, Duston
N/2005/473 Construction of 2no. detached houses at land adjoining 17 Favell Way
N/2005/477 C/U to coffee bar/internet outlet (Class A3) at 40 Barrack Road
N/2005/479 Construction of all weather surface to existing runway 03/21 with associated taxiway apron areas and earthworks at Sywell Aerodrome, Wellingborough Road, Sywell
- N/2005/494 C/U to Class A3 use as licensed premises with associated building works with 16 Sheep Street
- N/2005/497 Construction of a spine road from Main Road to Cotswold Avenue at former British Timken Works site, Duston
- N/2005/500 Conversion of factory to 19no. flats at 74-76 Overstone Road
N/2005/501 New house at rear of 18 Lady Winefrides Walk
N/2005/503 Household waste recycling centre at land off Harvey Reeves Road

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

Thursday, 17 February 2005

PRESENT: Councillor Marriott (Chair); Councillor Perkins (Deputy Chair);
Councillors J Caswell, Church, Markham, Robinson and Stewart

M Hunter Head of Overview and Scrutiny
A Foster Head of Corporate Procurement
Cllr T Woods Observing

1. APOLOGIES

Received from Councillor L Patterson.

2. MINUTES

Minutes of meeting on 6 December 2004 signed by Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

None.

5. RESPONSES FROM THE EXECUTIVE

None.

(i) Prudential Borrowing

The Chair noted the inclusion of this item at the request of Councillor Patterson, so that the committee could examine the council's use of this facility. Item deferred for the attendance of appropriate officer and Cllr Patterson.

6. REPORTS FROM WORK GROUPS

Reports from Committee work groups

(i) Recovery Plan - since, for this committee, this mainly concerns performance monitoring and the Plan is also being monitored by the Recovery Board, scrutiny by this committee for implementation and effect will be considered after the imminent away-day event.

(ii) **Costs/Benefits of Recovery Plan** – initial discussion with the lead officers has shown that consideration of this item is premature.

(iii) **Housing Benefits Review** – the Chair reported on the outcomes of working party meetings, the latest on 14 January 05. The scope of the review has been set – to collate information from the customer viewpoint and examine uses for improvement. The outline brief was circulated and a further meeting will be convened to consider research being collated by officers. A timetable for taking evidence from witnesses will be determined. Cllr Evans commented on the need to consider ‘payment on account’ within the review.

(iv) **Street Fair Review** – The Chair expressed concern at the lack of officer support in relation to requested information at two recent working party meetings. (2 Dec and 27 Jan). Information from a de-brief meeting had finally been received on 17 Feb 05. The present structural review and the likelihood of further difficulty in relation to officer response, was acknowledged.

The Chair reported on the remit and scope of the review – to assess the actual financial costs and compare with previous years, as well as an assessment of likely future costs, then to inform the Executive’s decision-making. Cllr Hadland acknowledged the need for the committee’s findings.

The next meeting set for 24 February at 1.30pm.

Value for Money – Consultants/Partnerships – this item to be covered under item 8(i), since the work had not yet begun.

7. FUTURE WORK

(i) **Consultants** Andrew Foster, Head of Corporate Procurement, circulated a document giving details of consultancy work initiated during 2004.

Page 1 referred to those consultants acquired using the exemption route. It was commented that during tendering the information was confidential, and remained so until agreed.

Page 2 referred to those consultancies subject to a formal tender process (above £50K).

Pages 3-4 referred to those under the council’s core business system for purchase orders. Some inclusions may not be consultancies.

Page 5 referred to other pieces of work involving areas of spend that may be for corporate consultancy.

Page 6 consisted of a summary of the financial totals (internally and externally funded).

The committee discussed:

- The possibility of some consultancy work being overlooked by being recorded under other categories.
- How to determine the specification for line by line items and how/who funded.
- The authorisation process
- Contract procedure rules
- The meaning of fixed contracts/open contracts
- Whether objectives are achieved and how this is monitored
- Justification of overspends
- How externally funded items can be identified

- How the use of Government sponsored consultancy is monitored for value and achievement
- Explanation of 'open order' notification

The Chair referred to item 7e and the intention to evaluate the use of consultants and that the issue could be broadened to include examination of the current data. Comparison with previous years' figures, extrapolation of figures relating to the council's Recovery Plan and estimation of reduction/effect in following year.

The committee commented on the possibility of a reduction since the restructure and that it should bring greater competencies

The portfolio holder commented on the leaner structure which may mean 'buying in' expertise when needed.

- RESOLVED:** (1) The committee agreed to continue the work at 7e and expand the review to include:
- a) Scrutiny of the consultancy data to evaluate costs/yearly comparison/economies and value for money.
 - b) Examination of criteria for using consultants, specification, achievements, monitoring and value for money.

The list of issues to be provided to relevant officers for comment before consideration by the working party (councillors Marriott, Perkins, Patterson, Robinson). Councillor Perkins to confirm the content of the list then scrutiny officers to advise of date of next meeting.

(ii) Audit Reporting The Chair reminded the committee of the previous agreement to receive Audit Reports and monitor recommendations. This committee to become the 'Audit Committee' for the council providing aid to the Executive in identifying problem areas and ensuring improvement.

Consortium Audit welcomed the approach as best practice and offered expert training to committee members in the role of an Audit Committee and where internal audit fits.

- RESOLVED:** (1) The committee agreed to undertake training of half a day with Consortium Audit identifying an appropriate trainer. Training to take place after the proposed political structures away day.
- (2) The recent Annual Audit Inspection letter to be on the next agenda.
 - (3) The committee also requested an update in relation to the issue regarding premia and accrual on trade refuse service, with Consortium Audit invited to next meeting.

(iii) Financial Diagnostic W Roots Councillor Perkins referred to the report commissioned in April 2004 and the need to monitor implementation of the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That Mario Abela, Corporate Director, and Ray Bowmer, Head of Financial Services, to be invited to the next meeting to comment on action in response to the report.

The Chair referred to the work of reviewing the Mears contract and the proposed visit to see the GVA system with Executive members. The visit to be arranged with appropriate officers.

The committee referred to the invitation from Alison Betts to take part in a member/officer review of the Corporate Capital process on 1 March 05 at 9.30 - 4.00pm at Sixfields. Councillors Caswell, Church, and Markham, who expressed interest, to contact Alison Betts if able to attend.

The meeting ended at 7.40pm

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE****Monday, 23 May 2005**

PRESENT: Councillor Larratt (Chair); Councillor Hadland (Deputy Chair); Councillors Caswell, Hill, Lane and J Lill

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor Palethorpe.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 4 April 2005 were signed by the Chair.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

- RESOLVED: (1) That Mrs S Attfield, Mrs S Riley, Mrs D McKintosh, L Martin, C Thurlow, Mrs Patel and Messrs Purdy, Smith, Beneworth and Davies and Councillors Mason, Pritchard, Boss and Glynane be granted leave to address the Executive in respect of item 14 "Skateboard Park Facility – Northampton East".
- (2) That Councillor Woods be granted leave to address the Executive in respect of item 10 "Car Price Increases Consultation", item 11 "Northampton Development Framework Local Development Scheme" and item 19 "Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Preparation of Development and Transportation Plans for West Northamptonshire".

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (1) Councillor Larratt declared an interest as a member of the UDC Board in respect of item 11 "Northampton Development Framework; Local Development Scheme" and item 19 "Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Preparation of Development and Transportation Plans for West Northamptonshire".
- (2) Councillor Larratt declared an interest as an employee of the Health and Safety Executive in respect of item 20 "Bus Station Fatality" and left the meeting during discussion of it.
- (3) Councillor Hill declared a prejudicial interest as a minor shareholder of Stagecoach in respect of item 20 "Bus Station Fatality" and left the meeting during discussion of it.
- (4) Councillor Hadland declared an interest as a trustee of the Northampton Theatres Trust in respect of item 24 "Former Blueberry Diner and Studio One, Swan Street, Northampton".

5. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

None.

6. RECOVERY PLAN

The Chief Executive welcomed Councillors Lane and Caswell to their first meeting of the Executive and to Councillors Woods and Glynane as the new Leader and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group. She also welcomed Zena Peatfield who would be working with the Director of Enabling Northampton on Housing Issues.

The Chief Executive thanked the staff for their work at the recent County Council and General Elections. She commented that the Housing Options Appraisal situation had taken up a lot of time and the decision to remove this item from the Council agenda on 16 May 2005 had not been taken lightly. The Police had now concluded that so far there had been no criminal activity however they would re-examine the situation in the light of the Council's own investigation. The Director for Governing Northampton was investigating how the situation had arisen and the Director for Living in Northampton was considering how the situation could be moved on. At the moment the 25 July deadline for the Council to determine its housing options remained in place.

In respect of the Root and Branch Review the first phase was reaching its conclusion with presentations being made to the Challenge Team. Veredus were working with the Challenge Team and seeking further information from the reviews as appropriate. A review of the process to date would be carried on 6 June at which time an overview of the Council's organisation would be put together. The Executive and Council would consider this before full consultation took place during the autumn.

There had been 139 applications for the posts of Corporate Manager and 40 had been longlisted. Earlier in the day a shortlisting exercise had taken place. It was noted that successful applicants probably wouldn't be able to start before September.

The new Councillor development programme had commenced the previous week and had been successful. The programme had been designed by and for Councillors with funding from the ODPM. This programme was being mirrored with a similar one for Senior Managers which would bring that peer group together. The first session had been held and had been about values and how our behaviour and actions indicated the Council's values. The second session would be about good practice. Whilst the Council was striving to achieve excellence, a picture of what excellence actually was needed to be drawn.

A review of the Council's relationship with the Government Monitoring Board was also taking place and a half day session had been arranged for 24 June to consider how the relationship would work in future.

The Chief Executive referred to a piece of art presented to the Council by Cyril Stephenson-Mole which it was hoped would be hung in the Jeffery Room.

RESOLVED That the Chief Executive's comments be noted.

7. REVENUE OUTTURN 2004/05 (FS)

Councillor Hadland reported that the Council's Revenue Outturn position for 2004/5 showed a 2% underspend on the General Fund and a 2.1% underspend on the Housing Revenue Account. He referred to the accounting treatment of the Trade Waste Service that had made change difficult but the Council's financial position had enabled this to be dealt with in the last financial year without the planned phased changes over the next ten years. The underspend had largely come from rolled over projects and he referred in particular to recommendation 4 of the report that set out a process for re-affirming or changing priorities as the Council's situation evolved.

The Head of Financial Strategy commented that Appendices E onwards referred to in the report would be presented to the Executive with the Statement of Accounts at the meeting scheduled for 24 June 2005.

- RESOLVED
- (1) That the draft outturn position for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account be noted.
 - (2) That the addition of £1,248,000 to General Fund Revenue Balances be noted and that £682,000 of that sum may be required to fund approved expenditure that was not completed in 2004/5 and that may now be completed in 2005/6.
 - (3) That the addition of £1,547,000 to the Housing Revenue Account balances be noted and that £876,000 of that sum might be required to fund approved expenditure that was not completed in 2004/5 and that would now be completed in 2005/6.
 - (4) That approval of the necessary supplementary estimates in 2005/6 be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder of Financial Strategy and Performance.

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN 2004/05 AND MONITORING 2005/06 - 2007/08 (FS)

The Head of Financial Strategy submitted a report that summarised the performance of the Capital Programme against Projects in 2004/5 and commented that whilst only variations in excess of £100,000 had been detailed in the report a separate document was available that showed all variations should members be interested.

Councillor Hadland noted that the Council's performance against programme was 83% for 2004/5.

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

9. COMMUNITY CENTRE CHARGES (HE)

The Community Development Manager submitted a report that sought to increase charges for regular and casual hirers of the community centres. It was noted that these charges had not increased over the last three years and that the new charges would still be well below that charged by competitors. The higher increases for weekends were aimed at better reflecting the staff costs of making these facilities available.

Councillor J Lill proposed some revisions to the proposed charges so that the weekend regular hirer rates for the main hall would be £7 rather than the proposed £10 and for the activity room would be £5.25 instead of the proposed £8.25 and for casual hirers the main hall children party rate would be £7.00 per hour rather than £10.00 per hour.

The Head of Financial Strategy commented that if these amended income charges did not meet the anticipated budget savings then expenditure on the service would have to be re-examined.

RESOLVED That the Community Centre Charges as amended be agreed and that a further report be prepared in respect of any

necessary savings in expenditure to achieve the anticipated budget savings.

10. CAR PARK PRICE INCREASES: CONSULTATION (PRT)

Councillor Woods referred to the call-in in respect of car parking pricing strategy some 18 months previously but the Council still did not have a strategy but had a pricing policy. He reminded the Executive that the call-in had called for consultation with users and businesses and that a strategy was needed. The Executive had previously agreed these recommendations.

The General Manager, Parking and Security Operations submitted a report in response to a previous request for further information on the consultation that had taken place in arriving at the car park price increases for 2004/5 previously agreed by the Executive. He commented that a survey used by Middlesbrough had been acquired however carrying it out would require some funding. He suggested that as there was an inter-dependence with the County Council that they and the Town Centre Partnership might if approached to consider contributing towards it. He also observed that the Council's charges were lower than elsewhere and broke the myth Northampton was an expensive place to park.

Councillor Hadland commented that whilst Milton Keynes, Oxford and Leicester in particular made higher charges, the offer that these centres presented was higher than that available in Northampton.

RESOLVED That the report be noted and that agreement be given to the development of car park pricing strategy, and that a costed proposal be submitted to the Executive in two months.

11. NORTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK; LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (PRT)

Councillor Woods commented that he had been on the Local Development Document Steering Group and referred in particular to page 4 of the Local Development Scheme document in respect of Joint Planned Preparation, noting that each Council was to have three Councillors representation. He commented that in his view that the Council should have cross party representation and that the Leader of the Council as a UDC Board Member should not be one of those Councillors.

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report and commented that the scheme now had been submitted to and accepted by the Government Office for the East Midlands and the Council was now required to bring it into effect. The timetable set out in the scheme would be used to judge the Council's performance.

RESOLVED That the Local Development Scheme attached as Appendix A of the report be brought into effect.

12. POST OFFICE, ST GILES STREET; FRANCHISE OF BRANCH (CL)

The Chief Executive referred to a letter received from the Post Office dated 12 April 2005 which had commented that they intended to proceed with the franchising of the Main Post Office. Councillor Hill proposed that answers to further questions should be sought from the Post Office viz:

- (1) What other towns of a similar size had the Post Office taken similar steps and what were the views of those Councils concerned?
- (2) What was the length of the franchise on offer?
- (3) To whom would the Council raise any concerns in future should they arise?

Councillor Larratt also welcomed the application to seek the listing of the building as a Building of Special Architectural or Historical Interest.

RESOLVED That the correspondence be noted and that the Chief Executive pursue the points raised by Councillor Hill.

13. CPA REASSESSMENT TIMETABLE (LC)

The Chief Executive referred to the timetable submitted with the agenda and commented that a draft report had not been received by the Council that day. The reassessment experience had seemed positive. The Executive members and Scrutiny Chairs would get an opportunity to comment on the report. It was believed that the report would indicate that the Council made some progress but that a lot remained to be done.

RESOLVED That the position was noted.

14. SKATEBOARD PARK FACILITY- NORTHAMPTON EAST (CSE)

Councillor Larratt stated that as Chairman of the meeting he agreed to accept this item as a Matter of Urgency being satisfied that it was urgent because a decision was required to enable the Skateboard Park Contract to be let in time for the commencement of the summer holidays.

Councillor Lane commented that as a Councillor for an adjoining ward, Ecton Brook, he felt a decision needed to be made by the Executive at this meeting. The proposals had received a great deal of support and there had been general agreement of need. He referred to the presentation made by young people to the Council when the Radlands facility had closed and that it was now time to get on and provide the promised facility. He also referred to the success of the skateboard park at Briar Hill.

Councillor Boss commented that a proposal to provide a skateboard facility had been around for some time. His Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been asked to examine the consultation process which had been found to be comprehensive. He acknowledged that the chosen site was not wholly within the Council's criteria but he also noted that a health and safety report had ruled out the originally preferred site because of its isolation. He commented that the delay should not be extended further.

Mrs S Riley, a former Chair of Blackthorn Residents Association, commented that she had been heavily involved with the CASPAR project in Blackthorn and commented that there was no proof that skateboard parks automatically led to gang culture or other issues. She noted that the other facilities provided in Blackthorn had not been vandalised. She supported the proposal.

Mr G Smith, Headteacher of St Peter's School commented that he was seeking a compromise. The local residents and the school did not want a skateboard park however if one was to be provided they preferred a site on the other side of the field. He commented that contrary to other reports there had been many accidents at skateboard parks and that in

the United Kingdom there were so many that there were not accurate statistics available. He referred to a recent reported event at Cogenhoe where a number of children (around 50), some dropped off by parents, had alcohol with them which was then being sold to younger children. This had been an unsavoury event and given his own previous experience of working in a large school in Birmingham noted that there had to be some kind of supervision of the facility. He commented that over the years he had enjoyed very good relations with both the Borough and County Councils and was prepared for the school to assist with supervision.

Mr K Davies, Chair of the Rectory Farm Residents Association, commented that he had been involved with the project for a long time. He commented that consultation was very important and that youngsters had been brought onto the Management Board at Rectory Farm. The youngsters concerned were aware that it took time for schemes to be put in place and they expressed a willingness to help maintain the facility. He commented that it was important for a range of facilities to be available to the early teens which in themselves would prevent many of the issues that Mr Smith had commented on.

Mrs S Atfield, of Lumbertubs Residents Association and a mother of four, commented that one of her children played with a large number of others on the playing field. They had never been in trouble and she referred to the limited play area close to where she lived at Rillwood Court. She commented that there was a need to provide further facilities.

C Thurlow referred to the health and safety report that commented that the original preferred site was too close to the nature reserve and too isolated and the need for the site both to be safe and to be perceived as being safe. She had been at several meetings on the playing field and at the school and commented that the proposed site was not particularly visible from the road either. She felt that comments from a health and safety expert were needed on this site as well. She referred to the unfortunate murder of Carol Baldwin some years ago in a similar area. She also referred to a survey that she had undertaken which she felt had been misrepresented. She commented that she had gone to three schools, Lings Academy, Blackthorn and Weston Favell Upper and had children indicate their preference for an outdoor skateboard area, and indoor skateboard facility, all weather pitch and other options. Overwhelmingly, there had been support for an all weather pitch.

Mrs D Mackintosh, Chair of Northampton Federation of Residents Association commented that the Federation had supported the provision of the skateboard facility. She referred to a basketball court located close to her own home from which no trouble had been experienced and had proved to be very successful. She commented that the children of local schools had been very keen to have a skateboard park.

Councillor Mason referred to the CASPAR project and the proposal for the skateboard park which had been made some four years previously. She commented that there was no direct association of skateboard parks with drugs or alcohol issues per se.

Mr B Beneworth a resident of Broughton commented that he would like to challenge the comments that there was no evidence of anti-social behaviour. He referred to some comments by a landscape architect that there was evidence of drugs issues as skateboard parks were seen as a soft touch. He referred to his experience in Broughton where petty vandalism had spread to the village hall etc after the provision of such a facility. The local Police in his area were against skateboard parks. He commented that he supported facilities for young people but not the skateboard facility. Since these issues had arisen Broughton had set up a scheme for young people which was proving to be successful. He queried as to if none of the sites wholly met the Council's own criteria why was it pursuing it at this location.

Councillor Glynane commented that he supported both young people and the need for a skateboard facility. He referred to the 80 or 90 youngsters that had come to the Council meeting and had been extremely well behaved to put over their point of view. He commented that the scheme had the full support of the Residents Association's, Councillors and the Council as a whole. He commented that in the United States there were estimated to be 11 million participants in the sport which was worth \$3 billion annually. He also commented that it was not a certainty that there would be problems associated with the skateboard park and indeed if there were these would be an indication of other issues that would require different solutions.

Mr B Purdy commented that he did not believe that Mr Smith had set a good example for youngsters. Respect was earned by showing respect to young people. He commented that he had long experience of being involved in the CASPAR project and little vandalism had occurred to other facilities provided for young people.

Mrs Patel as a mother of children at St Peter's School expressed concern that she did not think that the site would be safe for children to play unsupervised. She commented that she lived at Cherry Lodge and that children played outside. She felt that there should be youth clubs or other supervised activities for young children and she referred to the petition signed by 300 people against the skateboard park. She commented that children did not need a skateboard park, such a facility would require improved lighting; in her opinion it was a waste of money.

L Martin from the County Council's Community Development Section commented upon her long association with Northampton East and endorsed the supporters of the scheme. She commented that the skateboard park would be the last in a number of initiatives for young people and would provide a cheap alternative to Lings Forum and other facilities.

Councillor Pritchard as Ward Councillor commented that the majority of residents wanted the facility. Some 330 young people had themselves signed a petition supporting the facility that she presented to the Leader. She had had many enquiries about when it was to be provided. She also commented that it was important that youngsters had a say in what was provided for them and that assumptions about what they wanted should not be made by others. Proposals were supported by Residents Associations, the Police and the local MP. Originally five sites had been examined and whittled down to two for a variety of reasons. The site now proposed represented the best match to the Council's criteria. She also referred to the experience at Briar Hill which had been very successful. She commented that this proposal had overwhelming support in the area and the overwhelming support of the Council.

The Chief Executive read out a written representation from Mr A Roe against the proposal and a letter from Sally Keeble MP in favour of it.

Councillor Hadland commented that there had been a lengthy consultation and much advice had been sought on this proposal. He concluded that this kind of facility was never going to receive 100% support and that the Executive was only being asked to ratify a decision already made by Council. He commented that if some of the fears raised by residents did come to pass then these would be issues for the Police to deal with.

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration commented that should the Executive resolve to ratify the previous decision made by Council that the Contractor had advised that the lead-in time for ordering materials would be 8 weeks and the build itself 4 weeks. It was hoped that the project could be completed in a shorter timescale. He also noted the revenue implications and sought authorisation for funding from the Council's Contingency Fund.

Councillor Hill commented that in his view the objectors needed to make a case as to why the Council should not proceed with this project. To his mind they had not done so.

At this juncture Mr Smith protested and he and the other people opposed to the skateboard park facility left the meeting.

- RESOLVED
- (1) That the Executive re-affirm its decision made on 4 April 2005.
 - (2) That approval be given to the location of the skateboard facility in Lings Park, Northampton at Site 2A on the attached plan (Appendix D to the report) ratifying the decision made at full Council on 7 March 2005.
 - (3) That approval be given to let the contract for construction of a skateboard park at the earliest opportunity.
 - (4) That the potential for additional costs in the provision of the facility be noted and approval be given to the use of supplementary funds from the Contingency Reserve under delegated powers to meet the costs and ongoing maintenance of the facility.

15. NORTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK- CORE STRATEGY (PRT)

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report that sought authority to consult on issues and options for the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. It was noted that the paper had been prepared jointly with Daventry and South Northants District Councils. South Northants had proposed a minor change which had been accommodated. It was intended that the Core Strategy would be consulted upon during the summer and be put in place during the autumn.

Councillor Hill noted that a number of external infrastructure issues such as health and education needed to be in place at this stage without them being in the situation of playing catch up.

- RESOLVED That the Core Strategy Issues and Options Report attached as Appendix A to the report be issued for full consultation.

16. SIXFIELDS AREA ACTION PLAN; PRE- SUBMISSION DRAFT (PRT)

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report that had been prepared jointly with consultants Urban Practitioners. The report set out preferred options and approach. It was noted that a workshop had been held in January to examine options with key stakeholders. Urban Practitioners had held one to one meetings with all landowners in the area which had produced a body of evidence when the Action Plan had been drawn up. All parties had been invited to a stakeholder meeting and that Estates and English Partnerships had been involved. All landowners had been treated as on an equal footing.

Councillor Larratt expressed some concern that some key stakeholders might feel that their views had not been fully taken into account.

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration commented that this process was being keenly scrutinised by landowners and other interests. A balance needed to be achieved between good quality information and going out to consultation upon it and letting

other people write the document for the Council. The Executive could do one of two things either accept the report and let it go out for consultation and deal with comments as they were received or to review it beforehand. Member involvement had been conducted through membership of the Local Development Document Steering Group.

A number of questions were raised as to how the situation presented in the report had been arrived at.

RESOLVED 1. That consideration of the report be deferred pending further consultation and consideration including a seminar for members of the Executive and any other Councillor to explain how the Action Plan in its current form had been drawn up.

2. That the anomalies identified in the report be addressed and further consultation take place with key stakeholders in the locality and the Town Centre.

17. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS AND ACCREDITED PERSONS PILOT REVIEW (CSE)

The Environmental Health Manager submitted a report which reviewed the current neighbourhood wardens project and proposed a rollout programme of future wardens and accredited persons. He elaborated upon the Appendices attached to the report. He commented that the service had been well received so far and that the success had been due both to the wardens in place and to the organisation of a Senior Environmental Health Officer.

RESOLVED (1) That the findings of the review of Neighbourhood Wardens Project be noted.
(2) That the rollout programme for the allocation of Neighbourhood Wardens to all areas of the town to completion in 2007 be agreed.

18. DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHAMPTON FESTIVAL (HE)

The Director for Governing Northampton submitted a report commenting that the Arts Council was prepared to give a grant towards the Northampton Festival of £60,000 if an arms' length company was established to manage and broaden the Festival. The grant was welcomed at a time when the Arts Council was reducing its funding nationally.

RESOLVED That the report be noted and that agreement be given to the establishing of a company to facilitate the award of £60,000 to the Arts Council of England for the Northampton Festival.

19. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING RELATING TO THE PREPARATION OF DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION PLANS FOR WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (PRT)

The Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration submitted a report which had been agreed in principle by the joint Steering Group and which was intended to be signed on 8 June in Northampton.

RESOLVED (1) That the Memorandum of Understanding attached as Appendix A of the report be agreed.

- (2) That further consideration be given to the Council's membership of the Joint Steering Group.

20. BUS STATION FATALITY (FS)

The General Manager Parking and Security Operations submitted a report setting out the conclusions of the Coroner's Court into a fatality that occurred on the bus platform at the Bus Station during the Autumn of 2004. He made particular reference to Section 5 of the report and the actions to be undertaken and referred to consideration of the longer term issues that would need to be taken in conjunction with the Highways Authority. He also referred to the long term future of the bus station.

The Chief Executive congratulated Mr Owen for his presentation to the Coroner's Court.

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

NB Councillor Hadland took the Chair during consideration of this item.

21. ITEM WITHDRAWN

Withdrawn.

22. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Chair moved that the public and Press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that there was likely to be disclosure to them of such categories of exempt information as defined by Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 as listed against such items of business by reference to the appropriate paragraph of Schedule 12A to such Act.

The Motion was Carried.

23. LAND AT REAR OF 81- 87 ST JAMES MILL ROAD (FS) (9)

The Chief Estates Surveyor submitted a report that set out an approach by a landowner to acquire an area of land at the rear of their site as shown on the plan attached to the report. Adjoining landowners had also shown an interest in acquiring this land. Network Rail had no issues with the disposal of land and Westbridge Depot also had no issues.

RESOLVED That the disposal of the land at the rear of St James Mill Road as set out on the plan attached to the report be approved and that purchasers be required, by covenant, if necessary, to keep the land in a tidy state given that the railway was a major gateway into the Town.

24. FORMER BLUEBERRY DINER AND STUDIO 1, SWAN STREET, NORTHAMPTON (FS) (9)

The Chief Estates Surveyor submitted a report seeking agreement to the acquisition of two areas of land as shown on the plan attached to the report for future development.

RESOLVED That approval be given in principle to pursue the comprehensive redevelopment of the former Blueberry Diner

968

and Studio 1 site and associated property as shown on the plan attached to the report.

The meeting concluded at 21.06 hours